

Terms of reference for the *ad hoc* committee on integrating coral reefs into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

Proposed for adoption at the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) 37th General Meeting (United States of America)

Background

Healthy and resilient marine and coastal ecosystems, including coral reefs and their associated ecosystems, are an essential part of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) 2030 and 2050 visions, providing multiple benefits and ecosystem services to address the drivers of biodiversity loss as well as climate change mitigation, adaptation, and community resilience. The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Secretariat has therefore recognised the urgent and continued need for action to address coral reef issues through the GBF, building on the advances made with respect to coral reefs by the *ad hoc* committee on “developing a recommendation for a post-2020 framework”, supporting coral reef nations party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to implement the GBF.

Following the adoption of the GBF in December 2022 at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the CBD, coral reefs, and their associated ecosystems, are not explicitly referenced within the framework’s 4 goals and 23 targets. However, the GBF remains highly applicable to coral reefs and their associated ecosystems. In this light, it is imperative that ICRI retains its valuable supportive role to CBD parties demonstrating how, and where, coral reefs and their associated ecosystems can be conserved, protected, and restored through the framework. A key mechanism for this is National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

NBSAPs are the main vehicle for implementation of the CBD at the national level and are expected to be a key component of the enhanced planning, monitoring, reporting and review mechanism of the Convention for the GBF. In decision 15/6 (Mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review), Parties are requested to submit revised or updated NBSAPs, including national targets, by CBD COP16, following the guidance provided in annex I of the decision, aligned with the goals and targets of the GBF. NBSAPs are an umbrella process under which all national targets and actions relevant to the GBF can be planned, implemented, monitored, reviewed, and enhanced. They are the main instrument through which Parties establish and communicate their national contribution towards the Framework and its goals and targets and should involve and facilitate the engagement of all government sectors at all levels of government, and all stakeholders, indigenous peoples and local communities, and youth across society.

ICRI has an important role to play in coordinating consistent views across its member countries, with support from its organisations, on the need for, and substance, of updates and revision to NBSAPs to include coral reefs and their associated ecosystems.

The objective of the *ad hoc* committee will be to:

1. Prepare a timeline for the implementation of the Terms of the Reference, according to the ICRI Rules of Procedure;
2. Develop a guidance document for revising, updating and implementing NBSAPs to integrate coral reef ecosystems, including guidance on reporting and coral reef indicators, populated with the national case studies, and appropriate alternative resources that align with, and build upon, the GBF Monitoring Framework and previous ICRI *ad hoc* committees;
3. Develop national case studies for interested and volunteering countries;
4. Organisation of an event at the COP16.



Chair:

ICRI Secretariat

Members:

United States of America. Others: TBC.

Duration:

The *ad hoc* committee will work intersessionally through to the 38th ICRI General Meeting

Working procedures:

The *ad hoc* committee will work virtually and take advantage of any opportunities for face-to-face meetings in the side lines of other meetings.