



## Table of Contents

- **ICRI secretariat News**
  - Report of the first ICRI General Meeting under the Mexico-United States Secretariat
  - Economic Valuation of Coral Reef Ecosystems
  - International Coral Reef Marine Protected Area Network Meeting / 4th ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop
  - Planning an ICRI Side event at the Convention on Biological Diversity Conference of Parties
  - Coral Reef Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) updates
- **International Year of the Reef News**
  - IYOR 2008 officially launched, by ICRAN
  - IYOR "highlighted" Initiatives
    - World Ocean Day
    - [www.IYORcreative.com](http://www.IYORcreative.com)
- **ICRI Members news**
  - 19th U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting
  - Release of the "*Status of Caribbean Coral Reefs after Bleaching and Hurricanes in 2005*"
  - Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) now world's largest Marine Protected Area
  - Knowledgebase for Lessons Learned and Best Practices in the Management of Coral Reefs
  - ReefBase Pacific - Livelihoods, Fisheries and Biodiversity
  - Equator Initiative

### ICRI secretariat News

- **Report of the first ICRI General Meeting under the Mexico-United States Secretariat**

The first general meeting of the Mexico-United States ICRI Secretariat and the official international launch of the International Year of the Reef (IYOR 2008) took place from 22 - 25 January 2008 in Washington, DC. The general meeting was co-chaired by Robert Cudney (Mexico) and Stephanie Caswell (United States). A total of 79 participants from 18 countries and 26 organizations, attended the ICRI General Meeting. ICRI welcomed Project Aware as a new member.

The Minister Estrosi, Secretary of State in charge of French Overseas Territories, addressed the meeting. Ambassador Kyota of Palau was an active participant in the meeting.

During the meeting, the ICRI Mexico-U.S. Action Plan 2007-09 was adopted. It was also agreed that the ICRI Secretariat will take forward the planning of the ICRI Regional Workshop on Sustainable Tourism in the Caribbean, drawing on the outcomes of the breakout session at this meeting and in a consultative manner. The ICRI Regional Workshop will take place in parallel to the General Meeting (12-13th July 2008) and directly following the International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS, [www.nova.edu/ncri/11icrs](http://www.nova.edu/ncri/11icrs)) in Ft. Lauderdale, FL in the same venue.

Two new *ad hoc* Committees were formed, and will report to the next ICRI GM in July 2008. The first *ad hoc* Committee is on "Economic Valuation of Coral Reef Ecosystems" and the second is for the "4th ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop preparation". ICRI members interested in joining *Ad Hoc* Committees are asked to contact the ICRI Forum administrator ([fstaub@icriforum.org](mailto:fstaub@icriforum.org)).

ICRI Members were requested to contact Clive Wilkinson or David Souter directly regarding offers of funding to support the 2008 Global Coral Reefs Status Report.



The next General Meeting is planned for 12-13th July 2008, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, directly following the 11th ICRS. Members requested the ICRI Secretariat to consider the question of the relationship of ICRI to its Operational Networks at the next general meeting. ICRI members, particularly country members, are encouraged to continue to submit reports in the run up to the next ICRI GM in July 2008.

For more information, meeting documents, reports, and presentations, visit: [www.icriforum.org/dcgm.html](http://www.icriforum.org/dcgm.html) or contact Emily Corcoran ([icri@unep-wcmc.org](mailto:icri@unep-wcmc.org)).

- **Economic Valuation of Coral Reef Ecosystems**

At the last ICRI General Meeting, the World Resources Institute (WRI) agreed in assisting the ICRI secretariat in an effort to compile information, references, and good examples of economic valuation in practice, with an emphasis on coral reefs. WRI has developed a short questionnaire and the ICRI Secretariat encourages ICRI members to provide feedback.

The questionnaire is available at: <http://www.icriforum.org/ecoval.html>. Please reply to Richard Waite ([rwaite@wri.org](mailto:rwaite@wri.org)) and Laretta Burke ([Laretta@wri.org](mailto:Laretta@wri.org)).

