



## International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)

Member's Report | 37<sup>th</sup> General Meeting

19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2023 Hawai'i, – United States of America

Reporting Period: 2021 – 2023

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### A. Member Information:

- Name of ICRI member: **Myanmar**
- Name of person(s) completing member's report: Cherry Aung
- Email: [missaungmarine@gmail.com](mailto:missaungmarine@gmail.com)
- 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: 34<sup>th</sup> annual ICRI general meeting, Townsville, Australia
- Will you be attending the 37<sup>th</sup> 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:* Coral trade is controlled under the Myanmar Marine Fisheries Law since 1990. As arising awareness of important role of coral reefs, climate change impacts and anthropogenic impacts, relevant laws and policies regarding to conserve the existing coral reefs in Myanmar is consequently adopted. The following are current implementing laws and policies which are mainly based on resilience-based management (RBM):

1. Environmental policy (1994)
2. National Wetland Committee (2016)
3. Myanmar's Responsible Tourism Policy (2012)
4. Environmental Conservation Law (2012)
5. Environmental Conservation Rules (2014)
6. Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure (2015)
7. National Environmental policy (Reformulated in 2019)
8. Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (2018)
9. National Climate Change Policy (2019)

To attain the sustainability of coastal resources in Myanmar, National Coastal Resources Management Central Committee (NCRMCC) was formed on 2016. The NCRMCC was chaired by the Vice President (now Deputy Prime Minister) of the Myanmar Government with 20 committee members. The Working Committee of NCRMCC was established with 20 members and Advisory Committee for NCRMCC was also formed with 30 members. The NCRMCC is aimed to highlight the role of Blue Economy on coastal and marine tourism, resources conservation, and inshore and offshore fishing.

One of the NCRMCC mandate include to formulate the Integrated Coastal Management Programme-ICM in which including six strategic actions, 1) management, 2) institution and capacity development, 3) coastal ecosystem conservation and rehabilitation, 4) research and monitoring, 5) inclusive management and 6) benefit sharing. Above mentioned programme aims to prepare the 15-Years Integrated Coastal Management Plan with the support of relevant agencies.

*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:*

- 1- Marine Science Department is recently doing academic researches on coral reefs and currently doing a project on the impacts of climate change and tourism on the coral reef community
- 2- Marine Science Department has a project with TIO (Third Institute of Oceanography, China) on impacts of recently increasing heat waves in the eastern Bay of Bengal on the corals reefs in coastal region of Myanmar
- 3- The international organisation INGO such as WCS and FFI also doing the assessment on coral reef health.

- 4- Myanmar Dive Center (MDC) is currently emphasized on the coral reef conservation regarding to the development of tourism sector. The implementation on setting up the artificial coral reefs near the natural and degraded coral beds.
  - 5- Coral reef conservation club Myanmar (CRCCM) is a local CSO and developed in 2021 aimed to share knowledge and conserve coral reefs along the coast of Myanmar.
- (ICRI) Have you developed, or are you aware of, training materials that you can share?

Answer:

Only one training agency what I know is “Coral reef Check”. Reef check method is currently using by INGO in Myanmar.

Marine Science Department is not yet get the training to use the Reef check method in coral reef assessment due to lack of budget.

#### *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:

Most of the local and international agencies are emphasized on the conservation and management of the existing coral reefs areas in Myanmar. Coral reef restoration is recently started by MDC and CRCCM making the artificial coral reefs especially on tourism sites.

## **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.
- (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: I involved in the project of capacity building on Marine Science to the use of coral reef monitoring mechanisms (2015-2019) implemented by FFI (Fauna and Flora International). The

activities on coral reefs community assessment involved habitat mapping by using the underwater camera with the line transect methods on the coral reefs area.

