

## Terms of reference for the ICRI Youth ad hoc committee

*Adopted on September 12<sup>th</sup> 20204 at the 38<sup>th</sup> ICRI General Meeting, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*

### Background

Under Theme 4 of the Plan of Action 2021-2024, expanding the coral reef community, ICRI aims to broaden the coral reef community to include underrepresented voices, including the Indigenous, local, and youth communities.

Incorporating the voices and perspectives of the young professional community in coral reef conservation and decision making is crucial to ensure the conservation, restoration, and long-term survival of coral reef ecosystems around the world. Young professionals are considered as people aged between 18 – 35 years (based on the IUCN youth strategy). Engaging young professionals fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to preserving coral reefs for future generations. Youth bring unique perspectives, fresh ideas during decision-making, and novel approaches to address the challenges facing coral reef ecosystems, challenges that young people will disproportionately suffer the burden of.

ICRI recognises the importance of incorporating youth perspectives into conservation efforts and for the first time, held a youth panel session and working group during the 37<sup>th</sup> ICRI General Meeting in 2023. To ensure the integration of youth voices in future ICRI actions and global efforts, a youth report was produced which identified the key needs, concerns, and aspirations of the youth community, emphasising the need for a reliable, relatable source of information with easy access to actions and opportunities with clear strategies for youth inclusion and engagement.

As such ICRI aims to continue this momentum and proposes to engage, empower, and support the ICRI community through the creation of an ICRI Youth ad hoc committee.

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

1. Develop a desk-based gap analysis of existing youth strategies for the marine sector, including a needs-based assessment with Youth to understand challenges and opportunities, with a particular emphasis on coral reef conservation to identify any gaps that ICRI's strategy can fill in relation to coral reefs and the broader mission of ICRI.
2. Develop an ICRI Youth #ForCoral Strategy (based on some of the findings of the gap analysis).
3. Identify how to better engage youth and assist ICRI members in identifying qualified and passionate youth representatives for participation in international conferences, workshops, and symposiums related to coral reef conservation.
4. Support the Global Biodiversity plan including Target 22: Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and Information Related to Biodiversity for all

### Chairs:

ICRI Secretariat

### Members:

The Commonwealth Secretariat, Wildlife Conservation Society, International Coral Reef Society (ICRS)



**Duration:**

One year with possibility of extension.

**Annex 1: Proposed Terms of Reference for the ad hoc Committee on ICRI Youth**

The ad hoc committee will promote the voices and perspectives of the ICRI youth community (ages 18 – 35) in coral reef conservation and decision making to ensure these diverse voices are heard and integrated. The committee will be chaired by the ICRI Secretariat alongside TBC. Members will meet online a minimum of 4 times per year to discuss solutions and challenges.

Working with ICRI members and partners, the ad hoc committee will:

- Review ICRI member and supported partner youth strategies, with a particular emphasis on coral reef conservation. Focus on a) existing initiatives, b) lessons learned from other strategies, and c) identifying any gaps that ICRI’s strategy can fill in relation to coral reefs and the broader mission of ICRI.
- Identify, promote, and support innovative solutions and projects led by youth that address coral reef conservation challenges.
- Ensure the inclusion of diverse youth voices and perspectives when creating the ICRI Youth #ForCoral Strategy including indigenous local knowledge.

Possible deliverables:

- ICRI Youth #ForCoral Strategy
- Desk based analysis of existing coral reef youth initiatives
- Where feasible support ICRI members to identify qualified and passionate youth representatives for participation in international conferences, workshops, and symposiums related to coral reef conservation.