



## ICRI Member's Report

### The Reef-World Foundation

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](#)).

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](#)):

Reef-World is an active contributor to the Beat The Microbead campaign, and has engaged Green Fins partners (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Maldives, Singapore, Palau and the Dominican Republic) to do so too.

**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).

Through Green Fins adoption, national governments and marine tourism related businesses commit to eliminating anchoring on coral reefs, seagrasses and other fragile live substrates, and to participate in mooring buoy programmes ([code of conduct](#) item number 5). Participating Green Fins dive centres undergo environmental performance assessments which generate environmental risk ratings for all business practices posing potential threats to coral reefs. Between 2013 and 2017, the environmental risk score associated with anchoring activities has reduced by 53% on average across participating dive centres (N=148) across all active countries (Thailand,

Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Maldives, Singapore, Palau and Dominican Republic). Furthermore, the number of dive centres anchoring in 2013 represented 31% of the total, this reduced to only 6% of the total in 2017. From this data we can infer that improvements in environmental practice in line with the Green Fins code of conduct within dive operations, as well as improved availability of mooring buoys, has resulted in a significant reduction in anchoring activities at project coral reef sites.

A key element of Reef-World's Green Fins IYOR 2018 campaign (more details below) focussed on raising awareness to alternatives to anchoring. The following awareness raising material was developed –

- An [infographic](#) providing an overview of the impacts of anchoring and offering guidance for alternatives.
- [Guidance](#) for liveaboard dive boats to minimise the impact of anchoring when there are no alternatives.
- [Recommendations](#) on how to install mooring buoys.
- A [video](#) featuring a Green Fins dive centre's efforts to eliminate anchoring.

- 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](#)):

Reef-World designed and is currently implementing the Green Fins IYOR 2018 Campaign. All campaign material can be found on the associated [Trello Board](#). The campaign focusses on 4 actions points –

- Redefine the dive (released February 2018)
- Alternatives to Anchoring (released June 2018)
- Do not feed the fish (released October 2018)
- A healthy ocean means a healthy business (due for release November 2018)

The campaign has been disseminated through Green Fins and Reef-World social media (commonly reaching an audience of more than 25K) and 43 articles released on online platforms and magazines (example [here](#)).

- 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.

- The [Green Fins](#) approach, specifically the associated green environmental assessment rating system (GEARS), remains entirely unique globally. Conditions for implementation include an active diving/ snorkeling industry, a government mandate to manage the coastal environment, and access to experienced divers to be trained as Green Fins assessors. Green Fins delivers on national and international environmental targets. Finances for national level implementation are usually supported by central government funds, in collaboration with partnering NGO support. International development, promotion and capacity building work conducted by Reef-World is largely supported through grants (with the UN Environment remaining the main donor) as well as through partnerships with industry. Green Fins has measurably improved environmental practice in the marine tourism industry in all the sites it has been implemented (in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Maldives, Singapore, Palau and the Dominican Republic).
- Through Green Fins, Reef-World widely promotes the use of ecological mooring devices (see 1.b above). Many of these systems require expense, time and human resource to install, which remains a barrier for many of the smaller dive and snorkel operations. Still, there is great opportunity in partnering with the tourism industry in order to reduce the impacts of anchoring. Where strong policy and / or legislation support ongoing mooring buoy programmes, there is notably more success. An assessment of the results of Reef-World “alternatives to anchoring” advocacy can be read in section 1.b above.

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.

- Because of its emphasis on private sector responsibility and performance, Green Fins lends itself to implementation through symbiotic partnerships that builds on more traditional corporate social responsibility programmes of businesses. Reef-World is working with a number of industry leaders to develop strategic partnerships aimed to result in measurable environmental action in line with the Green Fins code of conduct, while providing sustainable financing for international Green Fins operations. Such partnerships initially require

significant investment in resource to design and develop, which is a limitation. Another limitation is the requirement to deliver on these partnerships and in some instances provide collaborative marketing, which achieves the conservation objectives of the charity, however it does require more resources. Reef-World are still in the early stages of implementing these strategic partnerships, a better assessment of the results will be available by mid 2019.

