

## *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.

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# 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-

- 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*

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- . 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

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