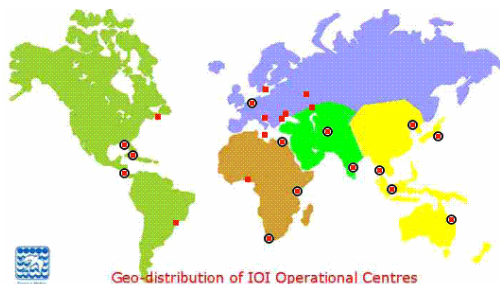




The International Ocean Institute attends the official launch of the International Year of the Coral Reef (IYOR) 2008

On the 24th of January 2008, the International Year of the Coral Reef (IYOR) was officially launched by the International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRI) in Washington, DC in conjunction with the ICRI general meeting. The ceremony and meeting was attended by the IOI Executive Director who gave a presentation on the role of the IOI in coral reef research and protection and contributed to the discussions.

The objective of IYOR is to focus world attention on the threats to, and the value of, coral reefs and seek global solutions. It corresponds to one of the main pillars of the IOI activities – creation of awareness for the protection and preservation of marine resources of the Ocean. Coral reefs are one of the Earth’s most productive and biologically diverse natural systems. They are spread over the tropical belt of the three oceans and cover big areas of the marginal seas. More than half of the IOI Operational Centres are located in these areas and implement projects related to coral reef research and protection.



(L) – Geo-Distribution of IOI Operational Centres. The highlighted sites are those in coral reef areas or have activities related to Coral Reefs.

As the French Minister of State for Overseas Departments and Territories, Mr Christian Estrosi mentioned at the ICRI General Meeting:

"The International Year of the Reef 2008 offers an extraordinary opportunity to meet and get the largest possible number of people to share the certainty that, beyond their beauty, reefs are useful for people; to get them to share the conviction that it is essential to protect them."

We expect that the IOI network will be able to join the efforts in conserving the planet’s coral reef systems and make IYOR a successful cooperative venture.

The IOI Governing Board during its session in November 2007 supported the proposal of publishing a book containing the experiences of the IOI Operational Centres in Coral Reef work. This proposal was initiated by Prof. R. South and Dr Posa Skelton, Director IOI Australia, in consultation with the IOI Executive Director. We are looking for your contribution in the publication and for information on your Centres’ engagement in reef work.

Mr Francis Staub - coordinator of IYOR – informed that there are now 70 events posted on the IYOR calendar. Readers are invited to visit <http://www.iyor.org/news/inthenews.asp> to enter their event and to publicise the contributions IOI will be making to IYOR.

11th International Coral Reef Symposium, July 7-11, 2008



The year of 2008 will have many events related to coral reefs. Among these there will be a flagship activity - the **11th International Coral Reef Symposium, July 7-11, 2008** in Fort Lauderdale, FL USA. Its goal is to better understand coral reef ecosystems and develop effective conservation and management strategies as well as disseminate knowledge about reef sustainability and resilience. For more information visit the Conference Website <http://www.nova.edu/ncr/11icrs>.

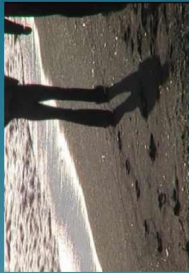


Photo Credit: J Watts, from "The Living Reef" produced by the Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i and Hawai'i State Department of Land and Natural Resources