



38 GM INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF INITIATIVE

J E D D A H , S A U D I A R A B I A

Summary Report 2024

INTERNATIONAL
CORAL REEF
INITIATIVE

38th GENERAL MEETING,
JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA

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EVENT SUMMARY

The 38th General Meeting (GM), under the chair of the United States of America, took place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 10th – 13th September 2024, hosted by the General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS). It marked the first ICRI GM to be held in the Middle East region. The agenda of the meeting is available in [Annex 1](#).



Participants of the 38 ICRI GM

Up to 80 participants, from 36 ICRI Members, including 16 member countries attended the GM in-person (who were joined by 10 online participants) bringing together governments, policymakers and leading experts, for rich discussion on the implementation of the “[2021 - 2024 Plan of Action: Turning the Tide for Coral Reefs](#)”, the achievements of the Initiative and its membership, and the future direction of ICRI in striving for the conservation, restoration and protection of the world’s coral reefs. Apologies were received from 19 ICRI members, and a full list of participants is available in [Annex 2](#). Additionally, during the lunch break on the final day of the GM, the ICRI Membership celebrated 30 years of championing coral reefs by ICRI with a bespoke birthday cake.



ICRI 30 Celebratory Cake

Among the discussion, the occasion of the GM resulted in significant outcomes, including:

- A resolution for the Red Sea Region was adopted ([Annex 3](#)), developed from the conclusions of “The Red Sea Region – A climate refuge for coral reefs” forum.
- Two new *ad hoc* committees (AHC) were established:
 - An ICRI Youth AHC for the development of an ICRI Youth strategy (the adopted Terms of Reference are available in [Annex 4](#))
 - An AHC for the development of a motion to the IUCN World Conservation Congress (the adopted Terms of Reference are available in [Annex 5](#))
- The welcoming of ICRI’s 102nd member - Rare. Rare is a global non-profit environmental organisation whose mission is to inspire change, so people and nature thrive.
- The ICRI membership welcomed “Saudi Arabia” as the next chair of the Initiative, with the Initiative being hosted by the General Organisation for the Conservation of Coral Reefs and Sea Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS).

The GM was coupled with the convening of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network’s (GCRMN) Steering Committee meeting (8th September 2024), and “The Red Sea Region – A climate refuge for coral reefs” forum (9th September 2024).

The GCRMN Steering Committee meeting focused on the production of the “Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025” report (which is expected to be released in 2026) alongside updates from four of the GCRMN’s regional nodes: Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, Regional Organisation for Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME), the Caribbean and the Pacific. The Steering Committee meeting was attended by 29 participants, including four online participants and 13 observers.

“The Red Sea Region – A climate refuge for coral reefs” forum preceded the 38th ICRI GM and highlighted the importance of the Red Sea’s coral reefs for global coral reef conservation efforts, showcasing the efforts being undertaken to understand and build future coral reef resilience to a rapidly changing ocean. The forum welcomed over 150 participants and emphasised the unique biogeography of the Red Sea, which has resulted in high endemism and heat-tolerant coral species, subsequently positioning the region as a potential refugia. The day was an open forum for the exchange of views and experiences to sustainably manage coral reefs with a central focus on the coral reefs of the Saudi Arabian Red Sea. A video, developed by SHAMS, portraying the forum, can be viewed [here](#).

SUMMARY RECORD

All documents and presentations are available at <https://icriforum.org/events/icrigm38/> and all the photos from the general meeting can be viewed at <https://www.playbook.com/s/icri/jWaLfqcDBoWkwJVfPfsmA8c>

ICRI 30 AND HISTORY

Founded in 1994 by eight nations: Australia, France, Japan, Jamaica, the Philippines, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States of America, ICRI was announced at the inaugural Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), on December 7th, 1994. An extensive presentation was delivered by the ICRI Secretariat on the major activities, outcomes and products from the Initiative since its inception. To celebrate 30 years of ICRI, the Secretariat developed a dedicated website, which includes a timeline of the major actions of the Initiative (www.icri30.org).

Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

ICRI MEMBERSHIP

Although the nature of exchanges within ICRI is informal, ICRI has adopted procedures to organise the Initiative. Section 1 of ICRI's [Organization and Management Procedures](#), is specific to "Membership", and outlines:

- Eligibility
- Becoming a member
- Members' roles
- Membership suspension, revocation and reinstatement

Recognising that the Initiative now counts over 100 members, the Secretariat highlighted the importance of ensuring the application of the procedures to support an efficient and effective network. To better understand the implementation of the procedures, the Secretariat undertook a preliminary analysis of ICRI members "adherence" to the procedures outlined under Section 1. Some of the preliminary results included:

- As of 2024, approximately 64% of the current membership have attended a general meeting within the last 10 years.
- A total of 7 members have not been represented since General Meeting 27, with 1 member not being represented since General Meeting 16.
- 36% of members submitted a report to the 37th ICRI General Meeting in 2023.

The main points of discussion, following the presentation, were:

- To continue to ensure that ICRI members can attend virtually (as was the case for the 38th General Meeting). However, in-person attendance should be a priority. The ICRI Secretariat remains committed to financially assist participants, where feasible, especially ODA country members. For instance, 14 members were supported to attend the meeting (with support from SHAMS, U.S. Department of State, Government of Sweden, UNEP and AIMS).
- To understand why some of the members have disengaged from the Initiative; and
- The key benefits of the Initiative to all members.

Considering the presentation and the discussion, the following points were agreed:

- The ICRI Secretariat will undertake a more thorough analysis of “adherence” to be shared with ICRI Members to reflect and comment.
- ICRI’s “Organisation and Management Procedures” need to be more thoroughly enforced to ensure a more efficient and effective Initiative.
- The ICRI Secretariat was asked to undertake actions that are in line with the ICRI procedures. For example, to engage with members that have become disengaged with the Initiative to remind them of the procedures.
- The ICRI Secretariat will report the next steps and the status of the membership at the 39th ICRI General Meeting.

NEW MEMBER

Rare was accepted as a new member to ICRI, joining 101 other members that account for over 75% of the world's coral reefs from 45 countries, 8 global intergovernmental organisations or multilateral environmental agreements, 34 non-governmental organisations, 5 private industry, company or foundation, and 10 regional intergovernmental organisations or regional seas.

Rare was welcomed as the 102nd ICRI member and is a global leader in accelerating social change for people and nature. For 50 years, across 60 countries, Rare have supported millions of people and thousands of communities to shift their behaviours and practices to protect our shared planet.

MEMBER REPORTS

The ICRI Secretariat recognised, and thanked the Membership, for the submission of 27 member reports in advance of the GM. All the received member’s reports are available on the ICRI website ([here](#)). Following the mention of the received reports, the attendees of the meeting opened a discussion on the value and mechanism of submitting members reports, led by the ICRI Secretariat.

It was noted that while the reports are a useful source of information, not only for the Secretariat but for all the ICRI members, they are submitted by members during the preparation period of the GM. This unfortunately leaves minimal time for the Secretariat to read, analyse, and present the rich content, meaning the reports are not utilised to their maximum potential. As a result, the Secretariat proposed to adjust the submission timeframe to receive the reports 3 to 4 months in advance of a GM allowing enough time for the Secretariat to analyse them in detail and present a summary at the GM.

This proposal was well-received by the ICRI membership, and therefore, the next round of member reports will be requested by the ICRI Secretariat around June 2025.

ICRI SECRETARIAT REPORT

An update of all the activities implemented by the ICRI Secretariat since the last GM (September 2023) was presented.

Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

Outputs from ICRI’s AHC on Resilience-based Management (RBM), namely the production of [six RBM case studies](#), was presented by Australia, through a pre-recorded video by the Reef Authority.

Associated document: [presentation \(.mp4\)](#)

FINANCING #FORCORAL

A keynote speech was delivered by H.E. Sakti Wahyu Trenggono, Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia on the “Indonesia Coral Bond: Innovative Blue Financing for MPA and Coral Reefs”, which evidence the mechanisms of the coral bond and its benefit to Indonesia’s coral reefs, and the wider community.

The Minister was subsequently greeted by ICRI co-chair Christine Dawson, United States of America (Department of State), where a copy of the GCRMN “Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020”, was presented as a gift by Ms Dawson.

Following the keynote speech, a short introduction on ICRI’s previous work with respect to “coral reef finance” was delivered before the session. Coral finance has always been a critical topic for ICRI to which the Initiative has implemented several activities and produced valuable resources:

- 2017 - Release of the report on innovations for coral finance – One of the first reports focussing on coral finance ([.pdf](#)).
- 2018 - Release of the Coral Reef Economy report ([.pdf](#)).
- 2018 - Organisations of the workshop to Explore Establishing a Global Fund for Coral Reefs and the Innovative Finance for Coral Reefs Workshop ([.pdf](#)).
- 2021 - Mapping the global funding landscape for coral reef restoration: This report found that US\$258 million has been invested in coral reef restoration efforts across 56 countries in the last decade ([.pdf](#)).

