

The ICRAN Newsletter

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the first issue of the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) Newsletter which brings you news of the ICRAN partners from around the globe. The 'Action Phase' of ICRAN has been underway for close to 20 months and the activities and success stories are beginning to mount up.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the partnership, ICRAN is an innovative global program that focuses on strengthening the capacity of communities to manage their tropical marine resources through an emphasis on monitoring, management, and communications. ICRAN is a new way of doing business and relies upon those who depend on the reef for their livelihoods to guide the course of ICRAN's work and to help enable a vision for the sustainability of coral reefs.

Governments and coral reef advocates coordinate their efforts through the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI). When ICRI launched the Call to Action in 1995, concerned organizations were inspired to establish ICRAN. The ICRAN strategic alliance brings together private and public organizations that act worldwide to address the management of coral reef ecosystems and the needs of the communities that depend upon them. This partnership operates by sharing and promoting traditional knowledge, current research and best practices in order to strengthen reef management through peer-to-peer communication.

This holistic approach to reef management aims to promote a better future for these valuable ecosystems and the communities that they sustain. It involves promoting alternative livelihoods, training, capacity-building, and the exchange of current scientific, economic, and social information. ICRAN currently focuses on reefs in the Caribbean, East Africa, East Asia, the South Pacific, Middle East and South Asia, where it is creating networks of sites to highlight successful examples of coral reef management and to promote sustainable management practices at other sites.

ICRAN is an opportunity to make investments in the future of people and reefs, and it is our hope that through our collective efforts we will achieve more today than what has been possible in times past.

Kristian Teleki, Acting Director, ICRAN

ICRAN News

Coral Harvesting Stopped in Vietnam

Coral has been used to make cement in Ninh Thuan since 1979. Originally the Phuong Hai Cement Company harvested dead coral from farming land in surrounding villages. Since 2000, they procured coral-block from My Tan and the local Vua swamp. However, once larger areas of the swamp were taken over for salt production, the company moved to My Hoa to exploit freestone coral and tried to obtain permission to exploit coral from the sea off My Hoa beach.

Upon receiving the results of an environmental impact trial on 1-hectare of coral, the people of My Hoa protested and directly resisted the cement company's plans to survey and exploit marine coral. Locals were already aware of the need to protect marine resources due to the publicity of a Sea Turtle Conservation project by WWF and Ninh Thuan Department of Science, Technology and Environment in 2000.

The selection of Ninh Thuan as an ICRAN target site in 2002 resulted in an increased level of awareness of the local government and communities in the importance of conserving coral reefs. When the ICRAN project was approved, coral exploitation in My Hoa was stopped by the Provincial People's Committee and is now controlled strictly by local people at the site.

This is an excellent example of how community awareness can influence decision-makers to stop further coral exploitation. The ICRAN project is strengthening this awareness and showing the determination of the Ninh Thuan Provincial authorities to protect coral reefs.

Connie Chiang, ICRAN Coordinator, East Asian Region



ICRAN Expands Geographical Range to Include South Asian and Arabian Seas

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Johannesburg 2002, ICRAN announced the expansion of its partnership into the South Asian region to work



with South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) countries: Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Invitations for new partnerships were also extended to PERSGA (Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment Programme) and ROPME countries (Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Marine Environment – Kuwait Action Plan).

In collaboration with SACEP and other organisations ICRAN is developing a work programme for the South Asian region. This

programme is hoped to act as a catalyst to maximise the benefits from the considerable expertise and potential within the region and to strengthen the role of SACEP in coordinating regional coral reef activities.

The ICRAN expansion to the South Asian region was presented for endorsement at the Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP, 20-21 January in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The partnership between ICRAN and SACEP has been formally accepted and SACEP are fully committed to coordinating ICRAN's work in the South Asian region with other organisations, government bodies and local communities.

A similar path will be taken to develop proposals for the Arabian Seas Region.

Honorary Rangers System in Africa is a Success

The Marine Parks and Reserves Unit (MPRU) in the Dar es Salaam Marine Reserve System (DMRS) has developed an innovative and unique collaboration with the community next to the Reserves. Community members have been selected to look after the reserve, and have gone through a certification process to become Honorary Rangers (HR). Some of the Rangers are former beach boys, making their living by selling simple food and drinks to visitors within the Reserve. Their status has been raised by the HR system, and their enthusiasm is unmistakable.

