



Report of the ICRI Ad-Hoc Committee on Cold-water Coral Reefs

Presented by the Chairman of the Ad-Hoc Committee

Background

1. ICRI, at its General Meeting in the Turks and Caicos Islands (November 2003), established an ad hoc committee on cold water coral reefs to identify ICRI's potential role in the international collaboration on cold water coral reefs. Based on the recommendations of this committee,, ICRI agreed at its General Meeting in Okinawa (July 2004) a decision on cold-water coral reefs including a new mandate for the committee. Subsequently, the cold-water coral reef ad-hoc committee developed a proposal for 'Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Committee on Cold-water Coral Reefs' (cf. Annex 1) and a 'List of Activities on Cold-water Coral Reefs' (cf. Annex 2), which were endorsed after the ICRI General Meeting in the Seychelles (April 2005). A progress report of the work carried out under the group was presented at the ICRI General Meeting in Palau (October/November 2005).
2. A discussion area for the cold-water coral ad-hoc committee was established on the ICRI Forum (<http://www.icriforum.org/List/Postings.cfm?CONFID=80>). Twelve messages from ICRI members and experts were posted on this discussion area from August 2004 to May 2005.
3. In addition, a dedicated site on cold-water coral reefs was established on the ICRI Forum (<http://www.icriforum.org/router.cfm?show=secretariat/cold/coldcoral.html>), which is being maintained by the Forum administrator.
4. Since the ICRI General Meeting in Palau, members of the ad-hoc committee (cf. Annex 1) had intermittent contact and exchanged information on their cold-water coral work, and how this work supports and relates to the List of Activities on Cold-water Coral reefs agreed under ICRI.

Conclusion and recommendations

5. As with all subsidiary bodies, there comes a time when their need and effectiveness has to be reviewed. Since its establishment in 2003, the ICRI ad-hoc cold-water coral committee has provided ICRI with a number of draft products and outputs which, following adoption, have increased focus and activity of ICRI and ICRI members on the sustainable management of cold-water corals and related ecosystems. However, experience also shows that co-operation amongst ICRI-members on different issues can be as effectively conducted without the designation of a ad-hoc committee on the issue. Thus, unless ICRI have other proposals, the chair recommends:
 - a. to dissolve the designated ICRI ad hoc committee on cold-water coral reefs and to inform the members of this committee accordingly;
 - b. to recall ICRI's List of recommended activities on cold-water coral reefs (Annex 2) and invite ICRI members to co-operate as suitable on relevant activities and report to future General Meetings on their work;
 - c. that the ICRI Secretariat keeps the ICRI List of Activities on Cold-water Coral Reefs under review and to inform ICRI if and when there is a need for ICRI to address or revise this list, *inter alia* in the light of the international developments;
 - d. to invite the ICRI Forum administrator:
 - (i) to remove the discussion area on cold-water coral reefs from the ICRI Forum;
 - (ii) to continue maintaining and up-dating the cold-water coral reef site on the ICRI Forum.

Composition and Terms of Reference of the ICRI Ad-Hoc Committee on Cold-water Coral Reefs

Chairman:

Mai Britt Knoph, Ministry of the Environment, Norway

Members:

(as of 31 March 2005)

Stefan Hain, UNEP CRU, WCMC, UK

Marjo Vierros, CBD secretariat (now UNU)

Mark Tasker, JNCC, UK

Ole Vestergaard, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, DENMARK

Arthur Paterson, US NOAA

Pierre Emmanuel Vos, Ministry of Environment, FRANCE

Rhian Waller, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, USA

Robert Canning, DEFRA, UK -and ICRI secretariat

Samantha Burgess, Research School of Earth Sciences Australian National University, Australia

Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Committee on Cold-water Coral Reefs

1. The ICRI Ad Hoc Committee on Cold-water Coral Reefs shall facilitate ICRI's work on cold-water coral reefs and related ecosystems¹ by :
 - a. advising ICRI on issues concerning the ecology, conservation and sustainable use of coldwater coral reefs;
 - b. identifying countries known to have cold-water coral reefs, relevant international organizations and other relevant stakeholders and working with the Secretariat to invite those that are not currently members of ICRI, to participate;
 - c. identifying opportunities to raise awareness and recognition of cold-water coral reefs and the threats that they face;
 - d. encouraging additional study and monitoring of cold-water coral reefs;
 - e. identifying opportunities for capacity-building;
 - f. identifying, as appropriate, actions for consideration by ICRI ; and
 - g. presenting reports on the committee's work to the ICRI General Meetings.

¹ for the purpose of this document, the term 'cold-water coral reefs' is hereafter used as short for 'cold-water coral reefs and related ecosystems'

List of Activities on Cold-water Coral Reefs

Below is the list of activities on cold-water coral reefs and related ecosystems that ICRI agreed to recommend as guidance for voluntary action. ICRI members are recommended to consider the list of activities and conduct the activities they find suitable in co-operation with other partners as suitable.

1. Identify opportunities to raise awareness and recognition of cold-water coral reefs and the threats that they face
 - 1.1 Include when appropriate, a chapter on cold-water coral reefs in the GCRMN report "Status of Coral Reefs of the world"
 - 1.2 Produce television documentary (ies) on cold-water coral reefs
 - 1.3 Include information on cold-water coral reef related events (meetings, symposia etc.) on the ICRI Forum list of upcoming events
 - 1.4 Share information on cold-water coral reefs at appropriate meetings
 - 1.5 Encourage inclusion of cold-water coral reef information in relevant reports, educational material etc.
 - 1.6 Encourage industry stakeholder involvement, including for information exchange
2. Encourage additional study and monitoring of cold-water coral reefs
 - 2.1 Encourage the development of a cold-water coral reef database including GIS and information on protected areas
 - 2.2 Encourage the development of a desktop study and predictive modelling for mapping the potential distribution of cold-water coral reefs
 - 2.3 Encourage development of guidance ('code of conduct') for cold-water coral reef research and monitoring
 - 2.4 Encourage development of guidelines/handbooks etc. for monitoring of cold-water coral reefs
 - 2.5 Encourage inclusion of cold-water coral reefs and related ecosystems in relevant scientific programmes and activities
 - 2.6 Encourage identification of gaps in knowledge concerning cold-water coral reefs, the threats they face and their sustainable management.
3. Identification and invitation of countries that are known to have cold-water coral reefs but are not currently members of ICRI
 - 3.1 Develop and regularly review of list of countries with cold-water coral reefs
 - 3.2 Identify and invite cold-water coral reef countries, scientists, and other cold-water coral reef stakeholders to participate in ICRI
4. Identify opportunities for capacity-building
 - 4.1 Encourage cooperation between relevant partners by including cold-water coral reefs on ICRI's agenda and inviting participation
 - 4.2 Specific cooperation projects through aid programmes
 - 4.3 Encourage compilation of a summary of existing practice and regulations, e.g. by updating the cold-water coral reef report regularly
 - 4.4 Encourage study on existing practice and lessons learned on relevant environmental impact assessments related to cold-water coral reefs
 - 4.5 Encouraging industry stakeholder involvement