

STRONG REEFS – STRONG ISLANDS

2008 PACIFIC YEAR OF THE REEF

REGIONAL CAMPAIGN PLAN

INTRODUCTION

2008 has been designated International Year of the Reef by the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI). ICRI is a partnership among governments, international organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and non-government organizations. It strives to preserve coral reefs and related ecosystems by implementing Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, and other relevant international conventions and agreements. ICRI's Secretariat is currently co-hosted by the governments of the United States and Mexico.

The Pacific region, through SPREP, will tailor this campaign to the particular issues and challenges of the region. Following the success of the Pacific Year of the Coral Reef 1997 campaign, SPREP hopes to implement a regional campaign to encourage the region to take action to reverse the current degradation of coral reefs and build their resilience to natural factors such as climate change. The main message being that reefs play a critical role being island protector and provider and that their conservation is key to our island people therefore it is more than time for action to effectively protect them.

1. BACKGROUND

Corals are dying worldwide for a number of reasons, particularly because of pest outbreaks (diseases and predators) but also due to climate change, nutrient pollution, destructive fishing practices and coastal development that can smother corals with sediment. Yet they provide between \$10,000 and \$100,000 in economic benefits to nearby communities, according to one estimate, including everything from coastal protection from storm surges to better fishing.

More than 75 percent of the world's reefs lie in the Pacific Ocean, where a new analysis reveals that an average of roughly 600 square miles of the marine outcroppings disappeared annually between 1968 and 2004—since 1995 the rate of their destruction has doubled. Marine biologist John Bruno reported that the global coral loss began earlier and is far more rapid and geographically extensive than anticipated. Twenty years ago, many reefs of the Pacific boasted living coral on more than 60 percent of their surfaces but today very few reefs in the Indo-Pacific, only about 1 or 2 percent, have coral cover close to the historical baseline.

However, recent research has shown that even severely degraded corals can recover, given the opportunity. Efforts have been made in the Pacific in the past years with many projects and funds dedicated to reef conservation among them the International Coral Reef Action Network and the Locally-Marine-Managed Area and more recently the Micronesia Challenge and the Phoenix Island protected area. All these initiatives being very encouraging, there is still a long way to reverse the current trend of reef constantly degrading in the Pacific. Establishing Marine Protected Areas is a way of reversing this trend but it has to be associated with controlling the input of land-based pollutants in the reefs. Efforts need to be made at all levels and in all areas, among communities, governments, scientists and private sector.

As for the climate change issue that tends to undermine all the others, there is little the Pacific region can do to reduce the world greenhouse gas emission. In these days where the main concern is how the region will adapt to climate change, the conservation of coral reefs step forward as the best adaptation so far. And Pacific Islanders taking action to conserve their reefs can achieve this.

2. 2008 PACIFIC YEAR OF THE REEF REGIONAL CAMPAIGN PLAN

2.1 Goal

The campaign goal is to encourage the region to take action to reverse the current degradation of coral reefs and build their resilience to natural factors such as climate change.

2.2 Campaign goal

It is envisaged that the following goals will be achieved or significantly advanced, at the completion of the campaign period

- Communities and governments supported to better protect their reefs through information sharing and marine protected area establishment
- Communities and government aware that the best adaptation to climate change is to build resilience of coral reefs and mangroves.
- Framework developed for governments and NGOs to conserve their reefs
- Governments aware of the economic value of conserving their reefs.

2. SPREP's role

- Actively seek new and additional funding, technical assistance and in-kind support for PYOR.
- Disseminate information about the level and availability of funding (including a format/guidelines for application)
- Provide expert and timely advice for nation/ngo campaign plans
- Support local and national workshops that are part of national/ngo campaign plans.
- Act as a clearing house for information and contacts. Collate information and/or provide contact information on resource persons that can respond to specific issues e.g. bleaching, marina development, starfish outbreaks, climate change, marine protected areas, monitoring, best management practices.
- Encourage Heads of Government/Ministers to launch national campaign
- Encourage national/NGO campaign to have a patron.

2.3 Objectives

The 1997 Pacific Year of the Coral Reef was a wide conservation awareness campaign aimed at communicating the urgent need to conserve Pacific's coral reef and related ecosystem.

In 2008, the campaign will not focus on raising awareness on reefs as endangered ecosystems because it is well known now. The campaign will focus on generating action to effectively protect them. Awareness will still be raised on new areas such as the economic value of coral reefs.

