Prioritising coral reefs in the CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Emily Corcoran, ICRI Consultant, on behalf of the ad hoc Committee

With thanks to Vulcan for their ongoing technical and financial support
**THE VALUE OF CORAL REEFS**

- More than one billion people benefit directly from coral reef resources for food and as a source of income through activities related to fishing and tourism.

- Coral reefs support 25% of marine life.

- Coral reef tourism contributes $36 billion to global tourism industry annually.

- Healthy coral reef ecosystems reduce shoreline erosion and protect coastal housing, agricultural land and beaches with a global net benefit of $9 billion USD/year.

- The time that the Great Barrier Reef has been a part of the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: 60,000 years.

- A healthy reef can reduce coastal wave energy by up to 97%.

- The prospect of finding a new drug in the sea, especially among coral reef species, may be 300 to 400 times more likely than isolating one from a terrestrial ecosystem.
The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework
**HEALTHY CORAL REEF INDICATORS**

1. **Live Coral Cover**
   - The amount of live coral cover on a reef — an important first look at coral reef health.

2. **Coral Reef Extent**
   - Measures area covered by coral reef ecosystems and can tell us if this is increasing or decreasing.

3. **Fleshy Algae Cover and cover of key benthic groups**
   - An increase in the cover of fleshy algae indicating a decline in coral reef health with less diversity of fish and lower productivity.

4. **Fish Abundance and Biomass**
   - The number of fish on the reef and the amount of energy available, telling us about the health and integrity of the system.

5. **Percent Coral Reefs Effectively Protected**
   - The amount of the world's coral reefs that are included within MPAs or Other Effective Conservation Measures.

6. **Index of Coastal Eutrophication**
   - Measures water quality in coastal areas.
Every day we see a biodiversity loss for the Saurimo people. Growing in my community, the importance of protecting our marine resources has been taught by our parents. When we are protecting our marine resources, we are doing it for future generations.

Marilyn Iwai
SP Stewardship Facilitator, St. Bernard Community, Saurimo, Angola

We lose coral reefs at 3°C global warming. Without coral reefs, how can we have a healthy Ocean? Without a healthy Ocean, how can we have a healthy planetary ecosystem? Greenhouse gases are our common enemy.

Peter Thomson
Secretary-General of the Ocean Conference

Protection of our oceans is a global challenge requiring global action. Coral reefs remain vital to this effort, as they support one quarter of all life in the ocean, and are facing unprecedented threats.

Tom Goldsmith
UN International Environment Minister

We have already lost 50 percent of the coral reefs globally. To save what is left, we must halt climate change and protect those that remain. This is the largest environmental project.

Helen Agren
Executive Director of the Global Coral Reef Restoration Partnership

As a country that boundary lies and breathes by virtue of our coral reefs, we understand the need to protect and advocate for the health of our reefs. It’s not enough in just how we manage, we have to think more about the health and the sustainability of our reefs.

Thierry Santa
Minister of the Environment of New Caledonia

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Uniloch Sergebeu
Minister of the Environment of New Caledonia

Sustainable use of coral reef resources is a cornerstone for the wellbeing and prosperity of millions of people from the Indo-Pacific Region. The new Global Biodiversity Framework is a call to action to ensure that we support the health of the reef as well.

Kate Brown
Executive Director, Global Ocean Partnership, New Zealand

Please draw your attention to the growing threats of the coral reefs, which must be the number one concern, given that the reefs are the first line of defense in the face of climate change. As the International Coral Reef Initiative, we must act on their behalf, recognizing that the health of the reefs is the foundation of our economy and our wellbeing.

IDB Prince Albert II of Monaco

Coral reefs are the nursery for fish, and marine, and are a very valuable asset that we must protect and nurture to ensure that they continue to flourish.

Ronald Amedee
President of the Conservation Society for the Adjacent Ocean Zones

Coral reefs are a natural resource that is essential for our survival. The protection of our oceans is crucial for the health and survival of all life on Earth.

Johno Wahrou
Executive Director, Marine Conservation Society of Australia

Every Fiji is brought up by the ocean. The first thing they see is the ocean and the reefs around them. When they go beyond the Great Barrier Reef, it is not only our life, it is a sanctuary for us. Our vision for the next 10 years is to get them to have enough feed and fish to eat.

Rokona Williams
Teacher, Savusavu Primary School, Fiji

Coral reefs, a breeding place for fish and marine animals, are very valuable for people who live in coastal areas. The protection of coral reefs is important for the wellbeing of many species.

Viliami Ratukulu
Director, Environment, Oceania, and Environment, Vanuatu, India

The urgent need to protect coral reefs cannot be more real. With our vision of a resilient Pacific environment, our biodiversity and natural heritage are in harmony with our cultures. Our island nations depend on coral reef and their survival is imperative and foundational to all we hold dear.

Kati Lage
Commissioner, International Coral Reef Initiative

The world’s reefs are being hit by all of an existential crisis. It’s not just one they are being impacted by climate change, but also threats from overfishing, lack of funds, and a lack of awareness.

Alison Jones
Forestry Minister of Fiji

In our region the Pacific’s coral reefs are part of our heritage and important for future 75% of the people. It is our duty to Pacific Islanders come together and protect the reefs. The threats affecting the coral reefs, including climate change, pollution, and overfishing, must be addressed.

