

### § 6402. National coral reef action strategy

#### (a) In general

Not later than 180 days after December 23, 2000, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and publish in the Federal Register a national coral reef action strategy, consistent with the purposes of this chapter. The Administrator shall periodically review and revise the strategy as necessary. In developing this national strategy, the Secretary may consult with the Coral Reef Task Force established under Executive Order 13089 (June 11, 1998).

#### (b) Goals and objectives

The action strategy shall include a statement of goals and objectives as well as an implementation plan, including a description of the funds obligated each fiscal year to advance coral reef conservation. The action strategy and implementation plan shall include discussion of—

- (1) coastal uses and management;
- (2) water and air quality;
- (3) mapping and information management;
- (4) research, monitoring, and assessment;
- (5) international and regional issues;
- (6) outreach and education;
- (7) local strategies developed by the States or Federal agencies, including regional fishery management councils; and
- (8) conservation, including how the use of marine protected areas to serve as replenishment zones will be developed consistent with local practices and traditions.

(Pub. L. 106-562, title II, §203, Dec. 23, 2000, 114 Stat. 2800.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

Executive Order 13089, referred to in subsec. (a), is set out as a note under section 6401 of this title.

#### CHANGE OF NAME

Committee on Resources of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Natural Resources of House of Representatives by House Resolution No. 6, One Hundred Tenth Congress, Jan. 5, 2007.

### § 6403. Coral reef conservation program

#### (a) Grants

The Secretary, through the Administrator and subject to the availability of funds, shall provide grants of financial assistance for projects for the conservation of coral reefs (hereafter in this chapter referred to as “coral conservation projects”), for proposals approved by the Administrator in accordance with this section.

#### (b) Matching requirements

##### (1) Fifty percent

Except as provided in paragraph (2), Federal funds for any coral conservation project under this section may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of such project. For purposes of this paragraph, the non-Federal share of project costs may be provided by in-kind contributions and other noncash support.

##### (2) Waiver

The Administrator may waive all or part of the matching requirement under paragraph (1)

if the Administrator determines that no reasonable means are available through which applicants can meet the matching requirement and the probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

#### (c) Eligibility

Any natural resource management authority of a State or other government authority with jurisdiction over coral reefs or whose activities directly or indirectly affect coral reefs, or coral reef ecosystems, or educational or nongovernmental institutions with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of coral reefs, may submit to the Administrator a coral conservation proposal under subsection (e) of this section.

#### (d) Geographic and biological diversity

The Administrator shall ensure that funding for grants awarded under subsection (b) of this section during a fiscal year are distributed in the following manner:

(1) No less than 40 percent of funds available shall be awarded for coral conservation projects in the Pacific Ocean within the maritime areas and zones subject to the jurisdiction or control of the United States.

(2) No less than 40 percent of the funds available shall be awarded for coral conservation projects in the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean Sea within the maritime areas and zones subject to the jurisdiction or control of the United States.

(3) Remaining funds shall be awarded for projects that address emerging priorities or threats, including international priorities or threats, identified by the Administrator. When identifying emerging threats or priorities, the Administrator may consult with the Coral Reef Task Force.

#### (e) Project proposals

Each proposal for a grant under this section shall include the following:

(1) The name of the individual or entity responsible for conducting the project.

(2) A description of the qualifications of the individuals who will conduct the project.

(3) A succinct statement of the purposes of the project.

(4) An estimate of the funds and time required to complete the project.

(5) Evidence of support for the project by appropriate representatives of States or other government jurisdictions in which the project will be conducted.

(6) Information regarding the source and amount of matching funding available to the applicant.

(7) A description of how the project meets one or more of the criteria in subsection (g) of this section.

(8) Any other information the Administrator considers to be necessary for evaluating the eligibility of the project for funding under this chapter.

#### (f) Project review and approval

##### (1) In general

The Administrator shall review each coral conservation project proposal to determine if

it meets the criteria set forth in subsection (g) of this section.