The campaign objectives are:

- Promote action to conserve coral reefs at the regional, national and community levels
- Entail a change of behavior
- Raising awareness on coral reef value to economy and adaptation to climate change.

2.4 Campaign Emphasis

The 1997 PYOCR campaign concentrated on creating general public awareness on the importance of coral reefs to our lives. The PYOR 2008 builds on that foundation and have more targeted actions and audience.

Even though the importance of coral reefs is well recognized, they are still declining. The Pacific has always been known for sheltering the most pristine and healthiest reefs in the world, the truth is that they are threatened and declining as the other regions in the world. In the context of climate change, the best way to adapt is actually to protect the reefs that provide protection for the island, by doing this; we also ensure the sustainability of natural resources for the island communities.

Campaign slogan and logo

Strong reefs, strong islands

The campaign slogan depicts the close relation between the health of the reef and the integrity of the island and its people that it is surrounding.

2.5 Overall key messages and target audiences

- Coral Reef: Provider, Protector.

This key message targets both governments and communities. It shows the urgent need to actively protect them to better face climate change and ensure the sustainability of marine resources to support communities, local and regional economies highly reliant on coral reefs for subsistence and tourism.

- Time for action

This second key message also targets all the audiences. Actions will be different at each level but we all need to take action to protect the reefs.

PYOR 2008 will still produce some awareness raising documents even if it is not its main focus. The key messages will be as followed:

Target Audience	Key message
PRIMARY	
Policy/decision makers (SPREP members)	<p>Coral reef ecosystems are 'ocean banks' - providing invaluable goods and services to PI economies, environment, culture and tradition</p> <p>Healthy coral reefs ecosystems reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change on PI livelihoods and economies by protecting coastlines and availability of marine resources</p> <p>Continued benefits from coral reefs ecosystems is dependent on development and implementation of effective integrated and adaptive management responses</p>
Private sector - tourism and fishing	<p>Pacific coral reefs are one of the most rich and unique ecosystems in the world. Investing in conservation and sustainable use of coral reefs ecosystems and their resources will result in increased income.</p>
Donor bodies	<p>Pacific coral reef ecosystems are one of the richest and unique ecosystems in the world. Increased investment in coral reef conservation and sustainable use of marine resources integral to maintaining global natural capital.</p>
SECONDARY	
Local communities	<p>Sustainable livelihoods are dependent on improved local community action.</p>
Schools	<p>Coral reefs are unique, special, colourful, fun. Coral reefs need to be looked after, conserved and understood.</p>

2.6 Campaign launch

The regional campaign launch will be between October 22nd and 26th, 2007 during the Conference on Nature Conservation in Alotau, PNG. The international launch will be held in conjunction with the ICRI meeting the week of the 21st of January in Washington DC. The IYOR Ad Hoc Committee with the coordinator are planning the details of this event.

2.7 Key partners

Key partners are expected to play a major role in the implementation of the campaign either through their normal programme activities or additional new initiatives. The targeted partners are those that have existing programmes involving coral reef conservation and education in the Pacific region or those of relevance to the region. These include national governments and administrations, local communities, fisheries and tourism authorities, donors and the NGOs, institutes and organizations.

2.8 Linkage with the International Year of the Reef (IYOR)

The international coordinating body of the International Year of the Reef 2008 will be composed of the ICRI co-chairs, the ICRI Ad-Hoc committee and the ICRI IYOR coordinator.

SPREP is a member of the Ad-Hoc Committee along with Australia, Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), France, IYOR committee Germany, Mexico, International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN), Japan, Philippines, Reef Check, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP), UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, and USA.

SPREP will be actively involved to advise, support and provide guidance to the IYOR 2008 Coordinator in carrying out the IYOR 2008 Action Plan and accompanying activities. This will include timely ongoing decision support and review.

SPREP will also be a coordinating link feeding back and forth information about the IYOR to the PYOR campaign network. This should include accessing and disseminating information from IYOR to the network; sending Pacific campaign information to IYOR and helping PYOR members access IYOR contacts and initiatives.

2.9 Funding

The campaign will mostly be funded through the CRISP programme and the Coral Reef Management Officer's operating costs. SPREP is in charge of the communication strategy for the CRISP activities and products. The PYOR will be taken as an opportunity to communicate on the programme along with broader coral reef conservation activities.

The campaign will badge activities as well as existing relevant material produced by partners to be included as campaign material, to be packaged and disseminated together with new material. SPREP has secured some funding to produce additional awareness campaign material as well as limited funding to support in-country activities.

