

## Section I: Workshop History

Throughout the past two decades, the Coral Reef Watch (CRW) workshop has developed into a forum for multidisciplinary coral reef collaboration. CRW workshops have become events where coral reef scientists, managers and conservationists of governmental, non-governmental and institutional backgrounds can convene to discuss how CRW products can be improved and what other products can be developed to aid in the study and management of coral reefs. CRW workshops have tailored their objectives to suit contemporary concerns and have evolved to serve the needs of the broader coral conservation community. This brief historical account will provide a glimpse of the various agendas and directions CRW Workshops have taken in the past.

1998 was a pivotal year for the world's coral reefs. A large El Niño occurred which caused bleaching of corals in many locations throughout the world. In addition, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force was established. These events prompted one of the first workshops, to investigate how remote sensing products could assist managers of coral reef ecosystems.

The first CRW workshop, held in 1999, facilitated a global exchange of ideas and investigated how remote sensing could be used to study and understand emerging threats to coral reefs and aid in their management. Organized by NOAA/NESDIS with approximately 75 attendees from 10 different countries in attendance, the workshop shared information about coral bleaching and fostered institutional collaborations. The workshop set the stage for developing satellite products for reef managers by legitimating the need for these products. Together with initial funding from NESDIS, this led to the establishment of the Coral Reef Watch office in the following year. Collaborations formed at this initial workshop led to meetings between U.S. and Australian researchers, which blossomed in subsequent years.

The second CRW workshop specifically focused on how scientists could use satellites to monitor and predict coral bleaching. This workshop was held in 2002 and was a smaller event than its predecessor. The workshop was held on Magnetic Island near Townsville, Queensland and was jointly organized by William Skirving and Al Strong. Participants from governmental agencies, universities and institutions from the United States, Australia and Europe attended. In addition to the presentations and discussions, a number of working groups and small group meetings were held amongst the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the Coral Reef Targeted Research (CRTR) Remote Sensing Working Group, and the International Global Observation Strategy (IGOS).

In response to the 2002 *National Action Strategy to Conserve Coral Reefs* resolution from the US Coral Reef Task Force, the third CRW workshop was held in Oahu, Hawaii in 2003 and concentrated on information sharing, management tool kits, and program planning. This meeting identified a need for providing training and outreach to coral reef managers on the topic of coral bleaching. Participants decided to use Australian Research Council (ARC) Centres of Excellence - Coral Reef Studies to provide training for coral reef managers on CRW products. Eventually "A Reef Manager's Guide to Coral Bleaching" was

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collaboratively written by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), NOAA, and IUCN staff and published by GBRMPA to provide reef managers with information about how they can manage coral reefs in the midst of climate change. CRW had created the foundation of their product line for the larger coral community through the combination of remote sensing research for coral reef management and outreach efforts designed to provide coral managers with this information,

The most recent workshop was held in 2010 at O'Reilly's in Lamington, Queensland. The workshop focused on ways to enhance current products and develop new remote sensing and outreach products that aid managers in protecting coral reefs. CRW workshops have contributed to the scientific community by providing a forum wherein coral reef conservationists of all backgrounds and occupations can exchange ideas, enhance monitoring methods, and chart a course for enhancing the ways we monitor and conserve these resplendent ecosystems.