



International Year of the Reef 2008

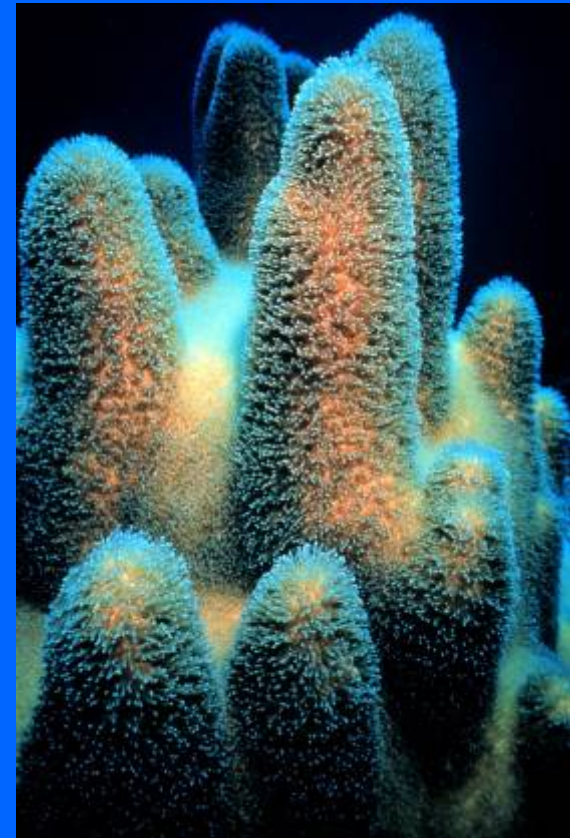


October 2007



Overview

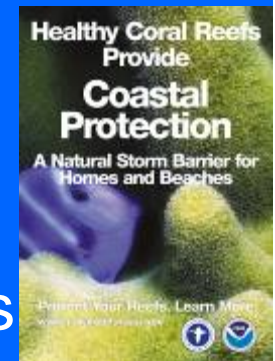
- Context: why coral reefs?
- Overview of the 1997 IYOR
- Momentum for a 2008 IYOR
- Opportunities for your involvement





Why care? Reefs are Valuable

- Reefs provide food, income and jobs:
 - **½ billion people (60 nations)** depend on coral reefs globally for food, income, jobs, coastal protection, medicines and cosmetics)
 - **Reef services worth \$375 billion worldwide** (\$100K-600K per sq km, including value from fisheries, tourism and shoreline protection)
- Reefs provide valuable products and services
 - **Medicines:** Increasing focus on coral reef species
 - **Storm protection:** Thousands of communities depend on healthy reefs for protection from storms and erosion
 - Decline of coral reefs in SE Asia has been identified as a key factor resulting in catastrophic **tsunami damage**.





Why Care? Loss of Coral Reefs

- **Increasing reef decline:** 25% lost; 35% are threatened; only 30% at low risk of destruction
- **Major causes of reef loss:**
 - Over-fishing
 - Land-based pollution
 - Climate change and ocean acidification
 - Vessel groundings
 - Coastal development
 - Trade in reef species





Overview: 1997 IYOR

- Primary goal: To raise global awareness of the value of coral reefs and the challenges they face
- Prompted by the scientific community
- Supported by governments and organizations around world
- Intended to promote and pursue the goals of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)





Organization of IYOR 1997

- Like ICRI – informal group of people and organizations decided to declare IYOR
- All volunteer activities
- Minimal funding from governments or others
- Many organizations involved used their websites to promote IYOR
- Global email discussion list called “Coral List” used extensively to communicate



1997 IYOR Website

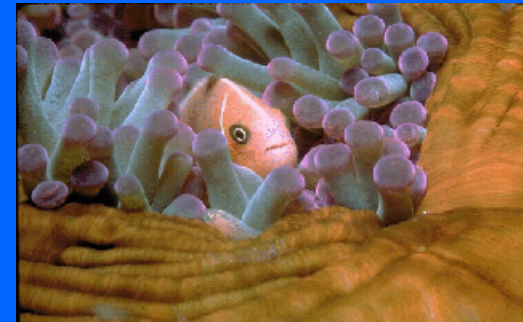
- Centralized information clearinghouse (website) hosted by Coral Reef Alliance with:
 - **Calendar** of international coral reef events
 - **Reporter resources:** 52 weekly story ideas from around the world
 - **Behavioral Tips:** “Things You Can Do to Protect Coral Reefs
 - Links to **participating organizations**
 - **Downloadable information resources:**
 - Global statements of concern for reefs
 - Links to major scientific reports
 - Information on ‘hot issues’





Example 1997 IYOR Activities

- General examples of IYOR activities:
 - reef clean ups,
 - the creation of coral reef guides,
 - coral reef workshops for teachers,
 - photo competitions, etc.
- Reef Check 97: A one day, rapid survey of basic coral reef health parameters by non-scientist diver groups.
- Mooring system improvement program in Kenya.
- International Year of the Reef Dive Festival in Bonaire.
- Children's Poster Competition, example themes:
 - "Coral reefs are important because...,"
 - "What the Reef Does For Us; and What We Can Do For It."
- Coral Reef Masterpieces Photography Exhibition.





