MESSAGE FROM CORAL REEF RESCUE CORE TEAM

As 2022 draws to a close, we reflect on a year that brought much activity for the CRRI.

We were able to share our approach with several partners in a number of high-level events that strengthened our policy influence and put coral reefs and communities front and center.

We co-hosted a successful CoP27 event: Adaptation Solutions for Coral Nations, which followed on from our event: The Last Stand for Coral Reefs, at the UN Oceans conference in Lisbon, Portugal. We also had the opportunity to present as a key-note speaker at the Ocean Collective Summit: Achieving Ocean Sustainability; where Carol talked about CRRI's work in surviving the climate crisis in the heart of ocean biodiversity - coral reefs.

As we write this, CoP15 is underway in Montreal, Canada. The main objective of CoP15 is to adopt the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR), International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and Coral Research and Development Accelerator Program (CORDAP), have held events throughout the conference with a focus on innovative finance to safeguard the future of Coral Reefs.

It has indeed been a busy 12 months for all of us and we thank all our partners, funders and collaborators for another fruitful year for the initiative. Before everyone goes off for a much-needed break, we would like to wish you all a healthy and hopeful 2023!

Best regards,

Carol Phua, Aya Mizumura and Larissa Sherman
Coral Reef Rescue Initiative Core Team

TOP UPDATES

UNFCCC CoP27 Event: Adaptation Solutions For Coral Nations

During CoP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh the Coral Reef Rescue Initiative (CRRI) together with WWF, Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) and International Coral Research Initiative (ICRI) hosted the premiere coral reef session: Adaptation Solutions for Coral Nations.

The event focused on global, regional and national organisations and entities engaged in reef-based adaptation action for ecosystems and communities. The event was co-hosted by the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, Ambassador Peter Thomson, and attended by high-level representatives of governments, multilateral organisations and companies, foundations, universities and NGOs. Watch the live recording here.

Fabien Cousteau, Carol Phua, Julian Chang at the Ocean Collective Summit.

Ocean Collective Summit: Achieving Ocean Sustainability

Singapore hosted its first Ocean Collective Summit: Achieving Ocean Sustainability in November 2022. The Ocean Collective Summit, a programme initiated by The International SeaKeepers in cooperation with Fabien Cousteau, invited CRRI Initiative leader Carol Phua to present one of the keynote speeches and a fireside chat on Ocean Conservation Challenges.

The Session focus was on the climate change affects on coastal communities and the economy in the Coral Triangle and to discuss the collective and individual actions that can form the basis of innovative approaches to address this issue.

Day 2 of the summit saw Carol help students from Singaporean Universities develop pitch ideas for Ocean Conservation projects. Read more on the Summit here.

UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, Ambassador Peter Thomson.

UN Oceans Conference – The Last Stand for Coral Reefs

During the UN Oceans conference the CRRI, together with the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) and Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP), organised a high-level breakfast event: The Last Stand for Coral Reefs. The event was hosted by the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, Ambassador Peter Thomson, and attended by high-level representatives of governments, multilateral organisations, foundations, universities and NGOs.

The conference concluded with a call from world leaders and more than 150 Member States to make global commitments, including:

- Protecting or exceeding 30% of national maritime zones by 2030.
- Achieving carbon neutrality by 2040.
- Reducing plastic pollution.
- Increasing renewable energy use.

Read More

Global Environment Facility (GEF) Update

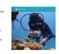
The Coral Reef Rescue GEF project is continuing in its progress of project start up phase before full implementation commences in early 2023. The onboarding of the National Technical Facilitators is progressing in each of the 6 key countries of Solomon Islands, Fiji, Indonesia, Philippines, Tanzania and Madagascar.

A dedicated Project Manager, Dr Joelle Albert has commenced working at the University of Queensland's International Development unit, overseeing the Project Management Unit. Joelle has a multi-disciplinary background with more than 20 years research, management and professional experience spanning coastal and coral reef fisheries management, community monitoring, nutrition and public health, participatory community engagement and science communication.

The Coral Reef Rescue GEF project will build capacity and solutions for sustainable blue economies and resilient coastal communities in Fiji, Indonesia, Madagascar, Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Tanzania. The project inception workshop will be held in early 2023 with all project stakeholders before the full implementation starts.

FROM OUR PARTNERS

ReefCloud



About 70% of the world's coral reefs are currently monitored, but it can take years to bring all the available data together; synthesizing disparate formats and data collection methods. ReefCloud is designed to machine-learn from experts to automate image analysis and extract relevant information, such as coral cover and reef composition quickly and efficiently.

Interactive dashboards, report cards and data access tools enable rapid interpretation report and communication on coral reef conditions across the world, leading to better management outcomes. ReefCloud was developed by the Australian Institute of Marine Science in collaboration with Indo Pacific partners, with in-kind support from Accenture and Allen Coral Atlas.

ReefCloud is an open-access platform designed to quickly and efficiently collate and analyse data to improve decision-making and inform conservation across the world. Find out more about ReefCloud and how you can share and collaborate your data or images on coral reefs.

WWF regional seascape conservation programme emphasizes benefits for nature and coastal communities

WWF launched the Southwest Indian Ocean (SWIO) Seascape, a regional collaboration encompassing South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya and Madagascar that will work closely with coastal communities to protect biodiversity and improve management of small-scale fisheries so they can sustainably support food security and livelihoods. More Information here.

Shark and Ray Recovery Initiative

The Shark and Ray Recovery Initiative (SARRI) is the latest response to save some of the most threatened sharks and rays from extinction.

Developed by a partnership of leading conservationists and scientists from WWF, Elasmo Project, James Cook University and Wildlife Conservation Society, SARRI is working to recover populations in their last remaining hotspots around the world.

