



## International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)

### Member's Report | 38<sup>th</sup> General Meeting

9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024 Jeddah, – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

### Reporting Period: 2023 & 2024

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#### A. Member Information:

- Name of ICRI member: The Commonwealth Secretariat
- Name of person(s) completing member's report: Ms Heidi Prislan
- Position/Title: Blue Charter Adviser, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Email: [h.prislan@commonwealth.int](mailto:h.prislan@commonwealth.int)
- Are you a designated ICRI Focal Point:  Yes  No
  - If no, please indicate who you are completing the form on behalf of: Dr Nicholas Hardman-Mountford, Head of Oceans and Natural Resources, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Which was the last General Meeting you attended: 37th General Meeting, Hawai'i, – United States of America
- Will you be attending the 38<sup>th</sup> ICRI General Meeting in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:  Yes  No
- Member social media:
  - Twitter/X: @commonwealth #BlueCharter
  - LinkedIn: @theCommonwealth

**B. Reporting on the implementation of the 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. You can download the ICRI Plan of Action here: <https://icriforum.org/documents/plan-of-action-2021-2024/>*

What are the main contributions you, as an ICRI member, have made to the ICRI Plan of Action?

*Theme 1 - Preparing for the Future: Promoting Resilient Coral Reefs*

*Theme 2 - Coral Reef Science and Oceanography: Advancing and Utilizing the Latest Science and Technology*

*Theme 3 - Local Threat Reduction: Integrating Response Planning Frameworks*

*Theme 4 - Diversity and Inclusion: Expanding the Coral Reef Community*

Answer:

*Under the Commonwealth Blue Charter Project Incubator, we are supporting a coral reef project (August 2023 - November 2024), 'Building ocean climate monitoring technical capacity between youth and leaders in the Swahili Coast,' in collaboration with the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), that aims to offer capacity-building expertise and marine education on the monitoring and restoration of corals in Kenyan communities. This project is targeted at local research institutions, environmental organisations, cultural associations, and recreational tourism operators to develop long-term capacity in the region. The project also aims to empower local and youth leaders in educational and technical skills on marine spatial mapping and coral reef monitoring to promote local advocacy of reef protection alongside empowering stewardship of these communities. The project contributes to all four of the ICRI plan of action themes:*

*Theme 1 - Preparing for the Future: Promoting Resilient Coral Reefs: By involving youth and local leaders, the project aims to create a robust network of stakeholders equipped to monitor and respond to changes in coral reef ecosystems, thus promoting long-term resilience.*

*Theme 2 - Coral Reef Science and Oceanography: Advancing and Utilizing the Latest Science and Technology: The project has contributed to advancing coral reef science and technology through the development of marine monitoring techniques and coral reef mapping. Scientific tools and methodologies are incorporated in the training programme to ensure that these are utilised to monitor coral health and inform conservation strategies.*

*Theme 3 - Local Threat Reduction: Integrating Response Planning Frameworks: The project's focus on local threat reduction is evident in its integration of marine monitoring data into broader coastal management plans. The first training session was attended by 35 participants from the Kenya Wildlife Service and 21 Beach Management units, including conservation officers and marine managers. By training local communities and leaders, participants are equipped with the skills to identify and respond to threats such as pollution, overfishing, and climate change. This project approach is designed to reduce local threats to coral reefs, ensuring that response strategies are based on real-time data and local expertise.*

*Theme 4 - Diversity and Inclusion: Expanding the Coral Reef Community: Diversity and inclusion are central to this project, by training youth and local leaders to utilise coastal data for coral reef conservation efforts.*

*We are hopeful further coral-related projects will be submitted through partnerships with countries and ICRI members in the next round of funding from the Blue Charter Incubator.*

*Additionally, since the last ICRI member reporting period, the Commonwealth Blue Charter has partnered with a range of NGOs to assist in 6 knowledge sharing webinars and training on treaty negotiation. At the UNFCCC COP28, there was a collaborative event with the Coral Restoration Consortium to show the importance of storytelling and the inclusion of youth and communities in coral reef actions.*

- (ICRI) What are your upcoming priorities for coral reefs?

