



International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)

Member's Report | 37th General Meeting

19th – 23rd September 2023 Hawai'i, – United States of America

Reporting Period: 2021 – 2023

A. Member Information:

- Name of ICRI member: Belize
- Name of person(s) completing member's report: Alicia Eck-Nunez
- Email: Alicia.nunez@fisheries.gov.bz
- Are you a Focal Point: Yes No
 - If no, who are you completing the form on behalf of:
- Which was the last General Meeting you attended: None
- Will you be attending the 37th ICRI General Meeting: Yes No
- Member social media:
 - Twitter: @
 - LinkedIn:

B. Reporting on the implementation of ICRI Plan of Action 2021-2024: turning the tide for coral reefs. *Your responses will help inform the Secretariat about members' contributions toward the current Plan of Action*

Theme 1 - Preparing for the Future: Promoting Resilient Coral Reefs

1.A - Strengthening policies - Supporting conservation and recovery of coral reefs and associated ecosystems through resilience-based management frameworks.

- (ICRI) How have you embedded resilience-based management into your policies? (Tip – refer to the RBM policy brief: <https://icriforum.org/resilience-hub/>)

Answer:

- *Fisheries Resources Act of 2020 – protection of stony and soft corals and additional species protection under Schedule 88*
- *High Protection for Biodiversity Marine Reserve declared for 7 Zones.*
- *Protection of the Cayman Crown in 2020*
- *Co-management Agreement Framework developed in 2023*
- *In 2022 Belize has partnered with the Resilient Reefs Initiative which is being piloted across four World Heritage reef sites to adapt to climate change and local threats by developing a reef resilient strategy for Belize and is being implemented.*
- *Belize is a part of the Commonwealth blue charter Coral Reef Restoration Co-champions with Australia and Mauritius*
- *Belize is a part of the Mar Parametric Insurance Program since 2022 for 2 sites and have expanded to 4 sites*
- *Adopted to assessing coral reef health with AGRRA methods*

1.B - Promote capacity building for applying resilience-based management approaches to coral conservation Ad Hoc Committee on Resilience-based Management.

- (ICRI) Please list any examples of leading practices, techniques and strategies for building reef resilience that your organisation/country is involved in. Include their location and extent, methods of implementation, financing, and an assessment of their results (or likely results), with links for more information if possible.

Answer:

- *The Reef Rescue Initiative of MARFUND is an insurance partnership with TNC, Willis Tower Watson and World Bank where they pay the pilot premiums. Under this Mar parametric insurance program there were the formation of 2 Brigades for emergency restoration after a storm. This was for Hol Chan MR and Turneffe MR. This was developed through the reef rescue initiative and is being funded through them. Additionally for 2023 there was the addition of 2 more sites for Belize under the insurance: Glover's Reef MR and South Water Caye MR. Brigades will soon be established for these sites.*
- *Training through Fragments of Hope on reef restoration: site selection, fragmentation, setting out nurseries in Bacalar Chico, Hol Chan, Caye Caulker, South Water Caye Marine Reserves and Laughing Bird Caye National Park, using diver based photo mosaics and drone Ortho mosaics to assess growth in the Laughing Bird Caye National Park.*
- *Training from AGRRA in collecting reef health data. Trainees were certified in collecting benthic or reef fish data.*
- *The Belize Fisheries Department partnered with HRI in the training of NCRMN members to be able to treat SCTLD using CoreRx and Amoxicillin this was done through a grant from MarFund. Treatment efforts were done nationally as SCTLD moved through the Barrier Reef System and atolls.*

- (ICRI) Have you developed, or are you aware of, training materials that you can share?

Answer:

- For the work being done with Fragments of Hope technical documents can be found on their web page: <http://fragmentsofhope.org/>
- <https://marfund.org/en/reef-rescue-initiative/>
- <https://www.coastalzonebelize.org/portfolio/resilientreefsinitiative/>

1.C - Promote and build capacity for the restoration of resilient coral reefs Ad Hoc Committee on Reef Restoration

- (ICRI) Please list any examples of reef restoration mechanisms that your organisation/country is involved in. Include their limits, conditions of implementation, financing and an assessment of their results, with links for more information if possible.

