

Building Capacity and Cooperation for Sustainable Development of Pacific Coastal Resources Forum

Mercure Hotel, Townsville, Australia; 3-7 September 2007

Sponsored by: The Australian Government through the Department of the Environment and Water Resources (DEW); and AusAID – the Australian Agency for International Development; The French Government through CRISP (Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific) in partnership with James Cook University and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre, Townsville

IOI (Australia) (Robin South, Posa Skelton & Damien Sweeney) assisted in the facilitation of the Pacific Forum. The Forum was attended by some 55 people, including 18 representatives from Pacific Island governments, institutions and regional organisations, and representatives invited by the Australian and French Governments. The Forum was intended as a platform for discussing research, management and governance of coral reefs in the Pacific, with the key objectives being to improve networking, enhance scientific co-operation, build capacity and explore solutions to common problems. The Forum examined Pacific capacity and research and identified both key issues and best practice solutions under four key themes.

Within the Forum, Pacific Island people shared experiences, successes and challenges, including those of traditional management, with Australian, French and other experts to identify Pacific solutions around the four Themes (below). Australian and French experts also shared their knowledge of the management of the marine environment and the integration of science and research in decision making, policy development and management operations.

The four themes were: Marine Protected Areas, Integrated Coastal Management, Sustainable Industries, and Governance. As a background to the discussions, some 45 case studies were provided by the participants and other experts.

Expected Outcomes:

1. *A strengthened Pacific coral reef network in association with Australia and France*
2. *A programme of potential actions to fill the gaps and improve sustainable development capacity*
3. *A compilation of validated best practices*
4. *A road map and a timetable for future improved collaboration to meet the goal*

It is anticipated that the report of the meetings will be published by the end of 2007. For further information contact Dr. Clive Wilkinson (c.wilkinson@rrrc.org.au) or Dr Eric Clua (ericc@spc.int).