



International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)

Member's Report | 38th General Meeting

9th – 13th September 2024 Jeddah, – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Reporting Period: 2023 & 2024

A. Member Information:

- Name of ICRI member: Panamá
- Name of person(s) completing member's report: Lissette Trejos-Lasso
- Position/Title:
- Email: ltrejos@miambiente.gob.pa
- Are you a designated ICRI Focal Point: Yes No
 - If no, please indicate who you are completing the form on behalf of:
Juan Maté by STRI-Panama
- Which was the last General Meeting you attended: 37th, 2023
- Will you be attending the 38th ICRI General Meeting in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Yes No
- Member social media:
 - Twitter/X: [@MiAmbientePma](https://twitter.com/MiAmbientePma)
 - LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lissette-trejos-lasso-20060929/>
 - Facebook: Ministerio de Ambiente de Panamá [miambiente.gob.pa](https://www.facebook.com/miambiente.gob.pa)
 - socialmedia@miambiente.gob.pa
 - Instagram: [@miambientepma](https://www.instagram.com/miambientepma)

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:

Now we are not applying the information in the guide, however, we are in the process of updating the National Biodiversity Strategy to include the topic of corals and associated ecosystems.

The Smithsonian Institution (SI) has the initiative called Life on a Sustainable Planet: Creating a Resilient Future for Our Oceans. Coral reefs are key ecosystem for this initiative. We do conduct research related to Theme 1 - Preparing for the Future: Promoting Resilient on both the Pacific and Caribbean coast of Panama. Key findings from this research are detailed in Section H.

We are constantly exploring how, through research, training, and collaboration with global partners, we advance our collective understanding of the interaction between nature and human communities to pursue nature-based solutions for a more resilient planet.

During Our Oceans Conference in 2023 Panama reiterated the country's commitment demonstrated by decisions taken such as becoming one of only three countries declared carbon negative in the world, conserving 54.33% of its exclusive economic zone, by expanding the limits of the "Banco Volcán Managed Resources Area" in the Panamanian Caribbean, increasing its surface area to 93,390 kilometers; six times its original size. This is one of the two largest MPAs that protect deep water coral communities.

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

Answer:

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 (km²) 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: 0 km²
 - Total area considered to be restored in 2023: 0 km²
- (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:

There is a pilot project by the local NGO Reef to Reef in the Portobelo region in the Caribbean coast of Panama. The project is evaluating the response of staghorn coral *Acropora cervicornis* to fragmentation and measuring recovery and growth rates in *in situ* nurseries to generate large numbers of large colonies that will be used in restoration projects in Panama. The project is several years away from being able to fully transplant coral colonies.

- (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:

Coral reefs in Panama are currently not undergoing any active coral transplant.

Restored:

Coral reefs are able to regain their ecological functions, including diversity, species interactions and coral cover. Pacific coral reefs, despite being impacted by natural factors such as El Niño sea warming have shown resilience to these events and may not require man-made actions to be restored.

[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:

Not at this time.

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: Juan Maté
Organisation: Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI)
Email Address: MATE.j@si.edu
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:

Yes

- (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:

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:

Yes,

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:

We are not currently following the information in the guide; however, we are in the process of updating the National Biodiversity Strategy to include the topic of corals and associated ecosystems. In accordance with Law 304 of May 31, 2022, “which establishes the comprehensive protection of coral reef systems, ecosystems and associated species in Panama, the Reef Committee of the Republic of Panama was established. This group emerged as an essential instrument to bring this law to life and ensure its effective implementation. The primary purpose of the committee is to provide key technical recommendations for the protection of coral reef ecosystems and to oversee strict compliance with regulations, rules and other priority actions.

- (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:

We are currently updating the national biodiversity strategy to include marine-coastal issues. The goal is to create a national strategy that aims to improve the management of mangrove ecosystems by integrating 50% of the mangrove coverage within the National System of Protected Areas.

In April 2024, INVEMAR in Colombia provided technical training to MiAmbiente staff in Panama on methodologies for monitoring corals and seagrasses. This training will help in collecting cartographic information on marine ecosystems in the Caribbean of Panama.

- (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 Ministry of the Environment and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) are developing consultative workshops during August 2024 to evaluate the National Goals and Alignments with the Kunming Montreal World Framework for Biological Diversity: The ICRI focal points attended this session.

Goals 1, 2, 3. Marine and coastal, and terrestrial spatial planning. Restoration of ecosystems, conservation and protection of protected areas, OMECs, connectivity was covered on August 20, 2024.

Goal 7 on pollution, and goal 10 sustainability in agriculture, fisheries, forestry. were covered on August 21, 2024.

Goals 12 (urban green areas), goal 14 integrate biodiversity in EsIA and Strategic Environmental Evaluation, were covered on August 20, 2024.

On August 23, 2024 the Ministry of Environment of Panama will host a stakeholder evaluation workshop to review national progress of goals 13 and 17.

G. Upcoming events

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

- September 10th – 24th: 79th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 79)
- September 23rd – 26th: GEF International Waters Conference
- October 13th – 18th: 7th International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC7)
- October 21st – November 1st: CBD COP16
- November 4th – 8th: 77th Annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI77)
- December 10th – 12th: The International Mangrove Conservation and Restoration Conference
- December 9th – 13th: Reef Futures
- June 9th – 13th 2025: United Nations Ocean Conference
- October 9th – 15th 2025: IUCN World Conservation Congress
- Other

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

Answer:

No

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

Publication	URL
Increased dominance of heat-tolerant symbionts creates resilient coral reefs in near-term ocean warming	https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2202388120
"RADReef: A global Holocene Reef Rate of Accretion Dataset	https://doi.org/10.1038/s41597-024-03228-w
Effects of bleaching on oxygen dynamics and energy metabolism of two Caribbean coral species.	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2024.170753
Evaluating biodiversity for coral reef reformation and monitoring on complex 3D structures using environmental DNA (eDNA) metabarcoding.	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.159051
Benthic composition changes on coral reefs at global scales	https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-022-01937-2
Disturbance-Induced Changes in Population Size Structure Promote Coral Biodiversity	https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-022-01937-2
Characterizing oceanographic conditions near Coiba Island and Pacific Panama using 20 years of satellite-based wind stress, SST and chlorophyll-a measurements.	https://coiba.org.pa/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Estacion-Coiba-AIP-Characterizing-oceanographic-conditions-near-Coiba-Island.pdf

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:

Being a member of ICRI provides the opportunity to exchange experiences between work carried out in different parts of the world, and also allows space for collaboration between the parties to develop joint projects, replicate ideas of successful actions.

It allows space for the exchange of experiences and the strengthening of technical capabilities.

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):

Focal Point 1:	
<i>Name:</i>	Lissette Trejos Lasso
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	Aquatic Animal Health Veterinarian by Sea and Costal Divisions MiAMBIENTE
<i>Email:</i>	ltrejos@miambiente.gob.pa
Focal Point 2:	
<i>Name:</i>	Karen Domínguez
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	Regional link of the Coasts and Seas Section in Los Santos Province MiAMBIENTE
<i>Email:</i>	
Focal Point 3:	
<i>Name:</i>	Juan L. Maté
<i>Title/Organisation:</i>	Smithsonian Tropical Research- Panama
<i>Email:</i>	MATEJ@si.edu
Member page updates:	
<i>Section</i>	<i>Update</i>
Do you have new resources (reports, guidelines etc.) that you would like to display?	
<i>Resource description</i>	<i>URL</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/38th-icri-general-meeting/>