SPREP and partners will endeavor to seek funding before and during the campaign period for the implementation of specific campaign activities during and beyond the campaign period. It is also envisaged that the campaign framework will provide guidance for partners on priority activities in efforts to seek funding for activities in a concerted manner.

Human Resource Development: Improving the capacity of Pacific Island countries and territories in communications and environmental education is critical to improving the ability of Pacific Islanders to actively promote sustainable use of their marine resources and the protection of sea turtles. As such, SPREP has secured funding to recruit a YOST intern who will be trained and also assist in the regional facilitation of the campaign. The area of training envisaged includes campaign framework development (national and regionally), preparation and distribution of campaign material, coordination and organization of events and activities, liaison with countries and key partners within the Pacific and within the international context. Additional training may be provided if appropriate. Working with communication and environment professionals will help build confidence and experience in a regional setting, and add to the cadre of specialists in the region. It is envisaged that the intern, a Pacific Islander, would be recruited for a period of 12 to 15 months. This intern will cost US\$20,000 and will be covered by the CRMO operating costs.

2.10 Coordination mechanism

2.10.1 PYOR 2008 Coordinating Committee

A SPREP circular was sent out to SPREP focal points among governments, regional organizations and NGOs for them to nominate a contact point for the PYOR to form the coordinating committee. The task of the committee will be to provide feedback on the campaign to SPREP (campaign plan, branding, activities). They will also coordinate their respective organizations or countries input into the campaign as well as the reporting aspects.

2.10.2 SPREP PYOR Team

The PYOR Team from SPREP will comprise of the Coastal Management Adviser, Coral Reef Management Officer, Education and Social Communications Officer, Associate Media and Publications Officer and Editor and Publications Officer . SPREP will help coordinate the 2008 Year of the Reef, in collaboration with partners, and providing necessary resources and support to in-country activities and by undertaking a number of regional initiatives in support of the campaign. The Intern will assist with the campaign coordination work, working closely along the SPREP PYOR Team. He/she will be a Pacific Islander and will work closely with national countries to develop their community projects, preparation and distribution of campaign material, coordination and organization of events and activities, liaison with countries and key partners within the Pacific and within the international context.

2.11 Reporting, monitoring and evaluation

SPREP will be responsible in maintaining a log of material to be distributed. Participating partners will update SPREP with their activities relating to the PYOR campaign. SPREP will compile and distribute reports of activities. In addition, SPREP in collaboration with PYOR partners, will conduct a long-term evaluation of activities initiated during the PYOR 2008 campaign.

2.12 Communication Tools & Resource material

Strategic and integrated communications is a key component of the Year of the Reef. The following framework aims to provide a regional guide for the Year of the Reef communication activities.

Branding

Logo development: A key component of a campaign is a Year of Reef branding. This will be developed and distributed to partner organizations to display on promotional material developed in 2008.

IYOR Communications Material

The IYOR has produced a logo, it will be used along with the PYOR. The IYOR is not planning on producing any new educational material but will encourage using existing ones.

Material Produced by Partners

There are many relevant materials already produced by partners on reefs that can be part of the package of material to be distributed, e.g. CORAL Guidelines for Tourist, NOAA Things You Can Do To Protect your Coral Reefs, Centre D'Initiation à l'Environnement de Nouvelle-Calédonie De Découvertes en Aventure, le Lagon.

New Campaign materials

A range of campaign materials will be produced for distribution throughout the region. These products will include:

- Posters
- Information/campaign booklet
- Fact sheets
- Stickers
- T-shirts
- Postcards
- Video/DVD

Web-page

A PYOR web page will be developed on the SPREP web site and be the key web point of contact for the PYOR. This page could be linked to partner organizations, organizations of the Steering Committee members, as well as other key stakeholders.

School competition

A regional school competition will be held in 2008 to highlight the campaign. Entries will be returned to country campaign focal points. Competition will have two sections: primary and secondary. Theme for the primary section will be to go out snorkeling and draw the reefs. Theme for the secondary section will be to find a legend related to the reef, tell the story and make a drawing to illustrate it.

World Environment Day activities

World Environment Day, a global initiative to encourage participation in environmental issues, will be on 5 June 2008. The 2008 activities will focus on coral reefs and the development of a programme of activities to promote reef conservation. This could include a reef cleaning.

Industry supported activities

SPREP will seek to establish a partnership with South Pacific Tourism Organization (SPTO) to involve the hotels in the campaign (selling of PYOR products, contribution of guests to a Pacific Reef Trust Fund...).