The HRs assist in keeping the beaches clean, providing services and information to visitors, confirming that visitors fees have been paid and in surveillance of the Reserve. They have also provided first aid as needed and prevented thefts. The amount of fees paid has increased significantly since the introduction of the HRs, and the HR system can be considered self financing as the increase in paid fees has more than covered the monthly salaries.

The ICRAN project has assisted in training the Honorary Rangers in the Dar es Salaam Marine Reserve System at the National Tourism College in basic cooking skills including hygiene. This training will both improve services provided to

the visitors of the Reserve, and equip the HR with an education and job qualification that they could not have achieved without the MPRU and ICRAN. Other training is being discussed such as first aid and monitoring techniques, which is particularly appropriate as many of the HRs are very skilled in snorkelling.

The ICRAN project has also assisted in equipping the MPRU with boats and radios so that the HRs can become more active in surveillance. This is particularly important as there is no permanent presence of MPRU staff in the Reserves, patrols are expensive and undertaken only twice a week. Radio equipment will assist the HRs to be in constant contact with the patrols to alert them immediately of any offences against regulations, such as illegal fishing.

The system of Honorary Rangers is working well, and it is recommended that the experience be shared with other marine protected areas through ICRAN.



Patrol boat from the Dar es Salaam Marine Reserve System

Agneta Nilsson, ICRAN Programme Officer

First ICRAN Regional Experience Sharing Workshop



B-F, L-R: Chen Chunhua, Jamrean Buaruang, Zhang Jun, Suraphol Sudara, Edi Djuharsa, Mirza Pedju, Yihang Jiang, Tran Phong, Arief Tongkatie, Buoy Roitana, Thamasak Yeemin, Chheng Touch, Nguyen Ngoc Thanh Laurie Raymundo, Connie Chiang, Pinya Sarasas, Wichanan Pongsri, Rattika. Pettonoma. Pablina Cadiz. Ivan Soto

August 2002 saw the First ICRAN Regional Experience Sharing Workshop, held in Phuket, Thailand. The workshop provided a forum for Site Managers in East Asia to exchange experiences in management and to discuss how successful practices could be translated to Target Sites.

The meeting gave Demonstration Sites the

opportunity to present results of assessment of management schemes, and Target Sites gave presentations on existing legislation. Managers were able to discuss site requirements and needs to improve management.

Demonstration and Target Sites paired up in working groups by themes: MPA development, community based management and sustainable tourism, and decided on dates for site visits and activities.

Discussions highlighted priority issues such as the importance of public awareness for protecting coral reef resources. Target sites compiled a table of available resources to identify their needs, and participants compiled a list of indicators to monitor reef health, as well as socio-economic indicators to monitor management.

Pairing of East Asian Demonstration & Target Sites

Apo Island, Philippines & Ninh Thuan Province, Vietnam
 Bunaken National Park, Indonesia & Gili Islands Marine Recreation Park, Indonesia
 Komodo Island, Indonesia & Sanya Nature Reserve, China
 Mo Koh Surin, Thailand & Koh Rong, Cambodia

Report is downloadable from www.icran.org

3rd Training of Trainers Workshop

The Third UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) Training of Trainers Course in MPA Management was held in Soufriere, Saint Lucia on October 28 to November 9, 2002. Under the Cartagena Convention and SPAW Protocol, governments approved the training programme in a bid to protect the region's biodiversity through the establishment of protected areas.

12 Marine Protected Area practitioners attended including managers, government officials and project staff from 8 different countries (Belize, Antigua, Anguilla, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Jamaica, Barbados and Bonaire). They were taught to select appropriate teaching methods to convey concepts and provide demonstration activities in the following areas of MPA management:

- Nature of the Coastal and Marine Environments
- Uses and Threats to the Marine Environment
- Marine Protected Areas Overview
- Participatory Planning
- Marine Protected Area Planning
- Marine Protected Area Management
- Research and Monitoring
- Communication

Sponsored by ICRAN, the training programme received positive feedback from the participants who indicated that there was a need for capacity building of this nature throughout the wider Caribbean.

Malden Miller, ICRAN Coordinator, Caribbean Region



Training of Trainers Workshop, St. Lucia

The World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD)

The ICRAN Exhibition displayed a wide variety of information and provided an opportunity for interactions between coral reef related public and private initiatives, as well as the large numbers of interested individuals who visited the H2O-pavilion.

