



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: International Coral Reef Society (ICRS)
- Name of person(s) completing member's report: Simon Harding
- Email: simonharding@yahoo.com / simon.harding@usp.ac.fj.
- 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: ICRS attended the 36th General Meeting
- Will you be attending the 37th ICRI General Meeting: Yes No
- Member social media:
 - Twitter: @ICRSCoralReefs
 - LinkedIn: not applicable
 - Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/ISRSmembers

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: Resilience-based management is a key strategy supported by ICRS through its Plan of Action and a critical element of the ICRS Science to Policy paper “Rebuilding Coral Reefs; A Decadal Grand Challenge” published in 2021 (<https://doi.org/10.53642/NRKY9386>).

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: ICRS has representatives on the ICRI Ad Hoc Committee on Resilience-based Management and ICRS members are employees of both government and non-government organisations actively involved in RBM for coral reefs.

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

Answer: ICRS has not specifically developed training materials for RBM.

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: ICRS has representatives on the ICRI Ad Hoc Committee on Reef Restoration. ICRS members are involved in multiple approaches and mechanisms for reef restoration through academic research and in situ approaches, mainly via the Coral Restoration Consortium (CRC), an ICRS Chapter.

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: ICRS does not have specific information or case studies that can contribute but ICRS members will be involved in the use of new technologies for monitoring and data management.

- (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: ICRS has recently established a mentorship programme for its members, which will include coral reef monitoring mechanisms and practices. The mentorship programme is being launched in September 2023 and is part of a programme looking to build community connections and networking in the international coral reef science community.

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: Yes – many ICRS members have read the 2020 report and have utilised the results and contents in scientific studies, publications or reports. Including additional indicators in the next report such as a measure of reef fish abundance or biomass would be useful. Selection and inclusion of one or more socioeconomic indicators would also improve global coral reef monitoring.

- (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: ICRS is interested in joining the Data Task Force or other upcoming Task Forces subject to availability of expert members.*
- 2. Data to contribute (GCRMN Region Country, Data description): ICRS does not have data to contribute although ICRS members may have through their respective organisations (employers).*
- 3. Upcoming capacity building activities: None planned specifically but also refer to the new ICRS mentoring programme.*

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: ICRS is currently not developing specific coral reef response plans but does produce briefing papers on key coral reef issues including coral disease and bleaching: <https://coralreefs.org/publications/briefing-papers/>

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: ICRS developed a flyer that summarises the ICRS Science to Policy paper which was distributed at the UNFCCC COP26 in Glasgow in 2021 and is available in five languages: https://coralreefs.org/icrs_at_cop26/. The ICRS Student Chapter was heavily involved in the development and distribution of this flyer.

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: This question is currently not very applicable to ICRS as our policy work has been at the global level and we do not develop management plans. However, ICRS strongly supports the use of indigenous and local knowledge in management approaches for coral reefs.

In terms of internal policy ICRS has implemented a sliding scale for membership fees to encourage participation of indigenous people, especially those from small island nations. The Society has also implemented free virtual attendance to the International Coral Reef Symposium for specific groups to encourage participation. Please also refer to the [ICRS Diversity Statement and Code of Conduct](#).

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

Answer: Peer-to-peer exchanges between particular stakeholders or coral reef communities are a proven technique to solicit knowledge, and is one supported by ICRS.

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: This question is not applicable to ICRS

- (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: ICRS strongly supports the implementation of the K-M GBF to improve the health of coral reefs and associated ecosystems. The most relevant targets for coral reefs are: Target 1 (Spatial planning), Target 2 (Restoration), Target 3 (MPAs/OECMs), Target 4 (Species conservation/recovery), Target 5 (Wild species harvest/trade), Target 7 (Pollution), Target 8 (Climate change), Target 9 (Sustainable use of wild species), Target 20 (Information and knowledge), Target 21 (Participation of IPLCs) and Target 22 (Participation of women, girls and youth).

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: ICRS are sending a delegation to UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai in December 2023 which includes members of CORDAP. There are also two ICRS upcoming conferences: The European Coral Reef Symposium, 2 – 5 July, 2024, in Naples, Italy, and the 16th International Coral Reef Symposium, in New Zealand in 2026 provisionally planned for July.

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

Publication	URL
Knowlton et al. 2021. Rebuilding Coral Reefs: A Decadal Grand Challenge	https://doi.org/10.53642/NRKY9386
Coral Reefs Journal	https://www.springer.com/journal/338



Reef Encounter Newsletter	https://coralreefs.org/society-publications/reef-encounter/

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: Attending ICRI meetings (either in person or remotely) to network with other members and work collectively to conserve and restore coral reefs is extremely valuable.

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:	
<i>Name:</i>	Christian Voolstra
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Focal Point 2:	
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Focal Point 3:	
<i>Name:</i>	Simon Harding
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	ICRS Conservation Committee Co-chair / University of The South Pacific / ICRS ICRI representative
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Member page updates:	
<i>Section</i>	<i>Update</i>
<i>Additional Information</i>	<i>The next European Coral Reef Symposium (ECRS 2024) will take place in Naples, Italy, 2–5 July, 2024 and the 16th International Coral Reef Symposium, will be held in New Zealand in July 2026</i>
Do you have new resources (reports, guidelines etc.) that you would like to display?	
<i>Resource description</i>	<i>URL</i>



International Coral Reef Initiative

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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/>