*Answer:*

*Our upcoming priorities for coral reefs will be shaped by the commitments made under the forthcoming Commonwealth Ocean Declaration and the outcomes of the Commonwealth Ocean Ministers Meeting held in Cyprus in April 2024. These priorities include strengthening marine governance frameworks, prioritising the promotion of sustainable blue economy practices that benefit coral reef ecosystems, and enhancing the resilience of coral reefs.*

### **C. Reporting on the Restoration of Coral Reefs (Target 2 GBF/Action Point 3 Coral Reef Breakthrough)**

- (ICRI) Are you able to estimate the total area (km<sup>2</sup>) of coral reef under active restoration and the total area you consider to be 'restored', as a result of your organisation/country's in 2023?
  - Total area under active restoration in 2023:  km<sup>2</sup>
  - Total area considered to be restored in 2023:  km<sup>2</sup>
- (ICRI) If available, please provide further information on the total area considered to be restored, and under active restoration for the total period of the restoration programme, including the timeframe:

Answer:

N/A

- (ICRI) For the purpose of the above, please provide definitions for how your programme/organisation/country considers coral reefs to be:
  - A) Under active restoration
  - B) Restored

Answer:

*Under active Restoration:*

N/A

*Restored:*

N/A

### Does your country have any restoration policies or regulations?

Many locations have outdated and insufficient regulations for coral reef restoration, resulting in inadequate oversight of restoration efforts. In addition, the absence, limitations, or differences among regulations between countries prevents the development and implementation of effective regional coral reef conservation strategies.

- (ICRI) Please describe the restoration policies or regulations (if any) that are in place in your country.

Answer:

N/A

*We would be interested to in the results of this survey for Commonwealth countries. This would assist in allowing for targeted capacity building activities and actions as a pan-Commonwealth initiative,*

## D. The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)

The production of future GCRMN reports, both at the regional and global level, relies on the ongoing support of data contributors who are willing to share their coral reef monitoring data for this purpose. As such, from 2024 to 2026, the GCRMN will undertake the rigorous process of developing the **Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025** global report, including an extensive data collation process.

Do you have data to contribute to the upcoming GCRMN global report?

- Please provide the contact information for the data providers to allow for the GCRMN data collation team to request data and discuss the process of data contribution.

*Please add further contacts as needed.*

Answer:

Contact Name:  
Organisation:  
Email Address:

Contact Name:  
Organisation:  
Email Address:

Contact Name:  
Organisation:  
Email Address:

## E. Capacity Building & Communications

Have you found the ICRI #ForCoral Webinar Series useful?

Through 2024, ICRI has hosted multiple webinars that aim to share knowledge and foster collaboration across critical topics concerning the conservation, protection, and restoration of coral reefs. These webinars form the #ForCoral webinar series, and topics include the 4th Global Bleaching Event, impacts of land-based sources of pollution and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

The full list of webinars and recordings can be found here: <https://icriforum.org/forcoral-webinar-series/>

- (ICRI) Did you attend any of the series' webinars, and if so which topics have you found the most useful and engaging? If you did not attend the webinars, please explain why, and how what we could have done better.

Answer:

*We attended a few of the webinars over the past 12 months namely, Integrating coral reefs into NBSAPs and Results of the 2023 Survey of Coral Restoration Practitioners Needs. In addition to this, we also promoted the ICRI webinar series through the Commonwealth Blue Charter networks and newsletters.*

- (ICRI) Do you have any suggestions or request for topics that you wish for ICRI to host as part of this series? If you have a specific topic in mind, and would like to host a webinar, please indicate below.

Answer:

*Youth engagement webinar series, to enable youth to present their studies and innovations to a range of experts.*

Have you found the ICRI communications useful?

- (ICRI) Do you find the ICRI Monthly Round of News Useful? If yes, what do you like about it and how would you suggest improving ICRI's communications?

Answer:

## F. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

ICRI has continually supported the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Post-2020 process, developing a recommendation for coral reef indicators to be included in the Global Biodiversity Framework and supporting Parties during the negotiation process. Following the Framework's adoption in 2022, ICRI's support now aims to support parties in implementing the framework, especially through National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPS) and the Marine and Coastal Work Programme.