- **International Coral Reef Marine Protected Area Network Meeting / 4th ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop**

In response to an ICRI Recommendation on Developing MPA Networks adopted at the ICRI General Meeting in Tokyo in April 2007, Japan has committed to host the "International Coral Reef Marine Protected Area Network Meeting / 4th ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop" in November-December 2008 in Tokyo, Japan, as part of the major regional activities for ICRI and International Year of the Reef (IYOR) 2008. A series of subsequent follow-up meetings in 2009 and 2010 are proposed, and throughout the whole process until 2010. This new regional initiative seeks to positively facilitate efforts for developing MPA networks in East Asia region and toward achieving MPA global targets in 2010 and 2012. The tentative plan includes developing a framework for regional cooperation, developing a regional strategy that can support and enhance developing sub-regional and national MPA networks, and further developing the regional MPA database "Coral Reef MPAs of East Asia and Micronesia." During the Washington, DC ICRI General Meeting in January 2008, an Ad Hoc Committee on the ICRI East Asia Regional Workshop was established, and discussion on planning and preparation of the workshop has begun. An update and detailed plan of the workshop including date and location will be proposed to the next ICRI Mini-General Meeting in Florida in July 2008.

For further information, please contact: Kohei Hibino ([khibino@jwrc.or.jp](mailto:khibino@jwrc.or.jp)).

- **Planning an ICRI Side event at the Convention on Biological Diversity Conference of Parties**

The ICRI Secretariat and IYOR Coordinator are in the process of working with the CBD Secretariat on a high-level side event at the upcoming meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9), to be held in Bonn, Germany from 19 to 30 May 2008. The purpose of the side event is to highlight the International Coral reef Initiative and the International Year of the Reef 2008. If you are interested in helping to organize this side event, please contact Francis Staub at [fstaub@icriforum.org](mailto:fstaub@icriforum.org)



For more information about the CBD COP 9, visit: <http://www.cbd.int/cop9/>

- **Coral Reef Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) updates**

Coral Reef CSI training programme is a unique four-day field-based training workshop taught in, around, and adjacent to, the near shore coral reef waters at each location. The workshops involve a series of lectures and demonstrations related to the relatively new field of coral reef forensic investigations, along with hands-on field crime scene investigations guided by international professionals in wildlife enforcement, coral reef ecology, and marine natural resource investigation.



Building on the pilot workshop held in Mexico in 2006, a regional field training workshop will take place in the Dominican Republic from 16 - 21 April 2008. The course will be conducted entirely in Spanish, and will train coral reef resource managers and enforcement personnel on the application and uptake of standardized methodologies for coral reef enforcement and natural resource investigations, which can be adapted for use in any major coral reef region and applied to a wide variety of events. A comprehensive Toolkit was developed, collating critical information and tools to guide practitioners. The final files for the toolkit are available in English and Spanish, and will be printed before the end of March to support the regional training workshops.

A site visit is currently underway in Malaysia to prepare for a further regional field training workshop, scheduled for September 2008. Consultations continue with a range of stakeholders to develop and advance the CSI training workshop programme in locations across the globe.

For more information, visit [www.icran.org/action-csi.html](http://www.icran.org/action-csi.html) or email [gulkod001@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:gulkod001@hawaii.rr.com) or [info@icran.org](mailto:info@icran.org).

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

### International Year of the Reef News

- "IYOR 2008 officially launched" by ICRAN

The International Year of the Reef (IYOR 2008) was officially launched on the evening of January 24th, 2008 in Washington DC at a celebration event hosted by The World Bank.



Guests gathered from all over the world to attend the event, including government representatives, organizations, embassies, private sector and the conservation and scientific community. Remarks given by Claudia McMurray, US Department of State, Assistant Secretary for Oceans, Environment and Science; Noah Idechong, Vice Speaker of the Palau House of Delegates; VADM Conrad Lautenbacher, NOAA Administrator; and Drew Richardson, President and Chief Operating Officer of PADI among others, demonstrated the importance of the IYOR campaign.

