



Member's report on activities to ICRI

Presented by DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Reporting period July 2008 – April 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 ICRI Forum 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

Representation to ICRI (Country / Organization):	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Focal Point 1:	Rubén E. Torres, Ph.D.
Focal point 2:	Jeannette Mateo
Last meeting attended:	Washington DC, 22-25 January, 2008
How do you circulate ICRI information within your country and/or organization?	E-mail
Budget allocated for coral reef related activities (please mention for year/period):	To be determined

For countries only:

National Action Plan / Initiative	
Do you have a National Coral Reef action plan?	There is no official coral reef action plan. The Sub ministry of Coastal Marine Resources is currently implementing several coral reef related programs, as well as other NGOs like Reef Check DR (RCDR), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Grupo Jaragua, CEBSE, Counterpart International (CI). These include: nation-wide monitoring program (RCDR); collaboration for the management of La Caleta MPA (RCDR); Mooring buoys for La Caleta MPA (RCDR, SEMARENA), Catalina Island MPA (RCDR, SEMARENA), Punta Rucia MPA (RCDR, SEMARENA), Creation of a new MPA, Snorkeling camps for kids (RCDR); Workshops on marine conservation (RCDR, TNC, CI SEMARENA).
Is this plan publicly available? If so please provide location:	Contact info for Sub ministry of Coastal Marine Resources: Edificio Agricultura, Km 6.5 Autopista Duarte, Jardines del Norte

	<p>Ph 809-732-3303, fax 809-547-3057, fax 566 6042 costeromarininos@medioambiente.gov.do</p> <p>Contact info for The Nature Conservancy: Central Caribbean Program Cuba-Dominican Republic-Haiti-Puerto Rico Mesoamerica & Caribbean Region The Nature Conservancy Jacinto Manon esq. Federico Gerardino D' Roca Plaza, Suite 401, Ensanche Paraíso, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic Elianny Dominguez (edominguez@tnc.org) (809) 541-7666 (Phone) (809) 541-4165 (Fax)</p> <p>Contact info for Counterpart International DR: Counterpart International-Dominican Republic Calle Presidente Vasquez # 21, Monte Cristi, Republica Dominicana. Tel.: (809) 809-765-9095 / 809-710-1542 Kguerrero@counterpart.org</p> <p>Contact info for Grupo Jaragua: Grupo Jaragua Inc. Calle El Vergel # 36 Ensanche. El Vergel Santo Domingo, República Dominicana Tel (809) 472-1036 Fax (809) 412-1667 E-Mail jaragua@tricom.net</p> <p>Contact info for Reef Check Dominican Republic: Prol. Fantino Falco #5, Piantini Santo Domingo, R.D. ph/fax 809-227-4409 info@reefcheckdr.org www.reefcheckdr.org</p>
Do you have a National Coral Reef Initiative or Task Force?	Action Plan National Initiative: A draft action plan for coral reefs was drafted in year 2001 by the Directorate of Fisheries Resources with the support of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism but has not been implemented mainly due to very limited logistical support and funding.
Are you engaged in any regional programs / initiatives relating to coral reefs:	YES
If yes, please indicate which programmes/initiatives:	Sub ministry of Coastal Marine Resources: GCFI, ICRI, Remote

	<p>Sensing Specialists Network</p> <p>Reef Check Dominican Republic: Reef Check Eco Action, CSI Coral Reef, ICRI, Dominican Sustainable Tourism Alliance</p>
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2. Member contribution to the ICRI GM: Your responses to the following questions will assist the Secretariat in assessing contributions towards the major themes of the Mexico-United States action plan. 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 April GM. The Secretariat will also request specific Members to highlight certain initiatives, should additional information be of interest to the full ICRI membership. Please keep this in mind when filling out this report and place special emphasis on calling attention to new initiatives/programs/projects of your government/organization which will be of interest to the ICRI Members.*

a. Please provide any lessons you have learned from your experiences of developing partnerships with the private sector that might be relevant to ICRI members?

