

Program Overview

The Coral Reef Targeted Research & Capacity Building for Management (CRTR) Program is a long-term initiative established to address fundamental information gaps in our understanding of coral reef ecosystems, so that management options and policy interventions can be strengthened globally. Phase One of this initiative commenced on 1 December 2004 and will finish on 30 November 2009.

The Phase One goal is to:

"Build scientific capacity necessary to provide the information needed for management and policy, so that coral reef ecosystems under threat from climate change and multiple human stressors can be sustained for current and future generations".

Centres of Excellence

Currently, most coral reef research is based in universities and research institutes in the developed world, whereas most coral reefs are located in developing countries.

Rectifying this global imbalance in knowledge and capacity is a key mission of the CRTR Program.

To accomplish this, the Program intends to build or enhance the capacity of institutions in at least three developing country sites within the first phase so that they can function as regional Centres of Excellence. These three sites will be supported by a fourth site based in a developed country.

The four sites or Centres of Excellence are:

1. Southeast Asia: Marine Science Institute of Bolinao, University of the Philippines.
2. East Africa: Institute of Marine Sciences, University of Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Tanzania.
3. Mesoamerica/Western Caribbean: Unidad Academica Puerto Morelos, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico.
4. Australasia/South Pacific: Heron Island Research Laboratory, Centre of Marine Studies, The University of Queensland, Australia.

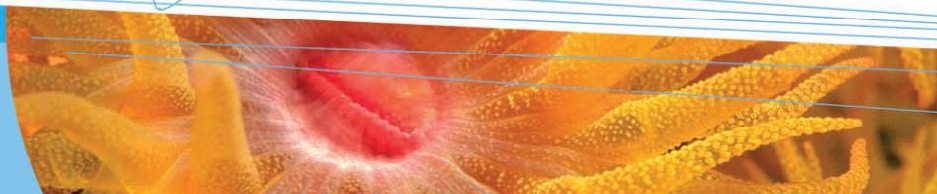
East African Centre of Excellence

The East African Centre of Excellence 'hub' is located at the Institute of Marine Sciences (IMS) in Zanzibar, Tanzania. The facility is owned and operated by the University of Dar es Salaam.

IMS engages in the creation, transmission and evaluation of knowledge in marine sciences through research, training and the provision of advisory and public services, making it an important regional centre for the East African region.

Activities

In undertaking the role of the Centre of Excellence for the Eastern African region, IMS has the following objectives:



1. To host and provide technical support to Working Groups for their research and training activities.
2. To increase capacity of the COE to support Working Groups in undertaking research and training in coral reef science and management.
3. To build regional capacity through (i) provision of graduate scholarships, (ii) training workshops on regionally emerging issues such as coral disease, and (iii) bringing in new expertise such as remote sensing methods, analysis and modelling techniques.
4. To undertake regionally relevant coral reef research such as coral bleaching, restoration and remediation, nutrient and sediment dynamics, reef corals and fish ecology as well as undertaking information outreach and uptake in the Eastern Africa region.

In serving as a hub for research, the COE will undertake regionally important local research. In this regard three local research sub-projects related to the concerns of the CRTR Program have been designed:

1. Investigations on coral settlement, recruitment, restoration and associated environmental factors.
2. Mapping and characterisation of coral reefs and associated threats.
3. Information dissemination on coral reefs and indigenous knowledge.

Capacity building will be realised in two directions:

1. To build the capacity of the COE to support the Program's Working Group activities in the region.

2. To build capacity of the region through postgraduate training, workshops and seminars.

Information on project results and any other issues related to coral reefs in the region will be disseminated to all users, particularly managers and decision-makers. In ensuring national and regional input on how to make it relevant to capacity building and knowledge needs in the region, and add value to ongoing projects and programs in the COEs projects, the COE will set up a reference stakeholder group both at national and regional levels.

Further Information

Further information regarding the East African Centre of Excellence can be obtained from:

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CRTR Project partners include the Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Bank (WB), The University of Queensland (UQ), United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), UNESCO-Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC/UNESCO) and approximately 50 research institutes & other third parties around the world.

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