

The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL) | International Year of the Reef 2008

A vibrant underwater scene featuring a diverse coral reef ecosystem. In the foreground, there are large, textured coral structures in shades of brown and tan. A prominent feature is a large, rounded rock covered in bright red coral. To the right, a tall, dark green branching coral structure stands out. The water is clear blue, filled with numerous colorful fish of various species. In the upper part of the frame, two divers are visible swimming near the surface. The overall atmosphere is bright and healthy, showcasing the beauty of a thriving reef.
CORAL REEFS
FOREVER

The 5-Year Program to Save Coral Reefs

A vibrant and detailed photograph of a coral reef. The scene is filled with a variety of coral species, including branching corals, brain corals, and sea fans. The water is clear and blue, and the reef is densely populated with numerous small, colorful fish, primarily in shades of orange and yellow. The overall atmosphere is one of a healthy and thriving marine ecosystem.

**CORAL REEFS SUPPORT AN ESTIMATED
25% OF ALL MARINE FISH SPECIES.**



The Coral Reef Alliance

CORAL is the only international organization working exclusively to save coral reefs. We are a member-supported, nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting coral reefs from the effects of climate change and other human-induced stresses.

- * CORAL works through grassroots partnerships within communities to identify and solve conservation challenges.
- * CORAL changes attitudes and behavior through education and training.
- * CORAL provides resources to strengthen management of marine protected areas.
- * CORAL creates incentives for environmentally sustainable development.

OUR MISSION

Research on coral reef sponges lead to the development of the HIV drug AZT, which has prolonged hundreds of thousands of human lives.



With even greater biodiversity than rainforests, coral reefs provide spawning, nursery, refuge, and feeding areas for more than 1 million aquatic species including fish, marine mammals, sponges, worms, mollusks, sea turtles, sea stars, spiny lobsters, and shrimp. This extraordinary diversity is an invaluable resource for scientific research with the potential to provide raw materials for lifesaving medical treatments.

Coral reefs play an important role as natural breakwaters to minimize wave damage from cyclones, hurricanes, typhoons, and tsunamis. Communities located near coral reefs depend on these natural structures for coastal storm protection, sustainable food sources, and the income and employment generated by tourism.



For millennia, more than 100 cultures have depended on coral reefs for food, protection, and income. Yet, coral reefs in 93 countries have been damaged or killed by human activity.





Bleached Coral

<<< Pollution and coastal development hinder the resiliency of coral reefs.

In their modern form, coral reefs have thrived on Earth for more than 50 million years. However, recently 35 million acres—more than 27 percent of the world's reefs—have been lost or severely damaged and another 32 percent may be destroyed by human activities in the next 30 years.

Coral reefs are among those environments most threatened by the massive increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide that is changing our climate and acidifying our oceans. Increases in sea surface temperatures, rising sea levels, and more frequent and severe storms negatively impact coral reefs, leading to bleaching as well as declines in biodiversity, coastal protection, and income from reef fisheries and tourism. Chronic stresses arising from such human activities as overfishing, pollution, and coastal development are greatly reducing reef resiliency.

But much can be done and CORAL is leading the way. The same scientists who predict the demise of coral reefs also give us the solution: by reducing local threats, we can build the resiliency of coral reefs to help them better withstand the impacts of increased ocean temperature and acidity.

Managed marine areas remain the best tool we have to conserve reefs. And yet, of the more than 1,000 coral reef marine protected areas (MPAs) around the world, fewer than 20 percent have any management whatsoever. CORAL's goal is to help these unmanaged MPAs build the infrastructure and community support to become managed marine areas (MMAs). To do this, we urgently need rapid action supported by increased funding. It is no exaggeration to state that every day we wait to act, more coral reef species are lost forever.

How We Save Coral Reefs

CORAL promotes conservation through our Coral Reef Sustainable Destination (CRSD) approach, a holistic model that combines marine area management and sustainable business operation for community benefit. The CRSD model is designed to rapidly and effectively harness community action as it builds a new economic reality whereby sustainable practices and direct conservation are linked with new opportunities, better fishing, and preserved cultural identity.

The goal of the CRSD model is to increase the capacity of marine recreation providers, reef managers, and local communities to work collaboratively toward conservation. Upon completion of our work, community members at each destination have the fundamental skills and abilities to implement effective and financially sustainable coral conservation strategies.

