

South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF) Meeting

Environmental Education Call for Action and defining the process for Proposal Review.

A Call for Action was released in September 2007, through the South Asia Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPA) Project, to request short proposals from each of the 5 participating MCPA sites for activities that raise awareness among coastal communities of the importance and value of coral reefs, and which help to demonstrate the role of MCPAs in their sustainable management. The deadline for proposal submissions is 31 December 2008. ***(Further information on the Call to Action-PDF Document)***

Identification of 5 proposals for the implementation of project activities under the Environmental Education Call for Action representatives from all 5 countries, appropriateness of extension of the Proposal date till 31st January, 2008 for the nominated sites in accordance with the suggested criteria. It was clarified that it is obligatory in the “call for Action” that the proposal should be submitted by the MCPA management staff in collaboration with others. Short listed proposals will be then reviewed according to the potential for demonstrable impact that might be realised through the project at each site. SACRTF representatives were requested to identify a strategy for the assessment of proposals and set a deadline for announcing the successful candidates.

SACRTF Managers Exchange Programme

The SACRTF was established with a key strategic objective to promote the effective implementation of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) and to advance the concept and discussions of a network of MCPAs in the South Asia region.

To develop the capacity of resource managers at existing MCPAs in preparation for network development, and in order to meet the objectives of the South Asia MCPA Project under which the SACRTF is established, the SACRTF will establish and coordinate a programme of exchange or exposure visits for MCPA managers and policy makers from across the region, allowing countries and sites to benefit from each others experiences and management efforts, and demonstrating management challenges and successes at MCPA sites. Based on the extent and well manage sites among the 5 maritime nations, Mahatma Gandhi National Park and Andaman Islands, India was selected as the first site.

Mahatma Gandhi National Park and Andaman Islands, India was chosen as the first site for the managers exchange programme and India agreed to facilitate the programme. It was noted that all training and capacity building activities would be implemented in conjunction with the selected sites, to address multiple elements of management, enforcement and education, and to encourage the improved operation and outputs at these sites and their use as better management practice examples within countries and across the region.

International Year of the Reef 2008 (IYOR) and key messages and activities for inclusion on the SACRTF profile.

The International Coral Reef Initiative designated 2008 as the International Year of the Reef (IYOR 2008). IYOR 2008 will be a year long global campaign to raise mass awareness on the importance of coral reefs and the need for their sustainable management. Only one other region is currently presenting a coordinated regional response to the IYOR 2008 challenge.

Potential role of the SACRTF in leading a regional level response to IYOR were agreed by participants as an excellent mechanism to not only generate political will for coral reef conservation and management, but also to raise the profile and visibility of the SACRTF within the region.

IYOR 2008 focal point to coordinate the effort, and generate an organisational profile for the SACRTF on the IYOR website (www.iyor.org). In developing this profile representatives will need to supply contact information, and details of specific activities that will be undertaken, or showcased by the SACRTF in support of IYOR in 2008. It is noted that the East African Coral Reef Task Force also has an IYOR 2008 organisational profile page.

Next South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF) Meeting

June 2nd 2008, as appropriate date for the second regional meeting to finalise draft outputs resulting from this meeting. Country Governments are asked to nominate their representatives and identification of a suitable location for the next SACRTF meeting.