The Dominican Republic private sector lacks general information in coastal marine issues, and thus, is responsible for many impacts to coastal marine resources. Our experience shows that private sector institutions, mainly the ones related to tourism developments, would support conservation initiatives once they become aware of the importance marine ecosystems have in the general stability of the resources they benefit from, ie. Beaches.

So, a few lessons learned from working with the private sector:

- Most of current environmental problems in the DR come from lack of knowledge and awareness,
- Do not assume the private sector is aware of the problems they may be responsible for,
- Facilitate objective communication between interested parties,
- Consider to mitigate solvable environmental problems leveraging with unavoidable impacts to natural environments.

b. Are you aware of programmes or policies by your country/organization for implementing integrated ecosystem management from watershed to reef slope?

RCDR has been assisting the Environmental Police (Servicio Nacional de Proteccion Ambiental) or SPA. Even though they were created during the year 2000, it was not until August 2005 that a major initiative for environmental integration was started. Due to the lack of funds (like in other environmental GOs), the environmental police are seeking to integrate under a nation-wide effort all private environmental initiatives that have been ongoing -- for years in some cases. The strategy was to call in all major companies that have existing environmental programs and integrate them to support a national effort, avoid duplication of effort and re-allocate funding to underrepresented environmental problems especially coral reefs. Due to the lack of marine expertise in the DR, the SENPA turned to this project for support and collaboration. This project was been instrumental in assisting in planning how to extend the environmental police initiative to coastal and marine areas. This effort builds on Reef Check work with the International Coral Reef Action Network Meso-American Reef (ICRAN-MAR) project in Central America <http://www.icranmar.org/> or http://www.icran.org/icranmar/mar_home_sp.html). RC started initial coordination with ICRAN to replicate key elements of the project here in the DR and a draft proposal is being completed to implement such project in the DR in the near future.

In partnership with AgroFrontera, a local non-profit sustainable development organization based in Monte Cristi, Counterpart is creating community-based education, conservation, and economic development activities engaging a wide range of stakeholders within the Park's boundaries and surrounding buffer zones. A key component of the program will be the formation of a collaborative alliance of stakeholders consisting of agricultural and fishing cooperatives; businesses; local, national and international development and conservation organizations and governmental agencies, to design and implement a broad-based, integrated conservation and development strategy.

- c. Are there any monitoring or research activities you are either involved in or aware of aimed at improving understanding of adaptive management of coral reefs and related ecosystems that may be of interest to ICRI members?

Examples could include any efforts through workshops, environmental education programs, beach and underwater clean ups, etc. with coastal/local communities to promote understanding and recognition of the environmental services coral reefs provide.

Since 2004, RCDR implements the only national coral reef monitoring program in the DR. Volunteer divers and fishermen, assisted by scientist, collect data from most coral reef areas of the DR. A lot of effort has been concentrated at La Caleta MPA, where RCDR and SEMARENA are implementing several fisheries management actions, which preliminary data shows and increase of small fish populations.

This monitoring program, is combined with several workshops at coastal communities of the DR focusing on marine conservation, sustainable fisheries management, MPA management, coral reef monitoring, sustainable tourism, climate change among others.

- d. Please indicate the effects of the Live Reef Food Fish Trade on your government/organization. Are you aware of any programs/policies in place to address these impacts?

N/A

- e. What other new initiatives/programs/projects/progress, in particular since January 2008, has been made by your government/organization relative to Marine Protected Areas, Ramsar site designations containing coral reefs, integrated coastal zone management measures, policy changes influenced by economic valuation of coral reef ecosystem services, etc., which you believe would be of general interest to other ICRI Members?

WRI has been working on economic valuation of coral reefs for several years. We have completed two pilot studies of the economic contribution of coral reefs in St. Lucia and Tobago, and are currently applying the methodology in Belize. We have also developed a simple, Excel-based Economic Valuation Tool that guides users through a stepwise process of gathering data and conducting an economic valuation analysis. With development pressures mounting rapidly in the Dominican Republic, now is a critical time to generate the incentives to protect these valuable coastal resources. By assigning quantitative values to the goods and services provided by coral reefs, this project will provide an important tool to aid and improve coastal policy and management.