After its launch in May, WWF has led the Initiative by identifying project sites in Tunisia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia. In November, the Mediterranean team started work in the first project site in the Gulf of Gâbes, Tunisia. To bend the curve for sharks and rays on a global scale, SARRI has been designed to trigger a much broader wave of recovery efforts beyond the Initiative itself. Tools, webinars, and other resources are therefore offered for free use to the shark conservation community on the SARRI website.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS): New Science Shows Connected Coral Reef "Hope Spots".

A 2022 study from WCS, the University of Toronto and the National Research Council of Italy has shed light on coral reef "hope spots" around the world. Findings show that climate-resilient reefs are connected in invisible underwater networks linked by tiny larval corals that travel from reef to reef on ocean currents. These networks have the ability to survive and re-seed ocean biodiversity, even after projected mass bleaching events from climate change.

NEWS & VIEWS

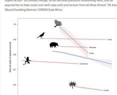
Can the COP15 CBD summit deliver?
CoP15 brings together Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with a goal of negotiating this decade's biodiversity targets and a new global framework for biodiversity protection.

#COP15 must deliver bold decisions to halt the loss of habitats and species, and unsustainable activities in our Oceans - an essential part of our planetary life-support system. Read the WWF Oceans Practice: Expectations Paper here.

Update to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species at CoP15 - Coral species are moving towards increased extinction risk

On Friday the 9th of December the IUCN presented the results of the Red List update. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is the world's most comprehensive information source on the global extinction risk status of animal, fungus and plant species. The IUCN Red List is a key tool to help define conservation targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework and measure progress against them. Dr David Obura chair of the IUCN SSC's Coral Specialist Group, Founding Director of CORDIO East Africa, and Dr Jane Smart, Head of IUCN's Centre for Science and Data presented the results of the latest update to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

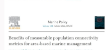
"I have been worried that with new and more quantitative methods for red listing of coral species our results would not be very consistent with the earlier trends. But now we're seeing even harsher extinction risk than 10 and 20 years ago - reinforcing the need for urgent action - on climate change, on all the local pressures threatening reefs, and on approaches to help corals and reefs cope with and recover from all these threats" Dr David Obura Founding Director CORDIO East Africa.



The Red List Index (RLI) of species survival for mammals, birds, amphibians, reef-forming corals and cycads. The blue line indicates the overall RLI for all the taxa combined. Coral species are moving towards increased extinction risk most rapidly, while amphibians are, on average, the most threatened animal group.

PUBLICATIONS

Coral Reefs of Australia: Perspectives from Beyond the Water's Edge celebrates Australia's conservation heritage of coral reefs. This comprehensive and engaging book brings together the diverse views of Indigenous Australians, coral reef scientists, managers and politicians to reveal how we interact with coral reefs, focusing on Indigenous culture, coastal livelihoods, exploration, discovery, scientific research and climate change. It will inform and inspire readers to learn more about these intriguing natural phenomena and how we can protect coral reefs for the future. Read more


ELSEVIER

Marine Policy
Volume 144, October 2022, 105218

Benefits of measurable population connectivity metrics for area-based marine management

Nils C. Krueck, Colin Tong, Courtney Cox, Eric A. Treml, Kay Critchell, Iliana Chollett, Dedi S. Adhuri, Maria Beger, Dominic Muenzel, Daniel Holstein, Stuart J. Campbell, Raymond Jakub

Fish Larvae Help Crack the Code on Effective Fisheries Management

In a recently published article in Marine Policy, Rare's Courtney Cox, Stuart Campbell, and Raymond Jakub alongside leading scientists demonstrate how knowledge and data of fish larval movement are vital to selecting effective areas for small-scale fisheries management and closures. The study examined fish larval dispersal data across coral reefs in Indonesia and found that simple larvae dispersal characteristics can help determine area-based management and contribute to fish recovery. The research findings will support the global marine fisheries community in implementing and evaluating the impact of global marine conservation policies, especially in biodiverse hotspots where communities heavily rely on coral reefs and fisheries for their livelihoods. Read more

Living Planet Report WWF

Released in October 2022 The future of the planet is in our hands. WWF's Living Planet Report 2022 shows the scale of the challenge – and what we can do about it.

This year's edition provides a platform for the best science, cutting-edge research and diverse voices on the impact of humans on the health of our Earth. More than 50 experts from academia, policy, international development and conservation organisations have contributed. WWF's Living Planet Report 2022 shows the scale of the challenge – and highlights what we can do, both here in Australia and around the world, to change the way we live.

The report quotes that About 50% of warm water corals have already been lost due to a variety of causes. Read More

CORE TEAM ANNOUNCEMENT

Communication and Partnership Outreach Lead: Larissa Sherman

We would like to welcome Larissa Sherman to the core CRRI team as Communication and Partnership Outreach Lead. For over a decade Larissa has been with the CSIRO (the National Science Agency in Australia) as Manager of Communications in the Biodiversity portfolio. With a degree in Environmental Science and experience as a environment campaigner at a number of ENGO's (Environment Non-Government Groups) in Australia, Larissa was recently the Communications Manager for the Protected Areas campaign at Queensland Conservation Council. Larissa will work with partners and community to develop and deliver a strategic communications strategy for CRRI.

Knowledge Lead for CRRI: Erin Lord-Lynch

Based at UQ, Brisbane, Australia, Erin Lord-Lynch is the Knowledge Lead for the Coral Reef Rescue Initiative. A qualified educator with a Master of International Development, Erin works in related areas such as education and training, capacity building and knowledge management across a diverse range of development programmes. She believes that climate change and loss of biodiversity are the greatest challenges facing our generation and is committed to nurturing sustainable change through inclusion, collaboration, and adaptive practice.

Read CRRI Newsletters here.

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