In 2020, ICRI funded the development of “[The Finance Mechanisms for Coral Reef Conservation Training Toolkit](#)”. The toolkit was formed of 13 slide decks that were based on “Finance Tools for Coral Reef Conservation: A Guide”. The slides cover 13 finance mechanisms, along with an introductory context-setting section, for the sustainable financing of coral reef conservation: Entrance Fees; Special Use Permits; Concessions; Green Taxes; Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES); Biodiversity Offsets; Nature Bonds; Impact Bonds; Debt for Nature Swaps; Reef Insurance; Conservation Enterprise Incubators; Impact Investing; and Conservation Trust Funds.

Following this introduction, three presentations on new financing mechanisms for coral reefs were delivered:

1. Global Fund for Coral Reefs: Blended & Innovative Finance, by Gabriel Grimsditch and Nicole Trudeau.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
2. The U.S Department of State: U.S. Funding Approaches to Turn the Tide for Coral Reefs, by Christine Dawson.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
3. Belize Fisheries Department: Belize Blue Bonds, by Alicia Eck-Nunez.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

The presentations sparked rich discussion from the membership, specifically noting a need to undertake an analysis to inform actions regarding financial flows to ensure that investments into blue economy activities that specifically pertain to, or can impact, coral reefs and their associated ecosystems, support coral reef restoration and conservation. It was noted that WWF has undertaken an analysis focusing on financial flows within the Southwest Indian Ocean which could form a strong foundation for such an analysis and there were

proposals to explore a collaboration with Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA) to further support this work.

Due to the complexity of mechanisms and desire for further discussion, the ICRI Secretariat proposed for a [#ForCoral Webinar](#) to be hosted focusing on innovative financing mechanisms for coral reefs. **It was requested that all members interested in participating in the webinar are to inform the ICRI Secretariat.**

PROMOTE AND BUILD CAPACITY FOR THE RESTORATION OF RESILIENT CORAL REEFS

Apologies from the co-chairs of the ICRI AHC on Reef Restoration and Adaptation were provided and therefore, an update from the AHC was not presented and will be provided at the next GM.

Jennifer Koss, ICRI co-chair, alerted the membership on recent papers and articles questioning the value of restoration:

- Coral restoration is a speculative, feel-good science that won't save our reefs (read [here](#)).
- Coral Restoration and adaptation benefits challenged (read [here](#)).
- The end of coral reefs as we know them (read [here](#)).
- Coral restoration – A systematic review of current methods, successes, failures and future directions (read [here](#)).

The GM was informed that a response to the contents of the publications is being prepared by NOAA.

In addition, a short update on communication restoration efforts considering the recent Global Coral Reef Bleaching Event was delivered by Caroline Donovan, NOAA. A small sub-group of the AHC, composed of Coral Restoration Consortium (CRC), NOAA, SECORE, CORDAP, and ICRI is planning to develop target audience-based communication material and key messages for policy makers, civil society and the scientific community. The aim is to present the products at Reef Futures (December 2024).

ICRI members interested in helping were invited to contact [Claire Spitzer](#), CRC, with offers of support provided by SHAMS and UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme with Indonesia and AIMS, on behalf of Australia and the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program (RRAP), have worked on messaging around bleaching and has also developed products that can be utilised.

Building on the updates and discussion around effective communication, ICRI members provided case studies on the regulatory frameworks and policies regarding coral reef restoration:

- Indonesia current restoration policies on marine and coastal ecosystems, highlighting successful indicators of restoration and the work throughout Indonesia by Hendra Yusran Siry.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
- Coral restoration in Jamaica, which presented Jamaica's commitment to update their NBSAP and the Action Plan for Coral Reefs by Chanel Raynor.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
- Coral restoration in the Maldives, noting that current policy is promoting cost effective technologies to scale up reef restoration, by Shafiya Naeem.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

The session provided participants with an insight into the restoration policies and strategies of Jamaica, the Maldives, and Indonesia including an understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities each country

faces. ICRI members subsequently discussed how ICRI members can better support countries in their restoration efforts and contribute to a broader awareness of global restoration, including the tourism industry.

SHAMS announced the organisation of a Restoration Forum in November 2024, located in Saudi Arabia, for three days about restoration and addressing challenges at scaling-up restoration. The workshop details will be shared with participants and the ICRI AHC on Restoration and Adaptation by the ICRI Secretariat.

In conclusion of the session, CORDAP presented their third funding call under the Coral Accelerator Program (CAP) for 2024 which showcased Saudi Arabia's contribution of \$100M over 10 years. The call will support a wide range of project types including Novel R&D projects, improving or scaling up existing interventions, translational R&D, Fundamental science to support implementation of interventions, and capacity development including local innovation and implementation. With key priority areas being Preservation and conservation of corals; Intervention planning, risk, and monitoring; Limiting mortality of early life stage corals; Methods to blend natural and artificial reef recovery; Developing country R&D methods; R&D capacity development; Assisted evolution of corals; Coral aquaculture; and Cold-water corals.

Eligible projects can span across the full range of novel early-phase projects through to final proof-of-concept development and testing with (up to) \$1.5M per project (and projects can run between 1 and 3 years in length) and a total budget for 2024 of approximately USD \$8.5M.

The deadline for applications is **21st October 2024**.

Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

THE GLOBAL CORAL REEF MONITORING NETWORK

A report on the main outputs from the GCRMN Steering Committee, 8th September 2024, was provided by Britta Schaffelke.

The annual face to face meetings of the GCRMN Steering Committee (SC) are important to strengthen the network, as they focus on knowledge exchange and allow members to make new connections between individuals, organisations, and regions.

The meeting of the GCRMN was opened by the co-chair of ICRI, Jennifer Koss (United States of America, NOAA), who reflected on the importance of high-quality data to support evidence-based decision making, at a time when climate-change related disturbances, especially the fourth global coral bleaching event are affecting coral reef conditions worldwide. The SC was welcomed by Dr Abdulaziz Alsuwailem, Chief Conservation & Strategy Officer from SHAMS.

The SC then received a series of presentations and updates:

- Dr Mohamed Ismail, SHAMS General Director of Coral Reef Monitoring and Assessment presented the organisation's strategy for coral reef monitoring in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- The GCRMN Global Coordinator, Britta Schaffelke (AIMS) provided an update on progress of action items, which have largely been completed. She reminded SC members to circulate in the regional networks the current calls for data for the Caribbean regional report (closing 30/09/2024) and for the global report (closing 31/12/2024). In an update of upcoming events, the pre-UNOC [One Ocean Science Congress](#) in June 2025 in Nice was identified as a good opportunity to showcase the

currently forthcoming regional Status of Coral Reefs reports from the Pacific and the Caribbean regions and to share a preview of the next Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025 report.

- Updates from regional networks were received from the Red Sea (by Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, PERSGA), Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME), Pacific and Caribbean regions of the GCRMN.
- The update from the GCRMN Data Taskforce highlighted the significant progress over the past 12 months to support the production of the 2025 global report. This has been mostly through working with a wider reference group of regional representatives to progress the selection of the data analysis method for the next report. Another important taskforce activity are discussions to provide advice how existing coral reef data platforms, e.g. ReefCloud, Data Mermaid and CoralNet can be best used by the regions and how their interoperability can be maximised.
- A presentation by the Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) on their monitoring and evaluation toolkit rounded out the meetings knowledge exchange component.

The afternoon was spent on discussing details of the production of the Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025 report, with a focus on the structure and content of the regional chapters. A chapter template will be circulated to the SC members for feedback and endorsement before the end of 2024. The production timeline was reviewed and is at this stage still on track.

Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

An update on the current status of the production of the Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025 was provided by Tom Dallison, ICRI Secretariat. The presentation highlighted the historic productions of the GCRMN, including global, regional and thematic reports, and reminded the ICRI membership of the impact of the Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020 report which was contributed to by over 300 members of the network and the global dataset spanned from 1978 to 2019, consisting of almost 2 million observations from more than 12,000 sites in 73 reef-bearing countries around the world. The report formed the first quantitative global assessment of the world's coral reefs and evidenced a 14% global reduction in live coral on the world's coral reefs from 2008 - 2019. Upon its release in 2021, the report saw over 4,000 downloads, was featured in 592 media articles, across 480 outlets, in 62 countries, and 18 languages, resulting in 2.5 billion engagements.