In 2024, ICRI released [A Guide for Integrating Coral Reefs and Associated Ecosystems into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans](#) to support coral reef countries to integrate coral reefs and associated ecosystems into their NBSAPs.

- (ICRI) Did you use read, use, and/or apply the Guide on integrating coral reefs and associated ecosystems into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) useful? *Where possible, indicate specific elements that were useful or alternatively provide information if you did not find the guide useful.*

Answer:

*Yes, we reviewed and utilised the report mainly for information and understanding the structured approach to incorporating coral reef conservation into broader biodiversity strategies. Specific elements that were valuable include the detailed frameworks for assessing ecosystem health and the recommendations for aligning national efforts with international conservation goals. For the Commonwealth Blue Charter and our approach to projects, the sections on stakeholder engagement and policy integration were instrumental in refining national strategies to ensure they are comprehensive and actionable.*

- (ICRI) Did you revise your current National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) to include coral reefs? ***N.B.** if you are not a country representative, are you working with national focal points to help update their NBSAPs? Please provide further details.*

Answer:

N/A.

*We would be interested to know the results of this survey for Commonwealth countries.*

- (ICRI) How are you planning to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework? Please list the target(s) and decisions that your work attributes to.

Answer:

*The CBC is exploring how to best support Commonwealth countries through the implementation of the Commonwealth Ocean Declaration as well as supporting countries through the Blue Charter Incubator. The restoration and protection targets are probably most relevant, though many could apply.*

## G. Upcoming events

*Please tick the most any events that you will be, or are planning to attend:*

- September 10<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>: 79th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 79)
- September 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>: GEF International Waters Conference
- October 13<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>: 7<sup>th</sup> International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC7)
- October 21<sup>st</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup>: CBD COP16
- November 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>: 77<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI77)
- December 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>: The International Mangrove Conservation and Restoration Conference
- December 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>: Reef Futures
- June 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2025: United Nations Ocean Conference

October 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> 2025: IUCN World Conservation Congress

Other

Please list any upcoming regional / international events relevant to ICRI that your organisation plans to attend:

*Answer:*

*7-10 October: BBNJ Caribbean Regional Workshop  
11 – 22 November 2024: 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*

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

Publication	URL
<b>CORVI: Assessing Priority Climate Risks in Dominica</b>	<a href="https://www.stimson.org/2024/corvi-assessing-priority-climate-risks-in-dominica/">https://www.stimson.org/2024/corvi-assessing-priority-climate-risks-in-dominica/</a>
<b>Turning the Tides of Inclusion: A Toolkit for Gender Equality in Ocean Sectors</b>	<a href="https://thecommonwealth.org/publications/turning-tides-inclusion-toolkit-gender-equality-ocean-sectors">https://thecommonwealth.org/publications/turning-tides-inclusion-toolkit-gender-equality-ocean-sectors</a>

**I. 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:*

*We are grateful to ICRI for providing updates on global coral reefs and for offering their expertise and support..*

**J. 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):*





<b>Focal Point 1:</b>	
<i>Name:</i>	<b>Dr Nicholas Hardman-Mountford</b>
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	<b>Head of Oceans and Natural Resources, The Commonwealth Secretariat</b>
<i>Email:</i>	<a href="mailto:n.hardman-mountford@commonwealth.int"><b>n.hardman-mountford@commonwealth.int</b></a>
<b>Focal Point 2:</b>	
<i>Name:</i>	<b>Heidi Prislán</b>
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	<b>Blue Charter Adviser, The Commonwealth Secretariat</b>
<i>Email:</i>	<a href="mailto:h.prislán@commonwealth.int"><b>h.prislán@commonwealth.int</b></a>
<b>Focal Point 3:</b>	
<i>Name:</i>	<b>Hilary Enos-Edu</b>
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	<b>Outreach Coordinator (Blue Charter), The Commonwealth Secretariat</b>
<i>Email:</i>	<a href="mailto:h.enos-edu@commonwealth.int"><b>h.enos-edu@commonwealth.int</b></a>
<b>Member page updates:</b>	
<i>Section</i>	<i>Update</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/>