

Let's Celebrate the International Year of the Reef – 2008



Ten years ago, 1997 was declared the International Year of the Reef (IYOR) in response to the increasing threats and loss of coral reefs and associated ecosystems, such as mangroves and sea grasses. IYOR was a global effort to increase awareness and understanding about coral reefs, and support related conservation, research and management efforts.

IYOR 97 proved to be very successful with over 225 organizations in 50 countries and territories participating, over 700 articles in papers and magazines generated, hundreds of scientific surveys undertaken, and gave rise to new marine protected areas as well as numerous local and global coral reef conservation dedicated organizations.

Recognizing that ten years later there continues to be an urgent need to increase awareness and understanding of coral reefs, and to further conserve and manage valuable coral reef and associated ecosystems, the International Coral Reef Initiative designated 2008 as the International Year of the Reef (IYOR 2008).

IYOR 2008 will be a year-long campaign of events and initiatives hosted by governments and non-governmental organizations around the world to promote conservation action and strengthening long-term constituencies for coral reef conservation. The IYOR 2008 goals are to:

- Strengthen awareness about the ecological, economic, social and cultural value of coral reefs and associated ecosystems
- Improve understanding of the critical threats to coral reefs and generate both practical and innovative solutions to reduce these threats
- Generate urgent action at all levels to develop and implement effective management strategies for conservation and sustainable use of these ecosystems.

Celebrate IYOR 2008 by planning an activity in 2008.

Individuals, corporations, schools and organizations are welcome and actively encouraged to participate in the IYOR. **Check out www.iyor.org for more information on the IYOR 2008 effort.**