



## **Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Enforcement and Investigation – Revised Terms of Reference**

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### **Introduction**

In the past few years, the global focus has tended to be on region-wide or global threats to coral reefs, such as climate change, acidification and coral disease. However, one of the few things that a small country or island can do at its local scale is to create Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to try and minimize local impacts on coral reef areas of highest value, biodiversity or rarity. While it may be relatively easy to declare new MPAs, very few of them are matched with properly trained staff to effectively enforce MPA rules - even though the public generally look to their natural resource trustee agencies to ensure that law-breakers are held accountable for the damage they cause to reefs and protected resources.

Another challenge is that reef impacts are increasingly crossing international boundaries between adjacent reef areas and include invasive species, chemical introduction, bioprospecting, and new forms of development, tourism and fishing which many jurisdictions are not currently equipped to manage. As a result, many small countries' developing network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) remain at risk; meaning that although they are clearly designated, they are not being fully enforced because of a lack of trained enforcement and/or compliance staff that can address these issues.

### **Background**

In late 2005, during the 19<sup>th</sup> General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), the ICRI membership decided on the formation of a *Ad Hoc* Committee on Enforcement and Investigation, tasked with developing a standardized protocol to investigate and collect evidence from a wide range of human-induced impacts on coral reef habitats, to be used by natural resource managers and enforcement officers.

Over the following years, an international program was developed by the International Coral Reef CSI (CRCSI) Field Training Program (the working arm of the Ad Hoc Committee) to train natural resource managers and enforcement officers in underwater forensics and evidence collection. The basic principles set down early in the program include that:

- the standardized protocols taught are independent of any one country's laws or rules;
- the field tools used are easily and inexpensively available in any country; and
- the focus remain on training multi-disciplinary, multi-agency teams in underwater evidence documentation and collection, focusing on chain-of-custody techniques.

The CRCSI program has to date conducted over 14 field trainings in most of the world's major coral reef regions, and trained over 420 coral reef managers and enforcement officers.

The program proved to be successful and the developed techniques applicable, and has led to the development of more advanced training programs focused on illegal wildlife trade, sea turtle field forensics, field contaminant assays and vessel grounding field investigations. A key strength of the program has been the feedback loop by participants in the direct

development and refinement of the field protocols, teaching aids and evidence collection tools. Along the way many improvements were made, usually suggested by workshop participants, including underwater flipbook aids, use of waterproof GPS cameras, homemade in-water documentation gear, mock court proceedings, and directed media evaluations, among others.

One of the recurring suggestions from workshop participants and some outside reviewers has been to strengthen the emphasis on direct enforcement investigation training, especially for managers of small-scale Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and those associated with small island nations, which often have very different operating capabilities than the larger, better-funded and equipped MPAs found in larger countries.

### **Actions Requested**

1. Propose that the existing *Ad Hoc* Committee on Enforcement and Investigation be reconstituted and strengthened through renewed ICRI member participation, and tasked with providing mechanisms and training support for small-scale MPAs to increase their enforcement and compliance efforts.

### **Objectives**

- Prepare an enforcement and compliance strategy to be used as a framework for local and regional strategies, to be used by managers of networks of small-scale coral reef MPAs.
- Work with established regional efforts (CaMPAM, ASEAN-WEN, etc) and major coral reef MPAs (GBRMPA etc.), using the existing successful international CRCSI program as a model, to develop training programs that take into account existing capabilities, limitations, and infrastructure of small-scale MPAs.
- Through the *Ad Hoc* Committee, address new cross-border threats to member countries' MPAs, and incorporate response strategies.
- Establish an information platform to enable the sharing of strategies and mechanisms, with a view to improve enforcement and compliance efforts within small-scale MPAs.

### **Proposed activities**

The following activities will be considered in the development of the strategy:

- Solicitation of active *Ad Hoc* Committee participants through ICRI members. Committee participants should be actively involved in the topic area and bring their expertise to the Committee to meet its goals.
- Creation, development and validation of an MPA Enforcement/Compliance Strategy (ECS) by the reconstituted *Ad Hoc* Committee on Enforcement and Investigation.
- Circulation of the draft MPA Enforcement/Compliance Strategy to all committee members for comment.
- Organisation of a committee meeting and an experts workshop to confirm, revise and refine the draft.
- Circulate draft to all ICRI members for comment and present it at the 1st Global MPA Enforcement Conference (GMPAEC) to be held in San Francisco, CA, USA in November 2012.
- Finalise the document and present it to the next ICRI General Meeting to be held in Belize in the second half of 2013.

Proposed Calendar of activities:

ACTIVITY	JUL/AUG 2012	SEP/OCT 2012	NOV/DEC 2012	JAN/FEB 2013	MAR/APR 2013	MAY/JUN 2013	JUL/AUG 2013	SEP/NOV 2013	DEC 2013
AD HOC COMMITTEE RECONSTITUTION	█								
ECS CREATION & VALIDATION	█	█							
PREPARATION OF THE FIRST DRAFT		█							
SEND DRAFT TO COUNTRIES TO FEEDBACK		█	█						
PRESENTATION at 1 <sup>st</sup> GMPAEC			█						
INTEGRATION OF COMMENTS				█	█				
WORKSHOP WITH EXPERTS						█			
INTEGRATION OF WORKSHOP COMMENTS, DELIVERY OF DOCUMENT TO COMMITTEE FOR FEEDBACK							█	█	
PRESENTATION TO FULL ICRI BODY								█	█