

Decision on Determining the Economic Value of Coral Reefs to User communities

*Adopted during the ICRI Coordination and Planning Committee (CPC) Meeting
5-6 April 2001, Cebu City (Philippines)*

Recognizing that coastal user communities have been deriving economic, cultural and environmental benefits from coral reefs for hundreds to thousands of years;

Recognizing that it is essential to actively involve coastal user communities in the conservation of coral reefs to effectively manage and enforce conservation mechanisms at the local level;

Recognizing also that coastal user communities will more likely accept responsibility for the conservation of coral reef resources if they anticipate receiving direct benefits through conservation, which may require alteration of existing practices;

Recognizing that support for coral reef conservation and management activities is often dependent on being able to demonstrate clear economic benefits and relevance to vulnerable coastal user communities;

Noting that the majority of economic assessments of the benefits and costs concerned with coral reefs have focused at national and international scales, and frequently not on the values of coral reefs to different sectors of society, especially for communities dependent on reefs for food security and protection;

Noting that a recent analysis by the Department for International Development of the UK showed that few studies have assessed the contributions of coral reefs to the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, whereas many focused on the costs of their activities

The International Coral Reef Initiative Coordinating and Planning Committee:

Requests that ICRI partners provide information on any economic assessments on coral reefs as these relate to coastal communities to the ICRI Forum and to other ICRI members;

Requests that, as a matter of urgency, ICRI partners undertake case studies of coral reefs within their areas of interest covering:

- Different coral reef regions of the world;
- Different coral reef user communities reflecting different use patterns and different levels of economic activity; and
- Specific evaluations of both use and non-use values, including traditional subsistence coral reef users.

And that these assessments include:

- A valuation of benefits and costs to vulnerable groups of poor people at the local level rather than the overall value. These would include subsistence activities and values of products sold through local informal networks and consumed by extended families, and other non-use values that do not appear in national statistics;
- Valuations of the benefits and costs of the declaration of marine protected areas on local peoples and the impacts of alternative income generation activities deriving from area declaration and the losses imposed on communities due to such declarations;
- Valuations of the economic effects of tourism activities on the livelihoods of poorer people.
- Establishing mechanisms for regular monitoring of socio-economic benefits and costs-related to coral reef resource use and degradation.

Requests that this information be compiled and provided to ICRI partners at the next CPC meeting and lodged on the ICRI Forum.