The launch was preceded by a press conference that highlighted planned international activities for the year and included an exciting live web and telephone hook-up to an ongoing scientific mission on the reefs of Bonaire (Netherlands Antilles, Caribbean), that is using autonomous underwater vehicles and other cutting edge technologies to examine the reefs. A report on the 2005 coral bleaching event in the Caribbean that affected more than 80 percent of the reefs in the region, was also released (see Release of the "*Status of Caribbean Coral Reefs after Bleaching and Hurricanes in 2005*"). Minister Estrosi, Secretary of State in charge of French Overseas Territories, and Claudia McMurray, US Department of State, Assistant Secretary for Oceans, Environment and Science addressed the press conference.

The press conference provided a brief glimpse of the phenomenal effort that the coral reef community and general public are putting into making this year a success. An even further exercise was conducted on the 25th of January, when a mini-symposium was held at the Mexican Cultural Centre in Washington, DC to celebrate IYOR 2008 through a showcase of activities taking place around the world. Opening remarks were given by His Excellency Arturo Sarukhan, Ambassador of Mexico to the United States of America, an avid diver and lover of the ocean. The wealth and variety of planned activities that the countries and organizations presented will certainly inspire other actions around the globe. During the mini-symposium, a youth choir from the Chesapeake Bay Middle School in Maryland, also a "green signature" school committed to environmental initiatives as part of their integrated curriculum, performed the "Reef Check Year of the Reef" song. This song, composed by Russ Lesser, President of Body Glove International, provides an exciting platform for children and adults to use their voices to protect and save the reefs.

- | IYOR Launches   |
|---|
| • December 9, 2007: Japan national launch   |
| • January 9, 2008: Barbados national launch   |
| • January 18, 2008: Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands proclaiming 2008 as the Year of the Reef |
| • January 25, 2008: Hawai'i proclaiming 2008 as the Year of the Reef                                  |
| • February 1, 2008: Guam proclaiming 2008 as the Year of the Reef                                     |
| • February 4, 2008: France National launch  |
| • February 8, 2008 : Turks and Caicos Islands national launch   |
| • February 20-24, 2008: Malaysia national launch  |
| • February 25-29, 2008: Regional launch of the Pacific Year of the Reef                               |
| • March 3, 2008: Fiji national launch   |
| • March 16, 2008: Belize national launch  |

The launch of IYOR 2008 does not only provide a opportunity to facilitate collaboration and share plans for the coming year, it also nourishes aspirations and gives one a sense of honor in being part of a movement that is bringing people together from all levels to stand up for coral reefs. Visit the IYOR launch page for more information: <http://www.iyor.org/IYORlaunch.asp>

In addition to the formal launch in Washington, DC on January 24, many other activities and launches (see box on IYOR launches) have happened around the world and many more are underway. We are pleased to see more than 60 organizations and countries designate an IYOR Focal Point to ensure coordination of their IYOR activities. To date, more than 120 events are showcased on the IYOR online calendar, with new additions added almost daily. Of note, IYOR will partner with World Ocean Day and the World Water Monitoring Day to promote coral reef conservation. Several educational materials have been made available and many articles (in newsletters and newspapers) have been published. We encourage you to browse the IYOR website for more information. Please remember to add your event to the calendar and share your activities with the IYOR Coordinator ([info@iyor.org](mailto:info@iyor.org)).

For more information:

