

10th Coral Reef Task Force Meeting
October 3-7, 2003
Guam & CNMI

Resolution 10-4: Proposal on Improving Outreach by and participation in the CRTF

Public participation plays an important role in the activities of the United States Coral Reef Task Force. Public awareness of and involvement in coral reef protection and preservation is vital to the long-term survival of coral reefs.

Many organizations and individuals have expressed a strong continuing interest in assisting the Task Force in achieving the goal of coral reef protection and preservation, and maintaining this interest and desire to support the Task Force's efforts will be crucial to coral reef protection and conservation.

Members of the public and organizations that have a special interest in coral reefs are also a valuable source of information about reef health and protection.

The Task Force has actively sought out such information by, for example, hosting panels to present information on a wide variety of coral reef-related topics at Task Force meetings and by establishing a tradition of an open public comment session at each Task Force meeting.

The non-Federal Task Force member States and Territories have also actively sought out and encouraged public participation and involvement at their respective local levels.

In response to the Task Force's charge, the Steering Committee, together with the Outreach and Education Working Group, have also explored further options and proposals for improving public outreach, involvement and participation in the Task Force's work.

As part of its exploration, the Steering Committee received valuable input from members of the public and the All-Islands Committee.

As a result of this exploration and collaboration, the Steering Committee developed several ideas for improving outreach and participation, some of which are already being implemented as part of the October 2003 Task Force meeting.

Other ideas will require a more extensive commitment of time and resources from Task Force members.

Now therefore the Task Force directs that the following specific actions be taken:

1. **Improve Outreach Via the Coral Reef Task Force Web Site.** The Steering Committee will ensure that the Task Force web site provides members of the public with information about the full range of the Task Force's activities, opportunities for public participation and input, and information about coral reef protection and preservation more generally. The Steering Committee will report on progress toward this task at the February 2004 Task Force Meeting.
2. **Responding Task Force Meeting Public Comments.** The Steering Committee will establish a mechanism for responding to the concerns raised in the public comment session at each Task Force meeting, preferably utilizing currently available mechanisms where feasible, and reporting back to the public on such responses. The Steering Committee will report on this mechanism at the February 2004 Task Force meeting.
3. **Local, Scientific and National Policy Issues at Task Force Meetings.** Future Task Force meetings will ensure that there are opportunities in addition to the public comment session for increasing information

exchanges between the Task Force and the scientific and local communities. Such a forum might include, but is not limited to, a presentation discussing (a) local concerns and approaches to coral reef-related issues at Task Force meetings held outside of Washington, and (b) scientific and/or national policy issues at Task Force meetings held in Washington.