This set the scene for the immense value, and need, for the next global report, which will serve to provide an update of the 2020 global report. Given the urgency to conserve coral reefs and the commitments made by countries to 2030, the GCRMN has launched a call for coral reef monitoring data contributions with the report seeking to describe the global-level temporal trends of hard coral, macro algae, turf algae, and coralline algae. The call for data is supported by a dedicated webpage (www.gcrmn.net/2025-report), a "Guide for Data Contributors" and a Data Sharing Agreement, with two webinars planned before 2025. The presentation utilised the opportunity to highlight that while the number of datasets received by the GCRMN has already exceeded the amount received for the 2020 report, there are clear gaps in data and ICRI membership that have coral reef monitoring data were encouraged to contact Tom Dallison and Jeremy Wicquart to discuss how they can be contributed. An interactive map of data that have currently been integrated into the global data set for the 2025 global report was also launched: <https://jeremywicquart.users.earthengine.app/view/gcrmnddbenthos>

The presentation concluded with an overview of the expected production of the report, highlighting the inclusion of case studies, to which, the ICRI membership were encouraged to contribute further suggestions to the existing list of topics: Application of the Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) in the Western Indian Ocean; RLE assessment to explore thresholds for ecosystem collapse; Highlighting the ecological complexity of

coral reefs, using local scale data (recruitment, demography, mortality); new indicator framework for assessing coral reef condition and recovery potential in the GBR; Changes in fish species abundance in response to climate change; Watershed management and coral reef health; MPA effectiveness; Threatened species; Recovery and restoration; Traditional & Indigenous people governance of reef resource use & conservation; Co-management in Artisanal Fisheries in Kenya; other SocMon case studies discussed in the Pacific, Australia, and Caribbean regions.

ICRI members were reminded that the production of GCRMN reports relies on the ongoing support of data contributors who are willing to share their coral reef monitoring data, and were encouraged to contact Tom Dallison, and visit www.gcrmn.net/2025-report, if they have coral reef monitoring data, and would like to contribute to, and collaborate on, the next 2025 global report.

Associated Document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

Regional updates were subsequently provided by two of the GCRMN's 10 regional nodes, accompanied by an update from SHAMS on the recently released outlook report for the Red Sea:

- Outlook Report, Coral Reefs in the Red Sea, Saudi Arabia by Mohammed Ismail.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
- Updates from the Caribbean node of the GCRMN by Susana Perera Valderrama.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
- Pacific GCRMN Regional Update by Nicolas Roche.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

The session concluded with a video from the IUCN Specialist Group on Coral Reefs, “Red Alert on Corals”, which can be viewed [here](#), and updates on coral reef monitoring from ICRI members:

- Malaysia's coral reef long-term monitoring and management programs, by Izarenah MD Repin.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
- Building Capacity for Coral Reef Monitoring: Updates on MERMAID as a global platform - including, putting the ‘AI’ into MERMAID, by Alexandra Kler Lago.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)
- Coral Reefs and the AI Summit by Carol Phua.
Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

THE FOURTH GLOBAL BLEACHING EVENT: MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

The session on the fourth global bleaching event began with an introduction from Derek Manzello, Coordinator of NOAA's Coral Reef Watch program, who stated that since February 2023, coral bleaching had been reported in 71 countries, territories and economies, spanning all ocean basins with 76.5% of the world's reef area impacted since January 2023. However, there is serious paucity of data with respect to bleaching monitoring which is imperative to understand the true impact of bleaching, especially 1-2 years following bleaching. Such data allow for the identification of resilient reefs, species and genotypes whilst building a blueprint for how to save corals during the next, inevitable, coral bleaching event. Derek emphasised that the true impact of this global bleaching event will not be fully understood for 1-2 years, however, severe impacts in the Caribbean have been widely reported and that a [recent publication](#) from the Mexican Pacific recorded mortality rates from 50 - 93%.

Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

Following Derek's introduction, ICRI members were welcomed to form a panel discussion, moderated by Jennifer Koss, ICRI co-chair. The panel was formed of representatives of key regions and countries:

1. The Caribbean - Susana Perera Valderrama, UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme
2. The Western Indian Ocean - Swaleh Aboud, Coastal Oceans Research and Development in the Indian Ocean (CORDIO)
3. Maldives - Shaifya Naeem, Maldives
4. Australia - Britta Schaffelke, Australia
5. Thailand - Thamasak Yeemin, Thailand
6. Saudi Arabia - Chico Birrell, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)

The panel discussion was rich and information with the key discussion points provided below:

- Coral Reef Watch (CRW) is widely used, but continuous updates with region-specific *in situ* data would improve its resolution. ICRI members were urged to send any *in situ* data to CRW to enhance forecasting accuracy.
- Standardised bleaching monitoring protocols are used in countries with well-established long-term monitoring frameworks. Survey methods vary in size and approach, but none currently incorporate intervention strategies like shading.
- All members emphasised challenges with sustained funding and capacity, highlighting the need for decision support to optimise the use of limited resources.
- Panellists stressed ICRI's role in supporting policy updates, as well as assisting in the creation of guidelines and raising awareness of best practices.
- Tools that enhance community engagement and private sector involvement in bleaching monitoring are crucial.
- High-level policy changes are also needed to ensure major coastal development projects are less harmful to reefs.
- Panellists were cautious about coral relocation due to disease risks, suggesting it as a last resort.

The panel session focused on key outcomes for improving coral bleaching management and participants emphasised the need for better forecasting models that incorporate region-specific data and continuous updates. Standardised post-bleaching monitoring protocols are being used in some regions, but challenges with funding and capacity persist, limiting long-term efforts. And whilst strengthening community engagement through tools like citizen science was highlighted as essential for early detection and response, the panel also stressed the importance of updating policies and securing sustained funding to improve reef resilience globally.

The outcomes of this session will be utilised by the established AHC to develop a motion on coral bleaching to the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2025 with a key focus on the themes of funding, community engagement, and the need for stronger policies to address coral bleaching and reef resilience globally.

The global coral bleaching session was concluded with a presentation from Chloe Harvey, The Reef-World Foundation, on "The marine tourism industry's involvement in monitoring coral reefs during the Fourth Global Bleaching event, and efforts to support recovery.

Associated document: [presentation \(.pdf\)](#)

PRESENTATION OF THE MOTION TO CREATE AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MOTION TO THE IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS (WCC)

The motion, submitted by the ICRI Secretariat, to the GM on establishing an *ad hoc* committee to support the development of a motion to the IUCN World Conservation Congress was presented by the ICRI Secretariat. The presentation evoked critical discussion and considerations for the AHC, especially with a call to recognise the pivotal role of Indigenous and Local Knowledge, as well as the need for critical capacity development to support local communities with respect to coral bleaching monitoring and management of the impacts of bleaching. More so, it was urged that there needed to be a clear differentiation on how the proposed motion on coral bleaching to the IUCN WCC differed from previous coral reef motions and the elevated urgency of the proposed motion. The members were reminded that support for the motion will be required, and such support should be sought from a range of stakeholders including Governments and NGOs.

Associated document: [Adopted Resolution \(.pdf\)](#)

STRENGTHENING THE INITIATIVE

The purpose of this session was to explore how the Initiative could be more effective in achieving its main objective - to strive to preserve coral reefs and related ecosystems around the world. The longevity of ICRI's existence demonstrates the need for and importance of the partnership. The Initiative, due to its composition and growing number of members, is in a very good position to be even more influential at the regional and international level, while also ensuring that the Membership receives the benefits of the Initiative's work and network.

The session was a critical opportunity for the Secretariat to outline the support needed from the Membership to ensure maximum efficacy:

- **Increased collaboration:** To support, co-sponsor and collaborate with ICRI on coral reef events including Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) and regional agreements. To support and co-sponsor coral reef motions, at, for example, United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) and IUCN WCC, with actions at the regional level to encourage the integration of coral reefs into programmes of work and decisions and organise side events to raise awareness on coral reefs. This noted that most of the ICRI country members are part of regional agreements. For example, ten out of 18 of the UNEP Regional Seas have coral reefs, of which six are ICRI members.
- **Raise the profile of coral reefs:** To incorporate coral language into ministerial, head of state or CEO communications whilst disseminating ICRI's work, including adopted resolutions and recommendations. ICRI members were also encouraged to share the achievements and efforts of ICRI and its membership. Here, it was highlighted that six of the Group of Seven (G7) were ICRI member countries and 14 were members of the G20 noting the elevated opportunity to ensure coral reefs were highlighted at the highest level.
- **Advance coral reefs:** To support, contribute and advance critical discussions through ICRI's AHCs, utilise ICRI's mechanisms to respond to critical and emerging issues, and establish or support national and regional coral reef monitoring programmes and facilitate data sharing.
- **Communication:** To better support and advocate for the vital work of ICRI and its members, it is essential to consistently continue to raise awareness on the plight for coral reefs. Members are encouraged to share lessons learned, highlight best practices, and provide the ICRI Secretariat with regular updates on their latest news, reports, and new initiatives, among other announcements.

Additionally, ICRI members are asked to actively promote ICRI's work and mission and engage in collective advocacy by using the #ForCoral hashtag, helping to unify efforts and increase visibility of coral reef actions globally.

The presentation elicited discussion from the Membership with a specific focus on the support for the establishment of national coral reef task forces including a suggestion for a topic at the next General Meeting on the mechanisms and governance of national task forces, what stakeholders are needed, and how they are established. It was also suggested that this could form a #ForCoral Webinar. In addition, the Philippines, noted that they had passed a proclamation to set up a national coral reef conservation and recovery programme. Further discussions were held on the need for ICRI member focal points to bridge communications with other key stakeholders in their countries, especially with respect to policy messaging and disseminating information notes as well as encouraging collaboration with other initiatives such as the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (a new ICRI partner).

