



Member's report on activities related to ICRI

The Republic of Maldives

Reporting period November 2016 – November 2017

1. **Contribution to the ICRI Plan of Action 2016-2018.** *Your responses to the following questions will assist the Secretariat in assessing contributions towards the major themes of the current ICRI Plan of Action (<http://www.icriforum.org/icri-secretariat/current>)*

Theme 1 – “Help raise awareness of how coral reefs and related ecosystems help to fight climate change”

- *Goal 1-1: highlight the contribution of coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses to mitigate and adapt to climate change and its impacts*

Question: Do you have examples of solutions provided by coral reefs and coastal systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

Over 120 islands in the Maldives have been developed as tourist resorts. Every island is self-contained with complete back-of-the-house services established on the island itself. Since the main tourism-product being sold on the resorts are the tropical setting in a pristine natural environment, every resort management ensures least amount of hard structures are used for shore-protection. But some also have the hard structures (groynes, and seawall or revetments) to mitigate the effects of seasonal sand movement and erosion. Most resorts also have raised walkways on stilts leading to series of overwater bungalows, but these more do with aesthetics or providing unique Maldives experience. Resorts cope and adapt to climate change with a combination of the soft and hard engineering solutions

Question: Are you planning to add in your NDC the importance of coral reefs / mangroves?

Yes

Theme 3: “Help to reduce human threats to coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, by making greater use of regulatory tools”

- *Goal 3-1: promote legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses, with quantified targets and effective enforcement to protect these ecosystems*

Question: What are the legal frameworks for the protection of coral reefs and associated mangroves and seagrasses in place in your countries? If you already replied to the previous request, you don't need reply.

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016 – 2025

Question: Did you to set quantified targets to protect their coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses? And are you able to provide a % of what is currently protected in your country? Please define what you mean by protection?

The National targets for 2025 are to protect 10% of coral reefs, 20% of mangroves and wetland, one sandbank and one uninhabited island under the Environment Act.

- *Goal 3-2: encourage a ban on plastic microbeads in cosmetic products*

Question: How did you implement the recommendation to reduce plastic microbeads pollution in the marine environment?

Marine litter and microplastics have been identified as a serious issue at a national level and the government is planning the necessary steps to be taken to address this issue. On 12th September 2017 Maldives joined UN Environment's Clean Sea Campaign to eliminate marine litter. Maldives also has pledged to collect and remove plastic rubbish from the sea by fishermen while they fish. After they are collected these rubbish will be shipped to the capital, Malé, where it will be transferred to long-distance ships for recycling into plastic-based fabrics.

- *Goal 3-3: improve regulation and enforcement to reduce direct anthropogenic damage due to dredging and physical alteration of reef structures*

Question: are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work? Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible.

Separate regulation under Environmental Act has been formulated and gazetted to address dredging and reclamation of reefs and lagoons of Maldives. The regulations also contain standards and guidelines to follow to minimise the negative impacts of such activities.

- *Goal 3-4: promote the deployment of mooring devices limiting the mechanical destruction of coral reefs and seagrasses*

Question: are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work? Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible,

There are no mooring programs at a national level, but mooring programs are being set at protected areas. Currently, there are mooring buoys deployed in the Baa atoll biosphere reserve. The Environment Ministry is planning on extending the deployment of mooring buoys to other marine protected areas which are famous dives sites.

- *Goal 3-5: review issues related to the impact of sunscreens and other endocrine disruptors on coral reefs, and encourage the production of sunscreens that are proven not to damage coral reefs*

Question: are you working on this topic? If yes, could you please share with us your work. Please note that the information provided will help us to develop a recommendation for the next ICRI General Meeting. Please send us information as soon as possible.

This is not relevant to the Maldives due to the reef systems and the degree of tourists exposed to the reefs with sunscreen is minimum at a given time.

Theme 4: “Monitor the state of reefs in order to better manage them”

- *Goal 4-2: better monitor the phenomena of coral bleaching*

Question: How did you implement the recommendation on addressing the decline in coral reef health due to global bleaching events?

Marine Research Centre is working on a National Bleach Response Plan to strengthen the data collection and the procedures to follow in an event of bleaching. Under this response plan, focal points from the relevant ministries will be selected and strategic plans and ways to proceed with a bleaching event will be decided.

Theme 5: “Progress via education”

- *Goal 5-1: prepare for the 2018 International Year of the Reef (IYOR)*

Question: How did you implement the Recommendation designating 2018 as the third International Year of the Reef? Please let us also know what are you planning to celebrate IYOR2018.

A photo competition and the Marine Science Symposium held by the Marine Research Centre will be dedicated to the IYOR 2018

Theme 5: “Progress via education”

Please also list the educational material that you’ve developed in the past, so we can share it on the IYOR website.

Question: Would you like to report on one of your activities during the ICRI GM meeting?

Yes

Publications. Please list relevant publications/reports (related to the ICRI plan of action) you have released during this reporting period.

- 1- “Status of Coral Bleaching in the Maldives 2016”- Scientific report
- 2- “The ‘resort effect’: can tourist islands act as refuges for coral reef species?”- Scientific peer-reviewed paper,

2. **General Information.** (Note that this information will be posted on the ICRI website on your member page: <http://www.icriforum.org/about-icri/members-networks>.)

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