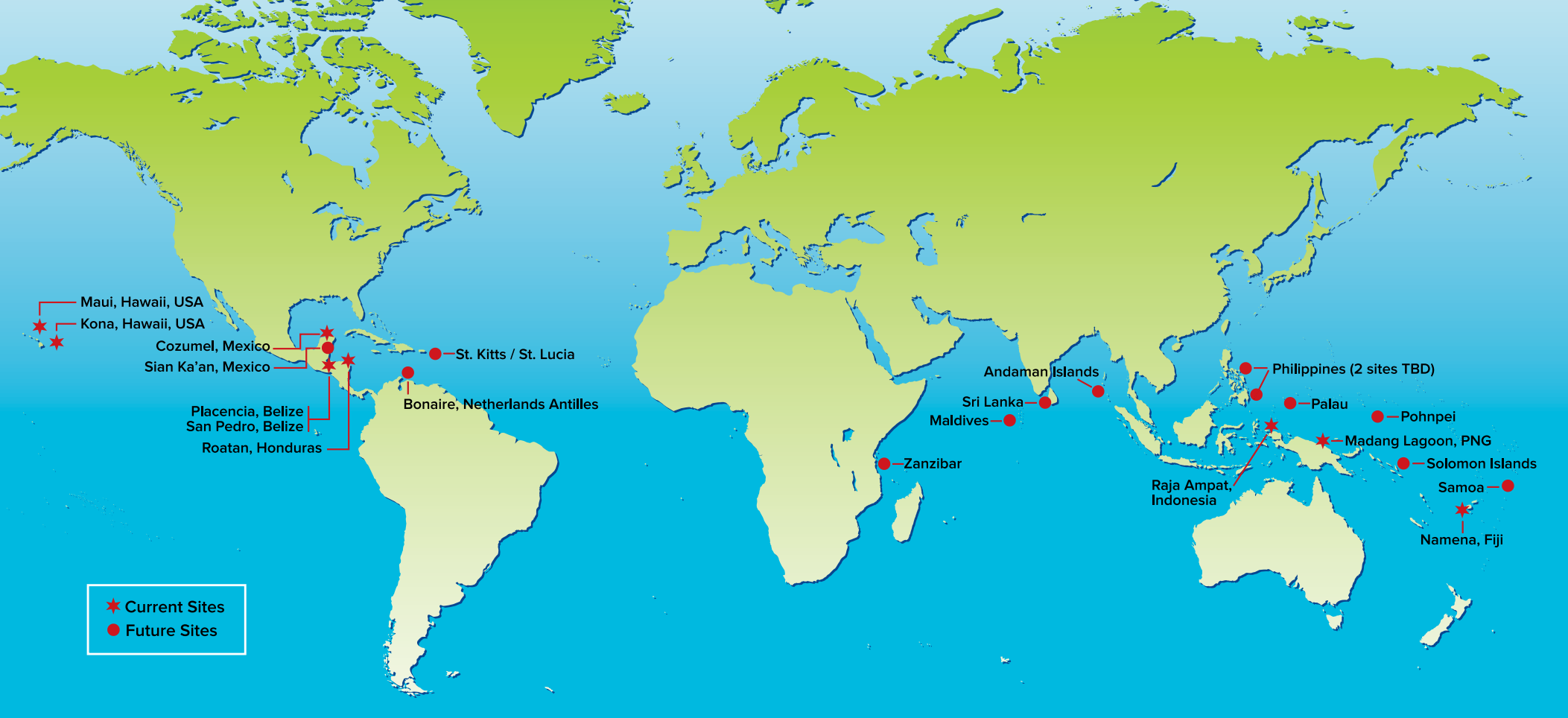
Through years of research and field-testing, CORAL has prioritized six indicators that determine business and community sustainability as well as effective reef protection. Prior to working with a community, CORAL evaluates each destination's existing conservation efforts and uses the CRSD model as a roadmap to increase sustainability in each area.

Testing of the CRSD approach has garnered praise from major marine conservation funders, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and governments around the world.

Our unique approach of engaging local communities through education, building cooperative alliances, and implementing conservation programs builds capacity from the ground up.