There was a clear need for stronger collaboration among ICRI members, with communication on member activities, events and achievements with the Secretariat, noting the full breadth of the membership's reach from Governments and regional institutions to NGOs and private industry. Under the shadow of the Fourth Global Bleaching Event and the continuing increase in pressures on coral reefs, now, more than ever, is the time to COLLABORATE #ForCoral.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND JOINT ACTIVITIES

ICRI, through its Plan of Action, ensures that coral reefs are integrated into regional frameworks and the international agenda. To bolster engagement with policy makers, practitioners and managers as well as donors, the ICRI Secretariat is trying to actively participate in events throughout the year. It allows ICRI to continue efforts to raise awareness at all levels on the plight of coral reefs around the world, to promote the targets of the Coral Reef Breakthrough, to start collating data on the status of coral reefs for the upcoming Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network's Global Report, and to showcase solutions to secure the future of coral reefs.

- **Sixteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD-COP16) - ICRI #ForCoral Pavilion, 21st October – 1st November 2024 – Cali, Colombia**

The sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will take place in Cali, Columbia, from 21 October to 1 November 2024. COP16 will be the first Biodiversity COP since the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework, also known as The Biodiversity Plan. Governments will review the progress made to implement the Biodiversity Plan, and the level of alignment of their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) with it. At COP16, governments plan to further negotiate the monitoring framework, advance resource mobilization (how the implementation will be financed) and finalize the multilateral mechanism on the fair and equitable Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources.

The ICRI Secretariat will host the [#ForCoral Pavilion](#), a dedicated space to showcase coral reefs and associated ecosystems. The #ForCoral Pavilion will bring together spokespeople for coral reefs, policy makers, indigenous peoples and local communities, investors, and conservation practitioners from around the world to showcase their work and to continue to raise awareness on the importance of healthy coral reefs.

The #ForCoral Pavilion is only possible with the support of ICRI's co-sponsors (by alphabetical order):

- Bloomberg Philanthropies Ocean Initiative
- Caribbean Biodiversity Fund
- Coral Reefs of the High Seas Coalition / Conservation International
- The Commonwealth Blue Charter
- WWF Coral Reef Rescue Initiative
- UNCDF / Global Fund for Coral Reefs
- Government of Monaco
- Government of Sweden
- Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF)
- International Coral Reef Society (ICRS)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- MARFund / MAR +Invest
- The Nature Conservancy / Reef Resilience Network
- Office Français de la Biodiversité (OFB)
- Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA)
- The Regional Activity Centre for the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife for the Wider Caribbean Region. (SPAW-RAC)
- XPrize
- The United States of America, Department of State
- The United States of America, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program

ICRI members are encouraged to visit the Pavilion or ask their delegation to do so. More information, including the agenda of events, is available at www.cop16forcoral.org

- **Reef futures, 9th – 13th December 2024 – Riviera Maya, Mexico**

Reef Futures is the only global symposium focused solely on the interventions and actions necessary to allow coral reefs to thrive into the next century.

Reef Futures is hosted by the Coral Restoration Consortium (CRC) approximately every two years. It is a conference of hope, action, opportunity, and diversity. Whether you are new to the field, or an experienced professional, this is the place to be if you are passionate about the field of coral reef restoration.

ICRI will be represented at the conference, and will deliver a short presentation, and poster session, on the Coral Reef Breakthrough and the work of the ICRI AHC on Restoration and Adaptation.

More information: <https://www.reeffutures.com/>

- **International Conference on Sustainable Coral Reefs, 13th – 15th December 2024 – Manado, Indonesia**

Recognising the importance of the Coral Triangle region, the Government of Indonesia will host an “International Conference on Sustainable Coral Reefs” from December 13th to 15th, 2024 in Manado, Indonesia. The theme of the Conference is “Sustaining Coral Reefs: Science, Conservation, Resilience and Development”. By bringing together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders from around the

world, the conference aims to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the development of practical solutions to safeguard the Coral Triangle for future generations. The conference will serve as a platform to raise awareness, share best practices, and mobilise support for the preservation and sustainable utilization of this vital marine ecosystem.

The ICRI Secretariat has been invited to partner for the occasion of the International Conference on Sustainable Coral Reefs to support the conference committee in the successful implementation of the event.

More information: <https://icriforum.org/events/conference-coralreef-manado-2024/>

- **UN Ocean Conference (UNOC), 9th – 13th June 2025 – Nice, France**

The high-level 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (the 2025 UN Ocean Conference) will be co-hosted by France and Costa Rica and held in Nice, France, from 9 – 13 June 2025.

The overarching theme of the Conference is “Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean”. The Conference aims to support further and urgent action to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and identify further ways and means to support the implementation of SDG 14. It will build on existing instruments to form successful partnerships towards the swift conclusion and effective implementation of ongoing processes that contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean.

The Conference will involve all relevant stakeholders, bringing together Governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, other interested international bodies, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities and other actors to assess challenges and opportunities relating to, as well as actions taken towards, the implementation of Goal 14.

The ICRI Secretariat is hoping to host a #ForCoral Pavilion in collaboration with ICRI members and partners. More information will be provided to ICRI members in due course. ICRI members are encouraged to share their planned activities for UNOC as well as register interest in partnering on the Pavilion with the ICRI Secretariat.

More information: <https://icriforum.org/events/unoc-2025/>

- **IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, 9th – 15th October 2025 – Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**

Held once every four years, the IUCN World Conservation Congress brings together several thousand leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, indigenous peoples, business, and academia, with the goal of conserving the environment and harnessing the solutions nature offers to global challenges. The Congress aims to improve how we manage our natural environment for human, social and economic development, but this cannot be achieved by conservationists alone. The IUCN Congress is the place to put aside differences and work together to create good environmental

governance, engaging all parts of society to share both the responsibilities and the benefits of conservation.

The next World Conservation Congress (WCC) will take place from 9-15 October 2025 in Abu Dhabi, UAE, and ICRI, through its AHC, will work to develop and submit a motion on coral reef bleaching. IUCN WCC presents a valuable opportunity in the international agenda to elevate coral bleaching. Historically, there has been no IUCN resolution on coral bleaching. The proposed ICRI motion will build upon the previous resolutions “[Conserving and protecting coral reefs through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework](#)” (WCC-2020-Res-105-EN) and “[Cooperation for the conservation and protection of coral reefs worldwide](#)” (WCC-2016-Rec-106-EN).

The key dates for IUCN WCC, considering the motion, are provided below:

- Submission on the motion platform
 - Opens – 1st November 2024
 - Closes – 15th January 2025
- Publication of Motions (24th March 2025)
- Online Discussion (18th April – 15th June 2025)
- Publication of Final Motions (9th July 2025)
- Electronic Voting (27th August – 10th September 2025)

- **Coral reef insight - harnessing artificial intelligence for the monitoring and conservation of coral reefs - *dates to be confirmed in due course***

Actions to address the rapid decline in coral reef ecosystems are needed across different scales. However, barriers to participation and limited access to actionable knowledge to make evidence-based decisions often hinder participation from local communities in the effective management of natural resources.

Current conservation efforts are limited by data gaps and resource constraints and there is a pressing need for data-driven solutions to improve monitoring and decision-making.

With recent advances in the accessibility and reliability of AI technology, the Coral Reef Insight programme has been conceived to understand it might be leveraged to standardise, enhance and scale monitoring and conservation efforts.

The main objective will be to identify at least one viable, scalable use-case for Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support the collection, analysis and interpretation of data for the monitoring and evaluation of the health of reefs and local communities in the Coral Reef Rescue Initiative (CRRI) target countries.

Partners and Collaborators: The inception programme brings together a working group with extensive experience at the intersection of technology and reef monitoring and conservation:

- PALO IT has led technical development for the CRRI’s Monitoring and Evaluation system.
- Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) has developed AI and machine learning technologies to support the monitoring of reefs across the globe.
- Arizona State University (ASU) is responsible for the ongoing development of the Allen Coral Atlas.

- Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) invests in innovative ideas and designs real-world, scalable conservation programs in Australia and the Pacific.

Register your interest or support:

- Technology providers who may have a solution that aligns to our opportunity areas.
- Funding partners who are aligned with the outcomes of Coral Reef Insight, and who would also like to explore emerging technologies.
- If you would like to learn more, please reach out to:
 - Carol Phua (cphua@wwf.org.au), Global Coral Reef Initiative Leader
 - Access the associated document (presentation) [here](#).

- **Other Events**

Following the presentation of the events, further events were highlighted to the ICRI membership:

- One Young World Summit. 18th – 21st September, Montreal (Canada).
- G7 Workshop on the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in the framework of the G7 Italian Presidency. 9th – 10th October 2024, Athens (Greece).
- Restoring the Red Sea – Collaborative Solutions for Scalable and Biodiverse Coral Ecosystems, Restoration workshop. November 2024 (Saudi Arabia)
- 12th World Ocean Summit. 12th – 13th March 2025, Tokyo (Japan).

