

**Table 3. Ranking of Actions Needed To Address Threats To U.S. Coral Reefs**

This table summarizes the relative importance (H = high, M = medium, L = low) of the objectives under each goal outlined in the Strategy and National Action Plan to addressing key threats to United States coral reef ecosystems by region. Rankings were provided by official state, territory, or commonwealth representatives to the United States Coral Reef Task Force in each region for use in this document. A higher ranking suggests that conducting the objective is considered more important to addressing current threats to coral reefs in the region. Lower rankings suggest that although implementing the objective may make significant contributions, it is currently less important to addressing the major threats to coral reefs in the region. The actual importance of each objective in addressing threats to reefs will vary within and between regions depending on conditions, location, and other factors.

| GOALS  | OBJECTIVES  | REGIONS             |             |                   |                       |                     |                |            |                    |
|--|---|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|--------------------|
|  |   | Atlantic/Carribbean |             |                   | Polynesia             |                     |                | Micronesia |                    |
|  |   | Florida             | Puerto Rico | US Virgin Islands | Main Hawaiian Islands | NW Hawaiian Islands | American Samoa | Guam       | N. Mariana Islands |
| Map U.S. coral reefs                         | Map all shallow reefs (<30 m)                         | H                   | H           | H                 | H                     | H                   | H              | M          | H                  |
|  | Map selected deep reefs (>30 m)+B8                    | M                   | L           | H                 | L                     | L                   | M              | L          | L                  |
| Assess & Monitor Reef Health                 | Conduct rapid assessments & inventories               | H                   | M           | H                 | H                     | H                   | M              | M          | H                  |
|  | Monitor coral, fish, and other living resources       | H                   | H           | H                 | H                     | H                   | H              | H          | H                  |
|  | Assess water & substrate quality                      | H                   | H           | H                 | M                     | L                   | H              | H          | H                  |
|  | Assess global warming & bleaching                     | H                   | M           | M                 | L                     | L                   | M              | L          | M                  |
| Conduct Strategic Research                   | Understand reef processes                             | H                   | M           | H                 | M                     | L                   | L              | M          | M                  |
|  | Understand reef diseases and bleaching                | H                   | H           | H                 | L                     | L                   | L              | L          | M                  |
|  | Understand impacts of management actions              | M                   | H           | M                 | H                     | H                   | H              | M          | H                  |
| Understand Social and Economic Factors       | Assess Human Uses of Reefs                            | H                   | H           | H                 | H                     | M                   | M              | H          | H                  |
|  | Assess Social/Economic impacts of reef management     | L                   | H           | H                 | H                     | M                   | L              | H          | M                  |
|  | Assess value of reef resources                        | M                   | H           | M                 | H                     | M                   | M              | H          | H                  |
| Improve Use of marine protected areas (MPAs) | Strengthen existing MPAs                              | H                   | H           | H                 | H                     | H                   | H              | H          | H                  |
|  | Identify gaps in MPA system                           | M                   | H           | H                 | H                     | H                   | H              | L          | H                  |
|  | Establish new MPAs                                    | L                   | H           | H                 | H                     | M                   | H              | L          | H                  |
| Reduce adverse impacts of fishing            | Reduce Overfishing                                    | H                   | H           | H                 | H                     | M                   | H              | L          | H                  |
|  | Reduce habitat destruction and other indirect impacts | M                   | H           | M                 | H                     | H                   | M              | M          | H                  |
| Reduce impacts of coastal uses               | Reduce dredging and other habitat impacts             | H                   | H           | M                 | L                     | L                   | M              | L          | H                  |
|  | Reduce Impacts from Ocean Recreation                  | L                   | H           | H                 | H                     | L                   | L              | H          | H                  |
|  | Improve Vessel management                             | M                   | H           | M                 | H                     | H                   | L              | H          | M                  |
| Reduce pollution                             | Reduce Sediment Pollution                             | M                   | H           | H                 | H                     | L                   | H              | H          | H                  |
|  | Reduce Nutrient Pollution                             | H                   | H           | M                 | H                     | L                   | M              | H          | H                  |
|  | Reduce Chemical Pollution                             | M                   | M           | M                 | M                     | M                   | H              | H          | H                  |
|  | Reduce Marine Debris                                  | M                   | M           | M                 | M                     | H                   | M              | L          | L                  |
|  | Prevent and Control Invasive Species                  | M                   | L           | L                 | H                     | H                   | L              | L          | L                  |
| Restore damaged reefs                        | Improve Response Capabilities                         | H                   | H           | M                 | H                     | H                   | M              | L          | M                  |
|  | Improve Restoration Techniques                        | M                   | H           | M                 | M                     | L                   | L              | M          | M                  |
|  | Restore Damaged Reefs                                 | M                   | H           | L                 | L                     | L                   | L              | L          | M                  |
| Improve Education & Outreach                 | Increase awareness                                    | H                   | H           | H                 | H                     | M                   | H              | H          | H                  |
| Reduce International Threats to Reefs        | Increase Capability for Resource Management           | L                   | H           | H                 | H                     | H                   | H              | L          | H                  |
|  | Support International Organizations and Institutions  | L                   | L           | M                 | L                     | L                   | M              | H          | M                  |
|  | Support Project Development and Implementation        | L                   | L           | M                 | L                     | L                   | L              | L          | H                  |
|  | Provide Technical Assistance                          | L                   | L           | M                 | L                     | L                   | L              | L          | H                  |
| Reduce Impacts from International Trade      | Reduce Destructive Fishing Practices                  | L                   | M           | H                 | L                     | L                   | L              | L          | L                  |
|  | Increase International Awareness                      | L                   | L           | L                 | L                     | L                   | L              | L          | L                  |
| Improve Coordination and accountability      | Improve coordination and accountability               | H                   | M           | M                 | H                     | H                   | H              | L          | H                  |

H = High priority action needed to address threats  
M = Medium priority action to address threats  
L = Low priority action to address threats