

USCRTF Strategy



**35TH MEETING OF THE U.S. CORAL REEF
TASK FORCE**

FEBRUARY 18, 2016

What led to the Draft Strategy



- February 2015 – Steering Committee retreat
- Request by AIC for strategic planning
- Recognition: “*despite our good work, we are losing the game.*”
- SC creates “Tiger Shark Team” to draft strategy
- Meanwhile Res 34.1 drafted

- October 2015 –
- Additional SC retreat; 34.1 adopted

Purpose & benefits of a strategy



- **Keep coral alive**
 - We are currently losing the game
- **Reinvigorate what we can do on a national level while localities continue to work through local action strategies**
- **Aware of the global scale impacts and imminent threats to coral reefs**
- **Inform CRTF actions 2016-2020**
- **USCRTF strategic imperative**
 - Ensure long-term viability, ecological integrity, economic stability, cultural significance, and sustainable use of coral reef ecosystems for current and future generations

Process for Developing Strategy



- **Tiger Shark Team**
 - Identified process
 - Developed draft strategy
- **Steering Committee Retreat – Puerto Rico, 2015**
 - Discussion centered around: What do we need to do and who can bring want to the table?
 - ~150 actions identified
- **Post-Puerto Rico**
 - Tiger Shark Team determine next steps
 - Small writing team incorporated outcomes of retreat into draft strategy

Guiding Principles



- Go back to original mandates:
- E.O 13089, 1998, established CRTF to lead, coordinate, and strengthen U.S. actions to conserve coral reef ecosystems
- Former and current Resolutions
- Operations defined in USCRTF Charter
- Recognize no specific authorities or funding
- Last chance for this Administration
- Be science based, forward thinking

Guiding Principles – What Makes Good Strategy



- Clear strategic goal
- Good assessment or diagnosis of problem
- Approaches to overcome the problem
- A coherent plan to implement the approaches

Key elements of draft strategy



- **Strategic goal: keep corals alive**
 - “Ensure long-term viability, ecological integrity, economic stability, cultural significance, and sustainable use of coral reef ecosystems for current and future generations.”
- **Assessment of problem**
- **Coral demise up to now:**
 - Major factors: land based pollution, overfishing
- **Coral demise projected from here:**
 - Climate change and ocean acidification could end coral as we know it – within decades
 - Areas already impacted by stressors will fare worst

Key elements continued



- Conclusion: business as usual won't be enough
- Need to integrate and mainstream climate and OA considerations into our broader CRTF strategy

Key elements continued



- Major approaches:
 - 1. Do everything we can to keep existing coral as resilient as possible
 - Reinforces urgency of watershed, LBS, marine protected areas
 - Be climate smart: integrate CCAP approach for adaptation
 - 2. Influence the source of problem: CO₂ emissions
 - E.g., messaging: better connect the dots between CO₂ and coral demise
 - 3. Reassess legislative and policy tools available

Relationship with Res 34.1



- From 34.1, Internal Business
- “Strategic Planning: Engage in strategic planning to set the course for attainment of USCRTF tasks and goals articulated in EO 13089 and tailored to the FY16-20 performance period by this resolution, to effectively preserve and protect coral reef ecosystems for future generations. Based on the outcome of this strategic planning process, the USCRTF will reevaluate Resolution 34.1 to determine if an amendment or separate superceding resolution is necessary.”

USCRTF Strategy Status and Next Steps



- **Finalize the Strategy**
 - Review by Tiger Shark Team and Steering Committee
 - Complete final draft by end of May,
 - Solicit input by CRTF members more than 60 days in advance of fall 2016 CRTF meeting

- **If necessary, draft amendments to Resolution 34.1**
 - for adoption during the fall 2016 or spring 2017 USCRTF Meeting

- **Save coral reefs for current and future generations!**

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Strong