ADOPTION OF THE MOTIONS

The following motions were adopted by acclamation of the ICRI membership:

- Resolution for the Red Sea Region ([Download .pdf](#))
- Terms of reference for the ICRI Youth ad hoc committee ([Download .pdf](#))
 - Nominations to join the AHC have been received from: The Commonwealth Secretariat, Wildlife Conservation Society, International Coral Reef Society (ICRS), CORDIO East Africa

ICRI members interested in joining the AHC should reach out to the ICRI Secretariat with the proposed representative’s name.
- Terms of reference for the ad hoc committee to support the development of a motion to the IUCN World Conservation Congress ([Download .pdf](#))
 - Nominations to join the AHC received from: United States of America, UN Environment Programme, Australia (further nominations received from: International Coral Reef Society (ICRS))

ICRI members interested in joining the AHC should reach out to the ICRI Secretariat with the proposed representative’s name.

PROPOSAL TO HOST THE 2025-2027 ICRI SECRETARIAT

Dr Abdulaziz Alsuwailem, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)

Dr Abdulaziz started his presentation by reminding the importance of coral reefs for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden:

- The most biologically diverse coral reef communities outside of Southeast Asia's coral triangle.
- 10% of coral reef species are endemic – a critical repository for marine biodiversity in the world.
- Coral reefs in the region cover 13,605 km² (34.3% coral cover, 2019).
- 5.3% of the total global area of coral reefs.
- USD \$6 billion in coral associated tourism annually.
- Potential repository of thermal-tolerance and high resiliency.

The Red Sea is unique and home to a spectacular, biodiverse, complex, connected set of ecosystems including coral reefs, mangrove forests, seagrass meadows, algal beds, and deeper water ecosystems. The challenge to protect and restore the health and resilience of Red Sea coral reefs and their associated ecosystems into the future requires strong national action on climate change and the immediate and effective implementation of resilience-based management priorities.

He also reminded ICRI on the importance of coral reefs for Saudi Arabia:

- 5,927 km² of coral reef, the 9th largest coral community globally.
- Represents 44% of the Red Sea region's total coral cover.
- Coral cover was highest in the most northerly ecoregion (incl. the Gulf of Aqaba).
- Yet, the condition of coral reefs and associated ecosystems is highly variable across the region.
- SHAMS is tasked with the overall responsibility for the conservation of coral reefs and sea turtles in the Red Sea under the jurisdiction of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia has a comprehensive legal framework to protect its coral reefs, primarily by the national Environment Law. The Kingdom is committed to combating climate change and conserving coral reefs (evidence through the establishment of SHAMS and the Coral Research and Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP) under its G20 presidency) and protecting biodiversity and has ambitious goals set out through its Vision 2030, the Saudi Green Initiative, the Middle East Initiative (MGI), and the National Red Sea Sustainability Strategy.

SHAMS is a distinguished Saudi government organization operating under the authority of the Council of Ministers Resolution No. (250) dated 04/25/1443 AH. Its mandate is to oversee the regulation, protection, development, and sustainability of coral reefs and turtles in the Red Sea. SHAMS is committed to collaborating with local and international experts to drive forward-thinking initiatives aimed at monitoring, restoring, and rehabilitating these vital marine habitats. By harnessing innovative solutions, SHAMS strives to position Saudi Arabia as a global frontrunner in the realm of coral and sea turtle conservation.

Saudi Arabia will represent the first Secretariat to be hosted in the Middle East region. Hosting the Secretariat aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 by bolstering the nation's commitment to environmental sustainability, demonstrating a commitment to addressing global environmental challenges and enhancing its role as a leader in global conservation efforts. ICRI is a global constant in global coral reef conservation efforts, to which the Kingdom joined ICRI's membership in 2022, showcasing our commitment to preserving biodiversity.



The current ICRI Secretariat welcoming the upcoming Saudi Arabia ICRI Secretariat

SHAMS proposed to host the Secretariat for three years (starting in 2025 to 2027) under the vision “**Coral reefs and related ecosystems are used and managed in an ecologically sustainable manner to enhance their resilience and provide goods and services for generations to come.**” Dr Abdulaziz presented the possible main “core” activities under the Kingdom:

- Production of a Plan of Action (linking to the implementation of the Framework for Action and Call to Action) in collaboration with ICRI’s member.
- Organisation of the 6th International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposiums (ITMEMS).
- Strengthening the Red Sea region, building national, regional and global capacity.
- Support the production of the Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025.
- Organisation of 3 General Meetings.
- Begin preparations for the 4th International Year of the Reef: 2028.
- Maintain and continue to raise the stature of coral reefs within the International Agenda, notably at the United Nations Ocean Conference (June 2025) and the IUCN World Conservation Congress (October 2025).

The possible focus themes were also presented:

1. Mainstream coral reefs into legal instruments and frameworks (at national level) for their effective management
2. Blue Economy and Coral Reefs: Support countries to integrate coral reefs into blue economy strategies (at the national and regional level)
3. Capacity Building: Build capacity in all facets of management of coral reefs and related ecosystems, and support dissemination and application of best practices
4. Science & Monitoring: Red Sea regional GCRMN node, alongside PERSGA, is strengthened and contributing to global assessments
5. Raising Awareness on coral reefs among the public, reef beneficiaries, and stakeholders

For now, it is proposed that Dr Khaled Asfahani, Chief Executive Office, will be the chair of the Initiative (with Dr Abdulaziz Alsuwailem as the Associate Chair) and the Secretariat will continue to be hosted by the

Designated Administrative Representative with the same core team supporting the implementation of the ICRI Plan of Action. The Secretariat will benefit from the broad spectrum of scientific and technical expertise at SHAMS.

Following the presentation the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia represented by SHAMS was welcomed to chair the next secretariat.

ENGAGING, EMPOWERING & SUPPORTING YOUTH IN CORAL REEF CONSERVATION: TOWARDS A HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE AND RESILIENT FUTURE #FORCORAL

To conclude the 38th ICRI GM, the Membership welcomed its second Youth panel session, building on the discussions held at the 37th ICRI GM in September 2023. The panel was formed from members of the Youth Working Group who were tasked with:

1. Preparing and finalising the motion for the Youth AHC, submitted to the meeting.
2. To utilise the opportunity to convene and meet with ICRI members to review existing 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.
3. Based on the ICRI Youth Report created during the ICRI 37th General Meeting, translate up to five suggestions into tangible actions, including an outline of the steps that could be taken to turn some of the reflections into reality throughout 2024/2025.
4. Identify which ICRI members would like to be part of the ICRI Youth ad hoc committee (must be 18 – 35).

The session was opened by Margaux Monfared, ICRI Secretariat, stating that our shared goal is clear: to shape a future where coral reefs not only survive but flourish. In recognising young professionals, as key stakeholders in the future of coral reef conservation, ICRI is not only investing in the future of coral reef ecosystems but empowering a generation that will carry forward its mission of sustainability, resilience, and global collaboration.

Moderated by Esther Maina, Country Co-ordinator, Kenyan youth Biodiversity Network and Ghaida Ali Hadaidi, Environmental Conservation Specialist, SHAMS, the panel session sought to provide a summary of the youth-based reflection developed during the ICRI 37th GM, present the findings of the working group regarding available youth strategies from various ICRI member organisations and countries for the marine sector, with a particular emphasis on coral reef conservation, and a discussion that identifies gaps from the review that ICRI's strategy can fill in relation to coral reefs and the broader mission of ICRI. The panel was composed of:

- Anna Rothstein, NOAA
- Morgan Short, ICRS
- Karin Moejes, CORDIO East Africa
- Diwigdi Valiente, WCS
- Hatim Salloum, KAUST Coral Restoration Initiative
- Tom Dallison, ICRI Secretariat

The key outcomes of the panel discussion included:

- **Youth Empowerment & Opportunities:** Youth need more opportunities to participate in decision-making. The suggestions from the panel session were emphasised on ensuring young people have

the space to contribute meaningfully, not just as beneficiaries but as key stakeholders and equal partners in coral reef conservation. Esther Maina highlighted that youth should not be labelled solely as representatives of their age group but should be valued for their insights and leadership potential.