- Reef-World is also in the early stages of identifying sustainable income opportunities, with the aim to ensure the sustainability of the Green Fins initiative and scale it's impact. In these early stages we aim to identify what brings value for local businesses and what delivers on the charitable objective, which can be linked to various income streams in the form of: voluntary donations, fees for additional value services, payment for a service/product.
- 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.
- By reducing local direct threats to coral reefs, the Green Fins approach supports reef resilience work. (see 2.b above for further information).
- 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.

### **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.

Main challenges include -

- Lack of national frameworks and legislation, and lack of capacity for enforcement of existing legislation, designed to tackle the environmental impacts associated with tourism development.
- Lack of awareness among tourists of good environmental practice.
- Instability of tourism related businesses resulting in high staff turnover / change in ownership, which threatens to undermine efforts to implement good environmental practice on a business by business case.
- Scale and growth of the tourism sector versus lack of national government support and resources to keep up with the current and expected growth trends.

Strategies to deal with them –

- Implementation of the Green Fins approach at major dive destinations.
- To promote awareness of existing laws with the private sector and provide recommendations for strengthening legislations to national authorities.
- Implementation of global, targeted communication efforts to better inform marine tourism industry consumers to catalyse a pro-environmental behaviour change.
- Annual awareness raising activities promoting environmental best practice with dive operator staff, allowing access to new staff and owners

- Diversify the current approach to enable global scalability through the development of a new online education and solution sharing platform.
- g. Is your organisation involved in activities to raise awareness and encourage action to support communities reliant on coral reefs?** Please include details below.
- Awareness raising activities target dive centre staff who are usually representatives of local communities. Messages include promotion of best environmental practice above and below the water.
  - Green Fins dive guide Ambassador programmes aim to provide environmental champions with the tools and knowledge to promote protection and conservation of their local coral reefs among their own communities and at work.
  - Global communication campaigns target local dive guides and instructors with messages to inspire them to take action and act as stewards for their dive sites and coral reefs (e.g. the Redefine the Dive Action Point within the Green Fins IYOR Campaign was specifically targeted at dive guides and instructors).

**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
- As members (Category D Liaisons) of the ISO WG1 TC 228 - Diving Standards, Reef-World has provided critical input in the final Draft International Standard (DIS) to be agreed upon by other members and Reef-World at a meeting in Vienna, December 6-7 2018 on DIS 21417 "*Requirements for training on environmental awareness for recreational divers.*" This standard will ensure that all diver training organisations will have to comply to the new standards which contents include such topics such as Climate Change amongst others. Once finalised, Reef-World will be working alongside numerous diver training organisations to assist them with complying to this ISO standard through a comprehensive review of training material.
  - The effects of climate change on coral reefs is included in all levels of the Green Fins awareness raising sessions for dive staff. The importance of reducing local direct impacts (such as damage to live coral through direct diver contact / boat collisions / anchoring) to build coral's resilience to more widescale threats such as those associated with climate change is also included. Methods to monitor coral bleaching are also promoted.
- 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.

Green Fins addresses marine debris through awareness to the reduction in single use plastics through the uptake of eco-friendly alternatives, promoting and measuring compliance to responsible garbage management practices for dive / snorkel operations and encouraging participation in beach and reef clean ups.

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

Yes

I would be happy to present on our international Green Fins efforts, as well as the success we have met through our work to provide alternatives to anchoring at project sites.

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

ICRI GM, Monaco, 5-7 Dec 2018

Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 3-14 Dec 2018

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: Our Ocean Conference, DEMA, ISO, ITB Asia

5. **Publications.** Please list relevant publications and reports you have released during this reporting period.

UN Environment, UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre and International Coral Reef Initiative (2017). Harnessing citizen behaviour change to protect coral ecosystems: Behaviour Change Campaign Briefing Note for the Global Coral Reef Partnership. (Reef-World were collaborators on this publication).

A range of Green Fins materials including publications in relation to the Green Fins IYOR 2018 campaign, an online dive guide training course, as well as audiovisual materials – see [greenfins.net](http://greenfins.net) and [Trello](https://www.trello.com).

6. **ICRI Member Feedback.** What do you find most valuable about the ICRI member reports? If you have any ideas for improvement please list below:

While I recognise the value of itemising the information to track progress against the call to action, I do think the reports are too long.

7. **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>.)

Member type (Country / Organisation):	
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*Thank you very much for sharing your valuable experiences and information with ICRI.*