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Coral Reef News



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The Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) is a partnership between the NOAA Line Offices working on coral reef issues, including the National Ocean Service (NOS), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) and the National Environmental Satellites, Data and Information Service (NESDIS). From mapping and monitoring to managing reef resources and removing harmful debris, the CRCP addresses the priorities laid out in both the [National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs](#) and the [National Coral Reef Action Strategy](#).

Volume 6, No. 1

October 2008

Announcements

Upcoming Workshop: Coral Genomics for the Non-Genomic Scientist. Sponsored by the [CRCP](#) and the [National Coral Reef Institute](#), this workshop will be held from June 21-27, 2009 at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. The course is designed around practical problem sets to illustrate each of the types of data available to today's coral researcher and provide the participant with practical experience with real coral data. Accepted participants will be surveyed to tailor the course content to their needs. The only pre-requisite for the course is to be comfortable using a PC computer. For more information, including the application form, information on cost, travel scholarships, and a list of instructors, click [here](#).

Public Comment Opportunity: CITES Conference of the Parties Agenda. The [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#) (CITES) is an international treaty designed to regulate international trade in certain animal and plant species that are now or potentially may be threatened with extinction. The Parties to CITES meet periodically to review what species in international trade should be regulated and other aspects of the implementation of CITES. The fifteenth regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP15) is tentatively scheduled to be held in late January 2010 in Doha, Qatar. Therefore, a Notice was published in the September 29 issue of the *Federal Register* to solicit recommendations for amending Appendices I and II of CITES at CoP15 as well as recommendations for resolutions, decisions, and agenda items for discussion at CoP15. The [Notice](#) (pdf, 64 kb) also outlines the U.S. approach for the meeting and provides directions for submitting comments; the deadline for public comment is November 28, 2008.

Public Comment Opportunity: Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Strategic Plan. On October 17, NOAA published a federal register notice (FRN) to announce the availability of the [Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and](#)

[Management Strategic Plan](#) (pdf, 330 kb) for public comment. Prepared under the auspices of NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program and in consultation with the Nation's eight Regional Fishery Management Councils, the *Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan* identifies objectives, priorities and approaches that will guide NOAA's research, management, and international activities from Fiscal Year 2009 through 2013 as they relate to deep coral and sponge ecosystems. The *Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan* will be available for public comment for a period of 90-days from the date of publication of this [FRN](#) (pdf, 45 kb). The FRN includes instructions for submitting comments; the deadline for public comment is January 15, 2009.

Threat-based Working Groups Formed to Guide CRCP into the Future. In 2007, the [CRCP](#) underwent an [external review](#) by a panel of recognized experts in coral reef resource science and management to provide an independent assessment of the CRCP's effectiveness in meeting its goals and to suggest recommendations for future improvement. In response to the [panel's report](#), the CRCP developed a [Roadmap for the Future](#), laying out new principles and priorities for the future of the Program. According to this new Roadmap, the primary objective of the CRCP will be to address strategic coral reef management needs and the CRCP will narrow its focus by emphasizing efforts on understanding and addressing the top three global and national threats to coral reef ecosystems: fishing impacts, land-based sources of pollution and climate change. In order to implement the proposed changes, the CRCP has put into place three working groups to provide recommendations on the strategic goals and objectives the Program should work towards in the next 5-20 years in order to effectively address each of these top three threats. These threat-based working groups were established in early October and will work towards their stated goal over the next eight months. You can track their progress [online](#). (continued on page 8)

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2008

18-20: Pacific Coral Reef Mapping and Monitoring Workshop, Honolulu, HI. Contact [Jessica Morgan](#) for details.

28: Public comment deadline for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora [Federal Register Notice](#) (pdf, 64 kb).

December 2008

31: End of International Year of the Reef 2008.

January 2009

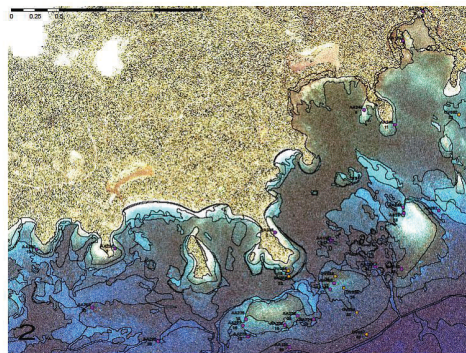
15: Public comment deadline for Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan [Federal Register Notice](#) (pdf, 45 kb).

