



# 1 *Introduction*

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Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP), thank you for agreeing to participate in our first external program review. The CRCP was established in 2000 to support effective management and sound science to preserve, sustain and restore valuable coral reef ecosystems. As a member of the seven person external review panel, you bring valuable expertise and experience to this important task.

As a panelist, your charge is to provide an independent assessment of the CRCP's effectiveness in achieving the goals and purposes set forth in the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 and other relevant mandates during 2002–2006, and to provide recommendations on how the CRCP can improve its impact and performance in the future. The CRCP is seeking input from the panel on the following three main questions, and the specific charge to the panel is attached below.

1. Is the CRCP directing resources and efforts in the right areas to optimize the conservation of coral reef ecosystems?
2. How effective have these efforts been in advancing coral reef conservation?
3. How can the CRCP improve its impact and performance in the future?

The review panel will meet September 25-27, 2007, in Washington, D.C. A final draft agenda for the panel meeting is included below.

The panel meeting is an opportunity for you to meet with CRCP leadership, staff, core participants and key stakeholders, and listen to and ask questions of these attendees. Following these presentations and discussions, you will have time to develop and present your initial findings. In the month following the meeting, the panel will develop and submit its final report to the CRCP.

This document was prepared to assist you in your review of the CRCP. It was designed by the CRCP as a “self-assessment” and includes the following information:

1. Overview of the CRCP mission, goals, structure and operation (Tab 2).
2. Summary of goals, activities, outputs, outcomes, challenges and future directions for each of the nine CRCP priority investment areas (Tab 3).
3. Summary of goals, outputs, outcomes, and challenges of the CRCP Coral Reef Conservation Grants Programs (Tab 4).





4. Summary of comments from stakeholders on CRCP past effectiveness and future directions submitted in response to a public call for input through the Federal Register in July 2007 as part of this external review process (Tab 5).

We appreciate the time and expertise you bring to this process, and look forward to your comments and recommendations. If you have any questions or need assistance concerning this review, please contact Roger Griffis, CRCP Program Coordinator (301-713-3155 x152; [roger.b.griffis@noaa.gov](mailto:roger.b.griffis@noaa.gov)).

Best regards,

David M. Kennedy  
Program Manager  
Coral Reef Conservation Program  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)  
United States Department of Commerce





### **a. Charge to Reviewers**

The charge to the External Review Panel is to evaluate the success of the Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) in meeting the purposes of the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 and other mandates during 2002–2006, and to provide recommendations that the CRCP may use to improve the Program. The specific charge to the Panel is to evaluate past performance and provide recommendations for future improvement by addressing the following questions and topics:

1) **Is the CRCP directing resources and efforts in the appropriate areas to optimize the conservation of coral reef ecosystems?**

- **Mission** – Is the mission clear and appropriate to address Program mandates?
- **Goals and Objectives** – Are the goals and objectives clear and appropriate to address the Program mandates?
- **Priorities and Strategic Planning** – Are priorities appropriate to enable the Program to make a significant impact on coral reef conservation? Are there lower priorities that should be elevated, or *vice versa*, to complete or enhance long-term objectives?
- **Resources** – Is the Program funding the right balance of activities to advance the conservation of coral reefs? Is the overall Program cost-effective? Are available resources adequate to fulfill the Program mission?
- **Regional Focus** – Is the balance between efforts in the Atlantic and the Pacific appropriate to address the issues in each region? Is adequate effort being spent on international issues?

2) **How effective have these efforts been in advancing coral reef conservation?**

- **Application of Results to Resource Management** – Are the science and observation efforts (e.g., research, mapping, monitoring) funded by the Program adequately addressing management needs? Are they adequately informing and resulting in management actions? Are the Program’s efforts to build management capacity and support implementation of management actions resulting in effective conservation of coral reefs?
- **Education and Outreach** – Have the Program’s education and outreach efforts been effective in reaching target audiences?
- **Partnerships** – Is the Program building and maintaining effective partnerships in support of its mission and mandates?
- **Leadership** – Is the Program providing effective leadership to advance coral reef conservation?
- **Evaluation** – Is the CRCP using appropriate tools and mechanisms to evaluate impacts of funding and measure progress in meeting its goals and objectives?

3) **Building on responses to #1 and #2 above, how can the CRCP improve its impact and performance in the future?**





***b. Draft Agenda***

**Draft Agenda**  
**Meeting of External Review Panel**  
**NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program**

**September 25-27, 2007**

Hall of States, 444 North Capitol St., N.W., Washington D.C.

*Note: p=time (min) for presentation, d=time (min) discussion*

**Monday, September 24**

6:00 pm Mixer reception

**Tuesday, September 25**

8:00-8:20 Coffee/Executive session

8:30 Welcome and Introductions (David Kennedy, Program Manager)

8:45 Review Charge to Panel (10p/10d) (Kennedy)

9:05 Overview of Program (40p/15d) (Kennedy/Griffis)

10:00 Break (refreshments)

**Presentation and discussion of major CRCP goal areas**

10:15 Assess and Characterize Coral Reef Ecosystems (45p/20d)

11:20 Reduce Impacts of Fishing (35p/15d)

12:10 Lunch (provided)

1:15 Reduce Impacts of Coastal Uses (25p/15d)

1:55 Reduce Impacts of Pollution & Disease (25p/15d)

2:35 Increase Use and Effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas (35p/15d)

3:25 Break (refreshments)

3:40 Reduce Threats to International Reefs (20p/15d)

4:15 Reduce Impacts of Climate Change (15p/15d)





- 4:45 General Discussion (Panel and CRCP)
- 5:15 Adjourn
- 6:00 Group Dinner (location TBD)

## Wednesday, September 26

- 8:00 Welcome and Introductions (Kennedy)

### *Presentation and discussion of major CRCP goal areas (continued)*

- 8:15 Emerging Issues (15p/15d)
- 8:45 Grants Program (30p/15d)
- 9:30 Break

### *Input and discussion with CRCP Stakeholders*

- 9:45 Stakeholder Panel 1 (introductions)
  - 9:50 7 Panelist Testimonies (each has 10p/2d)
  - 11:15 Discussion (30d)
  - 11:45 Executive Session (30d)
- 12:15 Lunch (Provided)
- 1:15 Stakeholder Panel 2 (introductions)
- 1:20 5 Panelist Testimonies (each has 10p/2d)
  - 2:20 Break (15)
  - 2:35 5 Panelist Testimonies (each has 10p/2d)
  - 3:35 Discussion (30d)
  - 4:05 Executive Session (30d)

### *Panel Discussion*

- 4:35 General Summary (Kennedy and Panel Chair)
- 4:50 General Discussion and/or Panel Session
- 5:30 Adjourn
- 6:00 Mixer Reception
- 7:30 Group Dinner (Location TBD)





## **Thursday, September 27**

- 8:00 Coffee
- 8:30 General Discussion (Panel and CRCP)
- 9:00 Panel working session (Panel)
- 10:00 Break (refreshments)
- 10:15 Panel working session (Panel)
- 12:00 Lunch (provided)
- 1:00 Panel working session (Panel)
- 3:00 Break (refreshments)
- 3:15 Exit Briefing (Panel and CRCP)
- 4:30 Adjourn

