

*10<sup>th</sup> Coral Reef Task Force Meeting*  
*October 3-7, 2003*  
*Guam & CNMI*

**Resolution 10-6: Proposal on Coral Reefs, Climate and Coral Bleaching Initiative**

**Background:**

At its meeting in October 2002, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) passed two resolutions highlighting the impacts of climate change and coral bleaching on coral reefs:

1. **The Puerto Rico Resolution** identified climate change and coral bleaching as one of six key focus areas for priority attention, including the development of Local Action Strategies (LAS) for climate change and bleaching, as locally appropriate.
2. **The Resolution on Coral Reefs and Climate Change** called for development of an interagency, public/private partnership for planning a comprehensive, integrative program for understanding local and system-wide coral reef responses to climate change, including the application of this knowledge for local reef management.

In response to these resolutions, NOAA, EPA, and DOI sponsored a workshop on Coral Reefs, Climate and Coral Bleaching in June 2003. In the Workshop, over 100 scientists and managers from local and federal governments, universities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations:

- Shared the most current information on the status of the science and best practices for management of coral reefs in the context of climate change and coral bleaching;
- Discussed strategies for development of novel approaches and tools for enhancing coral reef survival in the context of climate change and coral bleaching;
- Developed partnerships to develop a Reef Manager's Guide to Action to articulate the state of knowledge about how local managers can prepare for and respond to mass coral bleaching; and
- Initiated development of a framework for an integrated research program on local and system-wide responses of reef ecosystems to climate change.

**Proposal:**

The USCRTF requests that DOI, NOAA, and EPA, along with other interested Task Force Members, in cooperation with the U.S. Climate Change Science Program, continue development of an interagency, public/private partnership for planning a comprehensive, integrative program for understanding local and system-wide coral reef responses to climate change, including its application of this knowledge for local reef management.

Specifically, the USCRTF requests that these partners:

1. Finalize production of the Reef Manager's Guide to Action.
2. Develop a process for testing the Reef Manager's Guide to Action by the February 2004 Task Force Meeting. This process will assess the need to build capacity in applying the recommendations outlined in the Guide.
3. Develop a strategy with input from local coral reef managers that will identify the specific components of a comprehensive, integrative program for understanding local and system-wide coral reef responses to climate change.

4. Develop a strategy to partner with the international community to further test and develop strategies for building reef resilience in the face of climate change by the October 2004 Task Force Meeting. This strategy will address the need to learn from other international efforts, and identify and assist in support of pilot sites that systematically test the strategies described in the Manager's Guide to determine their effectiveness.