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Dear Ms Mrema

The information in this note is provided by the International Coral reef Initiative<sup>1</sup> in response to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) notification 2020-001 (reference: SCBD/IMS/JMF/ET/CPa/88555).

**(a) Additional views and suggestions regarding the proposals referred in Annex 1 of the recommendation [23/6], including elements of technical and scientific cooperation for enabling technology horizon scanning, assessment and monitoring, avoiding duplication of related technologies considered by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on synthetic biology.**

- With regards to §4 – Agree it is important to continue to draw on and strengthen initiatives that are outside the work of the convention, where these exist and can demonstrate a basic level of organization and transparency. An example for coral reefs would be the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) implemented by ICRI members.
- In regards to §6 - There are a large number of networks and mechanisms that fit the definition of technical and scientific cooperation within the context of coral reefs, however the overarching mechanisms that can help coordinate across these is the International Coral Reef Initiative and its monitoring network, the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (both of which are described in more detail under part (b)).
- With regard to §10 - The activities and past deliverables of ICRI can be considered to contribute to:
  - (a) Help desk support services,
  - (b) Matchmaking services,
  - (c) Network development and partnership building,
  - (d) Capacity building (for instance, ICRI will organize the 6<sup>th</sup> International Tropical Management Ecosystems Symposium, and capacity building is also a component of the GCRMN), and
  - (f) Identification and promotion of exemplary cooperation.

<sup>1</sup> The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) is a partnership between Nations and organizations that strives to preserve coral reefs and related ecosystems around the world by promoting sustainable management practices, building capacity, raising awareness and promoting action to address the continuing decline of coral reefs. ICRI was founded in 1994 and has more than 80 members, including 38 countries, including 37 countries that are Party to the CBD. ICRI is currently co-chaired by Australia, Indonesia and Monaco



- With regards to section 5 (from §13 onwards) and the options for institutional mechanisms and modalities, a mix and match option could be envisaged. We strongly support making use of existing organizational structures where these exist and/or can be strengthened to fulfill this role, rather than creating new structures. In terms of considering options set out, it could be considered helpful to have some kind of global oversight for coordinating existing bodies and identifying gaps where new mechanisms may be needed.

**(b) Examples of effective institutional mechanisms, partnerships, networks, and regional and sub-regional institutional arrangements.**

(1) **The International Coral Reef Initiative** ([www.icriforum.org](http://www.icriforum.org)) has been established as a partnership for 25 years. It provides a platform for open discussion, opportunity for sharing knowledge, exchanging technologies, addressing emerging threats, building consensus, developing partnerships and cooperation across different types of actors, sectors, and levels network for actors working on issues relevant to coral reefs. The ICRI membership includes governments, intergovernmental organisations, organisations representing academia, civil society, practitioners, foundations and activists.

ICRI provides a unique opportunity to enable sharing of experiences, coordinating across [member] [coral reef] countries, organisations and other related networks in order to help streamline efforts and develop consensus on questions relating to coral reef policy, management and conservation, as called for by UNEA Resolution UNEP/EA.4/L.14 on “Sustainable coral reefs management” (adopted 15 March 2019). ICRI represents an example of existing mechanisms that could be helpful for implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

ICRI is currently coordinating its members to contribute to the on-going process to develop the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The ad hoc committee was established by ICRI in December 2018 to follow the post-2020 framework development process and contribute on matters relating to the critical status of coral reefs and how these can be sufficiently addressed within the post-2020 framework. It is anticipated that “any future target should be quantifiable and have an ambitious but realistic timeframe with a holistic view of coral reefs within the broader marine system as well as relate to the broader sustainable development agenda, with clear cross-reference to other global and regional policy instruments and commitments relevant to coral reefs.

At its last General Meeting (Townsville, December 2019), ICRI members agreed on extending the mandate of the ICRI ad hoc committee on the inclusion of a coral reef-related target in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (see Annex 1 resolution).

The membership of this committee is very engaged and includes Australia, France, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Maldives, Monaco, New Caledonia, Seychelles, UK, USA, ICRS, Reef World Foundation, SPREP, UN Environment, UNEP-WCMC, Vulcan Inc., Wildlife Conservation Society, World Resources Institute, WWF International.

