



National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Vision: Healthy, richer, and more abundant populations of fish, wildlife and plants for future generations.

Mission: To sustain and expand our nation’s fish, wildlife and plant resources through healthier habitats, stronger partnerships and enhanced stewardship. We achieve this mission by bringing together the talent and resources of federal, state, and local agencies, tribal organizations, corporations, foundations and individuals, increasing those resources through leveraging our funding, and investing in emerging leaders, conservation techniques, and innovative solutions to natural resource challenges.

Goals:

- Engage the broadest possible base of partners for collaborative conservation;
- Increase resources for conservation;
- Support innovative and sustainable conservation solutions;
- Respect private property rights and personal and community livelihoods;
- Recover and sustain viable and healthy ecosystems;
- Maintain scientific rigor and integrity; and
- Maximize efficiency, customer service and financial accountability.

Coral Reef Conservation Fund

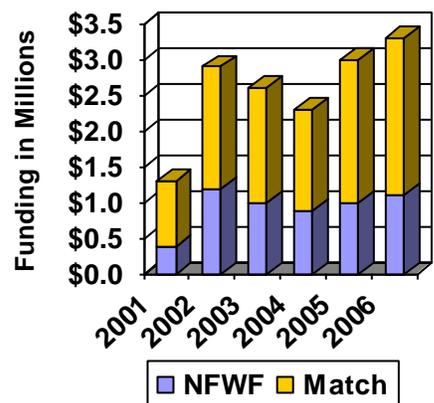
Responding to an alarming decline in both the quantity and productive quality of the world’s coral reef ecosystems, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Foundation) partnered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to establish the Coral Reef Conservation Fund. Through this Fund, the Foundation supports local to ecosystem level projects that restore damaged reef systems and prevent further negative impacts through both on-the-water and up-the-watershed projects. By focusing on specific areas of human impact such as anchor damage and sedimentation, we maximize the outcome of our programs.

The Foundation convenes highly respected domestic and international scientific reviewers and advisors from NOAA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, state government representatives and coral reef conservation NGOs. By bringing these partners together, we are not only assisting in the coordination of coral reef conservation across federal agencies, but we are further increasing the likelihood of each approved project’s success, as these members represent the grantees technical support network.

Coral Portfolio Performance Highlights

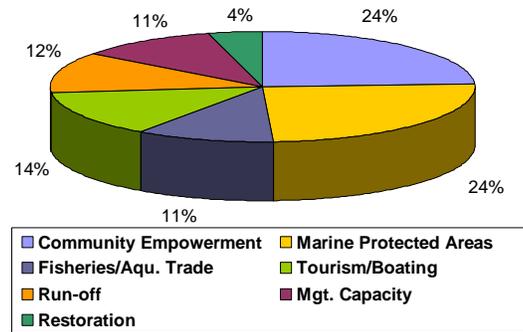
- 166 projects funded
- \$5.7 million in Foundation federal and non-federal funds
- \$9.5 million in non-federal matching funds

The Foundation has brought more than **\$15 million** for coral conservation in **35** countries, including 4 U.S. states and 8 U.S. territories and freely associated states, giving the program a truly global reach.



Targeting Tangible Threats

The Coral Reef Conservation Fund focuses its efforts and resources on specific human-based threats to coral reefs and associated habitats and values strong partnerships between community members and management authorities to achieve these goals collaboratively. Sponsored projects provide solutions to specific problems, mitigate or otherwise address specific threats, and/or help prevent coral reef degradation through increasing management effectiveness, reducing anthropogenic impacts, increased community awareness and promoting habitat restoration.



Emphasis on Evaluation

The Foundation continues to play a leadership role in evaluation and is committed to fostering capacity for evaluation and performance measurement in our grantees and our partners. Currently, the Coral Reef Conservation Fund is partnering with Foundations of Success (FOS) to conduct a third-party assessment of the first five years of giving in order to continue to achieve the highest conservation impact by analyzing and adjusting targets and funding strategies.