CORAL REEF SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION (CRSD)

SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS	CAPACITY LEVELS				
	1	2	3	4	5
SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES	Tourism businesses provide basic awareness to clients	Tourism businesses trained	50% adoption	80% adoption	Full participation and self-regulation
CONSERVATION ALLIANCES	Initial contact and interest cultivated	Community buy-in , collaborative projects	Collaborative projects initiated	Collaboration increased 50%	Collaboration sustained 5 years
SUSTAINABLE FINANCING	Financial needs assessed , funding sources defined	Stakeholder process initiated	Adoption of new finance systems	Additional funding sources defined and adopted	Diversified funding in place, sustained 5 years
THREAT REDUCTION	Threats defined and ranked	Threat reduction plan endorsed	Projects implemented	Monitor and evaluate projects	Reassess , redefine if necessary
EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT	Management needs and assessment surveys	Stakeholder process, draft management plan	Management plan adopted	Monitor, evaluate, and implement management tools	Management plan updated , revised
BENEFIT SHARING	Awareness building	Tourism sector hiring locals	Alternative livelihood training	Micro-enterprises initiated, support by tourism sector	Tangible benefits realized for the community



CORAL's Project Sites and Key Milestones

Kubulau Qoliqoli Conservation Corridor, Fiji:

CORAL is now seeing the fruits of its CRSD work in Fiji. We have designed a business plan for the Namena Marine Reserve and begun developing projects in sustainable finance. We provide technical support to the Kubulau Resource Management Committee—a community-based body charged with managing traditional marine resources—in their operation of the reserve. We also facilitate a close working relationship between marine recreation providers and the local community on issues of marine area manage-

ment and decision-making. On the nearby island of Taveuni, we continue to assist the Waitabu Marine Park with improving its local management of the reef. CORAL now maintains two Fiji-based field staff to aid in all program execution.

Hawaii: CORAL is nearing completion of a project to establish voluntary standards for marine tourism on the island of Maui and along the Kailua-Kona coast of Hawaii. With our partners we have launched the successful “Take a Bite out of Fish Feeding” education and awareness cam-

paign, which is designed to eliminate the feeding of reef fish and the sale of fish food. More than 30 Hawaii-based marine recreation businesses have pledged their support.

Raja Ampat, Indonesia: Our newest site successfully launched a network of interconnected MMAs across 5 million hectares of species-rich coral reefs and island systems in Raja Ampat along the northern tip of the province of Papua. A new tourism fee developed by CORAL and Conservation International is in place and generating revenue

for marine area management. To support sustainable tourism, CORAL created a Raja Ampat “Yellow Pages” designed to keep operators up to date on key information connected to the user fee, ports-of-call, lines of communication, and more. This year, CORAL trained more than 100 individuals in Sustainable Marine Recreation and reached more than 80 percent of the marine recreation providers in the region with information, training, and resources. CORAL maintains an Indonesia-based field representative in Bali.

Mesoamerican Barrier Reef (Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras): CORAL initiated and successfully completed a collaborative project across four nations and involving nearly 200 stakeholders to develop voluntary standards for sustainable marine tourism. We are currently testing an innovative environmental performance evaluation program in Mexico that will allow us to assess the sustainability of participating businesses and create customized training plans for improvement. Local conservation initiatives such as marine park infrastructure improvements, mooring buoy programs, public school education programs, and standards training for marine recreation businesses were launched after CORAL’s workshop series in Mexico, Belize, and Honduras.

Madang Conservation Corridor, Papua New Guinea: In collaboration with local recreation providers and the Locally Managed Marine Area Network, CORAL is establishing the Madang Conservation Corridor on the north coast of Papua New Guinea. In the past year, CORAL partnered with the local government on a series of trainings for the Madang Lagoon Association, an organization comprised of more than 250 community members representing villages and clans from the broader lagoon area. CORAL continues to be active in developing a management plan for Madang, training marine recreation providers, and extending its work to the nearby island of Manus. CORAL hired a Madang-based field representative this year.



A detailed underwater photograph of a coral reef. The scene is filled with diverse coral life, including large, flat, light-colored table corals in the foreground, and various branching and fan-like corals in shades of red, orange, and purple. A school of small, silvery fish is visible in the upper middle ground, swimming near the coral. The background is a deep, clear blue, suggesting a healthy reef environment. Overlaid on the center of the image is a white text message with a black outline.

**DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD'S
CORAL REEFS MAY OCCUR IN THE NEXT
100 YEARS IF WE DON'T ACT NOW.**



The Future of CORAL and Coral Reefs

Until recently, the threats to coral reefs seemed manageable. While alarming, the impact of such human activities as overfishing, coastal development, sewage, and mining have site-specific and proven solutions. Now, however, climate change and ocean acidification present massive and intractable challenges that have no simple or tested solutions. And this multifactor global assault means that complete destruction of coral reefs within 100 years is guaranteed if nothing is done.

With the generous support of our donors, CORAL has designed, tested, and proven the effectiveness of community-driven conservation. We know from scientific evaluation and surveys of marine area managers and

stakeholders that our CRSD approach is the best chance we have to eliminate locally generated threats and promote lasting conservation.

Over the next 5 years, CORAL will expand the CRSD program to support 17 strategically located MMA communities as centers of coral reef excellence. From these centers of excellence, our Coral Reef Leadership Network will disseminate the skills and lessons of successful conservation to neighboring marine communities to build coral reef resilience at each location. Over time, these protected reefs will become a reserve system, restocking depleted reefs, building community pride, and ensuring that we have healthy coral reefs for millions of years to come.

- 1994** CORAL was founded
Awarded first micro-grant to Bonaire Marine Park
- 1995** Supported protection of Rock Island Marine Park
Joined International Coral Reef Initiative
- 1996** Launched membership program
Profiled in PBS documentary *The Visionaries*
- 1997** Lead efforts for International Year of the Reef public awareness campaign
Established Bonaire Dive Festival
- 1998** Received *Scuba Diving* magazine's Robert Rodale Environmental Award
Mounted traveling photography exhibition Coral Reef Masterpieces
- 1999** Became founding member of International Coral Reef Action Network
Established Marine Managed Areas (MMA) program
Launched International Coral Reef Information Network
- 2000** Launched Dive In To Earth Day
Opened Bonaire branch office
- 2001** Launched Dive Operator Recognition and Coral Parks programs
Conducted first-ever training in sustainable dive operations
- 2002** Conducted first-ever global survey of marine park managers
- 2003** Chosen by USAID to lead \$600,000 sustainability program
Published the *Practical Guide to Good Practice*
- 2004** Selected by UNESCO to assist with World Heritage Site formulation
Designed user fee system for Pohnpei, Micronesia
- 2005** Launched first domestic conservation program on Maui, Hawaii
Designed CRSD model
Hired first of 8 field representatives
- 2006** Published first-ever industry standards for Sustainable Marine Recreation
Facilitated user fee systems for Namena Marine Reserve, Fiji, and Raja Ampat, Indonesia
- 2007** CRSD program implemented in 7 communities
Board approves 5-year plan to expand to 17 CRSD sites



New CORAL Program Centers

Center for MMA Effectiveness

Fewer than 10 percent of marine protected areas currently achieve their management goals and objectives. Typically, MPA managers and staff lack training, adequate financial resources, and the support and buy-in from local businesses and communities. The Center for MMA Effectiveness recognizes these deficits and works closely with the Center for Sustainable Tourism, the Center for Sustainable Financing, and the Center for Community Development to identify paths for increasing management capacity. Armed with cutting-edge scientific research and working in partnership with local and international organizations that focus on biophysical monitoring of reefs and associated coral reef communities, the center will effectively evaluate current reef health and resiliency, as well as improvements resulting from CORAL's conservation approaches.

Center for Sustainable Tourism

Generating 27 times more income than fisheries combined, tourism is the world's largest industry. Nature-based tourism, of which marine tourism is a subset, is the fastest growing tourism sector. The Center for Sustainable Tourism aims to be the world's leading authority on sustainable marine tourism and the development, implementation, and testing of best environmental practices and marine recreation standards as effective tools for MMA support and coral reef conservation. CORAL and members of the tourism sector will work as partners in reef stewardship. With CORAL's assistance, marine tourism providers will serve as sentinels for the reef, working to expand the reach of MMA managers, assisting in monitoring and enforcement, and recognizing that healthy reefs translate into healthy businesses.