- IYOR calendar: [www.iyor.org/Calendar/events\\_list.aspx](http://www.iyor.org/Calendar/events_list.aspx)
- IYOR focal points page: [www.iyor.org/focalpoints/](http://www.iyor.org/focalpoints/)
- IYOR press coverage: [www.iyor.org/news/media\\_coverage.asp](http://www.iyor.org/news/media_coverage.asp)
- IYOR Educational Material: [www.iyor.org/resources/education.asp](http://www.iyor.org/resources/education.asp)

~~~~~

### IYOR "highlighted" Initiatives

- **World Ocean Day**

The World Ocean Day provides an opportunity to collectively engage the global audience in conserving the ocean we all share and becoming Citizens of the Ocean.



In order to better make the connection between climate change and the health of our world's ocean, The Ocean Project and World Ocean Network are encouraging partners to focus on "helping our climate, helping our ocean." A special focus on potentially endangered species and habitats can illustrate the possible effects of climate change in our local environment. **And this themed focus also allows us to take advantage of International Year of the Reef (IYOR) 2008 and all the attention that will be focused on coral reef this year.** For more information, visit: [www.theoceanproject.org/wod](http://www.theoceanproject.org/wod) or [www.worldoceannetwork.org](http://www.worldoceannetwork.org).

- **[www.IYORcreative.com](http://www.IYORcreative.com)**

NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation have worked together to develop a united U.S. IYOR Messaging Campaign with the input from the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Education and Outreach Working Group. This group comprising more than 150 people from federal and state government, academia, NGOs, stakeholder groups, etc have been worked together since July 2007 to develop components for this campaign including: an Umbrella Theme, a Tag Line, and 5 Action Messages. 3 of the 5 action messages have been developed into FREELY downloadable print advertisements (available in 3 sizes) on [www.IYORcreative.com](http://www.IYORcreative.com). These ads and other similarly branded products are available to all groups planning their IYOR campaigns.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## ICRI Members news

- **19th U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting** by Elizabeth Dieveney

On February 27, NOAA co-chaired the 19th meeting of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (Task Force). The Task Force celebrated its tenth anniversary and IYOR 2008, and discussed the priority threats facing coral reef ecosystems and what actions and commitments are necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of these valuable ecosystems. During the meeting, the Task Force heard a keynote address from Dr. Nancy Knowlton, Smithsonian Institution Sant Chair of Marine Science. Dr. Knowlton challenged the Task Force to focus on outcomes that have measurable impacts on coral reef health. The



president of the Republic of Palau, H.E .Tommy Remengesau Jr., gave an inspiring address that highlighted the successes possible when we work beyond traditional political boundaries as seen in the Micronesian Challenge.

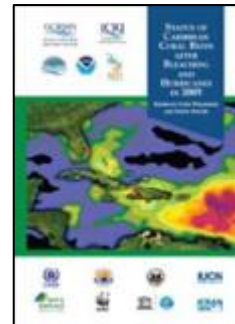
A panel of experts, which included Billy Causey of the NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program, Noah Idechong of Palau, and Marea Hatzioiols of the World Bank, engaged the Task Force in a discussion regarding new and innovative solutions and partnership opportunities needed for addressing the priority threats to coral reefs.

Finally, Wyland, the artist of U.S. IYOR 2008, unveiled his original painting "Year of the Reef." This partnership, which brings together Wyland's inspirational creativity and the collaborative nature of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, creates a new avenue through which we can inspire stewardship of our nations' coral reef resources.

For more information, visit: <http://www.coralreef.gov> or contact Elizabeth Dieveney, U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Coordinator at [Beth.Dieveney@noaa.gov](mailto:Beth.Dieveney@noaa.gov)

- **Release of the "Status of Caribbean Coral Reefs after Bleaching and Hurricanes in 2005"**

The GCRMN and partners, NOAA, ReefBase and Reef Check recently released "*Status of Caribbean Coral Reefs after Bleaching and Hurricanes in 2005*". This report continues the GCRMN Status Report series by documenting the devastating effects that the hottest summer and the most active hurricane season ever recorded in the Northern Hemisphere had on the coral reefs of the Caribbean and Atlantic Basins.



Based around the NOAA HotSpot satellite images, experts from the region describe the development and persistence of abnormally high sea temperatures that caused coral bleaching throughout the Caribbean and severe coral mortality as a result of bleaching or subsequent infections by disease. In some places, particularly around the islands of the Lesser Antilles, coral cover has declined by 50% and populations of key reef-building species by 73%. Many corals were still bleached into 2006 and in a few places they were still bleached in 2007 or were succumbing to disease. The report predicts that coral bleaching will be occur more frequently by 2030 and is likely to be an annual event by 2100, and acknowledges that atmospheric CO2 concentrations must be maintained below double the pre-industrial levels if coral reefs are going to survive in something resembling their current form.

