



Member’s report on activities to ICRI

Presented by Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Reporting period April 2009 – December 2009

Please note that the purpose of this report is to help you share information about your activities within the ICRI community to allow discussion at the next ICRI General Meeting. The reports will be made available on the ICRIForum prior to the meeting. The ICRI secretariat is well aware of your busy schedule, thus don't hesitate to submit an incomplete report.

1. General Information

Are you an ICRI Member?	Yes
Representation to ICRI (Country / Organization):	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)
Focal Point 1:	
<i>Name:</i>	John Baldwin
<i>Organization:</i>	GBRMPA
<i>Email:</i>	j.baldwin@gbrmpa.gov.au
Focal point 2:	
<i>Name:</i>	vacant
<i>Organization:</i>	
<i>Email:</i>	
Last meeting attended:	Phuket, April 2009
How do you circulate ICRI information within your country and/or organization?	Formalised intra- and inter-governmental committees (a) and Senior Executive briefings (b)
Budget allocated for coral reef related activities (please mention for year/period):	\$AUD44.6 million (2008/09 Financial Year)

For countries only:

National Action Plan / Initiative	
Do you have a National Coral Reef action plan?	YES¹ / NO
Is this plan publicly available? If so, please provide location:	http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mpa/commonwealth/coord/index.html
Do you have a National Coral Reef Initiative or Task Force?	YES² / NO
Are you engaged in any regional programs / initiatives relevant to coral reefs:	The Australian Government is engaged in various multi-lateral and bilateral environmental initiatives within the Asia/Pacific region with coral reef implications.
If yes, please indicate which programs/initiatives:	

¹ Within the context of the Australian National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA)

² Within the context of the Australian “Marine Protected Areas Working Group”

2. Updates on your activities

In 2006, the Australian Government resolved that decision making for long-term protection of the Great Barrier Reef should be underpinned by a periodic Outlook Report. An Outlook Report for the Great Barrier Reef Region is now required to be produced every five years, with the first provided to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts in June 2009.

The *Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2009* is a comprehensive, easy-to-read document supported by an *In Brief* summary report and a comprehensive website (www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/about_us/great_barrier_reef_outlook_report). The Outlook Report contains eight formal assessments analysing the current state of the Great Barrier Reef, the pressures and current responses and its likely outlook. It was formally peer-reviewed. To ensure transparency, the evidence used is available online.

Unlike 'state of the environment' reporting, the Outlook Report not only provides a current assessment but also presents a window to its possible future, thus providing a rigorous and transparent basis of policy development. It also provides the first ever assessment, at a broad level, of the effectiveness of all Great Barrier Reef protection and management measures. It has been the catalyst for a joint Australian and Queensland Government response to the risks facing the Reef.

The risk-based assessment of the Great Barrier Reef and its future has guided priority setting within the GBRMPA, such as development of portfolio budget statements, the corporate plan and annual operating plans.

3. Contribution to the ICRI GM: Your responses to the following questions will assist the Secretariat in assessing contributions towards the major themes of the current ICRI action plan and objectives of the general meeting. Due to the heavy schedules of ICRI members, we have tried to keep the questions to a minimum and value any response you can provide.

NOTE: The Secretariat will compile Members' responses to the below questions into a general presentation to be given during the GM. The Secretariat will also request specific Members to highlight certain initiatives, should additional information be of interest to the full ICRI membership.

- a. **Fisheries session:** Please provide any lessons you have learned from your experiences in managing fisheries and any projects/programs you are involved in.

Please see attached

- b. The ICRI secretariat is planning on revisiting/updating the ICRI "call to action" (http://www.icriforum.org/library/call_action.pdf) and ICRI "framework to action" (http://www.icriforum.org/library/framework_action.pdf). Please provide any guidelines you think would be useful.

The fundamental building blocks of the original Call to Action (coastal management, capacity building, research and monitoring and periodic review) are still valid. This reinforces the view at the inaugural ITMEMS where the "Renewed call to Action" reflected the original text from the 1995 Dumaguete meeting.

Perhaps the most relevant area for updating the "Framework for Action" (and the "Call" if necessary) is to couch these documents within current climate change vernacular. The focus should be on managing for resilience and biodiversity conservation at an ecosystem scale.

From an administrative perspective, discussion on this topic should link with discussion on the future operation of ICRI generally. In this context, reinvigorating the concept of a regional strength to ICRI is appropriate. There are already actions in this area such as the East Asian Regional Workshop series and the emphasis on the Caribbean scheduled for this ICRI General meeting.

