

## *Preface*

Coral reefs are in serious decline globally, especially those near shallow shelves and dense populations. It has been estimated that 10 percent of the earth's coral reefs have already been seriously degraded and a much greater percentage is threatened. If allowed to continue, this decline is likely to lead to the loss of most of the world's reef resources during the next century.

The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) is a partnership among nations and organizations seeking to implement Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, and other international conventions and agreements, for the benefit of coral reefs and related ecosystems. Founded by eight governments—Australia, France, Japan, Jamaica, the Philippines, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America—the ICRI was announced at the First Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 1994, and at the high level segment of the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) Intersessional Meeting in April 1995. Since then, the ICRI has come to encompass the participation and support of additional governments, U.N. organizations, multilateral development banks, environmental and developmental NGOs and the private sector.

An early decision of the original partners was to sponsor an international workshop focused on coral reefs. In anticipation of the workshop, the partners worked to produce a "Call to Action". The purpose was to provide broad principles which could be used to unify the participants in a partnership

and to set the direction for the workshop. Participants in the Dumaguete workshop provided additional insights leading to consensus approval of the Call to Action at the workshop.

The international ICRI workshop was held at Dumaguete City, the Philippines from 29 May through 2 June, 1995. The intent of the workshop was to enable governments, donors and funding agencies, development organizations, NGOs, the research community and the private sector, to work together in order to develop a "Framework for Action" which responds to the Call to Action.

The Framework for Action responds to the global problem identified in the Call to Action and was developed with the following purpose: to mobilize governments and the wide range of other stakeholders whose coordinated, vigorous and effective actions are required to implement the Call to Action.

The Call to Action and the Framework for Action are designed to be used in several ways. They provide the basis for regional workshops that will define regional needs and priorities, and catalyze the development of national coral reef initiatives. They give visibility to the ICRI's goal of ecosystem and community-based management. They encourage U.N. agencies and convention bodies, as well as multilateral and bilateral donors to incorporate ICRI into their programs, thereby better focusing and leveraging existing resources. They identify important roles for United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Oceanic Commission (IOC) and the scientific community in monitoring and addressing the serious global decline of coral reefs.



## THE CALL TO ACTION



The following Call to Action was approved by the ICRI Executive Planning Committee (EPC) and the participants of the International Planning Workshop on Friday, June 2, 1995.

### **International Coral Reef Initiative Call To Action**

The nations and organizations supporting the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) urge attention to the following:

#### **The Global Problem**

Coral reefs are in serious decline globally, especially those near shallow shelves and dense populations. It has been estimated that 10 percent of the earth's coral reefs have already been seriously degraded and a much greater percentage is threatened. If allowed to continue, this decline is likely to lead to the loss of most of the world's reef resources during the next century.

#### **The Threats to Coastal Ecosystems**

The reasons for the decline in reef health are varied, complex, and often difficult to accurately determine. While natural events – such as storm damage, predator infestations, and variations in temperature – have some impact on reef ecosystems, human activity is a primary agent of degradation. Contributing factors include:

Direct impacts from activities such as resource extraction, in-filling, over harvesting, and diving and boating activities, as well as nutrient enrichment and

toxic pollution;

“ Inadequate planning and management of coastal land use, including upland activities;

. Potential adverse effects of climate change, including temperature and sea-level changes, alteration of natural patterns of precipitation, tropical storms, and ocean circulation; and

“ Population growth, increasing pollution and increased uses of the fragile resources will accelerate the decline in coral reef ecosystems, with societal and ecological effects extending beyond reef environments.

#### **The Significance of Coral Reef Ecosystems**

Coral reef ecosystems offer benefits to humankind beyond those realized for food production, tourism, recreation, aesthetics, and shoreline protection. Capable of sustaining innumerable coastal communities worldwide, these ecosystems also have great economic, social, and cultural importance to nations, and to entire regions. As competition among multiple uses of reef resources increases, so too will their significance to the human populations that depend on them.

Coral reef ecosystems are among the most biologically productive and diverse in the world; they also serve as indicators of environment health. These facts were recognized at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, where coral reefs and associated systems were accorded a high priority for protection in Agenda 21.

## Reducing the Threats

Threats from human-related impacts can be minimized or eliminated through:

- \* Improved and sustained management practices;
- \* Increased national and local capacities for coral reef ecosystem management;
- \* Increased political support for managing coral reef ecosystems; and
- \* The sharing of existing important and new information related to maintaining the health of these ecosystems.