The GCRMN is now preparing chapters for "*Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2008*" for release later in the year. This report will be published in two formats: as a compact summary book of about 200 pages; and an extended version on a CD to accompany the book. Please assist Clive Wilkinson and David Souter with data and information on reef status and also on special themes for the executive summary and discussion chapters that will capture the latest news on coral reefs around the world ([clive.wilkinson@rrrc.org.au](mailto:clive.wilkinson@rrrc.org.au) or [david.souter@rrrc.org.au](mailto:david.souter@rrrc.org.au))

For more information, visit [www.gcrmn.org](http://www.gcrmn.org)

- **Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) now world's largest Marine Protected Area**

On January 28, 2008, the Government of Kiribati announced the expansion of the boundaries of the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) to encompass an area of 410,500 km<sup>2</sup> and approved associated regulations. The announcement by Minister Nakara follows recent government actions to expand the original provisional boundaries to include most of Kiribati's exclusive economic zone surrounding the islands. The PIPA is an area encompassing several critical ocean habitats, and exploration has already yielded some species new to science.

This action makes the PIPA the world's largest declared marine protected area, an incredible accomplishment for Kiribati, the largest atoll nation in the world. The PIPA will include the Phoenix Islands archipelago and both Winslow and Carondelet reefs within its boundaries. In addition, vast areas of deep ocean will also be carefully managed and protected. This important action serves as both a protection for Kiribati's fisheries as well as an important mitigation force against the impacts of global warming. PIPA is currently nominated as a possible UNESCO World Heritage site and a successful World Heritage meeting was recently held in Tarawa in December.

Kiribati will continue to work with Conservation International, the New England Aquarium, and other partners on management plans and the development of an endowment to support the PIPA. The PIPA is managed by the Phoenix Islands Conservation Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from several governmental and non-governmental agencies.

For more information, <http://phoenixislands.org/index.php>

- **Knowledgebase for Lessons Learned and Best Practices in the Management of Coral Reefs**

The objective of this project is to formalize the experiences, outcomes and lessons learned from previous GEF projects, as well as major non-GEF initiatives involving coral reefs and associated ecosystems. The project aims to comprehensively identify, analyze, and translate lessons into good practices and information resources, and then disseminate this information globally for use in future project design and development. Based on its history of supporting coral reef biodiversity, management and sustainable development, this project will help the GEF fulfill a major mandate to identify what has worked and what could be improved upon in supporting biodiversity conservation. In combination with other GEF projects, this effort will also help the GEF and other major non-GEF projects achieve an improved return on investment for future projects involving coral reefs and associated ecosystems.



Since the 1990s, over \$320 million of GEF funds have been invested in projects at varying action and technical levels to improve the management of coral reef, seagrass and mangrove habitats. Much of this was part of a broader portfolio of over \$600 million invested in coastal-marine projects overall. During four entry periods each year, the GEF receives well over 200 concepts and project proposals. While the actual number of pipeline-approved projects is much less, the volume and diversity of those projects approved has strained the capacity of the GEF to review and assess those elements that have worked and to identify what could be improved upon.

The dissemination of best practices based on lessons learned is a strategic priority for the GEF. However, in the case of coral reef projects no comprehensive understanding of GEF successes and failures has previously been conducted. In recent reviews of GEF performance and activities, the need to utilize the results of previous project outcomes, experiences and lessons learned more comprehensively has been highlighted. While some earlier work has extracted lessons learned from specific projects, looking at both success and failure and comparing across global regions, a comprehensive and systematic analysis has not been attempted.

The GEF Lessons Learned and Best Practices Toolkit (GEF LL Toolkit) is the place to find information about how to design and implement coral reef management strategies. The tools provided on this website are also available through an interactive CD-ROM. This toolkit is a "living knowledgebase" - as our knowledge of the issues surrounding coral reef management and how best to approach them improves, revisions of this information can be anticipated.

The GEF LL Toolkit is available on-line at <http://gefll.reefbase.org>, and updates will be provided on a quarterly basis to provide the latest information available on coral reef management issues. Also available online are an email listserv (<http://lists.reefbase.org/mailman/listinfo/lessons.learned>) and a weblog (blog) space for coral reef managers to discuss their ideas and experiences.

