

## Department of the Navy Supports International Year of the Reef



*2008 is a year for the world to focus on understanding the value of coral reefs and learning what it takes to protect them; the Department of the Navy (DON) will be in the action.*

*The International Coral Reef Initiative*, a voluntary partnership among governments, international organizations, and non-government organizations, has declared 2008 to be the International Year of the Reef. In 2008, agencies and organizations around the world will focus on the importance of coral reefs to environmental sustainability, local and global economies, and global peace and security. During the International Year of the Reef, Department of the Navy (DON) will lead Department of Defense (DOD) in highlighting the success of existing measures to conserve valuable reef resources and developing innovative and proactive new measures.

DON has a long and distinguished tradition of being a good “Steward of the Sea” and is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural resources of our world’s oceans. Navy and Marine Corps integrate coral reef protection into the every day work that is performed including: proper natural resources management on the land, completing marine ecosystem surveys and applying the data to protect benthic habitat; considering offshore resources when planning facility and operational actions; supporting research and development efforts; improving coral reef assessment and monitoring; and, many other coastal and aquatic resource protection measures. DON continues to focus on every day efforts to:

- Control land-based sources of sediment or other pollution
- Assess coral reefs in proximity to installations
- Conduct near-shore natural resources surveys for incorporation in Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans
- Plan for coral reef protection in operational and facility planning
- Utilize Geographic Information Systems to identify sensitive resources
- Carry-out ongoing shipboard practices to protect aquatic resources
- Conduct pro-active oil spill prevention and waste reduction programs
- Offer training to personnel addressing coral reef protection within DoD



“The Department of the Navy’s dedication to protecting coral reefs is part of a larger effort to make environmental considerations part of everything we do. Through effective natural resource management, as well as investments in assessments, monitoring and research, we can improve and protect valuable natural resources and maintain National Security through continued access to the high seas. By integrating protection measures where we train and operate in the coastal environment, we can uphold the long tradition of the Navy as “Stewards of the Sea”.”

**BJ Penn**  
Assistant Secretary of the Navy  
(Installations and Environment)

The Navy and Marine Corp Team will use International Year of the Reef to reemphasize the importance of these day-to-day work achievements while pursuing new efforts to preserve the ocean environment through:

- Increasing individual and Commander awareness of the issues, threats, and opportunities for coral reef conservation through various media
- Developing a Coral Reef Strategic Plan for DoD-wide use
- Continuing to coordinate research and develop projects for coral reef assessment in the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP)
- Coordinating Ocean & Meteorological information for coral reef conservation requirements



- Conducting underwater reef surveys and coral reef protection measures, as needed, for planned joint exercises in 2008
- Highlighting development and SERDP/R&D projects that incorporate sustainable technologies
- Increasing and broadening participation, partnerships, and collaborative action related to coral reef conservation
- Providing reef awareness tools to DoD schools (K-12)
- Distributing products at Earth Day, Coastal America, and Aquarium sponsored events
- Partnering with agencies to foster coral reef conservation

cooperation and information exchange

- Developing a DENIX portal to DoD coral and near-shore ecosystem information, and to collect and disseminate reef conservation information and success stories throughout the year
- Participating in 11th International Coral Reef Symposium, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, July 7, 2008 - July 11, 2008



"International Year of the Reef is an opportunity for the Department of Defense and Department of the Navy to highlight our efforts to preserve and protect the coastal environment. Effective and responsible protection and management of these resources will allow us to carry out our mission of defending the United States now and into the future. It is the duty of all – the public, the marine ecologist, the natural resources manager, the environmental planner, and our Sailors and Marines, to protect coastal resources through whatever measures are available to us, knowing that every act, small or large, counts. The Navy's stewardship efforts and conservation achievements continue to demonstrate our commitment to coral reef protection. I challenge our team to enhance those efforts in 2008 with innovative and proactive measures to conserve valuable coral reef resources."

**Donald R. Schregardus**  
**Deputy Assistant Secretary of the**  
**Navy**  
**(Environment)**

Coral reef and coastal resource protection are important not only to the mission readiness and sustainability of the Navy and Marine Corps, but also to the global economy and security of nations abroad. Through effective natural resource management and investment in assessments, monitoring and research, DON can improve and protect these valuable resources while maintaining national security through continued access to the high seas. Fulfilling these efforts in the maritime environment also contributes to the Cooperative Strategy for the 21st Century Seapower, achieving national security objectives by contributing to the sustainable use of reef resources and averting economic crises and conflict.

DON is coordinating DOD involvement in International Year of the Reef activities and will disseminate information on specific events. Future information about the International Year of the Reef will be posted at DENIX website: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portall/denix/environment/NR> or you can visit the official International Year of the Reef site directly at [www.iyor.gov](http://www.iyor.gov).