The ICRI governments endorse the following measures, to be implemented through global, regional, and national actions:

### Coastal Management

- \* Incorporate integrated coastal management measures into local, national, and regional coastal development plans and projects and support their long-term implementation.
- \* These measures will serve as the framework for achieving the sustainable use of, and maintaining the health of, coral reefs and associated environments.
- \* Develop coral reef initiatives (regional, national and/or local). These should use an ecosystem-based, integrated approach that encourages participation and includes programs for community-based management or co-management of reef resources.

### Capacity Building

- \* Establish regional networks to share knowledge, skills, and information.

- Develop and support educational and informational programs aimed at reducing adverse impacts of human activities.
- Establish information exchanges with stakeholder communities.
- Improve developing nations' access to bilateral, multilateral, and other forms of financial and technical support for coral reef management.

### Research and Monitoring

- Use regional networks to achieve better coordination and cooperation among national research programs.
- Promote linkages between regional and global research and monitoring networks, such as CARICOMP (Caribbean Coastal Marine Productivity), PACICOMP (Pacific Coastal Marine Productivity), and GOOS (Global Ocean Observing System).
- Support research and monitoring programs, projects, or activities identified as essential to managing coral reef ecosystems for the benefit of humankind.
- Promote the development and maintenance of a global coral reef monitoring network.

### Review

- Periodically review the extent and success of implementation of actions identified in the initiative.

The nations and organizations supporting ICRI call upon all other relevant, international entities, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including the private sector and scientific communities, to undertake the actions above.

*Approved June 2, 1995*

# THE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION



## *Preamble*

Maintaining the biological diversity, condition, resources, and values of coral reefs and related ecosystems is a matter of global urgency. While the majority of countries which have coral reefs are developing countries, there are many reefs in the waters of developed countries. This unites the developed and developing countries and should command the attention of the international community. Coral reef survival depends upon the world community acquiring and maintaining the knowledge and capacity to conserve and sustainably use coral reefs and related ecosystems. This requires that all uses and impacts be brought within and maintained at levels which do not exceed these systems' natural capacity for production and regeneration.

The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Workshop was held at Silliman University in Dumaguete City, Philippines in May 1995 to enable countries, donors, development and funding agencies to work with coral reef managers, private sector representatives, nongovernmental organisations and scientists to develop this Framework as a basis for achieving sustainable management of coral reefs and related ecosystems.

The ICRI Framework for Action builds upon and reflects the principles and processes established by Agenda 21, the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, the

Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, Global Program of Action to Protect the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities and other relevant international programs. It has been developed as a succinct statement which should be read and interpreted in light of these documents.

This Framework addresses the four elements of the ICRI Call to Action, which are:

- Management;
- Capacity building;
- Research and monitoring; and
- Review.

## **Framework Purpose**

The purpose of this Framework for Action is to mobilise governments and the wide range of other stakeholders whose coordinated, vigorous and effective actions are required to implement the Call to Action.

## **Principles**

The ICRI recognizes the following principles:

- Achieving the ICRI's purpose requires the full participation and commitment of governments, local communities, donors, NGOs, the private sector, resource users and scientists; therefore true partnerships, cooperation and

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The ICRI Framework for Action was drafted by the Philippine workshop participants, reflecting a unique partnership of governments, U.N. agencies, donors, scientists, NGOs, and industry. The Framework will launch much more detailed regional and national priority setting in the next 8 months, and therefore was deliberately focused on actions at the global level.

The participants developed the Framework for Action so that it would directly address the measures identified in the Call to Action to achieve improved coastal management, capacity building, research and monitoring and review. The drafting process took account of the issues raised in the preliminary discussions and key note addresses as well as the workshops which were organised, initially, in relation to the four themes of the Call to Action and, secondly, in relation to the perspectives of the

collaboration exemplify the ICRI activities.

- The over-riding priority is to support actions that will have tangible, positive and measurable effects on coral reefs and related ecosystems and on the well-being of the communities which depend upon them.
- Human activities are the major cause of coral reef degradation; therefore, managing coral reefs means managing those human activities. Individuals whose decisions and actions affect coral reefs – from board rooms to beaches – need to become aware of and committed to the conservation and sustainable use of coral reefs and related ecosystems.

regional groups. This approach enabled participants to address issues and priorities drawing on their experience as practitioners and paying particular regard to creating a framework which would address the range of regional requirements and would have regard to the feasibility of actions in a range of regional and developmental settings.

