

## **RESPONDING TO THE CORAL REEF USER COMMUNITY: THE NOAA CORAL REEF INFORMATION SYSTEM (CORIS) REGIONAL DATA PORTAL**

*Michele Newlin, NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center  
Davida Remer, NOAA/NOS Communications & Education Division  
Donald Collins, NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center  
Anthony Picciolo, NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center  
Georgia Shao, NOAA/NOS Communications & Education Division  
Robb Wright, NOAA/NOS Strategic Program Services Division  
Sarah O'Connor, NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center  
Sheri Phillips, NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center  
Zachary Bronder, NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center*

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The world's coral reef ecosystems are in serious jeopardy, threatened by over-exploitation of living resources, destructive fishing techniques, pollution, habitat destruction, invasive species, disease, coral bleaching, and global climate change. NOAA has a long history of collecting vast arrays of diverse scientific data on coral reef ecosystems and developing new information products that facilitate coral ecosystems research and management. Acting on recommendations of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, NOAA created the Coral Reef Information System (CoRIS, [www.coris.noaa.gov](http://www.coris.noaa.gov)) in 2002 to facilitate public access to this extensive collection of data and products. CoRIS is a web-based information system providing access to data and information resulting from NOAA's coral ecosystems research and management efforts. These efforts include coral reef mapping, monitoring and assessment surveys, research and modeling activities, outreach and education programs, as well as resource management and stewardship projects. In addition, CoRIS coordinates with the NOAA Library and NOAA's National Data Centers to provide access to archived data and products.

CoRIS continually strives to meet the information needs of a wide range of users. In response to feedback from regional users, CoRIS developed and released the CoRIS Regional Data Portal ([www.coris.noaa.gov/data/portals/](http://www.coris.noaa.gov/data/portals/)) in July 2008. Based on regions defined in the 'The State of Coral Reef Ecosystems of the United States and Pacific Freely Associated States: 2005' report, the CoRIS Regional Data Portal presents region-specific data in a clear, concise, and integrated way. The user is able to find a wide range of data and information from a single page, without prior knowledge of NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) activities or projects.

A visual reference image of the Atlantic/Caribbean and the Pacific reef regions is the starting point on the Regional Data Portal home page. From here, users may easily navigate between the different regional sections. Each regional portal section provides location and satellite image maps, access to region-specific data and complete metadata, related data and information, and specific education and outreach material, as well as general information about the reef area. Atlantic/Caribbean portal regions are the Flower

Garden Banks, Florida, Puerto Rico, Navassa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Pacific portal regions are American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Main Hawaiian Islands, the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Guam, and the Pacific Remote Island Areas. CoRIS updates and adds links to additional data and information products for each Regional Portal as they become available.

*Michele Newlin  
NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center  
1315 East West Highway, Rm. 4624  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
[Michele.newlin@noaa.gov](mailto:Michele.newlin@noaa.gov)  
(301 713-3284 x205)*