15: Registration deadline for [Coral Genomics for the Non-Genomics Scientist Workshop](#)

Updates from the Atlantic/Caribbean

Scientists Currently Monitoring Marine Resources in St. Croix. Divers from the [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#) are currently in the field conducting the 16th semiannual monitoring mission to study the marine resources of [Buck Island Reef National Monument](#) (BIRNM) in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI). BIRNM was designated by President Kennedy in 1961 and expanded from 3.56 km² to 77km² in 2001. A long standing partnership between NOAA, the [U.S. National Park Service](#), and the USVI [Department of Planning and Natural Resources](#) (DPNR), has enabled scientists to better understand how important fish and invertebrate communities are distributed among the mosaic of habitat types within and surrounding BIRNM. This work provides crucial information to the managers of the BIRNM, the DPNR which manages the surrounding territorial waters, and to the scientists and managers of the adjacent [East End Marine Park](#).

Field mission Supports Benthic Habitat Mapping of Vieques, Puerto Rico. From October 6-14th, scientists from the [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#) traveled to Vieques, Puerto Rico to collect ground validation and accuracy assessment data to complement mapping of shallow water benthic habitats. Updated fine scale habitat maps are being created for Vieques using new IKONOS satellite imagery and are based on a revised habitat classification scheme. The ground validation data collected during the week-long mission will be used to improve map generation, while the accuracy assessment data will be used to independently assess the accuracy of the completed benthic habitat map. Results will be presented as



Satellite imagery, delineated habitats, and October survey locations on a section of the south shore of Vieques. Courtesy: Laurie Bauer, NCCOS

part of an integrated assessment to support effective management and conservation of marine resources in Vieques. All maps, a satellite imagery mosaic, underwater video, and associated data will be made available online in early 2009.

Marine Protected Area Successful in Conserving Fishery Resources. Scientists from the [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#) (NCCOS) recently determined that the Tortugas Ecological Reserve in the Florida Keys can effectively protect coral reef ecosystems. Data from an August 2008 NCCOS [cruise](#) aboard the NOAA Ship *Nancy Foster* provided evidence of an increased grouper population and reduced marine debris within the Reserve. Specifically, fish surveys indicated that grouper numbers within the Reserve were 2.4 times higher, and that nine grouper species were found inside the Reserve as compared to only five species found outside the Reserve. Durable derelict fishing gear made up 90% of all marine debris observed, and amounts were similar inside and outside the Reserve. In contrast, non-fishing debris was observed at only 4% of sites inside but at 32% of sites outside the Reserve. Further data processing is ongoing and results will be provided to reef resource managers in the region.



Red grouper observed in the Reserve during the August cruise. Courtesy: Lauren Chhay

Characterization of Coral and Sponge Aggregations to Help Gray's Reef Sanctuary Managers. Results from a NOAA-funded study demonstrating the important role of corals and sponges as habitat-forming species are helping managers at [Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary](#) (GRNMS) characterize and protect its ecological resources off the Georgia coastline. The study, funded by GRNMS and the [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#), found highly abundant and diverse aggregations of tiny invertebrate organisms living hidden among the tissues of corals and sponges on live-bottom reefs within the Sanctuary. These tiny creatures, which had densities much higher in comparison to those from other areas or of benthic fauna in surrounding sediments at GRNMS, are a valuable food source for a variety of fishes foraging over the reefs.

(continued on page 3)

Atlantic/Caribbean continued...

NCCOS Kicks Off Benthic Habitat Mapping and Data Integration Project in St. John, USVI. On September 29, NOAA's [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#) (NCCOS), and [Coastal Services Center](#), in partnership with the [U.S. National Park Service](#) (NPS), initiated a project to develop a new suite of benthic habitat mapping products for the waters surrounding the island of St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This work builds on previous [digital maps](#) developed by NOAA in 1999, and will produce much finer scale habitat maps using a revised habitat classification scheme as well as U.S. Geological Survey and NOAA bathymetry data. This project is one of several benthic habitat pilot studies initiated by NPS, and has been designed to meet multiple management questions and issues such as natural resource damage assessments and marine protected area evaluations. The habitat and bathymetric maps are expected to be completed in spring 2009 and will support ongoing biological assessments conducted by NOAA's partners to further understand species habitat affinities and monitor recovery of living marine resources based on NPS management actions.