The ICRAN WSSD Side Event 'People and Reefs: A Partnership for Prosperity' was attended by over 100 guests and media representatives. The event presented ICRAN, its current work, and its future plans for expansion to address the outcomes identified at WSSD.

USAID also announced a US\$1.5 million grant for ICRAN's work on the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, which was matched with the same amount from UNF.

A new ICRAN leaflet was distributed in four languages along with a CD of relevant publications.



The ICRAN Type II partnership was launched by announcing an expansion to South Asia and the Arabian Seas region. A special focus on coral reef based tourism was also initiated, coordinated by the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, with a view to create an environmentally, as well as economically sustainable tourism industry through outreach and awareness campaigns.

For more details and a copy of the leaflet see www.icran.org

ICRAN Site Successes

Caribbean

- Under a technical assistance and capacity building project, **Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve (SKBR), Mexico**, implemented an environmental monitoring programme, integrated management of domestic waste, a socio-economic assessment of a local community (Punta Allen) and a programme for educational signs
- The **SKBR** project includes an exchange programme with other ICRAN Target Sites to share lessons learned, whose activities were presented on posters at the Gulf & Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) Conference
- **Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), St Lucia**, conducted a Ranger Exchange Programme with Negril Marine Park, where Jamaican rangers learned, amongst others, how to implement a user fee system
- **SMMA** have hired a Public Relations Officer to implement the Communications Plan: public presentations have been made to schools and hotels, and a Newsletter and Documentary produced

News from the region includes, (with the help of UNEP CAR RCU):

- strengthening of GCRMN nodes
- contribution to the Status of Coral Reefs of the World 2002
- helping to upgrade the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network (CaMPAM) database



L-R: Malden Miller; James Gumbs; Andrew Ross; Francis Staine; Fernando Simal; Albert Munnings; Dennis Garbutt; Juliana Samuel; Donald Anthonyson; Norman Norris; Alida Ortiz; Thomas Nelson; Miguel Alamilia; Patrick Leroy Williams

- In **Bonaire**, an Assistant Manager has been hired to implement the private mooring project, which will help expand their fee collection system
- **Hol Chan Marine Reserve, Belize**, project activities began in July, with work on their Environmental Education Outreach Project (which SKBR is helping design) and participation in site exchange programmes

▪ The Caribbean Training of Trainers Course has been adopted by UNEP as a best practice and success story project for the global network (www.unep.org/bsgn)

East Africa

- The **Malindi/Watamu Marine Parks and Reserves, Kenya**, undertook activities including construction works on small-scale infrastructure developments, moorings maintenance, acquisition of diving equipment, Park boats and engine repair and upgrading visitors facilities and bandas (accommodation)
- In **Malindi** the offices, community shop and boat repair workshop were repaired, and the Boat Association engine storage facility was expanded and handed over to the local community at a ceremony presided over by the local MP
- In **Watamu** the engine room was constructed below the Watamu boat operator's association office.

In cooperation with the East African IUCN Regional Office, pilot sites have been identified for the assessment and monitoring of management effectiveness in MPAs, and steps are being taken to initiate the process



Watamu Community Mangrove Boardwalk

The community mangrove boardwalk has been constructed – an eco-tourism project which aims to demonstrate an alternative non-extractive use of mangroves to generate funds for school bursaries for the local community

- The **Dar es Salaam Marine Reserve System (DMRS), Tanzania**, has trained community members as Honorary Rangers, educating and qualifying them, and improving visitor services

- The **Dar es Salaam Marine Reserve System** has been undertaking activities including the purchase of engines, boats, demarcation buoys, radios and handsets and conducting ranger patrols

