

**[Fiji] Member's report on activities to ICRI****Presented by [Aisake Batibasaga]****Reporting period : January – December 2007.**

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 report will be made available on the ICRIForum prior to the meeting, and a question and answer session will be held at the meeting. The ICRI Secretariat is well aware of your busy schedule, therefore please complete the report to the best of your ability.

**1. General Information**

Representation to ICRI (Country / Organization):	
Focal Point 1:Ministry of Fisheries & Forest; Fisheries Department.	Aisake. T. Batibasaga (Mr). Principal Fisheries Officer (R,A&D).
Focal point 2: Ministry of Tourism &Environment	Manasa Sovaki (Mr), Acting Director-Tourism.
Last meeting attended:	Palau ICRI Meeting, 2005.
How do you circulate ICRI information within your country and/or organization?	Stakeholder mailing address (particularly e-mail messages, and google groups).
Budget allocated for coral reef related activities (please mention for year/period):	FJ \$150,000 for 2007, and FJ\$150,000 for 2008.

For countries only:

<b>National Action Plan / Initiative</b>	
Do you have a National Coral Reef action plan?	NO. Currently being formulated, and to be finalized from June 2008.
Is this plan publicly available? If so, please provide location:	Fisheries Department is co-ordinating the formulation of the Fiji National Coral Reef Initiative.
Do you have a National Coral Reef Initiative or Task Force?	YES . The task force are simply all the stakeholders involved in coral reef conservation and management, which include government, non-government organizations, local communities, and academic institutions.
Are you engaged in any regional programs / initiatives relevant to coral reefs:	Yes.
If yes, please indicate which programs/initiatives:	CRISP and GCRMN- Fiji node.
<b>Marine Protected Areas</b>	
How many MPA(s) with coral reefs?	158
What is the percentage of coral reef MPA(s) to the (coastal zone / marine area)?	7.3%
Please provide the appropriate contact name for MPA data holdings	1.Sunia Waqainabete. 2.Alifereti Tawake. 3. Margaret Tabunakawai.
Details for contact (email/fax/telephone)	1. <a href="mailto:swaqainabete@fisheries.gov.fj">swaqainabete@fisheries.gov.fj</a> ,

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|  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. <a href="mailto:tawake_a@usp.ac.fj">tawake_a@usp.ac.fj</a></li><li>3. <a href="mailto:mtabunakawai@yahoo.com">mtabunakawai@yahoo.com</a></li><li>4. Imma website.</li></ol> |
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- 2. Member contribution to the ICRI GM:** Your responses to the following questions will contribute to the background material provided for the next ICRI General Meeting in Washington, DC. Due to heavy schedules of ICRI members, we have tried to keep the questions to a minimum and value any response you can provide.

**A. Questions to inform the break-out discussion groups**

**Session 1: Economic Valuation of coral reef ecosystems**

- a. Do you have examples of economic valuation of coral reefs being applied in practice? (e.g., in consideration of coastal land use, coastal/marine spatial planning, for determining compensation, etc.);

*Yes, we have recently undertaken this Coral reef valuation project(s) in Fiji.*

- b. Do you have established methods for assessing these values? If so, please provide further information.

Not yet established a standard valuation protocol, which should be formalized soon. There is a 3 year project being currently undertaken in Fiji to gather necessary data sets and do valuation of coral reef resources, which is being co-ordinated by Government, the University of the South Pacific; the University of Hong Kong, and the University of British Columbia.

A Master's Degree Research Scholarship in Marine Studies (Marine Affairs and Marine Science) tenable at the School of Marine Studies, the University of the South Pacific, is currently being offered for a one-year research programme on the **Valuation of Coastal Fisheries Resources. The project is to commence immediately under the Coastal Fisheries Valuation Project in November-2007, jointly run by the University of Hong Kong and the University of British Columbia, in collaboration with the Fisheries Research Division in Fiji. This project is entitled "Economic and Trade Impacts of Coral Reef Resource Use in Fiji".**

**Session 2: Designing the ICRI Regional Workshop on Sustainable Tourism (to be held in July 2008 directly following ICRS-11)**

- a. With respect to coral reefs, what does sustainable tourism mean to you?

Sustainable tourism, with respect to coral reefs would, in my belief mean the incorporation of the ecological values of coral reef ecosystem, with the economical values of tourism. This would have to focus more on minimising the impacts to the coral reefs, and promotion of eco-tourism. A major part of this would be the indirect use of the coral reefs, coral reef fish and invertebrate life forms for sight seeing and as dive or snorkel sites, rather than the direct use of these resources in terms of fishing, coral extraction, etc.

- Sustainable tourism requires a proactive approach that seeks to mitigate the negatives impacts of coral reef tourism, and aims to enhance the positive impacts of all forms of tourism - associated with

coral reef ecosystems. It is defined as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and its resources, as well as sustains the well-being and aspirations of the local communities. This also means that all stakeholders support and recognize the need to conserve the coastal areas, and its associated natural resources (notably for both the tourist operators and the visitors), and also seeks to strengthen the social dimensions to coral reef "tourism".