NCCOS-funded Research Educates Public About the State of Reefs in Puerto Rico. Researchers supported by NOAA's [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#) (NCCOS) assisted a Puerto Rican newscast in highlighting the state of the reefs in Puerto Rico and how scientific research is providing critical knowledge in the quest to reverse degradation trends. Through the [Caribbean Coral Reef Institute](#) and the [Coral Reef Ecosystem Studies](#) (CRES)-Caribbean Project in Puerto Rico, the researchers are providing ecosystem-based information to local managers so they may develop more effective management strategies to address the major threats to coral reefs in the region. The five-and-a-half-minute segment shows underwater footage of corals in reefs along the southwest part of the island and features commentary by the CRES-Caribbean Project Manager. The video clip is available in Spanish [online](#).

Race to the Reef: Juvenile Snapper Acoustic Tagging and Tracking. The [CRCP's](#) Juvenile Snapper Acoustic Tracking Project completed its last big data retrieval in mid-August. Juvenile mangrove snappers were tagged at two estuarine habitats in May 2008. This latest data retrieval has revealed the following trends: juvenile mangrove snappers tend to move downstream towards the more marine environment, correlated with anthropogenic freshwater input



Testing acoustic tag signals for tagged juvenile mangrove snappers earlier in this project. Courtesy: Southeast Fisheries Science Center

beginning in the Spring, and larger sub-adult fish moved from the juvenile habitat of estuarine mangroves to the reef habitat where adult snappers reside. In the same timeframe, educational outreach activities included a project presentation to undergraduate students in a Marine Coastal Conservation class at [Florida International University](#) and a tour of the [Southeast Fisheries Science Center](#) for students to learn more about NOAA's role in local conservation and management. As part of the [Florida Atlantic Coast Telemetry](#) (FACT) Project, the snapper tagging project is exchanging fish tag codes with 15 other research projects in the Bahamas and along Florida's Atlantic coast. This collaborative tag exchange allows researchers to cooperatively track both local and large-scale movements of seven reef-associated species, including sharks. To improve this effort, the CRCP's Juvenile Snapper Acoustic Tracking Project coordinated a two-day data analysis and exchange workshop for all FACT partners. The coordinated working group enables expensive acoustic receivers to be more efficiently placed to cover more habitats across the coastal ecosystem, allowing fish to be tracked from river to reef.

NCRI Researchers Aid Restoration Efforts in Southeast Florida. During the month of August, [National Coral Reef Institute](#) (NCRI) researchers continued to expand their understanding of coral reproductive biology by observing the spawning of two important Caribbean coral species, *Montastraea cavernosa* and *Acropora cervicornis*. Working with the [Florida Department of Environmental Protection](#), NCRI scientists and students collected eggs and sperm from large male and female colonies of *M. cavernosa* on the reef. The gam- (continued on page 8)



The International Year of the Reef (IYOR) 2008 is a worldwide campaign to raise awareness about the value and importance of coral reefs and threats to their sustainability, and to motivate people to take action to protect them.



Coral Reefs support more species per unit are than any other marine environment. Courtesy: Dave Burdick

Every Act Counts

It stinks to send chemicals into our waterways.

Whether you live one mile or one thousand miles from a coral reef, the chemicals we use to clean our houses and beautify our lawns end up in our waterways and are carried to the oceans. Just one pound of phosphorus in water produces an estimated five hundred pounds of algae, blocking sunlight and starving coral reefs.

Do your part by using naturally-derived and biodegradable detergents and cleaning products. Outside the house, minimize the impacts of fertilizer by using zero-phosphorus products or no more than one pound per 1,000 square feet of turf area for nitrogen (you need just half that amount in shade).

Whether you live one mile or one thousand miles from a coral reef, your actions affect the reefs' future – and the reefs' future affects yours.

Updates from the Pacific

Status of American Samoa Fisheries. The [Pacific Islands Regional Office \(PIRO\)](#) Habitat Office coordinated a 'Status of Fisheries' meeting in American Samoa from October 21-23. The participants were primarily from the pertinent management agencies in American Samoa, with a few key experts from the continental U.S. The meeting consisted of three separate modules. The first module focused on traditional knowledge, catch rates, and marine tenure. The second module presented an overview of the current status of fisheries resources, regulatory regime, sampling program, and methods of data collection. The entire last day was devoted to a strategic planning session designed to take input from the first two sessions and output recommendations on management options that will ensure sustainable fishery resources for the future. Outcomes of this meeting will be reported in the next issue.