- c. During the meeting, a full day will focus on the Caribbean region. If you have any question about the region, ongoing projects in the region,... please let us know. **Nil to report**
- d. During the meeting, we are planning on having a presentation on the "Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)". Could you please list your coral reef sites listed under the MAB programme. **Nil to report**
- e. What other new initiatives/programs/projects/progress, in particular since April 2009, has been made by your government/organization relative to Marine Protected Areas, Ramsar site designations containing coral reefs, policy changes, economic valuation of coral reef ecosystem services, etc., which you believe would be of general interest to other ICRI Members? **See "Outlook Report" above**
- f. Please list publications, reports you have been released since April 2009
[Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2009](#)
[Great Barrier Reef Tourism Climate Change Action Strategy 2009 - 2012](#)
[Water Quality Guidelines for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park \(2009\)](#)

For any of the above questions, please provide links to further information. As appropriate, the Secretariat will compile such information to make it accessible to all Members on the ICRI Forum.

ICRI and Other Meetings - Are you considering attending any of the following meetings in 2009?

- 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP15) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Doha, Qatar, from 13 to 25 March 2010 **No**
- 5th Global Oceans Conference: Ensuring Survival, Preserving Life, and Improving Governance:
 - Policy, Science, and Technical Symposium (May 3-4, 2010) **No**
 - Policy Conference (May 6-7, 2010) **No**
- 10th Meeting of the conference of the Parties to the convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10), October 18-29, 2010, Nagoya, Japan **No**
- Other (please specify): **No**

ATTACHMENT: FISHERIES SESSION, ICRI January 2010

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority: REEF STEWARDSHIP ACTION PLAN

What was the problem or challenge?

- How to address public misunderstanding around fishing practices in the small, marine aquarium collection industry in Queensland Australia.
- How to manage fine-scale spatial collection from coral reefs in the event of an environmental impact like coral bleaching, to ensure that reef health at the site is not further compromised.
- How to collaborate with fishers and the community to develop adaptive, responsive management tools that enable an integrated ecosystem based approach to be taken across multiple management agencies responsible for managing extractive activities in the GBRMP.

What was done?

A collaborative two part approach was taken:

- **Organisational/planning approach:** Managers across three agencies worked with fishers and the community to develop a management response framework for the aquarium collection fisheries to deal with environmental incidents such as coral bleaching (conceptually somewhat similar to an oil spill response plan). It is triggered by an early warning system (bleaching prediction based on sea surface temperatures) and characterized by complete integration across a range of existing management measures, transparency, inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in decision-making, adaptive solutions based on best available knowledge (including fishers local knowledge) customized to the local scale, and outlines a sliding scale of broad responses from strong voluntary actions to regulatory/policy options, depending the severity of the actual incident. This resulted in the release of the *Coral Stress Response Plan* in mid 2009, see link below for details.
- **Stewardship Actions:** The fishers' peak body "Pro-Vision Reef" (representing aquarium fishers) worked collaboratively with managers to develop a *Stewardship Action Plan* that documents world's best practice for daily collection activities as well as prescribing a range of adaptive strategies to modify these practices to address climate change impacts on key habitats and species. Because agreed actions are compulsory for members and open to public scrutiny (and penalties apply for non-compliance) it will be possible to have confidence that these strategies will be adhered to. A key component of this plan is the provision by fishers, of standardized survey information from each of their collection sites to provide a time series of reef health to help inform customized solutions at small spatial scales.

How successful was it?

This process has identified a global benchmark for aquarium fisheries. It has very successfully developed a strong sense of empowerment and pro-action amongst the fishers. It has provided an important new source of time series information for managers on reef health in areas that other stakeholders do not usually go. It also developed a culture of acceptance that detailed spatial information from fishers is an important part of good decision-making.

Lessons learned and recommendations/key messages

Stewardship and co-management are powerful tools in any EBM framework. They allow more effective integration across existing management arrangements (including across agencies), they demonstrate that participatory approaches achieve better solutions that are more likely to be complied with, they allow solutions that are timely, customized and adaptive (all of which are difficult to achieve using regulations or policies).

References:

<http://www2.dpi.qld.gov.au/extra/pdf/fishweb/Coral-stress-response-plan-for-the-coral-and-marine-aquarium-fish-fisheries.pdf>

http://www.provisionreef.org/sites/default/files/Stewardship-Action-Plan_web.pdf