



Member Report

ICRI GM 27 - MR/UNEP

INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF INITIATIVE (ICRI)

27th General Meeting

16 -19 June 2012 – Cairns, Australia

Member's report on activities to ICRI

Presented by Jerker Tamelander

Reporting period January - July 2012

1. General Information

Are you an ICRI Member?	Yes
Representation to ICRI (Country / Organization):	UNEP
Focal Point 1:	
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Last meeting attended:	ICRI GM 26, Reunion, December 2011

2. Updates on your activities

2.1. Development of a Coral Reef Partnership

UNEP has initiated development of a global coral reef partnership with the Regional Seas programmes, as a contribution towards Aichi Target 10 and Rio+20 outcomes in particular. The partnership will align with the ICRI Call to Action and Framework for Action and will build on current activities as well as past collaboration, including the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN), which was suspended as an ICRI Network at ICRI GM 26 in Reunion 2011. As such it will constitute a successor partnership to ICRAN, but will not be developed directly based on ICRAN and will differ in terms of objectives, structure and operational aspects as well as funding model.

The partnership is envisaged as a 'network of networks' with a common coordination mechanism. It would provide a platform for identifying solutions to common priority challenges in managing coral reefs to secure their ecosystem services, through development and dissemination of best practice guidance and tools, and fostering science-policy linkages. Consultation on partnership objectives and focal areas is at an early stage, initiated with Regional Seas programmes in April-May 2012.

The aim is to catalyse effective, ecosystem-based coral reef management, by utilizing the regional anchoring, inter-governmental platforms and policy mandates collectively possessed by UNEP and the Regional Seas, and technical expertise of a range of partner organizations. The effort is linked to and is coordinated with UNEP's wider Marine & Coastal Ecosystem-Based Management Tool & Capacity Building programme to utilize synergies, support innovation and ensure cost-effectiveness. Main activity areas envisaged are:

- Development of innovative and practical tools and guidance for ecosystem-based coral reef planning and management at the global level; pilot testing through regional-level interventions; and adoption and application by and through Regional Seas programmes and associated networks.
- Coordination, networking and communication to empower stakeholders, including development of a community of practice for ecosystem-based management of coral reefs, to enable key constituencies to take a greater role in planning and management, including through application of tools and guidance developed.

Further elaboration of partnership objectives, activities and operational aspects will be carried out through consultation, within UNEP and among Regional Seas and associated networks, as well as through consultation with the ICRI Secretariat and Membership. Development activities to be carried out during 2012 include:

- Conducting a terminal evaluation of ICRAN, which will provide recommendations for follow-up, including with respect to substantive activities and structure of the partnership;
- Consulting with Regional Seas secretariats to source further substantive input;
- Presentation of progress at ICRI meetings, and inviting input and participation;
- Modest implementation may be initiated during 2012 (including through projects underway or under initiation as described below), with broader scale implementation commencing 2013.

The ICRI General Meeting is requested to take note of this initiative, and offer its support and advice, as appropriate. ICRI Members are invited to engage in consultations towards development of the partnership.

2.2. EBM capacity building in Regional Seas - Training and Planning with PERSGA and ROPME

A four-day 'interactive' training workshop on marine and coastal Ecosystem-Based Management was hosted by UNEP, PERSGA and ROPME on 5-9 January 2012 in Hurghada, Egypt. Participants included mid-level planners and decision-makers of relevant ministries and agencies in the PERSGA and ROPME regions. The training introduced EBM principles and solutions, and included group work, 'role-plays' and discussions on EBM scenario design, follow-up activities and demonstration projects. The UNEP guide to EBM, 'Taking Steps Toward Marine & Coastal EBM – An Introductory Guide' served as the main training resource. Future anticipated activities include a number of linked coral reef EBM-EBA demonstration projects, as well as translation and customization of the UNEP EBM Guide into Arabic. In collaboration with the Caribbean Environment Programme, the EBM Guide will also be translated into Spanish, and EBM training and demonstration project planning in the region are in early stages of development.

ICRI Partners are invited to engage in UNEP's EBM capacity building work in PERSGA-ROPME areas, as well as in other global regions. For further details, kindly contact Ole Vestergaard, Programme Officer, UNEP Freshwater & Marine Ecosystems Branch, Nairobi, email: ole.vestergaard@unep.org.

2.3. Regional Projects under the Mangroves for the Future Initiative

UNEP is involved in four MFF funded two-year regional projects that are currently being initiated.

