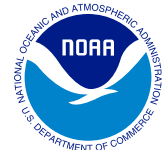
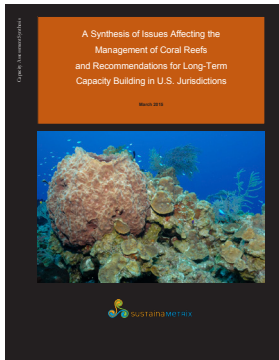


# Coral Reef Management Capacity in the U.S.



N O A A C O R A L R E E F C O N S E R V A T I O N P R O G R A M

## Coral Reef Management Capacity Challenges and Recommendations



Coral reef ecosystems face unprecedented threats from climate change, unsustainable fishing practices, and land-based pollution. It is more important than ever to address the challenges that hamper effective resource management.

With guidance from key coral reef conservation practitioners, a team of specialists supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program reviewed the technical and management gaps in each of the seven states and territories that participate in the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force. These are the results:

- The team identified common management capacity challenges across the nation
- They made specific recommendations to address these gaps and improve the overall management of U.S. coral reef ecosystems

Detailed findings are provided in a report, *A Synthesis of Issues Affecting the Management of Coral Reefs and Recommendations for Long-term Capacity Building in U.S. Jurisdictions*. Obtain this report by visiting the Coral Reef Conservation Program's website at [www.coralreef.gov](http://www.coralreef.gov).

## CHALLENGES

- A lack of political will and formal commitment for increased coral reef management
- A lack of long-term and sustainable financing
- A lack of supportive and informed constituencies
- A need to move from planning to implementation
- A need for improved enforcement and compliance
- A need for increased support for the effective function and structure of management agencies

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The national synthesis report outlines a series of near-term recommendations for addressing these national level issues. Additionally, the report offers longer-term strategies for consideration by the U.S. coral reef conservation community. The following recommendations are included:

- Support for a collaborative approach for the reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000
- The expansion and institutionalization of staff capacity-building programs in the jurisdictions, such as fellowships, internships, professional development opportunities, federal details, and trainings
- Establishment of a working group of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force focused on improving the enforcement of laws that safeguard coral reefs
- Strategic engagement of governors to champion coral reef conservation and management
- Facilitation of peer-to-peer learning exchanges among the jurisdictions, federal agencies, and nongovernmental partners to foster a network where coral reef conservation practitioners can connect and share information

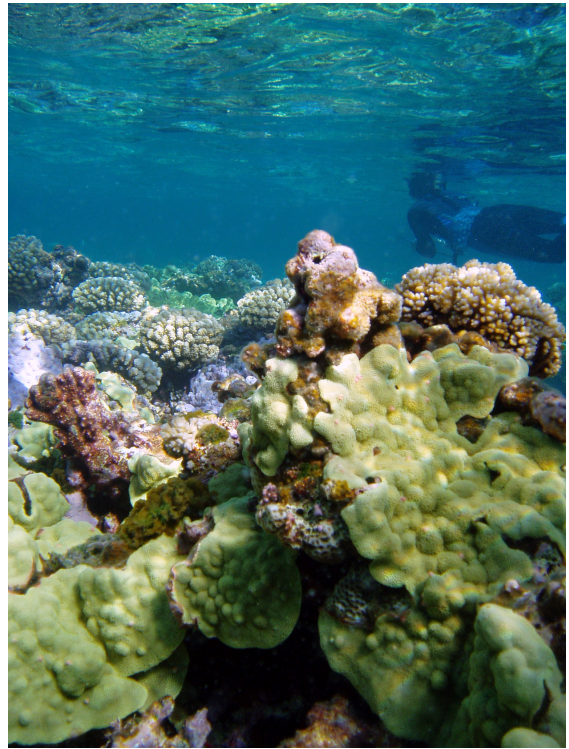
# Coral Reef Management Capacity in the U.S.

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## NEXT STEPS

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The assessment process illustrates the roles, responsibilities, missions, capabilities, and needs of the coral reef ecosystem management agencies in each of the jurisdictions. This information will greatly assist the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program in targeting support to each jurisdiction. It is also intended to support federal, state, and territory members of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, as well as those in the broader coral reef conservation community, as they work to improve management capacity across the nation.



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## MORE INFORMATION



The capacity assessments were conducted by Sustainamatrix under contract to the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program. We would like to thank the many partners who participated in this process. The assessments are available online at [www.coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutcrctp/strategy/reprioritization/capacityassessments](http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutcrctp/strategy/reprioritization/capacityassessments).

Dana Wusinich-Mendez | Atlantic-Caribbean Team Lead  
[Dana.Wusinich-Mendez@noaa.gov](mailto:Dana.Wusinich-Mendez@noaa.gov)

John Tomczuk | Program Analyst  
[John.Tomczuk@noaa.gov](mailto:John.Tomczuk@noaa.gov)