



ICRI Member's Report

PHILIPPINES

Reporting period December 2017 – November 2018

1. **Reporting on the ICRI Plan of Action 2016-2018.** *Your responses will help inform the Secretariat about members' contributions toward the previous Plan of Action.*

- a. **Please list any relevant examples from your organisation/country of investment/projects to protect and restore the natural infrastructure of reefs and mangroves.** (See Goal (1) 2 [ICRI Recommendation for supporting investments in the natural infrastructure of reefs and mangroves to increase climate resilience](#)).
- **Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program** or CMEMP is a national program of the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) which started in 2017. It aims to comprehensively manage, address and effectively reduce the divers and threats of degradation of coastal and marine ecosystems in order to achieve and promote sustainability of ecosystem of ecosystems services, food security and climate change resiliency for the benefit of the present and future generation. Protection and management under CMEMP are anchored on the following approaches Integrated Coastal Management, Partnership building, Sustainable Tourism/Ecotourism; Law Enforcement, Communication, Education and Public Awareness; and, Valuation of Ecosystems Services. The Program components include Marine Protected Areas Network Establishment and Strengthening, Knowledge Management Platform, Biodiversity Friendly Enterprise, Social Marketing and Mobilization and Capacity Building. (bmb.gov.ph; www.facebook.com/DENRAgos).

CMEMP formulated the following guidelines and disseminated to the DENR Regional Offices nationwide, for implementation:

- *Biodiversity Friendly Enterprise* (Technical Bulletin No. 2017-11)
- *Integrated Coastal Management* (Technical Bulletin No. 2017-14)
- *Guidelines on the Enrichment Planting of Mangroves and Beach Forest for Biodiversity Conservation and Coastal Resiliency* (Joint ERDB and BMB Technical Bulletin No. 1).

With SmartSeas Project –

- *Guidelines on the Assessment of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems* (BMB Technical Bulletin No. 2017-06) and *Guidelines on Establishing and Managing Marine Protected Areas* (BMB Technical Bulletin 2017-05).
- Being drafted - "*Guidelines on the Establishment and Management of Marine Protected Areas Network*" as well as the "*Identification of Best Practices*"

With Green Fins Project –

- “Guidelines on the Implementation of Environmental Standards for Diving and Snorkelling” (BMB Technical Bulletin No. 2017-13).

The Philippine Rise (formerly Benham Rise) is the newest territory of the country. It is a 24.4M ha undersea region in the northeastern part of the Philippines. It is within the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf of the Philippines with an area of 11.4M and Extended Continental Shelf with an area of 13M hectares. Portion of which was declared Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve (PRMRR) through Presidential Proclamation (No. 489 s. 2018). It is the largest marine area that remains relatively pristine and very rich in biodiversity specially the fish and mesophotic corals. Activities lined up are the creation of a management board, formulation of the site management plan and continue the expedition.

- **Strengthening Marine Protected Areas to Conserve Key Biodiversity Areas in the Philippines** or SmartSeas is a project of the BMB-DENR and UNDP which aims at working together for the conservation, protection and management of marine key biodiversity in the Philippines for the present and future generations. (www.facebook.com/smartseasph).
 - **Green Fins** is being implemented by the BMB-DENR in partnership with Reef World Foundation to protect and conserve coral reefs by establishing and implementing environmentally friendly guidelines to promote a sustainable diving and snorkelling tourism industry. It is being piloted in several places in the country.
- b. **Has your organisation/country made any progress in the following areas to target anthropogenic pressures?** Please give detail below. Note: If no change since your last ICRI member report, please write ‘no change’.

Encourage ban of plastic microbeads in cosmetic products. (See Goal (3) 2 & [See ICRI Recommendation to reduce plastic microbeads pollution in marine environment](#)):

Initiatives to ban the use of microbeads in beauty products –

- Philippine environmental group is actively pushing for the ban on the use of microbeads
- Lawmakers started to draft the bills which seek to ban the use of microbeads.
- Conducted CEPA events with partners on marine debris including microbeads (#biodiversity; #CleanSeasPilipinas; #iyor2018; coastal clean ups)

Improve regulation and enforcement to reduce direct anthropogenic damage due to dredging and physical alteration of reef structures. (See Goal (3) 3 & [ICRI Recommendation to reduce damage due to dredging and dumping on coral reefs](#)):

Deployment of mooring devices limiting the mechanical destruction of coral reefs and seagrasses. (See Goal (3) 4)

- c. **Did your organisation/country celebrate International Year of the Reef?** Please give details below. (See Goal (5) 1 & [ICRI Recommendation designating 2018 as the third International Year of the Reef](#)):

Yes – International Year of the Reef was officially launched on 12 February 2018 (www.facebook.com/DENRAgos/#IYOR; #iyor2018) and soft launched in one of the side events during the 12th COP of the CMS hosted by the Philippines in October 2017. The culmination of its celebration will be done in January 2019.

IYOR 2018 was celebrated nationwide by government and non-government organizations. They were encouraged to include the IYOR 2018 in all related events.