- Sustainable tourism is based on the appreciation of nature, and the aesthetic attractions that the area has to offer-and tourist activities are undertaken in an environment friendly manner, and takes into consideration the following:
- Involving appreciation not only of nature, but also of indigenous culture in the area- as part of the visitor experience. This practice is already common across Fiji.
- Education and interpretation- is part of the tourist offer.
- Generally organized for small groups- by small, specialized and locally owned businesses.
- Minimize negative impacts on natural and socio-cultural environment.
- Supporting natural areas by generating economic benefits for local communities, and managers of the natural areas (nature park, mpa, etc)
- Providing alternative income and employment for local communities, and
- Increasing local and visitor awareness of conservation needs.

b. What are the key challenges you face to achieving sustainable tourism?

- Lack of education and awareness on sustainable coral reef tourism or eco-tourism.
- Lack of policy and legislative framework
- Lack of capacity-building
- Lack of economic incentives and political will.
  - keeping tourism at a sustainable level
  - Identification and minimising the impacts of tourist activities.
  - Proper EIA process for Tourism development
- The cost of conservation is usually/often greater than the profits of exploitation.

#### **B. Summary of IYOR 2008 Activities**

- Briefly tell us about your activities for IYOR 2008. Information provided will contribute to the discussion during the IYOR 2008 Session on Friday, January 25, 2008.

#### **Fiji International Year of the Coral Reefs - 2008**

**AIM: Create awareness about the values and importance of coral reefs and threats to their sustainability, and to motivate people to take action to protect them.**

#### **IYOR 2008 OBJECTIVES**

**IYOR-G1 - Strengthen awareness about ecological, economic, social and cultural value of coral reefs and associated ecosystems**

**IYOR-G2 - Improve understanding of the critical threats to reefs and generate both practical and innovative solutions to reduce these threats**

**IYOR-G3 - Generate urgent action to develop and implement effective management strategies for conservation and sustainable use of these ecosystems.**

<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>IYOR-G1-01</b>		
<b>Create awareness on coral reef management (relating to fish stock and turtles) at the community level</b>	1 week launch to commemorate the international year of the reef. (Appendix 1)	3rd – 8th March 2008
	Community workshops	March – December 2008
	Distribution of awareness materials	March – December 2008
<b>IYOR-G1-02</b>		
<b>Create coral reef awareness materials</b>	Posters	March – December 2008
	T-shirts, caps	March – December 2008
	Library website	March – December 2008
	Wrist bands	March – December 2008
	Brooches	March – December 2008
	Fact Sheets	March – December 2008
	Stickers	March – December 2008
	DVDs	March – December 2008
	Articles in newsletters and local media	March – December 2008
	Radio talk shows – USP radios, wansolwara	March – December 2008
	Public lecture – invite guest lectures	March – December 2008
	Calendar	March – December 2008
	<b>IYOR-G1-03</b>	
<b>Educate younger generations on the value and importance of coral reefs</b>	Fiji Day	10th October 2007
	World Oceans Day	N/A

	USP Open Day	N/A
	Hibiscus	N/A
	Fisheries Open day – during the environment week	N/A
	Drawing competitions	School holidays
	Essay competitions	School holidays
	Coral ambassador	March – December 2008
<b>IYOR-G2-01</b>		
<b>Threat Identification and Reduction</b>	Identification of key threats to reef systems in Fiji	March – December 2008
	Have pilot coral reseeded sites and management sites	March – December 2008
	Inventory of coral bleached areas	March – December 2008
	Mangrove replanting programmes	March – December 2008
	Site Studies for Crown of thorns occurrences and undertake mitigation activities	March – December 2008
	GIS mapping of priority sites	March – December 2008
<b>IYOR-G3-01</b>		
<b>Create Plan of Action for coral management</b>	Review Live rock harvesting practices	March – December 2008
	Create Management plan for Coral Reefs to reduce detrimental factors	March – December 2008
<b>IYOR-G3-02</b>		
<b>Code of conduct for resorts</b>	Review impacts from Reef walking and recreational diving, and create best practices to minimise efforts	March – December 2008
<b>IYOR-G3-02</b>		
<b>Best Practices for Coastal Communities</b>	Identification of coastal community activities that impact coral reefs, and create guidelines to reduce these.	March – December 2008

### **C. Emerging Issues**

- Please identify any emerging issues relevant to coral reef ecosystems that you believe ICRI should consider.

Global warming and Climate Change Monitoring within the South Pacific Region, as well as Establishing capacity and the facility ; to monitor the same, including ENSO processes; and the occurrence of Earthquakes and tsunamis.

### **D. ICRI and Other Meetings**

Are your ICRI Focal Points considering attending any of the following meetings in 2008?

- 2008 Ocean Sciences Meeting, Florida, 2-7 March
- CBD COP 9, Bonn, 19-30 May
- UNICPOLOS 9, New York, June 2008
- ICRS 11, Fort Lauderdale, 7-11 July
- IUCN World Conservation Congress, Barcelona, 5-16 October
- Ramsar COP 9, South Korea, 29 October - 4 November
- Other (please specify):
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