(2) **The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network** (GCRMN <https://gcrmn.net>) was established by the International Coral Reef Initiative in 1995, initially with the primary task of reporting on the condition of the world’s coral reefs in the context of the development of the ICRI ‘Call to Action’. Since then GCRMN has produced a range of global, regional and thematic reports on coral reef status and trends.

ICRI adopted an implementation and governance plan for the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network at its 33rd General Meeting in December 2018 (<https://gcrmn.net/about-gcrmn/igp/>).

The plan establishes new operational practices for the GCRMN, including strengthening the role and importance of the regions in coordinating the collection and reporting of data, developing procedures for establishing data and metadata standards, ensuring data quality and developing key indicators from varied but comparable methods.

The process to produce an updated Status and Trends of Coral Reefs of the World in 2020 was triggered in response to UN Environment Assembly Resolution 2/12 which called on UN Environment to “support further development of coral reef indicators, regional coral reef assessments, and preparation of a global report through GCRMN”; and the process to develop a post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The report is in preparation and due for completion mid-2020.

The project to develop the 2020 Status Report started in January 2019 with the creation of a standardised procedure for the homogenisation and cleaning of benthic data from different monitoring programs. Following this step, several workshops were organised in the different GCRMN regions to explain the goal of the 2020 report and encourage collaborators to share their data. One year after the beginning of the project, the data acquisition step is almost complete, gathering 133 datasets on coral reef benthic cover. These datasets correspond to 50 countries and more than one thousand locations spanning for more than 30 years.

The GCRMN represents an established network that can contribute to the monitoring and assessment of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in regards to coral reef ecosystems.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Johnson  
General Manager Reef Strategy  
Australian ICRI Secretariat Co-Chair,  
on behalf of the co-chairs of the Australia-Monaco-Indonesia ICRI Secretariat 2018-2020

31 January 2020



## **Resolution for the Inclusion of a Coral Reef-Related Target in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework**

*adopted on December 2019, at the 34<sup>th</sup> ICRI General Meeting (Australia)*

*Recalling* that at the 33rd General Meeting, ICRI members recognized the urgent need for action to address coral reef issues in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is expected to adopt in Kunming, China in October 2020,

Also *recalling* that ICRI members established an *ad hoc* Committee at the 33rd General Meeting to develop a recommendation for a global target for coral reefs in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework,

*Recognizing* the progress that has been made by the *ad hoc* Committee in developing a recommendation for the global target for coral reefs,

*Acknowledging* that the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is an ongoing process and consultations are still in an early phase,

*Noting* the important international meetings and events taking place in advance of the CBD CoP, including CBD subsidiary body meetings and working groups, United Nations Oceans Conference, IUCN World Conservation Congress, International Coral Reef Symposium, and Our Ocean Conference, which will provide opportunities to build consensus and support for the recommended global target, and

*Reaffirming* the urgent need for action to address the global decline and possible extinction of coral reef species, as reflected in recent landmark global assessments by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

### **The General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative:**

1. ***Requests*** that the ICRI Secretariat continue to facilitate the work of the *ad hoc* Committee (AHC) to develop a recommendation for a global target relating to coral reefs in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under revised Terms of Reference set out in Annex 1 to this resolution;
2. ***Authorizes*** the ICRI co-chairs to approve, after consultation with ICRI members, the *ad hoc* Committee's recommendation, so as to enable an appropriate, timely and adaptive contribution to the ongoing Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework process;





3. ***Provides*** an informal update on AHC discussions to the CBD Secretariat and Co-Chairs of the Open-ended Working Group, following the 34th General Meeting of ICRI; and
4. ***Encourages*** its members to promote and advocate for the inclusion of the ICRI-approved global target relating to coral reefs in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

**Annex1: proposed update to the terms of reference for the *ad hoc* committee**

1. Coordinate ICRI's contribution to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;
2. Engage with relevant partners and stakeholders to develop, by 31 March 2020, a draft recommendation for a coral reef related target and an alternative; and
3. Develop and implement a communications strategy to promote the recommended coral reef target at important international meetings and events in 2020, including the 15th COP of the CBD in Kunming, China in October 2020.