Commercials producers of tourists items will be encouraged to use the PYOR theme e.g. t shirts and contribute to the Pacific ReefTrust Fund.

Media

Feature articles for newspapers and magazines will be prepared (with photos available) on the campaign and specific issues. Assistance from experts will be sought in the preparations of these features. Feature articles in airline magazines and possibly in-flight video programs will also be promoted and worked on during the year.

2.14 Timeline

Scheduled event and activities

Date	Activity	Comments
September, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the logo, slogan and key messages and draft campaign plan to Pacific representatives at the CRI SP-Townsville seminar • Finalization of the Campaign Plan • Dissemination of the TORs for the intern position • Proposal writing to secure additional funding 	
October, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional launch at the 8th Conference on Nature Conservation in Alotau, PNG 	
November 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intern on board • Finalization of development/design/preparation of campaign resource material • Source existing relevant material for awareness, package compilation of existing relevant material. 	
December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printing of resource material • Dissemination of the guidelines for countries to apply for funds 	
January 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International launch, ICRI general meeting, Washington DC • Resource material distributed • School competition started 	
February 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting of in-country activity funding 	
March 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of educational material 	
April 2008		
May 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of the school competition • COP9 in Bonn, Germany 	
June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Environment Day (June 5th) 	
July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Coral Reef Symposium in Fort Lauderdale, FL, USA 	
August 2008		
September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PYOR side-event at the 19th SPREP meeting 	
October 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Conservation Congress, Barcelona, Spain 	
November 2008		

PYOR 2008 Campaign Framework

Objective 1: Encourage people to take action to conserve their coral reefs					
Key areas	Regional Actions	National Actions	Indicator	Potential partners	Costs (US\$)
Raise the number of reef protected areas	Set up a regional framework for government and NGOs to set up MPAs	National engagement to create protected areas like Palau, FSM and Fiji	Statement made Framework circulated	SPREP National Governments LMMA SPC USP	5,000 (CRI SP)
	Support and focus attention on existing network in their efforts to promote Community-based adaptive Management	Submit MPA proposal to SPREP to fund protected areas establishment	Number of proposals submitted	NGOs National governments	
	Constitute a Pacific Reef Trust Fund to fund reef protected area establishment		Workshop supported	SPREP, LMMA, GCRMN	70,000 (CRI SP)
			Money collected on the Trust Fund bank account	South Pacific Tourism Organization	100,000 (unsecured)
Strengthen government involvement to reduce the input of land-based pollutants to the reefs.	Promote relevant national actions at the regional level		Articles published in regional magazines, SPREP newsletter	SPREP SeaWeb	
	Raise awareness on impacts of sewerage, pigstery, logging and mining and promote alternative solutions.		Information on alternative solutions collected Fact sheets produced	SeaWeb JCU, USP, I RD	10,000 (CRMO op.costs)

Objective 2: Entail behavior change					
Key areas	Regional Actions	National Actions	Indicator	Potential partners	Costs (US\$)
Encourage day-to-day behavior change	Regional awareness campaign on how to change behavior to protect reefs	Awareness workshops in communities and cities	Workshops conducted	NGOs, national governments SPREP SPTO	30,000 (15 000 from op.costs to produce materials)
	Regional school competition where schools will have to write an action plan for the people in their area to better behave towards coral reefs. The best actions plans will receive money for implementation	Coordination of the school competition, involvement of relevant departments and local NGOs to help the schools with their action plan	TOR for the competition circulated School awarded	SPREP Governments NGOs Schools	5,000 (CRMO Operating Costs)

Objective 3: On-going awareness raising on coral reef ecosystems					
Key areas	Regional Actions	National Actions	Indicator	Potential partners	Costs (US\$)
Coral reefs, climate change and adaptation	Enhance regional knowledge on the effects of climate change on coral reefs and their role in adaptation		Articles published in regional magazines Facts sheets distributed	SPREP USP, JCU, IRD	10,000 (unsecured)
Raise awareness on the economic value of reefs and their conservation	Examine the impact of sustainable financing/protected area network planning on coral reef management in countries that have undertaken it - eg Palau, FSM	Try to get high level recognition in one country	Paper developed for consideration through the SPREP meeting in September 2008 High level recognition in one country	SPREP FORSEC	15,000 (unsecured)
		Use economic valuation tools to help decision-making process towards reef conservation	Economic studies undertaken	SPREP, NGOs IUCN	40,000 (CRI SP)