1997 Pacific Year of the Coral Reef

- Theme: “Coral Reefs – Their Health, Our Future”
- Organized as a regional IYOR campaign by SPREP
- Developed by member countries; implemented through 17 National Campaigns.
 - Television and radio shows;
 - Public mural projects;
 - Monitoring and research workshops;
 - Logo, art, essay, and
 - Underwater photo competitions;
 - Battle of the Bands (coral reef theme song);
 - Coral reef stamps.





IYOR 1997: The Numbers

- 1400 signed IYOR 1997 pledge at 1996 ISRS
- Over 225 organizations in 50 countries and territories
- Over 700 articles in papers and magazines
- Hundreds of scientific surveys/monitoring
- ReefCheck: 100 scientists and 750 rec divers surveying 300 reefs in 30 countries



IYOR 1997: Lessons Learned

- Successes:
 - Increased visibility and traction for reef conservation
 - Decentralized approach: Allowed organizations around the world to participate, host IYOR events
 - Centralized information: Synergized global efforts, coordinated info distribution and dissemination
 - Connection to research community and their agenda(s)
- Challenges:
 - Demonstrated need for a coordinating entity (supported by time, \$\$, and global coalition)
 - International support and momentum built throughout 1997 (rather than established at outset)



Value of a 10-yr Anniversary of IYOR

- **Anniversary:** Good opportunity to focus resources on coral reef **PR/activities**
- **Resolutions passed** to move forward with 2008 IYOR:
 - ICRI: Nov 2005 Decision (recurring Day of the Reef)
 - ITMEMS: Oct. 2006 Support
 - ICRI: Oct. 2006 Resolution (endorsement)
- **Ongoing discussions** by ad hoc group





Declaration of IYOR 2008

“Recognizing that ten years later there continues to be an urgent need to increase awareness and understanding of coral reefs, and to further conserve and manage valuable coral reef and associated ecosystems, the **International Coral Reef Initiative** designated 2008 as the International Year of the Reef (IYOR 2008).”

- *International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)*
October 2006



IYOR 2008: International Goals

- International Year of the Reef 2008 (IYOR 2008) will:
 - **Strengthen awareness** about the ecological, economic, social and cultural **value of coral reefs** and associated ecosystems
 - **Improve understanding** of the critical **threats** to coral reefs and generate both practical and innovative **solutions** to reduce these threats
 - **Generate urgent action** at all levels to develop and implement effective management strategies for conservation and sustainable use of these ecosystems.



IYOR 2008: Vision and Organization

- Vision: the 2008 IYOR will:
 - Consist of a **year-long campaign** of events and initiatives hosted by governments and non-governmental organizations **around the world**.
 - Be modeled after IYOR 1997 and other successful international years:
 - **International and regional coordination**
 - **Centralized website** with customizable information, tools and actions for international dissemination
 - **International calendar of events**
 - **“Ownership” for IYOR should be global** – all invited to participate, from communities upward
 - Place strong emphasis on **promoting conservation action** and **strengthening long-term constituencies** for coral reef conservation



A Few Key Events Taking Place in 2008

- U.S. and Mexico to serve as co-chairs of ICRI Secretariat – 2007 to 2009
- 10th Anniversary of the establishment of GCRMN, Reef Check network, and the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
- International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS) – July 2008
- Release of Global ‘State of Reef’ report
- Release of report on status of Caribbean coral reefs after devastating bleaching event in 2005
- Dive Into Earth Day (April 2008), World Ocean Day (June 8, 2008), International Coastal Cleanup (Sept)
- *Others?*



IYOR 2008: Possibilities for Involvement

- **Marketing and outreach support:**
 - Spread the word about IYOR to ensure wide involvement
 - Targeted outreach to specific sectors not currently engaged
 - Content development and review of IYOR central information resources (website, FAQs, downloadable info, etc.)
- **Financial support:**
 - Support for IYOR “centralized services” (website, materials, etc)
 - Support for individual events and/or initiatives
 - Fundraising assistance
- **Collaborative planning:**
 - Involvement in IYOR working groups in your area
 - Creation of regional or issue-specific collaborative action groups



IYOR 2008: Possibilities for Involvement

- **Implementation:**

- Content development for IYOR website, centralized materials
- Content development for events, announcements and products to be launched in 2008
- Hosting events for IYOR focused on outreach/education, research findings, management needs, new funding initiatives, etc.
- Contributions of staff time for any of the above

- **Evaluation:**

- Assistance developing international, national or regional performance metrics
- Tracking and sharing success of specific undertakings
- Participation in post-IYOR assessment and next steps



Q. Okay, I've heard your presentation and I want to get involved. What are my next steps?

A. Please visit www.iyor.org and click on "Get Involved," then help us spread the word!



2008 International Year of the Reef

www.iyor.org

Thank You!

