

**Improving long-term coral reef monitoring in the Wider Caribbean region:
Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network - Caribbean accomplishments**

Theme: biodiversity tools & data + Theme: Linking biodiversity to ecosystem function and services + Theme: Biodiversity in a changing ocean (session 6)

Presentation format: Presentation

Abstract (200 words max)

Long-term, robust coral reef monitoring coupled with strategic reporting are essential drivers for ecosystem-based management and regional policy processes. Since the restructuring of the Caribbean component of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) in August 2014, the GCRMN-Caribbean has been bolstering its presence and regional acknowledgement as a dynamic network. An expert steering committee and members-at-large have enabled the network to achieve substantial progress. GCRMN-Caribbean bio-physical guidelines have been improved and tested at several sites; communication and experience sharing have increased considerably; capacity building actions have been implemented for coral reef practitioners with a special focus on MPA managers; and there has been collaboration with major Caribbean programmes. This paper reports on the progress of the GCRMN-Caribbean in 2017: the development of socio-economic guidelines for an integrated monitoring approach, the implementation of building capacity projects “*for coral reef and human dimensions monitoring within the Wider Caribbean*”, within a workshop-based training program to increase regional capacity for integrated bio-physical and socio-economic monitoring. Besides its achievements for the year, this paper also reports on GCRMN-Caribbean network challenges and next steps, including development of a standardized data analysis and reporting in 2018 and participation in the International Year of the Reef.

Key words (4): GCRMN-Caribbean, coral reef monitoring, bio-physical and socio-economic guidelines, International Year of the Reef

Short description (120 characters): Presentation of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network-Caribbean, actions, achievements and challenges.

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