



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: [FRANCE](#)
- Name of person(s) completing member's report: [Antoine PEBAYLE](#)
- Email: antoine.pebayle@developpement-durable.gouv.fr
- 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: [last in person meeting attended was GM 34 \(2019\); last meeting attended was GM 36 \(2022\)](#)
- Will you be attending the 37th ICRI General Meeting: Yes No
- Member social media:
 - Twitter:
 - [Ministry of ecological Transition and territorial Cohesion: @Ecologie_Gouv](#)
 - [Ministry of the Overseas: @lesoutremer](#)
 - [Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs: @francediplo_EN](#)
 - [French coral reef initiative: @Ifrecor](#)
 - LinkedIn:
 - [Ministry of ecological Transition and territorial cohesion: Ministères Écologie Énergie Territoires](#)
 - [Ministry of the Overseas: Ministère de l'Intérieur et des Outre-mer](#)
 - [Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs: Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères](#)

- French coral reef initiative: Initiative Française pour les récifs coralliens (Ifreco)

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:

Conservation and recovery of coral reefs is the subject of dedicated action plans ([National action plan \[FR\]](#); [French coral reef initiative \(Ifreco\) action plan 2022-2026 \[FR\]](#)), and is integrated in broader national policies dedicated to biodiversity ([National Protected Areas Strategy 2030](#); [National Biodiversity Strategy 2030](#)).

They aim to foster ecosystems resilience to the effects of ongoing climate change through key actions and priorities:

- *Protection of coral reefs at sea (MPAs, regulatory protection of coral and herbivores species, regulation of fisheries);*
- *Reduce land-based threats and pressures (watershed and coastal management);*
- *Avoid, reduce and compensate the impacts of human development and activities;*
- *Improve knowledge and monitoring framework;*
- *Build capacity;*
- *Raise awareness.*

These national action plans are implemented at regional level in order to adapt closely the policies to the specific characteristics of each territory.

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 UNESCO world heritage site “[Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef Diversity and Associated Ecosystems](#)” is one of the pilot sites of the [Resilient Reefs Initiative](#). This project includes: the development and implementation of a resilience-based strategy; and the sharing of feedback and expertise with the regional partners of the initiative (Palau, Belize, and Australia).

In 2021, the French Biodiversity Agency and the Ministry of the Overseas launched a call for projects to promote the resilience of coral reefs and associated ecosystems ([ReCorEA \[FR\]](#)), with the support of Ifrecoor.

1.5 million euros were allocated to the 10 selected projects:

- 4 ecosystem restoration projects
 - 3 pilot projects to test innovative climate-proof restoration techniques (French Polynesia)
 - 1 mangrove restoration project (Martinique)
- 5 projects on building and strengthening management and regulation of ecosystems (French Polynesia, La Réunion, Mayotte, Guadeloupe, Saint-Martin)
- 1 ecological mooring site (New Caledonia)

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

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:

In 2020 Ifrecoor published a [Guide to Ecological Engineering](#) that lists all the main restoration techniques suitable for coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass meadows. The guide includes the success rate, cost of implementation, limits, best conditions of implementation, etc.

Ifrecoor’s new action plan includes an entire section on reef restoration. It aims to develop a restoration methods classification to help project leaders, sponsors, and public authorities to identify the most suitable approach regarding the scale of the project, the local context, etc.

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:

The last assessment of the status of the coral reefs of French overseas ([report webpage \[FR\]; summary for policymakers](#)) still relies on known monitoring methods as listed on the guide (assessment of hard coral cover; living coral cover; algae cover; with few integrations of fish communities).

IfrecoR's action plan 2022-2026 includes developing a guide on the use of new technologies to monitor coral reefs. The reports and guides are expected for 2024-2025 and the results can be shared with ICRI.

- (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:

French overseas territories have different statuses and contexts, and this is reflected in the different monitoring approaches used (some rely on European directives monitoring efforts – Water framework directive for instance; others use more locally suitable methods; etc.).

Parallel to the development of a guide on the use of new technologies, IfrecoR is working on harmonizing the methods and indicators used to monitor coral reefs among the different French overseas in order to gain in efficiency and data interoperability.

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:

Have you read the report?

National focal points have read the report and attended webinars and presentations delivered by ICRI and GCRMN experts. The main results have been shared within the ministries involved in coral reef conservation.

Did you utilise the report and/or use the results and contents?

The report has proven to be a useful reference, especially when comparing national monitoring results to the global trends. Following its publication, the issue of coral reef conservation has been spread to a wider public with the active role of the media.