Dave Butchart
United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Oceans and Coastal Zones

Coral reef ecosystems bring about nature’s contributions to people including a great deal of livelihoods. I hope that ICRI will continue to contribute to the conservation of coral reefs under the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Teri Tahoa
President of the Conservation Society for the Adjacent Ocean Zones

Coral reefs are visibly known to be an essential pillar of our future, none more so including the conservation of our oceans. We need to make sure that the reefs are conserved and the health of the ocean is maintained.

John Wahrou
Executive Director, Marine Conservation Society of Australia

We must fight for the survival of our coral reefs. It is not just about the survival of the reefs, but the survival of our future generations.

Molly Iwai
SP Stewardship Facilitator, St. Bernard Community, Saurimo, Angola

The end of coral reefs will ultimately depend on local will to build resilience and address key threats connected with global climate change. Australia will continue to advocate for the conservation of these critical ecosystems within the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Dr. Ian Paton
Government of New Zealand

The Global Biodiversity Framework will reaffirm that coral reefs have been one of the most rapid increases in the loss of biodiversity over the past 10 years. It is challenging, but we must continue to protect our reefs.

Amin de Campondre
Director General, International Coral Reef Initiative

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Kati Lage
Commissioner, International Coral Reef Initiative
Strategy Focus areas

1. Ensure coral reef related indicators are retained in the monitoring framework;

2. Continue to look for opportunities to strengthen the GBF for application to coral reefs;

3. Ensure guidance for resource mobilisation / financial mechanisms is framed in a way that enables targeted and urgent action in specific ecosystems

4. Consider what happens after adoption: how can the Post-2020 GBF and its monitoring framework, be applied to a specific ecosystem, such as coral reefs?
How will we do this?

Working together with Parties to take the recommendation through into negotiations and interventions

★ Virtual briefings
★ Negotiation tool kit
★ Making the links - helping connect to
  ○ other areas of work - critically to continue collaborating with GCRMN
  ○ Relevance and connect to other policy areas (climate-ocean; sustainable development)
  ○ UN Decades of Ocean Science and ecosystem restoration
Current indicator use questionnaire

We have asked:

• Which of the recommended indicators are being used by national administrations? for what? what protocol is used and where is the data
• If they are not being used - why not?
• Are any of the indicators recommended for development already in use?
• Are there any other indicators used to monitoring coral reefs nationally?
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**Questionnaire returns:**

19 countries/territories | 35% of the world’s reefs

ICRI members

Non-ICRI members
If no (or partial use) - would you consider using the indicator in the future?

- Live coral cover (1)
- Coral reef extent (11)
- Fleshy algae and cover of key benthic groups (2)
- Fish abundance and biomass (2)
- % coral reef protected (9)
- Index of Coastal Eutrophication (14)
Negotiation tool kit: e.g. *in prep* - Indicator fact sheet to support SBSTTA

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<th>Indicator Name</th>
<th>Reference Number</th>
<th>What does it measure?</th>
<th>*Are the data &amp; metadata publicly available?</th>
<th>*Has the methodology been peer-reviewed?</th>
<th>What is the baseline? How often are updates?</th>
<th>*Is there an entity or mechanism to maintain it?</th>
<th>How will Parties report?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Live coral cover</td>
<td>A.1.1.13</td>
<td>Measures <strong>ecosystem integrity</strong> for coral reef ecosystems under <strong>Goal A</strong>, Component A.2</td>
<td>Data [and metadata] available on request.</td>
<td>Yes: <a href="https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2019.00580/full">https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2019.00580/full</a> Approved by the BIP.</td>
<td>Global baselines presented in GCRMN 2021 report.</td>
<td>Yes. GCRMN. Data from coral reef surveys led by different groups can be aggregated to national level.</td>
<td>Via engagement in the GCRMN as well as use of tools like MERMAID to support data aggregation and reporting at different scales.</td>
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- Technical review of SBSTTA/24/3/Add.1 from the perspective of the Recommendation
- Reaction to indicators included + response to proposed indicator selection criteria
- Comment on sufficiency of the current framework - is anything missing? are there other ways of representing the indicators?
Action Part 1:  
Motion: Amended Terms of Reference

The updated objectives of the ad hoc committee are to:

1. Coordinate ICRI’s contribution to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework; and
2. Develop and implement a communications strategy to promote the ICRI Recommendation at important international meetings and events in preparation for and including the 15th COP of the CBD.

Note: no comments received by the Secretariat
Actions contd..:

1. To champion the ICRI Recommendation to trigger action for healthy coral reefs
   a. Engage in the ad hoc Committee
   b. Respond to the Questionnaire
   c. Sign up to the WhatsApp Group
   d. intervene to ensure uptake of the ICRI recommendation

1. Consider the role for ICRI beyond adoption of a GBF;
WhatsApp Post-2020 group - contact emily to be added +46735232543

Join the ad hoc Committee - contact fstaub@icriforum.org

Bilateral discussions  emily.e.corcoran@gmail.com/ fstaub@icriforum.org

Social media  

www.coralpost2020.org