Answer:

- Post storm response committee mobilizes people to respond to emergency restoration after a storm has impacted one of the insured area. The co/managing body submits a proposal and budget to Reef Rescue Initiative Emergency Fund for resources to be allocated to them for response.
- NCRMN is composed of The Belize Fisheries Department (BFD), Belize Audubon Society (BAS), Belize Coastal Zone Management Authority & Institute (CZMAI), Blue Ventures (BV), ECOMAR, Fragments of Hope (FoH), Healthy Reefs for Healthy People Initiative (HRI), Projects Abroad, SIWA-BAN, Southern Environmental Association (SEA), Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE, Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA), University of Belize Environmental Research Institute (UB ERI) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). This committee meets frequently to discuss issues affecting coral reefs. The committee works along with protected areas managers to carry out coordinated efforts for doing assessments for bleaching, diseases and reef health, administering treatment SCTL D and to continue monitoring the spread of SCTL D.
- Through the Reef Rescue Initiative Belize is a part of the Coral Reef Restoration Network.

Theme 2 – Coral Reef Science and Oceanography: Advancing and Utilizing the Latest Science and Technology

2.A – Coral monitoring capacity building

- (ICRI) Do you have information / case studies that could contribute to the update of the “Methods for ecological monitoring of coral reefs” (<https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/documents/2004-023.pdf>), especially related to the use of new technologies.

Answer:

- (ICRI) Are you aware, developing, or involved with, any capacity building activities related to the use of coral reef monitoring mechanisms, especially regarding the advancement of monitoring practices (noting technology)?

Answer:

- *FoH does training yearly in using the diver based photo mosaics and the drone ortho mosaics.*
- *AGRRA training is done frequently as well.*

2.B – The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)

The GCRMN would like to receive feedback on the [Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020 report](#) to improve the production of future regional and global reports. As such, please kindly respond accordingly to the questions below:

- (ICRI) In reference to the Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020 report:
 - Have you read the report?
 - Did you utilise the report and/or use the results and contents?
 - How could the next report be improved (considering the entire process from data acquisition to reporting)?

Answer:

- *The entire report was not read however the areas of interest pertaining to Belize was looked at.*
- *The report is very lengthy and there should be a condensed version with easily understandable graphics. The report needs to be shared more widely. I only heard about the report because someone asked me to answer a survey question and the link was there for the report. If there was a condensed document that can be easily accessed and referenced, then I believe it would have been used more.*

- (ICRI) The GCRMN intends to establish time-bound task forces to address specific priority issues and to build capability and capacity across the network. As a first priority, a Data Task Force was established. The Task Force brings together subject matter experts to increase the transparency, reproducibility, and robustness of future GCRMN reports alongside capacity in monitoring, data collection, analysis, management and sharing of coral reefs and associated ecosystems. The Task Force will focus on:

- Improving data integration and analyses to facilitate the production of GCRMN regional and global reports; and
- Promoting good data management practices based on FAIR data principles for the coral reef scientific community.

Tell us if you will be interested in joining the Data Task Force, or upcoming task forces. More so, please inform us if you have data to contribute to upcoming regional, or global, reports and if you will be organising and/or partaking in any capacity building activities regarding data monitoring:

Answer:

1. *Taskforces:*
2. *Data to contribute (GCRMN Region Country, Data description):*
3. *Upcoming capacity building activities:*

Theme 3 - Local Threat Reduction: Integrating Response Planning Frameworks

Please tick the most appropriate box/boxes:

- (ICRI) Do you have (or in the process of developing) a coral reef response plan(s) on, for example, but not limited to:
 - coral disease
 - vessel groundings
 - bleaching
 - invasive species outbreaks (lionfish and COTS)
 - large storm events
 - other:

If yes, please provide us with more information.

