

ICRI Input to SG report – January 2014

Part I. The role of seafood in global food security

The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) is an informal partnership among Governments and NGOs, which strives to protect coral reefs and associated ecosystems, goods and services by promoting sustainable management practice and raising awareness on the plight of the world's coral reefs.

In 2010, ICRI adopted a *Resolution on coral reef-associated fisheries (ICRI GM24)*. This Resolution followed the *ICRI Resolution on Sustainable Fisheries and Food Security (ICRI GM11, 2001)*; *ICRI Recommendation for coral reef sustainable fisheries (ICRI GM9, 2000)*; and *ICRI Resolution on Fisheries (ICRI GM8, 2000)*, highlighting the critical need to ensure fisheries are managed for global food security.

The 2010 Resolution emphasises that coral-reef associated fisheries around the world support millions of livelihoods and provide important protein and food security. Despite their importance, and the increasing pressures they face, including from climate change, and illegal, unmonitored and unregulated trade, few reef-associated fisheries are effectively managed or monitored. This is leading to unsustainable harvesting which threatens food security, livelihoods, vulnerable species, important life history phases (especially spawning aggregations) and coral reef ecosystems. ICRI recognizes the social, economic and biological importance of effectively managed reef-associated fisheries; acknowledges concerns about their sustainability; and recognizes the need to raise awareness and to identify data gaps and initiatives to address this situation.

ICRI established a Coral Reef Associated Fisheries Ad Hoc Committee in 2010 (re-established in 2013). The ICRI Committee:

- provided a working paper entitled "*The need for sustainable management of coral reef fish spawning aggregations*" to the South Pacific Commission Heads of Fisheries Meeting in 2011;
- compiled a global list of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations to better inform work being done, and to be done, on seafood and food security; and
- produced a short film to raise awareness about fish spawning aggregations, using a Pacific Ocean fishery example.

The Committee is now focussing on fish aggregations as a key area for fisheries management and research, and will:

- improve awareness and understanding of the importance of fish aggregations for food security;
- disseminate information on the need to ensure fish aggregations are considered in coral reef management;
- promote research on fish aggregations to improve knowledge on their role in the sustainability of fisheries and vulnerability to fishing;
- contribute information to the SCRFA global fish aggregation, public access, database.; and
- produce an ICRI global status report on fish aggregations.