

Decision on Recognizing the Regional Structure of the GCRMN

*Adopted during the ICRI Coordination and Planning Committee (CPC) Meeting
8-9 May 2003, Gland (Switzerland)*

Preamble:

The GCRMN currently functions through a global coordinator and 17 nodes or coordinating centres and persons that assist the approximately 80 countries that constitute the GCRMN and contribute to the 'Status of Coral Reefs of the World' reports. Such a centralised structure is unable to interact sufficiently with the nodes and coordinating centres, and the associated countries to transfer training, resolve problems and gather data and information for the Status reports.

The 2001, 5 year review of the GCRMN commissioned by IOC-UNESCO and Chaired by Richard Kenchington, made the following recommendations:

6. That the GCRMN Management Committee should focus energy on establishing a strong, transparent and effective linkage between the GCRMN and ICRAN.
7. That the GCRMN Management Committee address the effectiveness and broader applicability of the nodal coordination system recognizing that different solutions are likely to be appropriate for different regional circumstances.
8. That the GCRMN Management Committee work with the ICRAN partners to ensure that effective regional, sub-regional and national co-ordination of monitoring and reporting is achieved through measures consistent with the operational situation of each of the regions.

The GCRMN Management Group responded in November 2001 to the 5 year Review by recommending:

Action 3.1: Management Group and Global Coordinator should establish Regional GCRMN Coordinators in each of the four major coral reef areas, with the responsibility for establishing and furthering the node functions identified by the GCRMN Strategic Plan in accordance with regional conditions and constraints.

Action 3.2: GCRMN Global Coordinator should work with the ICRAN Steering Committee to identify options for joint GCRMN-ICRAN regional coordination.

Action 3.3: The GCRMN Coordinator should work with the Management Group, the regional seas units and key people from each region to develop a mechanism to select candidates as Regional Coordinators and determine the terms of reference of these people in line with the tasks in each region.

Since the 5 year Review and the Maputo CPC meeting in 2001, ICRAN partners SPREP and WorldFish Center have undertaken to appoint coordinators for the Pacific and Southeast and East Asia respectively to assist with GCRMN operations within ICRAN Demonstration and Target sites and other countries in the immediate region.

A process is underway to consolidate ICRAN activities in Central America with a proposal submitted to appoint a person to coordinate ecological and socio-economic monitoring in demonstration and target sites as a model for the wider Caribbean.

The CORDIO Program has a network of Coordinators in East Africa, the Indian Ocean Islands and South Asia, and is implementing ecological and socio-economic monitoring to assist GCRMN in the Central and Western Indian Ocean. Recently, the CORDIO program and the IUCN Marine Program decided to support the GCRMN program in South Asia. Furthermore CORDIO and IUCN have offered to appoint a regional coordinator for the wider Indian Ocean region. This person will be able to assist the GCRMN with coordination of monitoring in the region, and also assist ICRAN partners in establishing monitoring in demonstration and target sites.

Decision:

Recognizing that the GCRMN has been successful in raising awareness about the status of coral reefs around the world and the need for urgent action through the publication of ‘Status of Coral Reefs of the World’ reports in 1998, 2000 and 2002;

Recognizing that the GCRMN has made good progress in establishing ecological monitoring of coral reefs in many countries, but that socio-economic monitoring has not been developed in parallel and many countries are not receiving sufficient assistance to establish national monitoring programs;

Recognizing that further progress is inhibited by a centralised structure and a lack of experienced people within the four major coral reef regions of the world able to assist countries, nodes and coordinating centres with coral reef monitoring;

Acknowledging that the ICRAN partners SPREP and WorldFish Center (in association with Japan) are in the process of appointing persons to assist in the monitoring of coral reefs in the Pacific and Southeast and East Asia respectively;

Acknowledging that the ICRAN partners are developing a process for monitoring coordination within the Central American region that could prove instrumental in assisting GCRMN monitoring in the wider Caribbean;

Acknowledging that CORDIO has had a functional network for several years and appointed three coordinators for the subregions in the Central and Western Indian Ocean, and that CORDIO and IUCN have offered to appoint a regional coordinator to assist GCRMN and ICRAN monitoring activities in the wider Indian Ocean;

Noting that there are other coral reef coordinating groups, such as those in Eastern Africa and the Caribbean that are also able to assist in coordinating GCRMN activities;

Noting that the GCRMN Operational Management Structure currently consists of the Global Coordinator, senior representatives of ReefBase, the Reef Check network, supported by the GCRMN Management Group chaired by IUCN and containing IOC-UNESCO, UNEP, World Bank, CBD, AIMS, WorldFish Centre, the ICRI Secretariat, and the CORDIO program;

The ICRI CPC decided to:

Thank SPREP, WorldFish Center and the CORDIO-IUCN partnership for offers to appoint persons to function as GCRMN Regional Coordinators in the Pacific, and Southeast and East Asia, wider Indian Ocean respectively;

Urge the ICRAN partners to assist the GCRMN, however possible, in developing a monitoring coordination mechanism for the wider Caribbean;

Recognise that direct functional leadership of coral reef ecological and socio-economic monitoring be vested in persons fulfilling the role of GCRMN Regional Coordinators and that that the Global Coordinator role would be focused on editing the 'Status of Coral Reefs of the World' reports, on linking the 4 regions, 17 nodes and coordinating centres, regional coral reef networks like that operating in Eastern Africa, and the 80 or more countries with coral reefs into international forums, and assisting these organisations in raising funds for monitoring activities;

Recommend that the expanded management structure of the GCRMN should add any appointed Regional Coordinators representing the wider Indian Ocean, Southeast and East Asia, Pacific and the wider Caribbean, into the GCRMN Operational Management Structure to complement the Global Coordinator, senior representatives of ReefBase, Reef Check and CORDIO, with the Management Group as advisors;

Request the assistance of ICRI and ICRAN Partners in obtaining the necessary resources to ensure sustainability of the GCRMN into the immediate future by funding these positions, and ensuring that they are located where they will be able to perform their functions of assisting people, countries and nodes with coral reef monitoring as well as other ICRI associated activities.

Approved: 9 May 2003