Step One: Analysis of Funded Projects into Logic Chains through a Grantee Survey

The purpose of the Coral Reef Conservation Fund analysis is to determine commonalities within the Fund's project base using various general components of conservation logic (specifically, conservation targets, threats, and strategies) as tools. Within the evaluation these individual components are used as query criteria in referencing a database of funded Coral projects. Using one-, two- or three-component queries produces results chains that clarify what the representative majority of Coral Fund projects are working towards, and therefore what aspects of coral reef conservation are being addressed. In essence it is answering the question, what strategies are being implemented to mitigate specific threats toward coral reefs? Which in turn raises the question, how can we steer our priorities to take advantage of progress already made and refine priorities where progress is needed?



In the assessment itself, each project is categorized by its target, threat and conservation strategy components. Intuitively, the most common project target resources identified were coral reef habitats and species, followed by other targets like associated habitats (seagrass, mangroves), migratory corridors and spawning aggregation sites. The most common identified threats to coral reefs based on survey results were, in order of frequency: direct resource extraction, tourism/recreation, land-based pollution, marine debris, climate-related issues (coral bleaching) and disease. By a significant margin, informal and formal education and outreach was the most common conservation strategy directed toward these threats in past Coral Fund projects. Development of community-based best management practices, marine protected area development, capacity-building, research, stewardship, mooring buoy installation, law enforcement and evaluation followed in frequency of use as conservation strategies within Coral Fund projects.



The frequency of specific combinations of components within the sample of projects being evaluated serves as the basis upon which continued, in-depth evaluation of Coral Fund projects will occur. The use of multiple-component combinations (Table 1) makes those dominant project strategies in relation to their perceived threat more apparent, and therefore more useful in determining longer-term funding patterns and priorities.

Table 1 - Two component 'results chains' of Coral Fund projects

Strategy	Threat	Number of Chains
Education and Outreach	Land-based Run-off	27
Education and Outreach	Tourism and Recreation	27
Education and Outreach	Direct Resource Extraction	20
MPA	Direct Resource Extraction	18
Best Mngmt Practices	Direct Resource Extraction	14
Best Mngmt Practices	Land-based Run-off	13
Mooring Buoys	Tourism and Recreation	12
Best Mngmt Practices	Tourism and Recreation	10
Capacity Building	Tourism and Recreation	9
MPA	Tourism and Recreation	9
Law Enforcement	Direct Resource Extraction	8
Capacity Building	Undefined	7
Education and Outreach	Undefined	6
Capacity Building	Direct Resource Extraction	6
MPA	Undefined	6
Research	Undefined	5
Evaluation and Assessment	Land-based Run-off	5
Research	Land-based Run-off	5
Capacity Building	Land-based Run-off	5
Stewardship	Land-based Run-off	5
TOTAL		208 (Out of 277)

Linking threats to conservation strategies and to target resources is a key aspect of the Coral Fund evaluation but does not on its own provide the level of detail desired from the evaluation. Responses from survey results developed these results chains by filling in intermediate steps of each strategy towards the specific threat. Examples of intermediate results include changes in stakeholder knowledge or awareness, changes in stakeholder perception, behavior, skills and/or capacity. These intermediate steps are vital to serve both grantees and the Coral Fund to guide monitoring and serve as milestones for progress.

After developing the logic chains for each of their projects, applicants were also asked general questions about their evaluation capacity. When asked if they felt their evaluation was sufficient to determine whether strategies/activities are achieving their desired results, 76% of respondents indicated that it was. Of those respondents that did not feel it was sufficient the majority indicated additional funding (an average of 34% increase to current budgets) was needed which they would direct to in-house monitoring and evaluative capacity.

The Foundation and FOS will now work with other funders and technical experts to further develop priority chains for future funding with the goals of focused grant-making, establishing measureable milestones and the development of a structure for meta-analysis in the future.

For additional information on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and/or the Coral Reef Conservation Program, please call Michelle Pico at (262) 567-0601 or visit our website, www.nfwf.org.