Center for Community Development

Recent studies have clearly demonstrated that communities located near effectively managed MPAs are better off than communities located near MPAs lacking effective management. MMAs bring proportionately greater benefits than costs, just as a local school or health clinic does. The Center for Community Development works to promote these findings in all of CORAL's site-based work to demonstrate that MMAs can reduce poverty and provide brighter futures for local children. The center does this through a variety of programs, including education, micro-grants, alternative livelihood trainings, and community-based conservation projects. These projects seek to reveal the positive relationships between MMAs and improved fish catch, new tourism jobs, better local government, increased community health, and economically and socially empowered women. When local community members witness tangible improvements to their quality of life through the success of conservation programs, they are more likely than not to continue supporting these initiatives and to pass on this ethic to future generations.

Center for Sustainable Financing

The lack of a secure source of funding for MPA management costs is perhaps the most important barrier to successful MMA implementation and the leading cause of MPA failure. Thus, there is growing demand for MPA managers to identify sustainable sources of funding for the operation of effective MPAs. The Center for Sustainable Financing explores and implements a diverse portfolio of options for building financial security for site-based coral reef conservation. The center uses such strategies as tourism fees, licensing and permits, micro-financing and micro-lending, as well as technical expertise honed over

CURRENT CRSD PROJECT SITES	
Mesoamerican Barrier Reef	Cozumel, Mexico / Placencia, Belize / San Pedro, Belize
Polynesia	Hawaii, USA Maui & Kona
Melanesia	Namena, Viti Levu, Fiji Madang Lagoon, Papua New Guinea
Coral Triangle	Raja Ampat, Indonesia
POTENTIAL 5-YEAR CRSD EXPANSION	
Mesoamerica	Roatan, Honduras Sian Ka'an, Mexico
Western Caribbean	Bonaire St. Kitts / St. Lucia
Polynesia	Samoa
Micronesia	Palau / Pohnpei
Melanesia	Solomon Islands
Coral Triangle	Philippines (two sites TBD) Andaman Islands
Indian Ocean	Maldives / Sri Lanka / Zanzibar

ten years of practical application. The center works closely with the Center for Sustainable Tourism to link finance strategies to tourism dollars and collaborates with the Center for Community Development to identify avenues for community benefit as a by-product of their support of and participation in local conservation efforts.





**MANAGED MARINE AREAS REMAIN THE BEST
TOOL WE HAVE TO CONSERVE REEFS.**

International Year of the Reef 2008



CORAL is proud to be an official Friend of IYOR 2008—a worldwide campaign to raise awareness about the importance of coral reefs and to motivate action to protect them. As a collaborator in the first IYOR 1997, CORAL hosted online support for event organizers, sponsored a traveling coral reef photo exhibit, and established the first Bonaire Dive Festival.

In 2008, CORAL returns to Bonaire to rekindle the IYOR spirit and reach out to new audiences with the message that we can save coral reefs. Ten years ago, the first IYOR carried a grave message about the future of coral reefs. Today we have the tools to take action.

For more information, visit www.iyor.org.

“As the International Year of the Reef 2008 begins, scaled-up management intervention and decisive action on global emissions are required if loss of coral-dominated ecosystems are to be avoided.” [sic]

—American Academy for the Advancement of Science
Science magazine (December 14, 2007)



How You Can Help Keep Coral Reefs Alive

This generation holds the future of coral reefs in its hands. If we fail to act now, coral reefs and the communities and cultures that depend on them may be lost forever. You can help by making small environmentally conscious changes like switching to compact fluorescent light bulbs, planting native trees, buying energy-efficient cars, teleconferencing instead of flying, and by contributing to CORAL's Reefs Forever Program:

- * Make tax-deductible cash contributions online at www.coral.org or by calling 888-267-2573 ext. 306.
- * Become a Friend of the Reef by pledging a monthly gift or making a 5-year pledge. Contributions can be automatically deducted from your credit card.
- * Ask your company to match your personal donations or underwrite CORAL's publications, website, or videos.
- * Designate CORAL for a Combined Federal Campaign contribution (#10418).
- * Spread the word by giving \$10 yearly CORAL memberships to friends, dive buddies, libraries, and schools.
- * Add CORAL to your will and make the gift of living reefs your legacy.
- * Contribute appreciated securities, real estate, art, or other items of value.

We need your help! Anything you can give is deeply appreciated and will help keep coral reefs alive. Thank you.



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