How could the next report be improved?

French researchers were deeply involved in the data acquisition and we think this first step can be improved to make data collection easier and more time-efficient. The reporting and sharing of the results have shown great improvements since the last global report and the overall products have a good informative value while being easy to share and understand.

- (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: Interest in joining the Data Task Force (already attended the workshop held in Monaco in 2022).*
2. *Data to contribute (GCRMN Region Country, Data description): French data are already being used in the regional & global reporting.*
3. *Upcoming capacity building activities: France is coordinating the next Pacific regional report and meetings and workshops are planned to help build capacity.*

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: [diseases affecting reef living organisms; accidental oil spills](#)

If yes, please provide us with more information.

Answer:

Since 2019, France has set up a national fund that can be mobilized to trigger fast monitoring campaigns in reaction to bleaching events.

During the 2022-2026 period, we are reflecting on replicating this model to monitor other events and phenomenon such as coral diseases, invasive species outbreaks, and diseases affecting reef living organisms.

Ifrecor's action plan also include trainings on invasive species management (2023 and 2024).

Finally, a report on accidental oil spill response protocol on a coral reef is being developed and expected to be published in 2024.

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:

The last national communication campaigns were organized in 2021 & 2022 to share the results of the assessment of French coral reef status (2021); and the assessment of the implementation of Ifrecor's last action plan (2022).

Reflections on the next campaigns will be conducted in 2024.

Communication campaigns target few key audiences: civil officers, elected representatives, private sectors, and general public.

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:

Indigenous and local knowledge is mostly mobilized at the local scale. We do not have a national framework to integrate these knowledges into our management and policies.

Yet we are interested to learn from the discussions that will take place during GM37 and to gather feedback from other countries.

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

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, the national implementation of the Kunming-Montreal GBF is our National Biodiversity Strategy 2030. It includes actions and targets dedicated to coral reef conservation.

- (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:

The Kunming-Montreal GBF most relevant targets for coral reefs are, at the moment, targets 1 (spatial planning & integrated management); 3 (protected areas); and 6 (management of invasive alien species).

Targets 2 (restoration); 7 (pollution); and 8 (climate change and ocean acidification) are also very important, with rising concerns in the near future.

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:

Except for ICRI GM, ICRI national focal points will not be attending the listed events, yet France will be represented and will actively participate to all of them.

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

Publication	URL
Ifrecor, Health status of coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves of the French overseas territories, 2021	http://www.ifrecor-doc.fr/files/original/6c2c8c211206f5857e58dffdd4b12b5c.pdf
Ouédraogo et al., What are the toxicity thresholds of chemical pollutants for tropical reef-building corals? A systemic review., 2023 (study preliminary to a wider project)	https://environmentalevidencejournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13750-023-00298-y

to identify and reduce pollution sources – final report expected by the end of 2023)

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:

The most valuable about being a member of ICRI is probably to receive regular and comprehensive information on initiatives and projects around the world. ICRI is an active community that foster cooperation and sharing of experiences among its members.

The current format of the member report (focused on the implementation of the ongoing action plan) seems adapted.

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>	Antoine Pebayle
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	Marine biodiversity and coral reefs policy officer / Ministry of ecological Transition and territorial Cohesion
<i>Email:</i>	antoine.pebayle@developpement-durable.gouv.fr
Focal Point 2:	
<i>Name:</i>	Nabil Medaghri Alaoui
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	Global Ocean Protection / Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs
<i>Email:</i>	nabil.medaghri-alaoui@diplomatie.gouv.fr
Focal Point 3:	
<i>Name:</i>	Marianna Monneau
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	Biodiversity officer / Ministry of the Overseas
<i>Email:</i>	marianna.monneau@outre-mer.gouv.fr
Member page updates:	
<i>Section</i>	<i>Update</i>
<i>MPA Information</i>	The link to the National Strategy for Protected Areas (English version) could be added on the last paragraph of this section :
	We will send new informations to be published on our member page when the National Biodiversity Strategy will be released.



Do you have new resources (reports, guidelines etc.) that you would like to display?	
<i>Resource description</i>	<i>URL</i>
Ifrecor, Health status of coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves of the French overseas territories, 2021 <i>The report was shared on ICRI website but we would like to have it appear on our member page.</i>	http://www.ifrecor-doc.fr/files/original/6c2c8c211206f5857e58dffdd4b12b5c.pdf

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/>