- **Youth Integration into ICRI's Initiatives:** ICRI's efforts to include youth during the 37th General Meeting was instrumental, allowing youth to chart the path for meaningful youth engagement within ICRI and the future they envision with ICRI in coral reef protection and conservation. Tom Dallison from the ICRI Secretariat noted that it is these efforts that have contributed to the newly established AHC that will guide ICRI actions including the development of an ICRI #ForCoral youth engagement strategy, based on the reflections and recommendations provided by youth at the 37th General Meeting. ICRI will closely work with the chair of this AHC to incorporate the views of youth and the strategy into ICRI's wider frameworks and initiatives including the next Plan of Action that is underway. In addition, ICRI will rally members to support the implementation of the youth strategy and ensure reports are provided on the progress made over time.
- **Building Global Connections:** Diwigdi Valiente from WCS recognized and reflected on the role ICRI has played in his connection to now working as the Senior Coral Reef Manager with WCS after engagement at the 37th General Meeting. He noted that this is timely as WCS is just in the process of developing a Global Coral Reef Strategy that will come in handy to incorporate the contributions from youth through ICRI's inaugural Youth Working Group and the new AHC. He noted how ICRI members are open and accommodative of the perspectives from young people including WCS and this support will help foster more equitable and inclusive solutions. Ghaida Ali Hadaidi, emphasised the importance of global collaboration, such as how SHAMS fosters partnerships from the local to international level, focusing on education, training, and research programs that create stronger networks. She noted that SHAMS recognizes the significant role played by young people in conservation, hence the need to ensure their contributions are integrated into policy development and coral reef conservation strategies. Hatim Salloum from KAUST suggested that partnerships between universities and organisations should focus on education that integrates coral reef conservation into science, research, and practical engagement to collaborate with ICRI, design and create modules that include coral reefs conservation topics. It was further noted that creating field research opportunities would help students gain practical and real-world experience while fostering international exchange programs and collaborative research in coral reef restoration and monitoring, allowing students to hone expertise in the field while contributing to global conservation efforts.
- **Conservation and Mental Well-Being: Strengthening both Reef and Human Resilience:** Emphasis was laid on the need to recognize the toll of anxiety and related trauma that impacts of climate-related disasters such as fires are having on young people and the necessity for provision of mental health support systems e.g., ecological grief counselling and work-off days to prioritise mental health, and reflect on our achievements that would help enhance productivity. Anna Rothstein from NOAA noted that it is essential to have a conventional work culture shift and have this modelled in leadership to create spaces that nurture mindfulness, openness, and self-care within the working environment and to build intergenerational healthy communities. In addition, as we work to enhance the resilience of coral reefs, it is equally vital to nurture our resilience as mental health and well-being are intertwined with nature. With stability in our mental well-being, we can reinforce our capacity for environmental stewardship.
- **Sustainable Career Pathways:** Concerns were raised about the high burnout rate among young professionals and the difficulty of transitioning from education to stable careers, especially after the first years of completing a degree in conservation fields, despite their education and motivation.

Morgan Short from ICRS noted some of the challenges that include difficulties in job acquisition, particularly permanent positions, with often jobs being temporary, recruiters laying more focus on experience as opposed to potential, financial barriers with jobs being often temporary focused on short term needs and limited long-term investment in young people, and lack of access to continued career development and training for young professional, especially from marginalised groups. Mechanisms for ICRI members to address these gaps:

- Create professional development workshops through the ICRI #ForCoral Webinar Series
- Structure organisations in a way that allows upward mobility
- Support/collaborate with existing initiatives by member organisations (e.g., ICRS job board, mentorship programs)

Karin Moejes highlighted CORDIO's value of bringing in young people, creating opportunities for building capacity and supporting their development in research and areas such as diving, monitoring and analytical skills to become leaders in coral reef conservation. Grant funding has been essential as it helps young people inducted as interns thereafter get to advance their studies contributing significantly to ocean scientific research. On the other hand, CORDIO East Africa continues with the ethos of supporting young people by providing an avenue for partnerships with Master programs students to do their projects with them as well as training for young marine biologists to continue building their skills to equip them for the work world. It was noted that retaining young talent requires support, mentorship, and resilience within the community, as seen in CORDIO's successful internship-to-career pipeline. The intersection of race and gender and how it comes to play with youth engagement should also be considered when giving platforms and tools in order to create conservation efforts that are sustainable and grounded on the best available knowledge including both scientific evidence and wisdom from local communities.

CLOSING OF THE 38TH ICRI GENERAL MEETING

At the conclusion of the 38th ICRI General Meeting, Christine Dawson (ICRI co-chair, U.S. Department of State) was thanked for her unwavering commitment, and dedication to the Initiative and applauded for her work by the ICRI membership.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, represented by SHAMS, was congratulated as the incoming chair of ICRI to be commenced in 2025.

The ICRI Secretariat distributed a 'feedback form' to ICRI members to provide comments on the GM as well as an opportunity to signify their interest in joining one or more of the newly established AHCs.

In summary, the 38th ICRI GM marked a pivotal moment for the Initiative, with a leadership transition and the formation of new working groups aimed at enhancing global efforts in coral reef conservation. Active participation from members remains key to ensuring the success and continued evolution of ICRI's mission.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. ICRI GENERAL MEETING AGENDA

The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) 38th General Meeting

Hosted by the General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)
under the ICRI chairmanship of the United States of America

Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi of Arabia
Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam

9th – 13th September 2024

Agenda
11/09/2024

Sunday 8th September

GCRMN Steering Committee Meeting – All day <i>By invitation only</i>		
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Registration			
17:00	90	Registration will be available in the Foyer of the Diamond Ballroom, of Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam	Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam

Monday 9th September

Red Sea Coral Reef Forum – All day			
09:00 – 17:30		Red Sea Coral Reef Forum (see annex 1)	Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam
19:15		Welcoming Reception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam</i> 	Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam

Tuesday 10th September – Day 1

Time (KSA)	Day 1		
Session 1 - Welcome & Openings			
09:00		General Meeting Opening and Official remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Khaled Asfahani, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)</i> 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Christine Dawson, United States of America, Department of State and ICRI co-chair</i>
09:15	Housekeeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Margaux Monfared, ICRI Secretariat</i>
09:20	Presentation & Adoption of the Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Christine Dawson, United States of America, Department of State and ICRI co-chair</i>
09:25	Review and summary of the Red Sea Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Simon Reeves, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)</i>
09:40	ICRI 30 and History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Margaux Monfared and Tom Dallison, ICRI Secretariat</i>
10:10	ICRI Membership Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Margaux Monfared and Tom Dallison, ICRI Secretariat</i>
10:20	New Member application presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rare - Embracing the ICRI Call to Action through Community-led Conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Anthony Chatwin, Rare</i>
10:30	Coffee Break
10:50	Review of ICRI Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI Secretariat</i>
11:05	ICRI Member discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI Co-chairs</i>
11:15	ICRI Secretariat Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Margaux Monfared and Tom Dallison, ICRI Secretariat</i>
11:45	Resilient Coral Reefs: WCS global coral reef strategy 2025-2030 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Diwigdi Valiente, Wildlife Conservation Society</i>
11:55	Presentation of Motions received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Red Sea Day • Youth ad hoc committee • Ad hoc committee to support the IUCN WCC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI Co-chairs</i>
12:05	Motion to create an ICRI youth ad hoc committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Margaux Monfared and Tom Dallison, ICRI Secretariat</i>
12:15	Lunch
Session 2 - Financing #ForCoral	
13:15	Opening of Session 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI co-chair</i>
13:20	Keynote Speech: Indonesia Coral Bond: Innovative Blue Financing for MPA and Coral Reefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>H.E. Sakti Wahyu Trenggono, Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia</i>
13:35	Q & A
13:45	Presentations on the latest financing mechanisms #ForCoral highlighting approaches such as debt-for-nature swaps and how they are driving efforts to protect, restore and safeguard coral reef ecosystems and those who depend on them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Fund for Coral Reefs: Blended & Innovative Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Gabriel Grimsditch and Nicole Trudeau, Global Fund for Coral Reefs</i> • U.S. Funding Approaches to Turn the Tide for Coral Reefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Christine Dawson, United States of America, Department of State and ICRI co-chair</i> • Belize Blue Bonds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Alicia Eck-Nunez, Belize</i>

14:15	Q&A / All discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Moderator, TBC</i>
14:45	Coffee Break / GROUP PHOTO
Session 3 – Promote and build Capacity for the Restoration of Resilient Coral Reefs	
15:05	Opening of Session 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI co-chair</i>
15:20	Presentation of Countries current restoration policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indonesia Current Restoration Policies on Marine and Coastal Ecosystems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Hendra Yusran Siry, Indonesia</i> • Coral Restoration in Jamaica: The Policy Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Chanel Raynor, Jamaica</i> • Maldives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Shaifya Naeem, Maldives</i> • All member discussion
16:20	G20 Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP) third funding call under the Coral Accelerator Program (CAP) 2024 <i>Anderson Mayfield, G20 Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP)</i>
16:30	Closing
DAY 1 CLOSE	

