

IWG meeting notes Oct 29 2008
4:00 – 5:45 PM
SSCM4 10153

Present:

Christy Loper	NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP)
Scot Frew	NOAA CRCP
Paulo Maurin	NOAA CRCP
Arthur Paterson	International Program Office, NOAA/NOS
Tyler Christensen	Coral Reef Watch Program, NOAA/NESDIS,
Michael Abbey	Office of International Affairs, NOAA/NMFS
Margot Bohan	Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, NOAA/OAR
Dr. Karen Koltes	Office of Insular Affairs, DoI (phone)
Jordan West	US Environmental Protection Agency (phone)

1. An overview was provided of the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP), it's matrix structure and the "Roadmap for the Future," which outlines reorganizational efforts to address strategic coral reef management needs with regard to three major threats (land-based sources of pollution, fishing impacts and climate change) and calls for expanding support for international coral reef conservation.

The existing structure of CRCP's international funding is primarily a grant-driven (~84% of funding) and thus essentially a client-driven approach that leverages funding for coral protection by working with international partners and distributing funds via a competitive grant process. The vast majority of CRCP's international funding goes to external partners.
2. The International Working Group (IWG) has been asked to develop an international strategy for FY 10-15 based on current funding levels (approximately \$1.7 million annually) and double that amount. Additionally, funding for international work could increase by \$5 -10 million per year with the reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Act.
3. The IWG will work to prepare a draft international strategy by February and final document by April. An effort will also be made to advise the FY10 International Coral Grants Federal Funding Opportunity, which must be prepared by late February. The group will begin by assessing the existing international portfolio and delivery mechanisms. It will then identify a set of international conservation priorities, goals and corresponding objectives.

As IWG coordinators, Christy and Scot will liaise with the other three Threat Panel groups as appropriate. Threat Panel activities can also be reviewed on the CRCP homepage at: http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov/working_groups.html

4. The IWG considered the issue of role and membership of NGOs, with discussion regarding potential conflicts of interests, as several large NGOs could be recipients of CRCP international funds. Given their regional and process expertise, and since there are no FACA issues, the IWG decided to invite NGOs to the group as full members, beginning with its next meeting. Foundational partners (i.e., McArthur Foundation) could be invited mid-way through the process in an advisory role.
5. The IWG was given the soft directive to spend about 80% of its funding in two geographic areas: the larger Caribbean and the Pacific region around the FAS (i.e., Micronesia and the Samoan Archipelago). The Coral Triangle region is a potential third focus area given the US Government's investment and interest in this coral biodiversity hotspot. The group will take a look at global regions for potential action and consider appropriate geographical allocation of funds.
6. Presently, the IWG calendar is set for alternate Wednesdays but meetings dates will be changed where appropriate.

Action Items:

- **Proposed date and time for next meeting: Thursday, November 13, 10-11:30 am (same call-in number)**
- **ALL – Provide comments on times/dates for meetings #3 and 4.**
- Christy/Scot/Roger will invite representatives from CI, WWF, and TNC to participate as full members beginning at next meeting
- Scot will provide a review of CRCP international work up to 2006
- **ALL- IWG will read this document for discussion at our next meeting**
- **ALL- IWG will discuss with their respective line offices which of the CRCP funding approaches have or have not worked up to present and will come prepared to discuss this issue at the next meeting.**
- Christy/Scot will provide references from each region, such as the Caribbean Reefs at Risk Executive Summary, to summarize local needs and trends. This will be circulated among the group and will form the beginning of our regional needs assessment.
- **ALL- IWG members contribute to this reference list before the next meeting.**