The results of the workshop discussions in the two sessions were then considered by an open-ended drafting group which included the EPC members, Chairs of the working groups and others who expressed a particular interest in being involved in the drafting of the Framework.

The ICRI workshop participants reviewed the initial draft of the Framework in a plenary session. A revised draft was considered and adopted, with minor amendments taking place at a subsequent plenary session on June 2nd.

- The diversity of cultures, traditions and governance within nations and regions should be recognized and built upon in all the ICRI activities.
- Integrated coastal management, with special emphasis on community participation and benefit, provides a framework for effective coral reef and related ecosystem management.
- Developing national capacity to conserve and sustainably use coral reefs and related ecosystems requires a long term (decadal) commitment. Improvement of coral reef management requires a permanent commitment and an adaptive approach.

- Strategic research and monitoring programs should be an integral part of the ICRI because management of coral reefs and related ecosystems should be based on the most relevant scientific information.
- Actions promoted under this framework should take account of, and fully use, the extensive body of international agreements and organisations that address issues related to coral reefs and related ecosystems. The ICRI will facilitate the leveraging and channeling of existing resources among all sectors for the benefit of coral reefs and related ecosystems.

#### Actions

- ° All those committed to supporting the ICRI and this Framework for Action are called upon to take account of and to act on the following at the international, regional and national levels.
- Support national and regional efforts to establish and coordinate strategies, priorities and programs to implement the ICRI Framework for Action, starting with regional workshops to be held by early 1996.
- Ensure that sustainable management of coral reefs and related ecosystems is considered at future relevant international meetings.
- Develop and /or strengthen national, regional and international mechanisms for gathering and sharing information and expertise on the sustainable management of coral reefs and related ecosystems.
- Promote improved access to financial and technological resources to enable institutions, regional centres and networks to assist and inform governments, industries and communities.

- Addressing conservation and sustainable use of coral reefs and related ecosystems requires activities in the following areas:

Integrated coastal management;

Public awareness, education and training;

Ratification of or accession to relevant international instruments;

Stakeholder participation at all levels;

Training policy makers and private sector decision makers in the development and implementation of coral reef management;

Marine science and technology;

Environmental law, particularly environmental impact assessment regulations; and

Assessing the potential for micro-enterprise development and facilitating access to financing on a small to medium scale.

#### *Management*

- Encourage governments to develop and adopt integrated coastal management measures, including:
  - Protection of the marine environment from land-based sources of marine pollution;
  - Environmentally sound land-use practices, including zoning where appropriate;
  - Measures to protect the marine environment from the adverse effect of maritime activities;
  - National and regional disaster strategies;

- Measures to prevent illegal fishing practices, achieve sustainable fisheries and protect the ecological systems that support them;
  - . Tourism management and planning;
  - ~ Cultural aspects of resource use; and
  - Enforcement of regulations.
- Encourage governments and funding agencies to consider the ICRI Framework in project and program design and implementation.
  - Encourage, where appropriate, an intersectoral systems approach to planning and management.
  - Encourage improved coordination among international organisations, donors and NGOs to provide more effective programs at the regional and national level.
  - Encourage prompt implementation of the outcomes of FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the Global Program of Action to Protect the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities.
  - Promote awareness and action by the global tourist community to minimise individual and collective impacts of tourism on coral reefs and related ecosystems.
  - Promote the establishment and effective management of coastal and marine protected areas for coral reefs and related ecosystems, within the framework of customary international law as exemplified by the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. This will contribute to the development of the Global Representative System of Marine Protected Areas as proposed by the World Bank, IUCN and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.
- Promote the regulation of international trade in endangered and threatened reef-associated species through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), and improve its implementation where required.
  - Encourage governments to develop and promote mechanisms for regulating international trade in species that are illegally harvested.
  - Encourage governments to develop legislation, policy and institutional capacity to apply environmental assessment to development activities.
  - Promote appropriate technologies, including voluntary programs and economic incentives and best management practices, for control of land-based causes of marine pollution.
  - Promote and replicate successes in integrated coastal management, including community-based management, as appropriate.
  - Support management measures to improve the socio-economic condition of local communities through such means as retraining and sustainable alternative livelihood development.

