

International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Statement

To the informal session for the 24th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice 17-19 and 24-26 February 2021

Agenda Item 6. Marine and coastal biodiversity

Distinguished Chair, delegates,

The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) is a partnership between 44 governments and more than 40 organisations that strives to preserve coral reefs and related ecosystems around the world. The Initiative is co-hosted by its country members on a rotating basis, currently the governments of Australia, Indonesia and Monaco.

We have heard a number of Parties calling for the framework to be strengthened with regards to its reflection of the ocean, including the need to strengthen indicators for marine and coastal biodiversity –drawing from well-established and already used indicators.

The 5th Global Biodiversity Outlook reported that none of the Aichi Targets were met. It is notable that Aichi Target 10 lacked available and meaningful indicators to assess progress. It is critical that we strengthen our ability to detect change – to help increase accountability and communication of any future targets and goals.

Coral reef ecosystems have been highlighted by the IPBES and IPCC assessments as a flagship indicator system due to their value, vulnerability and importantly their data availability (Obura et al., 2019)

ICRI has adopted a Recommendation for the appropriate recognition of this ecosystem within the GBF and its monitoring framework. Included in this recommendation are a set of available and actionable indicators that can inform progress against the draft goals and targets, help to ensure visibility, focus and prioritisation of coral reefs in the implementation of the framework and INCREASE CAPACITY to assess coral reefs.

Speaking on behalf of ICRI, we welcome the current inclusion of ecosystem specific indicators in the draft monitoring framework, in particular reflection



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of those that have been recommended by ICRI. We refer Parties to our

recent policy brief, providing information on the feasibility and current use of these indicators and we stand ready to continue to support the process as it progresses. Links to additional information, including this policy brief are attached to our written statement.

More information and resources are available on www.coralpost2020.org and a link provided to an analysis of the ICRI Recommended indicators as they are reflected in SBSTTA/24/3/Add.1 here: <https://www.icriforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ICRI-Recommended-Indicators-for-SBSTTA-24-6.pdf>