Answer:

- *Belize has a response plan for SCTLD treatment.*
- *A post-storm response plan has been developed for Hol Chan Marine Reserve and Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve with intents to expand it for South Water Caye Marine Reserve.*
- *National Lionfish Management Plan 2019 - 2023*

Theme 4 - Diversity and Inclusion: Expanding the Coral Reef Community

4.A – Connect with youth audiences:

- (ICRI) Are you developing (or planning to develop) any communication campaigns or outreach materials? What will your primary target audiences be and what would your key messages include?

Answer:

- *Through Belize Audubon Society (a MPA co-manager) there was the development of SCTL D booklets for outreach purposes to the general public and fishermen.*

4.B - Collaborate with Indigenous people and seek to incorporate indigenous and local knowledge into policies and management plans:

- (ICRI) How do you incorporate indigenous and local knowledge into policies and management frameworks. Please provide us with some examples. Do you have any plans or strategies to further promote this incorporation?

Answer:

- *Through Advisory Committees for the MRs*
- *Through consultations for the updating of management plans*
- *Through feedback when doing Management Effectiveness Evaluations*

- (ICRI) Do you have any, or know of, best practices to solicit Indigenous and local community knowledge?

Answer:

- *Belize currently has an Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for consultations with indigenous people.*
- *The Department normally have focus sessions with them in their communities.*

C. Kunming-Montreal Global biodiversity framework

- (ICRI) Do your current National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) incorporate coral reefs? If not, what kind of material will be useful for your Country/organisation to ensure coral reefs are integrated in the revision of NBSAPs?

Answer: Yes, Belize incorporated the conservation and management of coral reefs into it's NBSAP

- (ICRI) How are you planning to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global biodiversity framework. For you, which targets are the most relevant for coral reefs?

Answer:

- *Target 1 - Belize Sustainable Oceans Plan*
- *Target 2 – PfP Project*
- *Target 3 - Under BSOP the rest of the high and medium biodiversity areas will be identified; Already declared 7 zones as High Protection for Biodiversity Marine Reserves*
- *Target 5 – the CITES Act has been finalized and endorsed for Belize by cabinet. The commencement order is pending.*
- *Target 8 – Large-scale CoPe: Reducing Climate Risks with Equitable Nature-based Solutions: Engaging Communities on Reef-Lined Coasts*
- *Target 4 – Coral Restoration programs*
- *Target 6 – Lionfish Management Plan. Working along with Blue Ventures and tour operators for lionfish removal in no take zones.*

D. Upcoming events

Please tick the most appropriate box/boxes:

- September 19th – 23rd 2023: 37th ICRI GM, USA, Hawaii
- 30th November – 12th December 2023: 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- 26th February – 1st March 2024: 6th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
- 10th – 12th April 2024: 2024 UN Ocean Decade Conference, Barcelona, Spain.
- 2024: United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16) of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Turkey.
- Other

Please list any upcoming regional / international events relevant to ICRI that your organisation plans to attend:

Answer:

E. Publications. Please list relevant publications / reports you have released recently (+ add a link if possible)

Publication	URL

F. ICRI Member Feedback. What do you find most valuable about being a member of ICRI as well as completing the ICRI member reports? If you have any ideas to improve the Member Reports, please list below:

Answer: ICRI provides a platform for collaboration among countries. This is in knowledge exchange and capacity building. Being a member let's you have access to expertise and exchange of information and data. This is very important for a developing country who may not have in house expertise and knowledge about arising issues.

G. Contact information & member information. (Note that this information will be posted on the ICRI website on your member page: <https://icriforum.org/members/>).

Please use the table below to provide us updates to your member's focal points as well as the blank cells to indicate changes to information (please add more rows, as needed):

Focal Point 1:	
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Focal Point 3:	



<i>Name:</i>	
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	
<i>Email:</i>	
Member page updates:	
<i>Section</i>	<i>Update</i>
Do you have new resources (reports, guidelines etc.) that you would like to display?	
<i>Resource description</i>	<i>URL</i>

Thank you very much for sharing your valuable experiences and information with ICRI. Members reports, meeting outputs and resources will be uploaded to: <https://icriforum.org/events/37th-icri-general-meeting/>