Information to Support Assessment of Pacific Marine Conservation Areas. An interagency Presidential initiative is ongoing to assess three areas in the Pacific for consideration of additional protection or recognition. The three areas of interest are the Pacific Remote Island Areas, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Rose Atoll in American Samoa. As part of this initiative, Chairman Jim Connaughton of the [Council on Environmental Quality \(CEQ\)](#) requested presentations by the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) and NOAA's [Coral Reef Ecosystem Division \(CRED\)](#) and [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#) to highlight their ecosystem observations of the areas under consideration. On October 17th, CRED provided comparative analyses of the

integrated ecosystem assessments of the 50 islands/atolls surveyed biennially as part of the Pacific Reef Assessment and Monitoring Program. With extremely high fish biomass, high coral cover, and high biological diversity, the proposed Marine Conservation Areas are among the most pristine predator-dominated coral reef ecosystems on earth. These areas can provide essential data to understanding ecosystem resilience in the face of global climate change.

2008 NWHI RAMP Cruise Preliminary Data. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Reef Assessment and Monitoring (NWHI RAMP) cruise aboard [NOAA Ship Hi'ialakai](#) returned to port on October 12th. During the 32-day cruise, the [Coral Reef Ecosystem Division](#) successfully completed 109 [towed-diver surveys](#) covering 250 linear km of reef habitat, surveyed 148 fish [Rapid Ecological Assessment \(REA\)](#) sites and 60 benthic REA sites, and completed numerous oceanographic instrument retrievals and deployments. Significantly, large blooms of the green alga *Boodlea composita* were observed in all habitat types at Kure Atoll and along the northeastern backreef of Midway Atoll. Although the alga covered up to 100% of the seafloor in certain areas, the majority of the substrates affected were mixed sand and rubble assemblages with low percent cover of live coral. Surprisingly, only 41 sharks were recorded during 2008 towed-diver surveys, down significantly from the 211 shark sightings during 2006. Limited coral bleaching and paling was observed at many islands, although it is uncertain if this represents normal summertime population parameters or if bleaching was higher than typical background levels.

International Updates

Marine Conservation Agreements Make a Splash at World Conservation Congress. On October 8th, a workshop on [Marine Conservation Agreements \(MCAs\)](#) was held at the [World Conservation Congress](#). MCAs include any formal or informal understanding between two or more parties in which the parties obligate themselves, for an exchange of benefits, to take certain actions, refrain from certain actions, or transfer certain rights and responsibilities to achieve agreed upon ocean or coastal conservation goals. MCAs can be entered into by governments, communities, private entities, and private individuals. The workshop led participants through the process of determining if MCAs can

be used to meet their ocean and coastal conservation goals and, if so, how to plan and implement projects. During the workshop, participants learned the four phases of an MCA project: 1) Feasibility Analysis; 2) Stakeholder Engagement; 3) Building the Agreement; and 4) Implementation. Each phase was reinforced with case studies from around the world including the [Phoenix Island Protected Area](#), [Chumbe Island Coral Park](#), [Misool Ecoresort](#), and [Baja California Yaquita Project](#), all of which were catalyzed with MCAs. Workshop materials, including presentations, can be downloaded [online](#). For more information, please contact [Jay Udelhoven](#), [The Nature Conservancy](#). (continued on page 5)

International continued...



Chumbe Island Coral Park Ltd. in Zanzibar, Tanzania is an example of an MCA. Established through a lease and co-management agreement, it is a privately managed island nature reserve recognized by the Zanzibar Government. Courtesy: Chumbe Island Coral Park Ltd.

