

# Resolution to support 2028 as fourth International Year of the Reef (IYOR)

*Presented by the ICRI Secretariat, amended following review by members*

*Proposed for adoption at the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) 39th General Meeting (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)*

## Plain language statement

*This resolution seeks ICRI members' support for 2028 as the fourth International Year of the Reef (IYOR). A full calendar year provides a clear, simple framework for planning and maximises the opportunity to align with global events and campaigns. It also allows additional preparation time following the Global Coral Reef Summit 2026 and ensures the IYOR sits clearly within a single year that members and partners can plan around. It is intended to be inclusive of existing planned events and activities during this period. The IYOR would provide a unifying platform to elevate global awareness of coral reef importance, threats and solutions, and to mobilise coordinated communications, education, youth engagement and partnership action across ICRI members and partners.*

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## The Members of ICRI,

**Recognizing** the continuing importance of the International Coral Reef Initiative as a voluntary global partnership for coral reefs, bringing together governments, intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, operational networks, technical institutions and other partners around shared coral reef priorities,

**Recalling** the role of the Host Secretariat under the ICRI Procedures in maintaining outreach mechanisms, promoting ICRI and its work, and supporting coordinated engagement through ICRI media and international fora,

**Acknowledging** that previous International Years of the Reef have provided important platforms for public engagement, education, communications, and greater global visibility for coral reef issues, with earlier International Years of the Reef held in 1997, 2008, and 2018,

**Recognizing** with concern the continuing and escalating impacts facing coral reefs globally, including changing ocean conditions, mass bleaching, ocean acidification, pollution, overexploitation, and cumulative local pressures,

**Recognizing further** the importance of broad participation in coral reef action, including the meaningful engagement of reef-dependent communities,

**Emphasising** the value of a coordinated global awareness platform to help connect coral reef policy, science, monitoring, finance, management, education, youth engagement, and public communications,

**Noting** that an International Year of the Reef 2028 would provide a timely opportunity to sustain and extend momentum generated through current ICRI priorities and wider global coral reef action.

### **The 39th General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative:**

**Declares** 2028 as the fourth International Year of the Reef;

**Recognizes** the International Year of the Reef, 2028 as an opportunity to elevate global awareness of coral reef importance, threats, and solutions, and to mobilise coordinated action across policy, science, finance, management, education, and public engagement;

**Encourages** ICRI members, operational networks, partners, and relevant organisations to align communications, events, campaigns, and outreach activities with the International Year of the Reef throughout 2028, including through existing comms strategies and activities;

**Supports** the Host Secretariat to work with ICRI Members and partners to develop an International Year of the Reef, 2028 approach that:

- a) strengthen global visibility of coral reef priorities;
- b) promote public awareness, education, and youth engagement;
- c) showcase science-based solutions, leading practice, and member action;
- d) reinforce coordination and momentum across coral reef policy, monitoring, finance, and resilience efforts (e.g. via existing comms strategies and activities);
- e) develop voluntary guidance for members to ensure messaging is simple and adaptable at community level; and
- f) explore a permanent International Coral Reef Day designation with the UN;

**Requests** the Host Secretariat to develop a workplan and indicative resource estimate for delivery across the full period, including alignment with the broader ocean calendar, to engage the successor Host Secretariat once confirmed, and explore fundraising opportunities to support implementation, keep members informed of progress and any material changes to feasibility.

## **Conclusion**

ICRI Members express their collective commitment to advancing awareness, engagement, and coordinated action for coral reefs by supporting the International Year of the Reef 2027–2028 as the fourth IYOR, and recognise it as an important opportunity to strengthen global visibility, public understanding, and shared momentum for coral reef conservation, restoration, and sustainable management, with the initiative spanning two ICRI Host Secretariat terms to sustain momentum through 2028.