East Asia

- Communities of **Apo Island, Philippines**, are showing signs of prospering with sustainable lifestyles and studies are showing the first evidence that MPAs can contribute to creating a sustainable fishery
- A poster contest was held in **Apo** to raise awareness of coral reefs: winning posters will be reproduced to raise money for the community's alternative livelihood project
- **Apo** has set up a refillable drinking water station, where re-use of bottles receives a discount, to reduce the amount of garbage disposed of in the Park
- **Ninh Thuan, Vietnam**, is to test the establishment of a self-management scheme based on Apo, including a community centre and training workshop to engage the community to manage coral reefs
- A feasibility study for alternative income projects in **Ninh Thuan** highlighted seaweed farming as the most viable project, which will be tested in 2003
- Selection of **Ninh Thuan** as a Target Site increased levels of awareness in the local government and communities and contributed to the closure of a cement factory that was harvesting corals
- A baseline assessment of management schemes in **Bunaken, Indonesia**, highlighted the new entrance fee system and involvement of all stakeholders as crucial for Park management
- Socio-economic monitoring highlighted that the majority of the population in **Bunaken** are farmers and fishermen, and resulted in plans to introduce alternative livelihoods to mangrove harvesters
- During a site managers workshop in Phuket, **Komodo National Park, Indonesia**, prepared a rough guide to assist **Sanya** in assessing stresses and sources of stress to corals

Training workshops and courses were held in Ninh Thuan, Bunaken, Sanya and Koh Rong

Topics covered socio-economic impact, co-management of marine parks, coral reef monitoring and diving and Reef Check training

- In **Komodo** blast fishing has been reduced as a result of routine patrols, floating ranger stations and strict law enforcement
- The Monitoring Manual has been translated into Vietnamese, Thai, Khmer and Chinese
- The **EAS Regional Coordinating Unit** was able to fund 5 of 7 approved Small Grants Projects:
 - In **Indonesia**, training workshops were held in coral reef monitoring, SCUBA diving and Reef Check by Yayasan Adi Citra Lestari (YACL) and Reef Check Indonesia, who also held an awareness campaign and socio-economic study
 - Reef Check surveys were carried out in **Vietnam**, and **Sanya** also held a workshop on monitoring
 - In the **Philippines**, Philippines Reef and Rainforest Conservation Foundation, Inc. (PRRCFI) conducted activities in capacity building and monitoring skills at a local level. Fishermen monitored fish catch and 7 fish catch billboards were installed in 3 villages

In East Asia:

- **All Demonstration Sites completed baseline assessments of existing management schemes, sharing lessons learned with their paired Target Site.**
- **All Target Sites reviewed current legislation for coral reef management resulting in reports identifying management needs**

South Pacific

- An ecological monitoring programme has been established in **Aleipata and Safata MPAs, Samoa**, based on permanent sites (tied in with zoning plans) to be rigorously surveyed every 3 years. The programme also incorporates community monitoring of key indicators
- The Community Consultation that took place with the **Jaluit** people of Majuro, **Marshall Islands**, was a success, giving them the chance to raise questions and exchange ideas, and resulted in a show of support for the proposed conservation concept. The Republic of the Marshall Islands Environmental Protection Authority (RMIEPA) met with traditional leaders to re-establish "mo's" (traditional closures), also strongly supported by the people
- The RMIEPA Education and Information Unit spent a week on **Jaluit** to promote public awareness of the conservation project and solid waste management issue, and are holding an art competition for schools on the atoll.
- A marine resources monitoring team from the College of Marshall Islands gave presentations to high school students of **Jaluit**, and trained project officers and students in coral reef monitoring
- In **Tokelau**, a meeting was held between ICRAN and National Representatives in December to determine the way forward and develop a workplan for a project in the area. The Coral Reef Handbook was translated into Tokelauan
- In the **Solomon Islands** the **Coral Gardening project** conducted a training workshop and stakeholder consultation, and identified raising awareness amongst communities as a priority
- Workplans were developed for 3 Awareness Programmes in the **Solomon Islands** – one has already been started in Ngella, and 2 others are ready to be carried out in Malaita and Guadalcanal
- Five new villages have joined the **American Samoa** Village Fisheries Management Programme. Cooperative agreements have been signed, areas identified for MPAs and one-day workshops held to inform communities about the Programme

In the South Pacific, management plans have been finalised in Jaluit Atoll and Aleipata and Safata MPAs
Project personnel attended the 2nd phase of the Pacific Islands Community Based Conservation Course (PICC)

Partner News



The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL): has developed several coral reef educational tools and resources which are online at www.coralreef.org, as are the photo bank, downloadable fact sheets, tourism guidelines and teacher's resources. An ICRAN demo/target sites outreach and management needs assessment survey has also been initiated in coordination with UNEP Regional Seas offices



Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN): launched the 'Status of the Coral Reefs of the World: 2002' report at a series of meetings worldwide, and are hiring a coordinator for the South East Asian region to coordinate monitoring and data in the area