Scientists Prepare for Habitat Mapping in Majuro, RMI. Staff from NOAA's [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science Center for Coastal Monitoring and Assessment](#) and the Pacific Region lead for the [National Geodetic Survey](#) recently traveled to Majuro Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). As a first step in the process of creating underwater habitat maps for Majuro, the team used survey-grade GPS equipment to collect highly accurate positional data at twenty-one locations visible in satellite imagery. The detailed positional information will be used to georeference imagery of the atoll so that features visible in the imagery appear within one meter of their actual position on the earth. The accurately georeferenced imagery product can be used to support decision-making on a number of coastal management issues. When funding becomes available, the georeferenced imagery will also allow scientists to delineate and classify nearshore marine habitats and create habitat maps important to coral reef monitoring and management activities. While in the RMI, the team also arranged meetings with a number of local partners engaged in coral reef, coastal, and fisheries management, including the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, the Coastal Management Advisory Council, the Marshall Islands Conservation Society, and staff from the U.S. Embassy to discuss ongoing coral reef conservation efforts.

Saudi Arabia Hosts NCRI Researcher for Initiation of Reef Assessments. A scientist from the [National Coral Reef Institute](#) (NCRI) recently collaborated with the [International](#)

[Union for Conservation of Nature](#) to initiate a regional-scale project of coral reef assessment in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia borders the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea, both of which harbor rich coral habitat, particularly along the Red Sea's undeveloped coastline. Given how rapidly neighboring countries have been developing their coastal zones, there is an urgent need to survey these remote areas to provide a baseline against which future changes can be gauged. NCRI's experience in the region already includes ongoing projects in the southeastern Gulf and Red Sea, the latter as part of a four-year collaboration funded by the [Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation](#). During his visit, the NCRI scientist met and discussed NCRI's work to H.R.H. Prince Turki bin Nasser bin Abdulaziz, the General President of Meteorology and Environment Protection in Saudi Arabia. NCRI is a core component of NOAA's [CRCP](#) and is administered by NOAA's [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#).

Meso-American Reef Connectivity Project Workshop. Mexican researchers and their U.S. counterparts met at the [University of Miami](#) September 30th through October 3rd to discuss next steps for the ongoing project 'Monitoring Coral Reef Fish Utilization of MPA's and Recruitment Connectivity Between the Florida Keys and Meso-American Reef Systems.' Researchers reviewed five years of field results, began synthesizing data, assigned responsibilities for manuscript preparation for publication of the project's data, and discussed plans for the future. Both the project and workshop were funded by the [CRCP](#).



Mexican and US scientists met to discuss field results and next steps for a project studying reef fish use of MPAs and connectivity between Florida and Meso-American reefs. Courtesy: NOAA Southeast Fisheries Science Center



TAKE ACTION! Sign the [International Declaration of Reef Rights](#) and the [pledge to Protect Ocean Life During International Year of the Reef](#).

While you're online, send your friends one of three free IYOR-themed [E-cards](#).



Be a Reef-Hugger

As you do your Fall yard work, please fertilize less and use eco-friendly fertilizer or alternatives to fertilizer. ALWAYS dispose of household, yard, and garage chemicals properly.

New Data in CoRIS

New Metadata Text Search Available from CoRIS. The [Coral Reef Information System](#) (CoRIS) recently released a [new text search](#) that searches all of its metadata and library publications. Users have the option of utilizing either a "Quick Search" or "Advanced Search" option for locating metadata and publications, as well as a "browse list" option.

CRCP Tech Memo Search Now Available. The [NOAA Central Library](#) has created a canned search for the [CRCP NOAA Technical Memorandum series](#). Users can get to the search by two different methods, either from the [NOAA Virtual Publications Office web page](#) or the [NOAA Library Catalog](#). For the latter option, type "NOAA Technical Memorandum CRCP" in the "Series Title" field.

Are you or your organization participating in events for IYOR 2008?

Want to learn more about what you can do to support the goals of IYOR 2008?

Download free educational ads [here](#).

Be an agent of change: Every act counts.

Click [here](#) to find IYOR 2008 events in your area.