- *“Mapping and Enhancing Natural Resource Governance in Small Island Communities”*, focusing on Maldives, Seychelles, Thailand, Sri Lanka, led by UNEP CRU and implemented with national partners as well as SACEP. The study/initiative will fill a critical knowledge gap regarding how governance systems operate in small island environments, and will contribute to better utilization of the respective strengths of different stakeholders in natural resource governance. In doing so it will support ongoing efforts to decentralize environmental management and enhance public participation in decision-making. See further information on this project under 3b community stewardship below.
- *“Protecting Marine Ecosystems in MFF Countries Using the Green Fins Approach”*, focusing on Maldives and Viet Nam, led by UNEP CRU, COBSEA and Reef World. The project aims to effect change within the diving industry and among local communities. Green Fins is an innovative conservation initiative for dive centers, providing a practical framework for implementing environmentally friendly practices and a robust assessment system to monitor success and apply lessons learned. Participating dive centres are also trained to provide information to and collaborate with research institutions and government/management agencies, and to conduct public awareness campaigns. Green Fins provides participating centres a credible environmental certification, enhancing their competitiveness, while contributing to sound management of coral reefs and supporting and promoting development of regulatory frameworks relevant to the diving industry.

- *“Strengthening the Resilience of Coastal Communities, Ecosystems, and Economies and to Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Erosion”*, focusing on Thailand and Pakistan, and led by COBSEA. The project seeks to bridge the gaps between existing scientific knowledge and local needs and ensure that relevant tools, methodologies and policy guidelines are contextualized and made accessible to coastal zone managers, sectoral departments with responsibilities for the coast and senior-level decision makers. The project will assess needs and gaps in target countries, develop practical knowledge in climate change adaptation, and prioritize interventions for strengthening the resilience of coastal ecosystems and communities to coastal erosion.
- *“Income for coastal communities for mangrove protection”*, focusing on Pakistan, Thailand, Viet Nam and led by FAO, with technical input from UNEP on blue carbon. This initiative seeks to develop a mechanism enabling investors to responsibly promote mangrove conservation and restoration, carbon emissions reduction and sustainable development through the provision of funding to local communities. The mechanism will also provide an alternative income for fisher folk enabling reduction of fishing effort and regeneration of fish stocks, and support conservation.

2.4. Activities focusing on South East Asian Seas implemented through COBSEA

- A UNEP-COBSEA led project entitled “Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone - Disaster Prevention and Sustainable Development” is being implemented in COBSEA member countries China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. The goal of the project is to prevent and reduce the impacts of natural disasters, climate change and sea-level rise, and to promote sustainable development of the coastal areas through the application of spatial planning. A Regional Resource Document for national planners has been developed, and a regional Train-the-Trainers Course was organized.
- UNEP-COBSEA has also developed a new resource document on coastal erosion - ‘A Regional Approach to the Sustainable and Ecosystem-Based Management of Coastal Erosion in the East Asian Seas Region: A Resource Document’. The document builds on the current understanding of coastal erosion processes and policy responses from the region and around the world. It provides a two-step process of developing a logical approach in addressing coastal erosion in both a regional and country-specific context.

For further information contact: Elik Adler, Coordinator, COBSEA, ellik.adler@unep.org

2.5. Activities by other Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans

See separate ICRI Member Reports, including by Caribbean Environment Programme, the Nairobi Convention and its Regional Coral Reef Task Force; and SACEP/SAS.

2.6. Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EBA) Decision Support – ‘Moving from Principles to Practice’

A comprehensive ‘EBA Decision Support Framework’ (EBA-DSF) is under development by UNEP and a range of partners to assist national and local planners and decision-makers design and implement effective EBA interventions as part of a wider adaptation strategy. It addresses three strategic questions: (1) How to compare and select EBA vs. other adaptation options; (2) How to plan and design the most appropriate EBA option for a specific context; and (3) How to evaluate the effectiveness and long-term adaptation outcomes of specific EBA measure. The EBA-DSF will provide a capacity building platform to support National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and other adaptation actions. Near-future work includes pilot testing and refinement of the DSF, as well the development of practical modules for Monitoring & Evaluation; cost-benefit analysis; integrated community-ecosystem monitoring; as well as ecosystem-specific decision-frameworks.

ICRI Partners are invited to engage in this initiative, e.g. pilot testing of the EBA Decision Support Framework. For further details and feedback, kindly contact Ole Vestergaard, Programme Officer, UNEP Freshwater & Marine Ecosystems Branch, Nairobi, email: ole.vestergaard@unep.org.

A draft Working Paper is available for review and input at: <http://www.unep.org/climatechange/adaptation/Ecosystem-BasedAdaptation/EBADecisionSupportFramework/tabid/102163/Default.aspx>

2.7. Mapping Ecosystem Resilience for Marine Spatial Planning

UNEP, in collaboration with partners including IUCN, TNC, UQ, CORDIO and GBRMPA is working to develop practical tools for ecosystem resilience mapping to guide marine spatial planning and management. Initial work is focusing on coral reef ecosystems. A developing methodology is anticipated to enable integration of coral reef resilience metrics into spatial planning processes and zoning of human activities in tropical coastal areas. The effort is part of UNEP's wider EBM Tool and Capacity Building programme.