The GEF LL Toolkit is comprised of eight extensive issue streams, each of which are high priorities in coral reef management:

- Project Design
- Project Management
- Community Participation
- Partnerships & Linkages
- Policy, Legislation & Enforcement
- Ecosystem-based Management
- Monitoring & Evaluation of Coral Reef Management
- Capacity, Education & Knowledge Management

For more information, contact Dr. Mark Tupper at: [M.Tupper@CGIAR.ORG](mailto:M.Tupper@CGIAR.ORG)

• **ReefBase Pacific - Livelihoods, Fisheries and Biodiversity**

*Strengthening Information Access and Dissemination in Support of Effective Coral Reef Conservation and Management*

The ReefBase Pacific project is a component of the Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific (CRISP - [www.crisponline.net](http://www.crisponline.net)), executed by the WorldFish Center and funded by the Agence Française de Développement and the United Nations Fund.



ReefBase Pacific is the first regional focus of the ReefBase Project ([www.reefbase.org](http://www.reefbase.org)). It aims to improve quality and accessibility of data and information for reef fisheries and coral reef research, management, conservation, and education in the Pacific region. The project will generate worldwide web and DVD formats of the information system to maximize distribution and accessibility.

ReefBase Pacific DVD version 1.0 contains a large collection of reef resource information relating to the Pacific. The ReefBase Pacific Project focus information collation activities to 8 Pacific countries; Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. Information from throughout the Pacific region is considered important and included in the collection wherever possible.

The major content of the current database are outlined below. A variety of search options allow the user to easily identify, locate and access this information. The current database includes:

- 2507 Publications (2163 English, 308 French, 1212 in full text PDFs)
- 1232 Images
- 694 Monitoring Sites
- 77 Project Details
- 176 People
- 85 Organizations
- 2021 Species Profiles
- 22 Country profiles

The purpose of this DVD is to provide project collaborators, contributors and other users a first look at the existing collection of information and search methods. We would greatly appreciate feedback from database users regarding the form and content of the information, ease of searching and identification of information gaps. This process will assist in guiding future data collection activities and product outputs.

The ReefBase Pacific Project is ongoing and the efforts in compiling, improving and broadening this collection will also continue with the goal of providing an updated DVD and web-based database during 2008. The ReefBase Pacific website <http://pacific.reefbase.org>, will be launched in July 2008 and will provide a premier portal to reef and coastal fisheries information in the Pacific. The online database and revised DVD will contain a GIS application to allow users to interact with the geo-referenced information. For more information, please contact Pip Cohen, ReefBase Pacific Coordinator at [p.cohen@cgiar.org](mailto:p.cohen@cgiar.org) or ReefBase at [reefbase@cgiar.org](mailto:reefbase@cgiar.org)

- **Equator Initiative**



The call for nominations for the Equator Prize 2008: Celebrating Community Success in Biodiversity Conservation and Poverty Reduction is now open. This marks the fourth round of the internationally renowned Equator Prize. Awarded biennially, the Equator Prize recognizes community-based initiatives that demonstrate extraordinary achievement in reducing poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the equatorial belt. Prize winners receive worldwide recognition for their work as well as an opportunity to help shape national and global policy and practice in the field.

Twenty-five community organizations will be honored with the Equator Prize 2008 and US\$5,000 each. Five of these communities will receive special recognition and an additional US \$15,000. Special recognition will be given in the following categories: one for each region of eligibility (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean), one to the initiative that best exemplifies community approaches to adapt to climate change, and one to the initiative that best exemplifies the conservation of agricultural biodiversity. The Equator Prize will be presented in October 2008, in Barcelona, Spain, at the IUCN World Conservation Congress. All winners will have the opportunity to showcase their work in the "Poble" Dialogue Space at the Congress.

The Equator Prize 2008 nomination process will be open **through May 31, 2008**. Details on the criteria for the Prize, information on the award process, and the online nomination system can be accessed through the Equator Initiative website at [www.equatorinitiative.org](http://www.equatorinitiative.org).

The ICRI secretariat is encouraging its members to nominate qualified community initiatives that are active in environmental conservation and sustainable development within the equatorial region.

**We invite you to submit your ideas for articles and news for the future issues. Please also address all your comments and requests to [newsletter@icriforum.org](mailto:newsletter@icriforum.org).**