Wednesday 11th September –Day 2

Time (KSA)	Day 2
Session 4 – The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)	
09:00	Reflection from Day 1 and opening of Session 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI co-chair</i>
09:15	Report from the GCRMN Steering Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Britta Schaffelke, GCRMN Global co-ordinator / Australian Institute of Marine Science</i>
09:30	The Global Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tom Dallison, ICRI Secretariat</i>
10:00	GCRMN Regional Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlook Report, Coral Reefs in the Red Sea, Saudi Arabia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Mohammed Ismail, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)</i> • Updates from the Caribbean node of the GCRMN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Susana Perera Valderrama, UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme</i> • <i>Pacific GCRMN Regional Update</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Nicolas Rocle, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)</i>
10:30	Coffee Break
11:00	Red Alert on Corals (Video) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Introduction from Karin Moejes/Swaleh Aboud, CORDIO East Africa</i> <p>Monitoring updates from ICRI Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaysia's coral reef long-term monitoring and management programs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Izarenah MD Repin, Malaysia</i> ● Building Capacity for Coral Reef Monitoring: Updates on MERMAID as a global platform - including, putting the ‘AI’ into MERMAID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Alexandra Kler Lago, Wildlife Conservation Society</i> ● Coral Reef Rescue Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Carol Phua, WWF International</i>
12:00	Lunch
Session 5 – The Fourth Global Bleaching Event: Monitoring and Management Response	
13:00	<p>Opening of Session 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Jennifer Koss, United States of America, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and ICRI co-chair</i>
13:05	<p>Introduction to the Fourth Global Bleaching Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Derek Manzello</i>
13:20	<p>Panel Session: Response planning, Monitoring, Messaging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Moderator, Jennifer Koss, United States of America, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and ICRI co-chair</i> <p>Panellists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Caribbean <i>Susana Perera Valderrama, UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme</i> ● The Western Indian Ocean <i>Swaleh Aboud, Coastal Oceans Research and Development in the Indian Ocean (CORDIO)</i> ● Maldives <i>Shaifya Naeem, Maldives</i> ● Australia <i>Britta Schaffelke, Australia</i> ● Thailand <i>Thamasak Yeemin, Thailand</i> ● Saudi Arabia <i>Chico Birrell, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)</i>
14:55	<p>The Marine tourism industry's involvement in monitoring coral reefs during the 4th Global Bleaching event, and efforts to support reef recovery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Chloe Harvey, The Reef-World Foundation</i>
15:05	Coffee Break
15:25	<p>Presentation of the Motion to create an ad hoc committee to support the development of a motion to the IUCN World Conservation Congress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>ICRI Secretariat</i> <p>All member discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Moderator TBC</i>
16:55	Closing
DAY 2 CLOSE	

Thursday 12th September – Day 3

Time (KSA)	6	Day 3
Session 6 - Driving Further Impact and Longevity #ForCoral: Strengthening the Initiative		
09:00		Reflection from Day 2 and opening of Session 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI co-chair</i>
09:15		Strengthening the Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Francis Staub, ICRI Global Co-ordinator</i>
09:45		All member discussion
10:15		Coffee Break
Session 7 – Upcoming Events		
10:45		Opening of Session 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI co-chair</i>
10:50		Upcoming Events and Joint Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Conference on Sustainable Coral Reefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hendra Yusran Siri • Coral Reef Insight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carol Phua • CBD-COP16 - ICRI #ForCoral Pavilion • Reef Futures • UNOC-2025 • IUCN WCC 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>ICRI Secretariat</i> Discussion
11:20		Adoption of the motions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Sea Region Recommendation • ICRI Youth ad hoc committee • Ad hoc committee to support the IUCN WCC motion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>ICRI co-chairs</i>
11:50		Proposal to host the 2025-2027 ICRI Secretariat <i>Dr. Khaled Asfahani / Dr. Abdulaziz Alsuwailem, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)</i>
12:05		Lunch
Session 8 – Engaging, Empowering & Supporting Youth in Coral Reef Conservation: Towards a Healthy, Productive and Resilient Future #ForCoral		
13:05		Opening of Session 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI co-chair</i>
13:10		Opening and Welcoming Remarks <i>(to include summary of youth reflection from ICRI 37 GM)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Esther Maina, Youth Delegation</i>
13:25		The Reef Guardian Schools Program Video
13:40		Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Moderator: Esther Maina, Youth Delegation</i> Panellists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tom Dallison / Margaux Monfared, ICRI Secretariat</i> • <i>Ghaida Ali Hadaidi, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anna Rothstein, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)</i> • <i>Morgan Short / Igor Pessoa, International Coral Reef Society (ICRS)</i> • <i>Karin Moejes, Coastal Oceans Research and Development in the Indian Ocean (CORDIO)</i> • <i>Diwigdi Valiente, Wildlife Conservation Society</i> • <i>Hatim Salloum, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST)</i>
14:25	Q&A / All discussion
Meeting Summary and Closing	
15:00	Meeting Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ICRI Co-chairs</i> Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Francis Staub, ICRI Global Co-ordinator</i> • <i>ICRI Co-chairs</i>
DAY 3 CLOSE	

Al Balad Visit			
17:30	15	Meet in Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam Lobby	Meet Lobby of Crowne Plaza Jeddah Al Salam
17:45	30	Depart Crowne Plaza and travel to Al Balad	
18:15	135	Arrival to Al Balad	
20:30	15	Assemble at drop off point	
20:45	30	Depart Al Balad	

Friday 13th September 2023 –Day 4

Time (KSA)	‘	Field Trip	
07:00	30	Departure from the hotel to the marina	
07:30	30	Arrival at the marine	
08:00	15	Boarding the boat at the marina	
08:15	45	Departure of the boat to the Coast Guard station.	
09:00	45	Departure from the Coast Guard station to Al Marjan Park	
09:45	15	Arrive at Abu Tair for snorkelling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity: Briefing on safety, emergency procedures, diving procedures and marine life protection. 	
10:00	90	First snorkelling session	
11:30	30	Return to the boat	
12:00	60	Lunch	
13:00	30	Prepare for second snorkelling session	
13:30	90	Second snorkelling session	
15:00	30	Return to the boat	
15:30	90	Departure from the diving site to the marina.	

ANNEX 2. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS TO THE 38TH ICRI GENERAL MEETING AND APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Organisation/Country	First Name	Last Name	Status
Australia, Australian Institute of Marine Science	Britta	Schaffelke	ICRI Member
Australia, Australian Institute of Marine Science	Amanda	Brigdale	ICRI Member
Barbados, Coastal Zone Management Unit	Shoneé	Howell	ICRI Member
Belize, Fisheries Department	Alicia	Eck-Nunez	ICRI Member
Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP)	Rory	Jordan	ICRI Member
Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP)	Anderson	Mayfield	ICRI Member
Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF)	Frank Keith	Griffin	ICRI Member
CORDIO East Africa	Karin	Moejes	ICRI Member
CORDIO East Africa	Swaleh	Aboud	ICRI Member
Egypt, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency	Tamer	Attalla	ICRI Member
Egypt, National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries	Yasser	Geneid	ICRI Member
France	Louis	Gagny	ICRI Member
Global Fund for Coral Reefs	Nicole	Trudeau	Observer
Global Fund for Coral Reefs	Pierre	Bardoux	Observer
ICRI Secretariat	Tom	Dallison	ICRI Secretariat
ICRI Secretariat	Margaux	Monfared	ICRI Secretariat
ICRI Secretariat	Francis	Staub	ICRI Secretariat
India, Zoological Survey of India	Tamal	Mondal	ICRI Member
India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	Rakesh	Kumar Jagenia	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	H.E. Sakti Wahyu	Trenggono	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	Hendra Yusran	Siry	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	Dewi	Astikawati	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	Indra Cahya	Wardhana	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	Renaldi	Satari	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	Victor	Gustaaf Manoppo	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	Ari	Prabowo	ICRI Member
Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries	Anita	Setianingsih	ICRI Member
International Coral Reef Society	Morgan	Short	ICRI Member
International Coral Reef Society	Igor	Pessoa	ICRI Member
International Coral Reef Society	Raquel	Peixoto	ICRI Member
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	Ena Lucía	Suárez Bolaños	ICRI Member
Jamaica, National Environment and Planning Agency	Chanel	Raynor	ICRI Member

Japan, Nature Conservation Bureau	Satoshi	Kichise	ICRI Member
Japan, Wildlife Research Center	Yuko	Kitano	ICRI Member
Kenya, Youth Delegation	Esther	Maina	Youth Delegate
King Abdullah University for Science and Technology (KAUST)	Hatim	Salloum	Observer
Malaysia, Department of Fisheries	Izarenah	Md Repin	ICRI Member
Maldives, Maldives Marine Research Institute	Shafiya	Naeem	ICRI Member
Mars Incorporated	Alicia	McArdle	ICRI Member
Monaco, Centre Scientifique de Monaco	Didier	Zoccola	ICRI Member
Mote Marine Laboratory	Michael	Crosby	ICRI Member
Rare	Anthony	Chatwin	ICRI Member
Reef Check Indonesia	Derta	Prabuning	ICRI Member
Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA)	Maher	Amer	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Dominic	Bryant	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Lojain Osama	Kamel	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Ghaida Ali	Hadaidi	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Abbrar Hussien	Labban	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Peter	Mous	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Ian	McLeod	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Chico	Birrell	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Simon	Reeves	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Abdulaziz	Alsuwailem	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Khaled	Asfahani	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	David	Feary	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Vincent	Kneefel	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS)	Mohammed	Elsayed	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, National Centre for Wildlife	Kahlid	Ali Al-Shaikh	ICRI Member
Saudi Arabia, National Centre for Wildlife	Faridah	Tayib	ICRI Member
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	Nicolas	Rocle	ICRI Member
South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)	Priyankari	Alexander	ICRI Member
South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)	Rokeya	Khaton	ICRI Member

Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute	Patterson Edward	Jasperkamalam	ICRI Member
Thailand, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources	Thamasak	Yeemin	ICRI Member
The Commonwealth Secretariat	Heidi	Prislan	ICRI Member
The Reef-World Foundation	Chloe	Harvey	ICRI Member
UN Environment Programme	Gabriel	Grimsditch	ICRI Member
UN Environment Programme	Janet	Opati	ICRI Member
UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme	Susana	Perera Valderrama	ICRI Member
United Kingdom, Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)	Rachel	Mulholland	ICRI Member
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	Rasul	Samadov	ICRI Member
United States of America, Department of State	Christine	Dawson	ICRI Co-chair
United States of America, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program	Jennifer	Koss	ICRI Co-chair
United States of America, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program	Michael	Lameier	ICRI Member
United States of America, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program	Caroline	Donovan	ICRI Member
United States of America, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program	Anna	Rothstein	ICRI Member
Wildlife Conservation Society	Alexandra	Kler Lago	ICRI Member
Wildlife Conservation Society	Diwigdi	Valiente	ICRI Member
WWF International	Carol	Phua	ICRI Member

Apologies from 19 members were received in advance of the GM:

- Brazil
- Blue Alliance
- Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)
- Colombia
- Coral Restoration Consortium
- Costa Rica
- European Union
- Germany
- Great Barrier Reef Foundation
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Mirpuri Foundation
- MSC Foundation
- Myanmar
- Palau
- Panama
- Sweden
- The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre

ANNEX 3. RESOLUTION FOR THE RED SEA REGION

Resolution for the Red Sea Region

Adopted at the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) 38th General Meeting (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia) on September 12th 2024

Submitted as an outcome of the Coral Reef Red Sea Forum

Acknowledging the Red Sea Region as a critical biodiversity hotspot, home to immense biologically diverse coral reef communities, harboring 12,696 km² of the world's coral reefs, and more than 265 species of corals;

Acknowledging coral reefs of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba represent an important open sky laboratory to investigate coral resilience to climate change that could provide insights into potential solutions for the coral reefs of the world in the event of future coral losses caused by climate change;

Aware that the coral reefs of the Red Sea not only sustain a rapidly growing population of over 28 million people living along its coastline but also support local economies through fisheries, tourism, and coastal protection;

Deeply concerned by the increasing frequency and severity of coral bleaching events, with the Fourth Global Bleaching Event confirmed in at least 71 countries and territories, with 73% of coral reefs worldwide experiencing bleaching-level heat stress, and the mounting pressures on coral reefs from climate change, unsustainable extraction and land, and marine, sources of pollution;

Emphasising the urgent need to enhance coral reef resilience against climate change and local drivers of loss, through effective conservation, protection, and restoration efforts;

Recognising the Red Sea as a potential climate refuge for coral reefs, offering hope for the future preservation of coral species, biodiversity, and the ecosystems they support;

The General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative:

Acknowledges with deep appreciation the hosting by Saudi Arabia and the General Organization for Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS) of the "Red Sea Region – A Climate Refuge for Coral Reefs Red Sea" Forum on the occasion of 38th ICRI General Meeting, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Recognises the need for robust regional collaboration amongst all the relevant stakeholders to collect, collate and share coral reef monitoring data to drive a better understanding of the health of coral reefs in the region;

Recognises the need to expand the coverage of marine and coastal protected areas, and enhance the management of such environments, to achieve regional and global 30 by 30 targets;

Recognises the need to develop regional capacity across all levels to effectively conserve, protect, and restore coral reefs;

Recognises the need to develop and implement national strategies and action plans that include coral reefs and related ecosystems in all coral reef nations;

Recognises the high economic value of coral reefs for the region;

Recognises the importance of citizen science to collect meaningful information from marine ecosystems, which not only provides useful scientific data that may inform for conservation and management but has a range of additional conservation benefits such as science education, increasing ocean literacy, capacity building, community, and private industry;

Recognises the need for increased support for local communities to ensure sustainable practices and economic diversification that reduce pressures on coral reef ecosystems.

ICRI Members are encouraged, as a matter of urgency, to:

1. **Consider** the actions, information and proposals noted in the report, and the outputs of the “Red Sea Region – A Climate Refuge for Coral Reefs” Forum;
2. **Enhance and strengthen** regional cooperation in the Red Sea Region;
3. **Support** the collation, monitoring and sharing of national and regional coral reef data;
4. **Share** best practices for conservation;
5. **Promote** effective management strategies for coral reefs, and their associated ecosystems, and the expansion of the total area of coral reefs in the region under effective protection;
6. **Call for** the development and implementation of national coral reef strategies and action plans for all the countries in the region.

ANNEX 4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ICRI YOUTH AD HOC COMMITTEE

Terms of reference for the ICRI Youth ad hoc committee

Adopted on September 12th 20204 at the 38th 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 37th 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.

ANNEX 5. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MOTION TO THE IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS

Terms of reference for the *ad hoc* committee to support the development of a motion to the IUCN World Conservation Congress

Adopted on September 12th 20204 at the 38th ICRI General Meeting, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Background

The IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC), held every four years, is a pivotal event that unites several thousand leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, indigenous peoples, business, and academia. The Congress aims to enhance the management of the environment for human, social, and economic development. The IUCN WCC provides a platform to set aside differences and collaborate on creating effective environmental governance, engaging all sectors of society to share both the responsibilities and the benefits of conservation. The next IUCN WCC will take place from October 9-15, 2025, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (please refer to Annex 2 for key dates).

In April 2024, ICRI and NOAA announced the world's Fourth Global Bleaching Event. This event has surpassed the spatial extent of the Third Global Bleaching Event, impacting over 72.9% of coral reefs worldwide as of July 2024, with coral bleaching confirmed in at least 69 countries and territories. The severity and frequency of coral bleaching events have escalated, highlighting a pivotal moment for global intervention.

In this light, IUCN WCC presents a valuable opportunity in the international agenda to elevate coral bleaching. Historically, there has been no IUCN resolution on coral bleaching. This motion will build upon the previous IUCN Resolutions “**Conserving and protecting coral reefs through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**” ([WCC-2020-Res-105-EN](#)) and “**Cooperation for the conservation and protection of coral reefs worldwide**” ([WCC-2016-Rec-106-EN](#)).

The motion will be developed further following the ICRI 38th General Meeting Session 5 – The Fourth Global Bleaching Event: Monitoring and Management Response which will discuss key messages to be included for the motion.

ICRI members have a unique opportunity to lead a coordinated effort to engage IUCN members (1,400, from over 70 countries) to advocate for strong action to conserve and protect coral reefs, building resilience to future coral bleaching.

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

1. Coordinate ICRI's contribution to the IUCN WCC 2025, including developing a timeline to according to the ICRI Rules of Procedures.
2. Develop a draft motion on coral reef bleaching to be submitted to IUCN WCC, aligning with, and building upon, other relevant processes where necessary.
3. Engage IUCN Members, including States and Governments, to support the motion; and
4. Disseminate information about the motion and the importance of addressing coral bleaching to a wide range of stakeholders including ICRI members, governments, NGOs, academia, indigenous communities, and youth.

Chairs:

ICRI Secretariat

Members:

United States of America, Australia, Wildlife Conservation Society, United Nations, Environment Programme, International Coral Reef Society (ICRS)

Duration: The *ad hoc* committee will work intersessionally until the end of the IUCN WCC congress in October 2025.

Annex 1: Proposed Terms of Reference for the ad hoc Committee to support the submission of a motion to the IUCN World Conservation Congress

The *ad hoc* committee will coordinate ICRI's contribution to write a comprehensive motion on coral bleaching to be submitted at the IUCN WCC 2025. The committee will be chaired by the ICRI Secretariat and supported by a possible co-chair(s) (TBC). The *ad hoc* committee will work virtually to discuss and draft the motion and will take advantage of any opportunities for face-to-face meetings on the side lines of other meetings. The text of the motion will be based on the conclusion of the session on the Fourth Global Bleaching Event: Monitoring and Management Response held during the ICRI 38 General Meeting.

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

- Coordinate ICRI's contribution to the IUCN WCC 2025, including developing a timeline to according to the ICRI Rules of Procedures;
- Develop a draft motion on coral reef bleaching to be submitted to IUCN WCC, aligning with, and building upon, other relevant processes where necessary;
- Engage IUCN Members, including States and Governments, to support the motion; and
- Disseminate information about the motion and the importance of addressing coral bleaching to a wide range of stakeholders including ICRI members, governments, NGOs, academia, indigenous communities, and youth.

Possible deliverables:

- Draft motion on coral bleaching to be submitted to the IUCN WCC 2025.
- Gather the support IUCN Members (countries, organisations, and key stakeholders) including ICRI members for the motion and to encourage voting.
- Dissemination of the motion to raise global awareness.

Annex 2: IUCN WCC Motion Submission Key Dates

- **Submission on the motion platform**
 - Opens - November 1st 2024
 - Closes - January 15th 2025
- **Publication of Motions**
 - March 24th 2025
- **Online Discussion**
 - April 18th 2025 – June 15th 2025
- **Publication of Final Motions**
 - July 9th 2025
- **Electronic Voting**
 - August 27th – September 10th 2025
- **IUCN WCC**