

Recommendation on Marine Protected Areas

*Adopted during the ICRI Coordination and Planning Committee (CPC) Meeting
25 and 26 May, 2000, Noumea (New-Caledonia)*

Reaffirming the ITMEMS¹ priorities to enhance effective management of marine protected areas, including replenishment zones, and the need for sustainable and effectively enforced fisheries policies;

Noting that the particular effectiveness of long-term replenishment zones for restoration of the ecological functions and productive capacities of coral reef ecosystems including protection of economically valuable resources;

Noting that many small marine protected areas are surrounded by large areas suffering damage through exploitation of natural resources, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the managed area;

Noting that in a report recently prepared by ICRI², coral reefs and associated ecosystems are poorly represented under the protection categories of the World Heritage Convention, Ramsar and Man and the Biosphere site;

Noting that community based protected areas have been successful in some regions, and further that community participation is critical to the establishment and long-term management of marine protected areas;

Further noting that ICRI partners can obtain assistance and advice to undertake listing of coral reefs sites through the respective convention bureaux or secretariats;

Noting that the USA, through a recommendation of the US Coral Reef Task Force, has established an objective of declaring 20% of all US coral reef areas as no-take ecological reserves by the year 2010;

The ICRI Partners agree to:

Increase the use of marine protected areas, including replenishment zones as one of the best tools to protect ecosystem functioning and productivity;

Encourage efforts among ICRI partners to facilitate establishment of marine protected areas of adequate size, biogeographic representativeness, and to ensure management capacity to enhance management effectiveness, using an ecosystem approach, and thereby enhance the development of a global network of coral reef marine protected areas;

¹ International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium, held in Townsville Australia November 1998

² "Coral Reef Protected Areas in the three international conventions", May 2000

Encourage ICRI partners to promote the listing of other coral reef sites and associated ecosystems under the World Heritage Convention, Ramsar, and Man and the Biosphere site and other regional agreements, and properly recognise the coral reef components of existing listed sites;

Promote integrated management of small MPAs into the management of surrounding coastal areas, where effective integrated coastal management exists;

Improve coordination and enhance collaboration on marine protected areas, including replenishment zones as recommended by ITMEMS and to that end, create an ad hoc working group to discuss ICRI strategies for collaboration and actions, including targets and time tables for designation and report at the next meeting of the CPC in Bali;

Develop a strategy to promote sustainable coral fishery strategies, in particular, promotion of replenishment zones through FAO/Committee on Fisheries regional bodies in 2000 (Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission) and at COFI in 2001;

Cooperate with IUCN and its members, FAO, UNEP, CBD, UNDP and other relevant international organizations and programs to promote the application of replenishment zones as a vital tool for the maintenance of ecological functions, including productivity, which can result in more sustainable fisheries management and conservation on biological diversity.