For further details, kindly contact Ole Vestergaard, Programme Officer, UNEP Freshwater & Marine Ecosystems Branch, Nairobi, email: ole.vestergaard@unep.org.

2.8. Rio+20

In the lead-up to Rio+20 increasing importance was given to oceans and coasts in negotiations, which is reflected in submissions by member states as well as the draft outcome document. The outcome document "The Future We Want" has undergone considerable change but retains sections on oceans and coasts and SIDS, including a paragraph specifically on coral reefs. UNEP has provided extensive input throughout Rio on a broad range of issues, and also organized and participated numerous side events including an event entitled Coastal Climate Change Solutions – from Principles to Practice, held at the Rio Conventions Pavilion 15 June 2012 17:15 – 19:00, which featured examples of and challenges with EBA from coral reef areas in the Caribbean and Asia-Pacific.

2.9. UNEP at ICRS 2012

UNEP is co-organizing two mini-symposia as part of the ICRS 2012 Scientific Programme. The mini-symposium "Does monitoring lead to improved coral reef management?" (18f) is organized on behalf of GCRMN by UNEP, SocMon/NOAA and Reef Check. 30 oral presentations and 5 poster presentations have been accepted to the session. The mini-symposium "Reef Resilience, Conservation and Management" (19b) is organized with CORDIO, IUCN, GBRMPA and TNC, with 25 oral presentations. See ICRS programme at <http://www.icrs2012.com/ScientificProgram.htm>

2.10. Support to ICRI Secretariat and GCRMN through funds provided by US Department of State

- UNEP and CEP/RAC-SPAW are supporting the development of a Caribbean Regional Lionfish Strategy. A writing workshop will produce a draft for consultation in the region in the latter part of 2012. See also UNEP/CEP Member Report submitted to this meeting.
- A contract for maintenance, updating and further enhancement of ICRIForum has been issued to strengthen its functions including as a means for information exchange, outreach and as a documents repository for ICRI.
- Funding is provided for several ICRI GM participants representing Regional Seas Conventions and Action plans and/or developing countries.
- UNEP continues to provide support to the GCRMN global coordination team, including towards developing a new reporting format and strategy. UNEP attended and supported financially the GCRMN workshop for Tropical Americas in May 2012, and is co-convening an ICRS 2012 mini-symposium entitled "Does Monitoring Lead to Improved Management?".

3. Contribution to the ICRI GM

a. Management effectiveness

Activities described above relating to work on EBM and EBA include specific consideration to assessment of effectiveness of interventions, including through M&E.

Please indicate whether you would like to provide a presentation as described above:

YES NO

b. Community stewardship

The UNEP-led regional project “Mapping and Enhancing Natural Resource Governance in Small Island Communities” was approved by the Mangroves For the Future (MFF) Regional Steering Committee in October 2011 and is presently being initiated. With implementation in Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, the project seeks to identify and understanding island-specific management challenges and constraints, especially in relation to community participation in governance processes, and address these through small-scale targeted interventions.

This project seeks to enhance prospects for sustainable and inclusive natural resource governance in island countries and countries with small islands by identifying and understanding island-specific challenges and constraints, and addressing these through targeted interventions. The project will map governance mandates, institutions, stakeholders and practices, from national to local level, identifying gaps and needs. Findings will be published in review reports on natural resource governance frameworks, decision processes and community involvement practices. Recommendations for governance reform will be developed, including identification of opportunities and synthesis of available approaches and tools. A resource toolkit for community involvement in natural resource governance in small islands will be developed, targeted primarily at communities, community groups and local organizations as well as local government. The resource toolkit will provide a framework for integration of community stakeholders and practices into local and provincial planning/decision making. Capacity building interventions will include targeted training among key stakeholder groups, notably communities and local government and/or pilot-scale demonstration interventions for small island natural resource governance reform. The project provides a foundation on which further interventions, including through MFF small and medium sized grants, can be implemented.

4. Is there any other topic you would like to raise during the meeting?

YES NO

5. Please list publications, reports you have been released since the last meeting.

Title (incl. author and date)	Type of publication (Paper, report etc.)
A Regional Approach to the Sustainable and Ecosystem-Based Management of Coastal Erosion in the East Asian Seas Region: A Resource Document (UNEP COBSEA 2011). Available at: http://www.cobsea.org/documents/report-Coastal_Erosion/Report%20Coastal%20Erosion%20Regional%20Resource%20Document.pdf	Report

6. Please indicate upcoming coral reef-related meetings you will attend

International Coral Reef Symposium, 9-13 July 2012, Cairns, Australia

IUCN World Conservation Congress, 6-15 September 2012, Jeju

11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties on Biological Diversity (COP-11), 8-19 October 2012, Hyderabad, India