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

The GCRMN would like to receive feedback on 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 I have just read the report but not yet utilise.*

- (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 is 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: I would like to join*
2. *Data to contribute (GCRMN Region Country, Data description): I have some data to contribute to upcoming report*
3. *Upcoming capacity building activities: I would like to participate*

## 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:*

*Tourism impacts on coral reefs : Regular assessment on the coral reefs health and tourist activities has been done especially on the tourism sites.*

#### 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:*

*After sometimes in summer, we have beach and under water cleaning activities making collecting plastic and other waste materials especially the tourism sites. Stakeholders, local community and government organization were participated. The primary target audiences - tourism sites (Particular in hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops) The key message – to control throwing the plastic and waste materials/ healthy coral reef is much more benefit in tourism sector.*

*Education on the coral reef conservation and campaigns (Workshop and seminar) had also be done by Marine Science Department.*

##### 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:*

*Coral reef health assessment, arising awareness program, academic research, are the kinds of incorporation into policies and management frameworks. We are already participated in National Coastal Resources Management Central Committee (NCRMCC) and National coordination body (NCB).*

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

*Answer:*

*The project on the tourism impact assessment on coral reefs is based on interview mainly to coastal communities and stressors.*

### **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, our current National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) incorporate coral reefs in Myanmar.*

- (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:*

*Not yet any idea about the Kunming-Montreal Global biodiversity framework. I hope I can answer later.*

*For me, the targets on restoration, fishery impacts, and tourism impacts coral reefs are the most relevant.*

### **D. Upcoming events**

*Please tick the most appropriate box/boxes:*

September 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023: 37<sup>th</sup> ICRI GM, USA, Hawaii

30<sup>th</sup> November – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023: 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

- 26<sup>th</sup> February – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024: 6<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
- 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 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: Our organisation plans will try to attend the above ticked box.*

**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:*

*Strengthening the networks relating the coral reefs. Get valuable knowledge that we can share our environment. We can improve the strategy in conservation and management.*

**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:	
Name:	<i>Dr. Cherry Aung</i>
Title/Organisation:	<i>Professor and head of Department of Marine Science, Myeik University</i>
Email:	<i>missaungmarine@gmail.com</i>
Focal Point 2:	
Name:	<i>Mr Soe Win</i>

<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	<i>Officer, Department of Fishery, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation</i>
<i>Email:</i>	<i>soewinn67@gmail.com</i>
<b>Focal Point 3:</b>	
<i>Name:</i>	<i>Dr. Toe Aung</i>
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	<i>Assistant Director Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation</i>
<i>Email:</i>	<i>toaung02@gmail.com</i>
<b>Member page updates:</b>	
<i>Section</i>	<i>Update</i>
	<p><i>The Department of Marine Science under the Ministry of Education is tasked with doing researches and managing both marine and coastal resources and environment especially on coral reef, seaweeds, seagrass and mangroves and fisheries as well. Researches on oceanography and marine and coastal resources have been regularly done by students and staffs for academic needs. Other researches collaborated with other agencies like NGO, INGO and CSO are also contributed.</i></p> <p><i>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) is responsible for policy and management within the area of Environment and Forestry at the national, regional and local level. Forest Department, a primary authority responsible for administering Reserved Forest Lands, is responsible for the protection and conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable management of forest resources in the country.</i></p> <p><i>Ministry of Agriculture, Livelihoods and Irrigation (MOALI) is also another one which has mandate to conserve and manage marine environment including coral reefs. The Department of Fishery of MOALI is a key in working for conservation and management of marine and fish species.</i></p> <p><i>Myanmar has a long coastline with more than 2800 km running from North to South of the country. Generally, the coastline is divided into three parts, the upper Rakhine Coast, the middle Ayeyarwady Coast and the lower Teninthayi Coast. The middle Ayeyarwady region and apart from it, Rakhine and Teninthayi Coast are well known for their richness of coral reefs. Myeik Archipelago is composed of more than 800 islands and also well known for its beautiful coral reefs. According</i></p>





	<i>to Marine Science's survey, there are more than 500 species of corals has been recorded from the Myeik Archipelago. Like many other countries, coral reefs in Myanmar are facing the problem of degradation, especially by fishing, trading and tourism. Currently, Myanmar has 170,000 ha (1700 km2) area of coral reefs.</i>
<b>Do you have new resources (reports, guidelines etc.) that you would like to display?</b>	
<i>Resource description</i>	<i>URL</i>
	<i>No.</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/>