Product Name	Description
SEAKEYS - Meteorological and Oceanographic Historical Observations 2007. Link to sample metadata for this product	The Florida Institute of Oceanography's (FIO) SEAKEYS (Sustained Ecological Research Related to Management of the Florida Keys Seascape) program began in 1989 and has continued until the present. This program, now being supported through NOAA's South Florida Ecosystem Restoration, Prediction and Modeling Program (SFERPM), implements a framework for long-term monitoring and research along the 220 mile Florida coral reef tract and in Florida Bay at a geographical scale encompassing the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS).
Continuous bottom temperature measurements in strategic areas of the Florida Reef Tract. Link to sample metadata for this product	The purpose of this project is to document bottom seawater temperature in strategic areas of the Florida Reef Tract on a continuing basis. This ongoing project began in 1988. A total of 38 subsurface recording thermographs have been deployed in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) and at other selected locations on the Florida Reef Tract and associated hydrologic ecosystems. An archival copy of these data is maintained and available from the U.S. NODC.
FBSAD Recruit Reef Fish Belt Transect Surveys and Reef Fish-Habitat Quadrat Surveys at Hawaii Island (Big Island) 2005. Link to sample metadata for this product	Datasets include taxonomic and functional characterizations of reef habitat that complement the reef fish density estimates provided by the companion survey. These data represent the first surveys of a multi-year (spring season only) project using in situ diver observations at sites of differing habitat structure, to descriptively test predictions relating to the use of specific habitats by the juveniles of various species of reef fishes in Hawaii.
Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory, Integrated Coral Observing Network (ICON) stations data for 2007 Link to sample metadata for this product	Instrument arrays to measure the various environmental influences are being deployed at key coral reef areas to gain long-term temporally intensive data coverage, to provide near real-time information products, and to surface-truth NOAA satellite sea surface temperature (SST) products used for coral bleaching predictions ("HotSpot" products).

New Data in CoRIS continued...

Product Name	Description
Underwater Video and Still Ground Validation Imagery of the Florida Keys Link to sample metadata for this product	Underwater video and still imagery were obtained for selected regions in the Florida Keys to provide ground validation for an ongoing benthic habitat mapping project in the region. Image download capability is provided using Google Earth.
Acropora Spatial Survey Data of the Upper Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary 2005 - 2007 Link to sample metadata for this product	Presence or absence of acroporid corals marked by handheld GPS during snorkel or tow surveys of shallow water (<5m) reef habitats in the Upper Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.
CRED Oceanographic Moorings for Guam, CNMI, Wake region Link to sample metadata for this product	Data from CRED Subsurface Temperature Recorders (STR) and Wave and Tide Recorders (WTR) for Guam, CNMI and Wake were recently listed.

Even if you don't live near a reef, you can [help protect coral reefs](#) in the U.S.A. and around the world

Publications

Cyanide Detection Workshop Proceedings Now Available. The illegal use of cyanide to capture live reef fish for both the food industry and the aquarium trade is wide spread in the Asia-Pacific region and not only leads to high mortality rates of the captured fish, but also damages and kills corals and other organisms on the reefs. NOAA released the [Proceedings of the International Cyanide Detection Testing Workshop](#) in early October. The workshop, held earlier this year, was one component of a series of initiatives being implemented by the [CRCP](#) to address this unsustainable and destructive trade in coral reef species. It brought together participants from Indonesia, the Philippines, the United States, and Vietnam, with representatives from fisheries and law enforcement agencies, forensic laboratories, [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#) Parties, non-governmental organizations, industry, and academia. The Proceedings summarize the outcomes of the workshop, including summary recommendations, working group reports, abstracts and white papers from speakers, and background information on cyanide fisheries. The Executive Summary highlights the major outcomes and conclusions from the workshop, including nine specific recommendations. These Proceedings provide the framework to move forward with implementing networks of cyanide detection laboratories. Such networks would advance international efforts to enforce bans on this type of fishing and help reduce this illegal and unsustainable fishery's presence in the aquarium trade.

Tortugas Report and Research Plan. The report, *Assessing the Conservation Efficacy of the Dry Tortugas National Park Research Natural Area*, has just been released by the [U.S. National Park Service](#) and the [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission](#). This research plan was developed with extensive input from Federal agencies, including [CRCP](#) and other parts of NOAA, academic scientists, and members of the public. This monitoring plan will provide a strong framework to gauge the effectiveness of this new protected area. The CRCP-funded Reef Visual Census was cited as a critical monitoring tool for the Research Natural Area (RNA). The RNA, a 46 sq mi marine reserve, was designated in January 2007.