Reef Check: methods continue to be applied in training courses and workshops worldwide, including Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia, where they also carried out a public awareness campaign and socio-economic study



South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP): partnership with ICRAN has been formally accepted and SACEP are fully committed to coordinating ICRAN's work in South Asia with other organisations, government bodies and local communities



South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP): see previous reports



The WorldFish Centre: held a ten day training course in October as part of the PICES (North Pacific Marine Science Organization) project entitled 'Workshop and Training on Population Genetics Applications in Fisheries Management' in Penang, Malaysia, and have agreed to undertake economic evaluation for Reefs at Risk. ReefBase has continued to update its records with a particular emphasis on reports of bleaching



United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP): and CEOS/US NOAA are co-leading the preparation of a coral reef sub-theme to incorporate coral reefs into an IGOS Coastal Theme. In collaboration with ICRAN, UNEP have actively taken part in furthering the launch of the coral reef 3D IMAX movie, 'Ocean Wonderland', and have adopted the Caribbean Training of Trainers Course as a best practice and success story project for the global network (www.unep.org/bsqn)

UNEP Regional Seas Offices (CAR, EAF, EAS): see previous reports from the regions

UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP DTIE): is coordinating a special focus on coral reef based tourism announced at WSSD 2002, with a view to creating environmentally, as well as economically, sustainable tourism industry through outreach and awareness campaigns



UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC): has continued upgrading its coral reef maps with new sources improving mapping. Maps have been prepared for several publications, including Reefs at Risk. A plan of work on Caribbean MPA data has been produced, including consolidating the CaMPAM interface. The analysis of global protection of coral reefs within MPAs is nearly completed



World Resources Institute (WRI): held the Caribbean Reefs at Risk Workshop in Miami during October 2002, where preliminary threat modeling results for the region were presented. Additional and improved data sources and models were identified there. The transfer of data from UNEP-WCMC has been coordinated, particularly for coral reef locations



World Wildlife Fund (WWF): has jointly launched a three-year advocacy initiative with ICRAN to support national and regional efforts to achieve a significant increase in the area of coral reefs and mangroves under formal conservation protection and greatly enhance awareness and support for coral reef and mangrove conservation

ICRAN Diary Dates

- **ITMEMS 2**, Manila, 24-27th March
- **ICRI Workshop and Coordinating and Planning Committee Meeting**, Manila, 28-29th March
- **Earth Week**, 15th-22nd April – **Earth Day**, 22nd April
- **Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) Partnership Fair**, New York, 24th Apr-8th May
- **ICRAN Steering Committee Meeting**, San Francisco, 11th-13th May
- **ICRAN Board Meeting**, San Francisco, 13th-15th May
- **17th Annual Meeting, Society for Conservation Biology**, Duluth, Minnesota, 28th June-2nd July
- **World Parks Congress**, Durban, South Africa, 8-17th September

Other ICRAN Business

Events

- The new IMAX film – Ocean Wonderland was launched in Boston on February 11th, in which ICRAN has taken an active part in the launch
- A joint WWF ICRAN Side Event was held at the Ramsar CoP8 in Valencia, Spain, in November 2002 to address the under-representation of coral reefs in the Ramsar convention
- The ICRAN supported report 'The Economics of Worldwide Coral Reef Degradation' was recently published in February 2003, highlighting the value and importance of reefs globally

Fundraising

- At WSSD, USAID announced a US\$1.5 million grant to ICRAN's work on the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, which was matched with the same amount by UNF
- ICRAN was awarded \$250,000 from the Goldman Fund, which will be matched by the UNF
- The project proposals submitted to the US based National Fish and Wildlife Foundation entitled 'Strengthening of MPAs in the Caribbean through Implementation of Best Practices at Target Sites' and 'Database of Caribbean Fisheries Restricted Areas' were approved
- ICU has undertaken project development with the GEF with a view to undertaking a PDFA with the ICRAN partnership

ICRAN Expansion

- UNEP is assisting ICRAN in its expansion to the South Asian and Arabian Seas
- Proposals for new ICRAN activities in the South Asian region are being developed by ICU and SACEP
- Proposals are being developed by ICRAN Partners for work in the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef region

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ICRAN is working to halt and reverse the declining health of the world's coral reefs.

We aim to make this newsletter a regular feature distributing it via email and making it available at the ICRAN website (www.icran.org)

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