

CSI for Coral Reefs: Investigative Underwater Forensics & Field Contaminants Training Workshop

ITMEMS4

A Six-Day Field Workshop for Marine
Enforcement, Coral Reef or MPA Managers,
Litigators, Agency Field Biologists & Interested
Parties



Why Coral Reef CSI?

Most coral reef ecosystems around the world are under various levels of impact from vessel groundings, illegal and destructive fishing, pollution and runoff, trade in endangered species, and poaching of regulated wildlife. In many cases such activities are illegal, and perpetrators are liable to prosecution, penalties and restoration/mitigation costs. However, only rarely are trained field investigators and well-developed natural resource or wildlife forensic programs available to properly assess and handle the wide variety of anthropogenic events occurring. Coral Reef CSI is a program designed around underwater field forensic and other investigative techniques which can directly help enforcement officials, resource managers, and the judiciary within a country to maximize prosecution, mitigation, negotiation, mediation, or litigation success. It also helps build compliance with legislation and aids enforcement of MPA regulations.

The Workshop

A unique six-day, field-based training workshop sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of State, and in partnership with the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and the organizers of the 4th International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium (ITMEMS4), is designed for coral reef and MPA enforcement officers, resource managers, environmental assessment specialists, marine field investigators and scientists and litigators with a focus on conducting coral reef enforcement and natural resource investigations on a wide variety of anthropogenic events, with additional emphasis on field assays for detection of man-made contaminants from such events.

Workshop Outline

The workshop will involve lectures and demonstrations related to the relatively new field of coral reef forensic investigations, along with hands-on field injury and crime scene investigations guided by international professionals in marine enforcement, wildlife forensics, ecotoxicology, coral reef ecology, and marine natural resource damage investigation.



Time and Venue

The workshop will be organized at the ITMEMS4 venue, the Karibea Beach Resort, Guadeloupe beginning in the evening of Thursday, December 8 (immediately following the closing of ITMEMS4) and finishing in the morning of Wednesday, December 14, 2011. Because of the intense and field activity-orientation of the workshop, accepted participants need to plan to fully commit to be present and actively participate all six days from early in the morning through, and into, the evening each day.

Major Topics

- Introduction to Crime Scene Investigations (CSI) on Coral Reefs
- Setting an Event Perimeter and Securing the Scene
- Concepts of Field Forensic Investigations
- Conducting Field Contaminant Assays
- * Underwater Searches
- Collecting Physical Evidence Underwater & Documenting Damage
- Chain-of-Custody Issues

Workshop Description

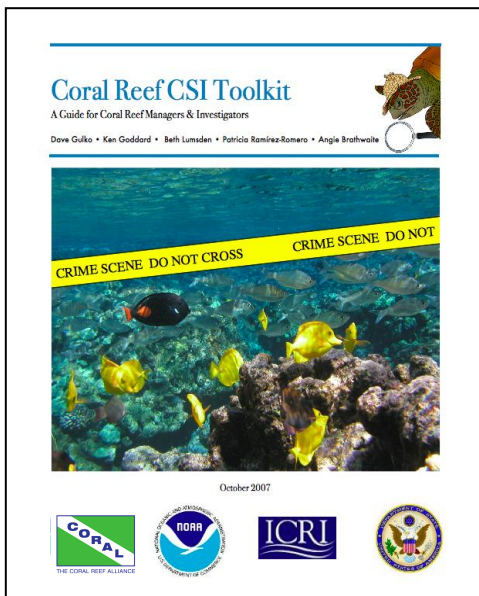
The six-day training workshop will be organized as outlined below:

1. Background talks on investigative strategies, field risk management, ecological risk assessment, forensic techniques, treating data as evidence, incorporating local reef ecological issues and impacts into an investigation.
2. Practice field investigation sessions with staff evaluation.
3. Instruction on using various components of a coral reef investigative toolkit.

A key feature of the workshop will be a number of marine “crime/injury scenes” that the participants will investigate using the techniques learned during the workshop. The scenarios will be as realistic as possible and will involve actual field investigations and analysis by teams of workshop participants. Instructional and reference materials will be provided. The workshop includes all classroom and instructor costs, use of underwater investigative equipment, diving costs and boat use, as well as all materials (278-page toolkit, underwater guides and evidence collection materials). Each participant that completes the course satisfactorily will receive a investigative training certificate along with other training materials. We will NOT cover hotel and meals, visa and departure fees, per diems or honorariums, or any costs required for the participant to meet minimum participant requirements. It is assumed that most of the participants will be ITMEMS participants and therefore already have had their travel costs covered to/from Guadeloupe.

Participant Qualifications

The workshop is field-intensive and requires enthusiasm and willingness to work long days. Participants must be comfortable working under water and are **required to have a valid diving certificate** from a recognized certifying agency. We will also allow a limited number of non-diving observers to also participate.



All participants will receive a 278-page Toolkit and underwater investigative tools specially designed for coral reef injury investigations.

How do I apply?

Applications are open to ITMEMS4 Participants and other regional natural resource trustee (NRT) agencies and NGOs active in marine wildlife conservation, and who meet the requirements. Priority will be given to qualified applicants who are also attending ITMEMS4. To apply (using the attached application form), or for further information about the training workshop, please contact:

Dr. Patricia Ramirez Romero (pattdf@gmail.com) Coral Reef CSI Workshop Coordinator
Dave Gulko (gulkod001@hawaii.rr.com), Coral Reef CSI Lead & Senior Instructor