FKNMS 10-year Comparison Study Available. A new report has been added to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Conservation Series; *Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions of Management Strategies and Regulations of FKNMS by Commercial Fishers, Dive Operators, and Environmental Group Members: A Baseline Characterization and 10-year Comparison* is a summary of research that is part of the [Socioeconomic Research & Monitoring Program for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary](#) (FKNMS), which was initiated in 1998. In 1995-96, a baseline study on the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of proposed FKNMS management strategies and regulations of commercial fishers, dive operators and on selected environmental group members was conducted by researchers at the [University of Florida](#) and the (continued on page 8)

IYOR PSAs

A free [IYOR PSA](#) related to the U.S. Messaging Campaign's main message was added to the national broadcast rotation for all Discovery TV Networks on June 19; it will run through the end of 2008.

The English version is 15 seconds; the 30 second Spanish version is in national broadcast rotation on the Discovery Channel Latina.

PSAs for each of the five action messages

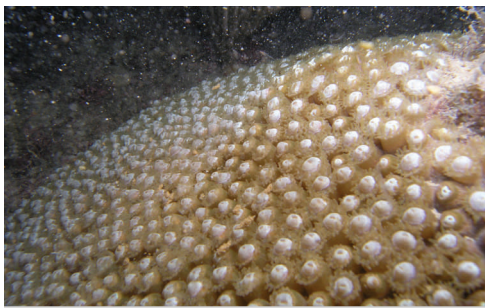
Announcements continued...

New Sampling Design Tool for ArcGIS Released. Scientists from the [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#) recently released a Geographic Information System (GIS) Sampling Design Tool for science planning that improves sampling efficiency by integrating maps at relevant spatial scales into survey designs, while balancing factors such as statistical power, precision and cost. The Sampling Design Tool has two main functions: 1) to help select a sample from a population, and 2) to perform sample design analysis. When these functions are combined iteratively, the tool effectively and simply achieves the goal of sample surveys — to obtain accurate, high-precision estimates of population metrics while minimizing cost. The tool and the technical manual can be downloaded [online](#).

We value your feedback. Feel free to [email](#) us comments .

Atlantic/Caribbean continued...

etes were brought back to the laboratory to mature and settle on conditioned natural limestone settlement plates in a controlled environment. Gametes were also collected from several smaller colonies maintained in NCRI's outdoor coral husbandry system. The resulting juvenile corals will be allowed to grow in this protected environment until they are large enough to be returned to the reef. NCRI is a core component of the [CRCP](#) and is administered by NOAA's [National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science](#).



A star coral releases its gametes into the waters of Florida. Courtesy: National Coral Reef Institute

Publications continued...

[University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science](#) (RSMAS). The study was accepted into the Socioeconomic Research & Monitoring Program at a workshop to design the Florida program in 1998, and workshop participants recommended that the study be replicated every ten years. The 10-year replication was conducted in 2004-05 for commercial fishers, 2006 for dive operators, and 2007 for environmental group members. The replication study was funded by the [CRCP](#) and conducted by the same researchers at RSMAS, while the University of Florida researchers were replaced by Thomas J. Murray & Associates, Inc., which conducted the commercial fishing panels in the FKNMS. More information and a copy of the report are available [online](#).

Preliminary Findings for Guam and CNMI Monitoring Delivered to NAVFAC. On September 30th, the [Coral Reef Ecosystem Division](#) completed and delivered copies of preliminary findings and key figures from the *Coral Reef Ecosystem and Habitat Surveys in the Mariana Archipelago: Preliminary Findings and Key Figures for the Islands of Guam, Aguijan, Tinian, Saipan, and*

Pagan to the [Naval Facilities Engineering Command](#) (NAVFAC). Preliminary findings are being provided now to satisfy a contract from NAVFAC; while funding was provided by the Navy, copies of the report were also provided to key federal and local resource management agencies in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). This delivery included an introduction, notes on methods and surveys, oceanographic findings across the region, short summaries of preliminary findings for each of the five islands, and, most importantly, about 500 draft figures presenting the data collected around each of the five islands during Mariana Archipelago Reef Assessment and Monitoring Program cruises in 2003, 2005, and 2007. Data processing, analyses, and development of the full coral reef ecosystem monitoring report for the Mariana Archipelago are on-going; any findings presented in this report are preliminary and may be subject to revision after further analyses.

[Subscribe](#) to NOAA Coral Reef News, the monthly e-newsletter of NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation program .

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<http://coralreef.noaa.gov>

The CRCP supports effective management and sound science to preserve, sustain and restore valuable coral reef ecosystems.

