

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. All three requests for proposals and program descriptions are available at <http://www.nurp.noaa.gov/noaacoral.html> or by contacting the appropriate regional contact persons identified in the contact information section (C) below. The grant eligibility and matching requirements and review process will be consistent with the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program Guidelines.

Please Note: Proposals are not being solicited for Coral Reef Research at this time. Separate solicitations will be made at a later date. For more information see "C. Contact Information" below. Funding will be subject to the availability of federal appropriations.

#### B. Research Priorities

Research supported through this program will address priority information needs identified by coral reef ecosystem managers and scientists. FY 2003 priorities include research on coral disease and bleaching, fisheries population dynamics and ecology, effects of anthropogenic stressors on benthic invertebrates, impacts and spread of invasive species, and evaluation of management actions and strategies. Specific priorities within these broad areas, and geographic preferences, will be indicated in each NURP Center's request for proposals.

#### C. Contact Information

For overall information regarding the NURP Coral Reef Grants Program contact: Kimberly Puglise, 301-713-2427, extension 199 or e-mail at [kimberly.puglise@noaa.gov](mailto:kimberly.puglise@noaa.gov), or see: <http://www.nurp.noaa.gov/noaacoral.html>.

For information regarding the NURP Center for the Caribbean contact: Craig Dahlgren, 561-741-0192, extension 231 or e-mail at [cdahlgren@cmrc.org](mailto:cdahlgren@cmrc.org).

For information regarding the NURP Center for the Southeastern United States and the Gulf of Mexico contact: Andrew Shepard, 910-962-2446 or e-mail at [sheparda@uncw.edu](mailto:sheparda@uncw.edu).

For information regarding the NURP Center for Hawaii and the Western Pacific contact: Keith Crook, 808-956-9429 or e-mail at [Crook@soest.hawaii.edu](mailto:Crook@soest.hawaii.edu).

### V. General Coral Reef Conservation

#### A. Program Description

This description provides guidance for applying for funding appropriated by Congress to NOAA in FY 2003 to support efforts by educational and non-governmental institutions to conserve the coral reef ecosystems of the United

States and the Freely Associated States in the Pacific (Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia). This program will be administered by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Office of Habitat Conservation (OHC).

The objective of this program is to support educational and non-governmental institution led programs and projects in U.S. States and Territories and the Freely Associated States to:

1. Help preserve, sustain and restore the condition of coral reef ecosystems;
2. Promote the wise management and sustainable use of coral reef resources; and,
3. Increase public knowledge and awareness of coral reef ecosystems and issues regarding their conservation.

#### B. Criteria Changes in FY 2003

Please note the following criteria changes in the FY 2003 General Coral Reef Conservation program:

1. Applicant Eligibility: Government agencies of U.S. States, Territories, and Commonwealths, and Freely Associated States are not eligible under this category in FY 2003. U.S. State and Territory government agencies are eligible under section II and III, and government agencies of the Freely Associated States are eligible under section III and VII.
2. Project Eligibility: Applications for research activities will not be eligible under this category in FY 2003. Applicants interested in submitting coral research proposals should consult section IV. Coral Reef Ecosystem Research.
3. Award size: It is expected that most awards will range from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$50,000. This is less than the maximum in FY 2002.

#### C. Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, commercial organizations, and local and Indian tribal governments. U.S. State, Territory, and Commonwealth, and Freely Associated State Government Agencies are not eligible under this category in FY 2003. Federal agencies are eligible under this program; however, pursuant to Section IV of the Guidelines, such applications will be a low priority unless they are an essential part of a cooperative project with other eligible educational or non-governmental institutions. In order for a Federal agency to receive an award under this program, it must provide the requisite statutory authority to receive funds from

a Federal agency for these purposes. Please note that the Economy Act, 31 U.S.C. 1535, is not sufficient legal authority because NOAA is not procuring goods or services from the federal agency. Regional Fishery Management Councils are not eligible under this program.

#### D. Funding Availability and Mechanisms

##### 1. Funding Availability

Approximately \$400,000 in funding is available in FY 2003 for awards under this program. It is expected that most awards will range from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$50,000. Funding will be subject to the availability of federal appropriations.

##### 2. Funding Mechanism

Applications selected for funding from non-Federal applicants will be funded through a project grant or cooperative agreement under the terms of this document. Applications selected for funding from Federal agencies will be funded through an interagency agreement. Generally, NMFS will make awards only to those projects where requested funding will be used to complete proposed activities within a 18-month period from the approved start date of the project.

#### E. Matching Funds

The requirements for matching funds under Section VIII(3) of the Guidance are applicable to Funding Availability under this program. Specific information to be submitted in regard to matching funds can be found in the Application Content and Format section here.

#### F. Application Content and Format

##### 1. Application Content

Applications should support the *National Coral Reef Action Strategy* and the following goals of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force *National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs*: A.II. Assess and Monitor Reef Health; A.IV. Understand Social and Economic Factors; B.I. Improve Use of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs); B.II. Reduce Impacts of Fishing; B.IV. Reduce Pollution; B.V. Restore Damaged Reefs; and B.VI. Improve Education. In addition, proposed activities should be coordinated, where appropriate, with ongoing and proposed NOAA mapping, monitoring, and coral reef or fishery management initiatives, and DOI Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service coral reef activities.

Applicants must consult with all relevant state, territory, and local