



NOAA CORAL REEF CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2010 Accomplishments

In fiscal year 2010 (FY10), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) received \$29 million to support activities to conserve, manage, and understand coral reef ecosystems in the US and around the world. Below are just a few of the many accomplishments of the NOAA CRCP and its partners in FY10.

Identified the Top Priority Needs of Reef Managers. The outcomes of many months of workshops and consensus-building are seven strategic planning documents, released in May, 2010. These documents articulate the top priorities developed by the coral reef resource managers in each of the US coral reef jurisdictions. The CRCP provided support to the jurisdictions to coordinate with the broader management community in each place to determine the local management priorities. NOAA will use these documents in conjunction with its National Goals & Objectives to direct its investment in each jurisdiction. To learn more, see <http://coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutcrcp/strategy/reprioritization/managementpriorities/>.



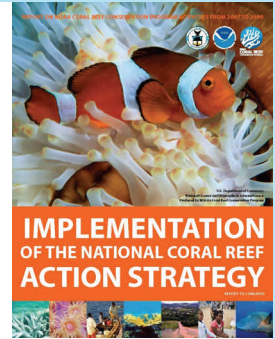
Participants gather at the July MPA 101 workshop in Indonesia. Courtesy: Jason Philibotte, NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office

Expanded Reef Conservation Efforts in the Coral Triangle. To protect the recognized global center of marine biological diversity and the food security for the region's 363 million people, six countries whose waters encompass the Coral Triangle launched the "Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security" (CTI). February 2010 marked a significant milestone when, after two years of planning, the US Coral Triangle Initiative Support Program (US CTI) officially launched. NOAA serves as the US government agency providing scientific and management capacity and technical assistance to the six Coral Triangle countries, specifically in marine protected area management, climate change adaptation, and ecosystem approaches to fisheries management. NOAA CRCP coordinates the agency's involvement in US CTI. In addition, the CRCP and a team of international partners worked to conduct a rapid response assessment of a significant coral bleaching event that occurred in the Coral Triangle in early summer of

2010. These efforts supported the goals of the USCTI and the CRCP's goal to improve and maintain resilience of coral reef ecosystems and the human communities that depend upon them in priority international regions like the Coral Triangle.

Released Report on Coral Reef Ecosystems of the Mariana Archipelago. In response to requests from management agencies in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam, the CRCP produced a report summarizing coral reef conditions, as observed between 2003 and 2007, in the Mariana Archipelago. *Coral Reef Ecosystems of the Mariana Archipelago: a 2003-2007 Overview* summarizes results from NOAA's Pacific Reef Assessment and Monitoring Program of coral reef ecosystems in the region. It is derived from a more extensive document, scheduled for publication in 2011, that provides the most comprehensive integrated ecosystem assessment ever completed of the benthic habitats and biological and oceanographic conditions around 14 islands and other offshore banks in the Mariana Archipelago. Download the report at: http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/cred/mariana_overview.php

Delivered 2007-2009 Report to Congress. In April, the CRCP delivered the *Implementation of the National Coral Reef Action Strategy: Report on NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program Activities from 2007 to 2009* to Congress. It is the third of the progress reports to Congress required by the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000. The report provides summaries and examples of the activities conducted by the CRCP and its extramural partners to implement the thirteen goals addressed in the *National Coral Reef Action Strategy*. The report also describes the CRCP's reorganization to better target its efforts to understand and address the three major threats to reefs. Download it at <http://coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutcrpc/news/coralsinthenews/10archive/crcpstories/report2congress/welcome.html>.



Helped Reef Managers Address Coral Bleaching. The CRCP worked with partners to continue addressing the threat of coral bleaching by providing reef managers with tools to understand climate change and coral bleaching and take action. The CRCP:



Bleaching workshop participants prepare to assess a USVI reef. Courtesy: M. Mehling

continue addressing the threat of coral bleaching by providing reef managers with tools to understand climate change and coral bleaching and take action. The CRCP:

- Conducted bleaching workshops in Belize and the USVI – this training has now been provided in all seven US reef jurisdictions to over 200 managers;
- Conducted the first 'train the trainers' bleaching workshop for 28 Caribbean reef managers; and
- Launched an enhanced bleaching monitoring product suite and experimental products to predict bleaching and its frequency.

Co-hosted 22nd and 23rd Meetings of the US Coral Reef Task Force. NOAA co-hosted two US Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) meetings in FY10 in Puerto Rico and Washington, DC. In Puerto Rico, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a partnership initiative focused on restoring the Guánica watershed in Puerto Rico. The USDA led the initiative by pledging \$1 Million; NOAA respond to the USDA's challenge at the meeting, pledging at least \$450,000 in technical assistance and \$100,000 for community grants in FY10. At the DC meeting, the USCRTF was asked to engage in the Administration's Ocean Policy Task Force. In addition, the USCRTF announced the availability of grant funding to build local capacity and support for projects that will help restore natural resources in the Guánica/Rio Loco watershed in Puerto Rico.



A sediment plume enters the ocean in the Guánica watershed, potentially impacting local reefs. Courtesy: Tom Moore, NOAA Restoration Center

Completed User- and Leadership-driven Website Redesign. The CRCP launched a significantly redesigned version of their Website at <http://coralreef.noaa.gov> in November. In response to input from its External Program Review, a re-alignment of focus within the program, input from Website users, and direction from the Program Manager, the CRCP's redesigned site focuses much more on coral ecosystem resources in an effort to provide the information for which its users are searching.

Awarded Almost \$11 Million for Coral Reef Conservation Projects. The CRCP awarded almost \$11 million to external partners in support of coral reef management, monitoring, reef fisheries management, and conservation. These awards:

- Accounted for approximately one third of the FY2010 budget and supported a range of conservation activities and projects;
- Leveraged over \$4.3 million in matching funds; and
- Were selected through CRCP's five competitive funding categories, the public-private partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, multi-year cooperative agreements with The Nature Conservancy and SeaWeb, and the Coral Reef Institute Awards processed in collaboration with the Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research.

For more information | www.coralreef.noaa.gov

www.coris.noaa.gov is the Web site of NOAA's Coral Reef Information System, and home to all data, products, and publications generated by CRCP-funded projects.

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

phone: 301-713-3155 | fax: 301-713-4012 | coralreef@noaa.gov | www.coralreef.noaa.gov