#### *Capacity Building*

- Capacity building includes establishing and strengthening human resource and institutional capabilities for coastal management, science, training and education.
- Encourage regional organisations to assist countries and communities implementing ICRI, for example through measures including:
  - Preparation of project proposals; and



- . Implementation of small grant programs.
- Establish, strengthen and sustain mutually supportive networks of centres of expertise in management of coral reefs and related ecosystems.
- Base human resource development strategies on needs assessments and ensure that they address:
  - The diversity of cultures, traditions and governance structures;
  - Increased community awareness and involvement;
  - Improving the capacity of today's managers;
  - Providing for the education of tomorrow's managers;
  - Coverage of coral reef management issues in the training of all professionals whose work involves decisions which affect coral reefs and coastal resource management;
  - Technical training needs for people at the field level;
  - Training and supporting trainers to work at the community and field level;
- . Evaluation of the effectiveness of training; and
  - The need to target children in awareness raising.
- Improve coordination and targeting of the education and human resource development programs provided by development partners.
- Support formal and informal environmental education programs for all levels of the community on the subject of coral reefs and related ecosystems, with curricula and materials tailored to the interests and needs of the regions and end-users.
- Encourage maximum use of national and regional expertise in management, research and capacity building activities.
- Support the development, identification and dissemination of materials which address the interests and needs of the regions, including:
  - The value of coral reefs and related ecosystems;
  - Practical monitoring and management techniques;
  - Inventories of formal and on-the-job training opportunities;
  - Case studies of management, including success stories as well as examples which have not been successful; and
  - Case studies of human impact and natural variation in coral reefs and related ecosystems.
- Increase the relevance to ICRI of existing donor scholarship programs by:
  - Devoting a proportion of scholarship awards to environmental studies; and
  - Encouraging thesis and dissertation studies carried out in home countries.
- Encourage the private sector's role in management of coral reefs and related ecosystems through:
  - Use of appropriate technologies;
  - Development of a trained and educated workforce; and
  - Innovative approaches to better environmental operating standards.

## *Research & Monitoring*

- Research and monitoring are needed to assess the status of coral reefs, evaluate the success of management and conservation actions and develop more effective management practices. As tropical ecosystems, coral reefs and related ecosystems are subject to dynamics which are generally less well understood than temperate systems. Therefore, without evidence it should not be assumed that they will react to natural and human disturbances in the same way as temperate systems.
- Research and monitoring programs should address biological, physical, social, cultural and economic studies and should be carried out over time periods appropriate to their objectives. They should be supported by information management, interpretation and dissemination. In the collection of data for both research and monitoring, resource users should be involved to the maximum extent practicable.
- Promote the involvement of managers in the development, conduct, interpretation and application of research and monitoring programs.
- Promote and assist the development and application of resource assessment methods that:
  - Allow for rapid assessment to establish baselines and initiate management; and
  - “ Can be used in Geographic Information and Decision Support Systems.
- Promote the development of a Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network under the Coastal Zone Module of the Global Ocean Observing System by incorporating and, as necessary, establishing or strengthening regional nodes.
- Encourage studies of coral reefs and related ecosystems which:
  - Address priority management issues in individual countries or regions;
  - Address the synergies between human effects and natural variations as causes of stress and degradation in coral reefs and related ecosystems;
  - Involve interdisciplinary research into human impacts with initial priority on fisheries and tourism;
  - Integrate traditional knowledge;
  - Quantify the socio-economic impacts of conservation and habitat destruction;
  - Address the scales and linkages of the biological communities; and
  - Develop methods for impact mitigation and reef restoration.
- Develop programs to involve communities, resource users, the private sector and others in monitoring the condition of coral reefs and related ecosystems.
- Encourage regional and international forums which bring together managers and scientists to identify priority information requirements for management of coral reefs and related ecosystems.

## *Review*

- \* Review of the state of coral reefs and related ecosystems and of action taken to implement the ICRI Framework for Action should be conducted at national, regional and international levels on a regular basis.
- \* The four yearly cycle of the international coral reef symposia provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the ecological condition of coral reefs. This should be matched by an equivalent program to review the effectiveness of implementation of actions in accordance with the ICRI Framework for Action. At the international level, the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development provides an appropriate forum for review of international actions taken at all levels by governments, international organisations and agencies. The 1996 session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, with its focus on Chapter 17 (Protection of Oceans) of Agenda 21 will deal, inter alia, with coral reefs and related ecosystems.
- UNEP should be encouraged to review the implementation and success of the ICRI Framework for Action through relevant programs including the Regional Seas Programmed.
- Similarly the IOC through the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, should be encouraged to produce reports on the ecological condition of coral reefs and related ecosystems for discussion at the quadrennial International Coral Reef Symposia and other relevant international forums.

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