**(2) Review; approval or disapproval**

Not later than 6 months after receiving a project proposal under this section, the Administrator shall—

(A) request and consider written comments on the proposal from each Federal agency, State government, or other government jurisdiction, including the relevant regional fishery management councils established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), or any National Marine Sanctuary, with jurisdiction or management authority over coral reef ecosystems in the area where the project is to be conducted, including the extent to which the project is consistent with locally-established priorities;

(B) provide for the merit-based peer review of the proposal and require standardized documentation of that peer review;

(C) after considering any written comments and recommendations based on the reviews under subparagraphs (A) and (B), approve or disapprove the proposal; and

(D) provide written notification of that approval or disapproval to the person who submitted the proposal, and each of those States and other government jurisdictions that provided comments under subparagraph (A).

**(g) Criteria for approval**

The Administrator may not approve a project proposal under this section unless the project is consistent with the coral reef action strategy under section 6402 of this title and will enhance the conservation of coral reefs by—

(1) implementing coral conservation programs which promote sustainable development and ensure effective, long-term conservation of coral reefs;

(2) addressing the conflicts arising from the use of environments near coral reefs or from the use of corals, species associated with coral reefs, and coral products;

(3) enhancing compliance with laws that prohibit or regulate the taking of coral products or species associated with coral reefs or regulate the use and management of coral reef ecosystems;

(4) developing sound scientific information on the condition of coral reef ecosystems or the threats to such ecosystems, including factors that cause coral disease;

(5) promoting and assisting to implement cooperative coral reef conservation projects that involve affected local communities, non-governmental organizations, or others in the private sector;

(6) increasing public knowledge and awareness of coral reef ecosystems and issues regarding their long term conservation;

(7) mapping the location and distribution of coral reefs;

(8) developing and implementing techniques to monitor and assess the status and condition of coral reefs;

(9) developing and implementing cost-effective methods to restore degraded coral reef ecosystems; or

(10) promoting ecologically sound navigation and anchorages near coral reefs.

**(h) Project reporting**

Each grantee under this section shall provide periodic reports as required by the Administrator. Each report shall include all information required by the Administrator for evaluating the progress and success of the project.

**(i) Coral Reef Task Force**

The Administrator may consult with the Coral Reef Task Force to obtain guidance in establishing coral conservation project priorities under this section.

**(j) Implementation guidelines**

Within 180 days after December 23, 2000, the Administrator shall promulgate necessary guidelines for implementing this section. In developing those guidelines, the Administrator shall consult with State, regional, and local entities involved in setting priorities for conservation of coral reefs and provide for appropriate public notice and opportunity for comment.

(Pub. L. 106-562, title II, §204, Dec. 23, 2000, 114 Stat. 2801.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, referred to in subsec. (f)(2)(A), is Pub. L. 94-265, Apr. 13, 1976, 90 Stat. 331, as amended, which is classified principally to chapter 38 (§1801 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1801 of this title and Tables.

**§ 6404. Coral reef conservation Fund**

**(a) Fund**

The Administrator may enter into an agreement with a nonprofit organization that promotes coral reef conservation authorizing such organization to receive, hold, and administer funds received pursuant to this section. The organization shall invest, reinvest, and otherwise administer the funds and maintain such funds and any interest or revenues earned in a separate interest bearing account, hereafter referred to as the Fund, established by such organization solely to support partnerships between the public and private sectors that further the purposes of this chapter and are consistent with the national coral reef action strategy under section 6402 of this title.

**(b) Authorization to solicit donations**

Pursuant to an agreement entered into under subsection (a) of this section, an organization may accept, receive, solicit, hold, administer, and use any gift to further the purposes of this chapter. Any moneys received as a gift shall be deposited and maintained in the Fund established by the organization under subsection (a) of this section.

**(c) Review of performance**

The Administrator shall conduct a continuing review of the grant program administered by an organization under this section. Each review shall include a written assessment concerning the extent to which that organization has implemented the goals and requirements of this sec-