2. **Contribution to the ICRI Plan of Action 2018-2020 and upcoming ICRI general meetings.** *Your responses to the following questions will assist the Secretariat in assessing contributions towards the major themes of the draft ICRI Plan of Action 2018-2020.*

Theme 1 – Promote effective and adaptable solutions to improve the protection of coral reefs

- a. **Which of the below topics do you consider to be the three top challenges that your organisation faces in managing coral reefs?** Please select from the options below:

- Climate change impacts
- Inadequate planning, zoning and management
- Unsustainable resource extraction
- Tourism and recreation
- Shipping
- Coastal development
- Dredging
- Illegal and destructive fishing
- Fish and coral trade
- Marine debris
- Other. Please specify:

- b. **Please list any examples of innovative management practices that your organisation/country is involved in, such as use of VMS, drones & ecological mooring devices.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.
- Marine Protected Area Networking (MPAN)
 - *Guidelines on the Area clearance for reclamation projects and proclamation/ special patents over reclaimed lands* (DENR Administrative Order No. 2018-14)
 - Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) (enforcement)
 - Boat Color Coding (enforcement)

- Short Messaging Service or Text Messaging (enforcement)
 - Communication Education and Public Awareness (CEPA)
 - Green Fins Approach
- c. **Please list any examples of innovative funding for management that your organisation/country is involved in.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.
- Partnerships – sharing of expenses
 - 80-20 government fund utilization – for earning marine protected areas, 80% retention of income for use in the site management and 20% sharing of income to other least/non-earning of marine protected areas
- d. **Please list any examples of leading practices, techniques and strategies for building reef resilience that your organisation/country is involved in.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.
- Green-gray solution
 - Marine Protected Area Networking establishment/management
 - Marine Protected Areas establishment/management
 - Green Fins Approach
- e. **Please list any examples of leading practice reef restoration mechanisms that your organisation/country is involved in.** Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results and links for more information if possible.
- Advocate passive or natural coral restoration (drafted guidelines on coral rehabilitation)
 - Green Fins Approach

Theme 3 – Support communities reliant on coral reefs

- f. **Is sustainable tourism development a significant challenge for your organisation?** If so please include detail below of the kinds of challenges faced and your strategies to deal with them.

Yes, an example is Boracay Island, a famous international tourist destination. The lack of monitoring by the concerned government specially on tourism activities, the lack of environmental concern among local inhabitants as well as tourists, no carrying capacity study, compounded by greed, Boracay tourism activity was abused. After six months of closure, several improvements were initiated but more are still for implementation. The challenge is how the improvements be maintained and for the local communities continue to be stewards for its protection.

- g. **Is your organisation involved in activities to raise awareness and encourage action to support communities reliant on coral reefs?** Please include details below.

Yes – some examples of activities are reflected on item #1.

Theme 4 – Help to reduce anthropogenic threats to coral reefs, particularly those that occur at a global or regional scale

h. What activities is your organisation involved in to elevate awareness of the global nature of the threat of climate change to coral reefs? Please include details below

- Philippines submitted resolutions and approved by the 12th COP-Convention on Migratory Species (Philippines, October, 2017) and 13th COP Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (United Arab Emirates, October, 2018) promote the conservation and management of intertidal flats and other ecological habitats which include the coral reefs. Related resolution was also submitted to the 14th COP-Convention on Biological Diversity (Egypt, November 2018) and awaiting its approval.
- Philippines hosted the Asian-Pacific Coral Reef Symposium (ACRS) in June 2018
- Coral Reef Triangle Initiative (chair: Philippines)
- ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (chair: Philippines)
- Coastal Global Forum - the Philippines will be hosting next year

i. Has your organisation made any progress in dealing with destructive fishing and trade? Please include details below.

j. Has your organisation made any progress in dealing with marine debris? Please include details below.

- Still on the stage of public awareness on the impact of marine debris to the environment.

Would you like to report on your activities during the ICRI GM? Please give details below.

Y / N

3. International events. Please list any upcoming international events relevant to ICRI which someone from your organisation plans to attend in 2018-2019.

- East Asian Seas Congress, Iloilo City, Philippines, 27-30 November 2019
- ICRI GM, Monaco, 5-7 Dec 2018
- Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 3-14 Dec 2018
- Coral Triangle Initiatives: Pre Senior Official Meeting, Senior Official Meeting, and, Ministerial Meeting, Makati, Philippines, 10 to 15 December 2018
- Reef Futures 2018: A Coral Restoration and Intervention-Science Symposium, Florida, 10-14 Dec 2018

Global World Heritage Marine Managers meeting, Alaska, US, 26-31 May 2019

Other: **Global Coastal Forum** to be hosted by the Philippines 3rd quarter of 2019, details to be announced.

4. **Publications.** Please list relevant publications and reports you have released during this reporting period. CMEMP brochure, 2017 CMEMP DENR Regional Offices Accomplishment Report, 2017 Smart Seas Project Board Meeting Report, Hands on Arms
5. **ICRI Member Feedback.** What do you find most valuable about the ICRI member reports? If you have any ideas for improvement please list below:
6. **General Information.** (Note that this information will be posted on the ICRI website on your member page: <http://www.icriforum.org/about-icri/members-networks>.)

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