

PROPOSAL TO HOST

International Coral Reef Symposium 2025*

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND



**THE UNIVERSITY OF
AUCKLAND**
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
NEW ZEALAND



*2025 is proposed. However if 2024 is preferred than an alternative venue can be found for 2024.

Letter of Invitation and Summary of Support



Professor Simon K. Davy

*Dean of Science
Head of the School of
Biological Sciences*
**Victoria University of
Wellington**

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui



30th August 2019

Dear ICERS Council:

We are delighted to submit our bid to host the 2025 International Coral Reef Symposium in Auckland, New Zealand. Auckland is New Zealand's largest city, with a population of 1.6 million, and is considered as a 'melting pot' of Māori, Pacific and European cultures. The city is the primary entry point into New Zealand and as such provides a gateway to exploring the wider country, as well as the whole South Pacific region.

New Zealand prides itself on its 'clean and green' image and is a world-leader in environmental conservation practice. New Zealand is also a proudly maritime nation, with the surrounding seas having important cultural significance to the indigenous Māori population. The exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of New Zealand is 15 times the size of its land area. This EEZ contains the Kermadec Islands, which sit about 1000 km northeast of the mainland and are home to some of the world's most high-latitude reef coral communities. New Zealand is also home to numerous deep-sea corals that inhabit its many sea-mounts and fiords. Beyond New Zealand's shores lie its tropical South Pacific neighbours, including Fiji, Samoa, the associated states of the Cook Islands and Niue, and the dependent territory of Tokelau. These islands are home to extensive and biodiverse coral reefs that support their local populations through sustenance and tourism.

As with all of the world's coral reefs, those of the South Pacific – both tropical and deep-sea - are under serious threat from climate change and more localised impacts. Yet these reefs are some of the least well studied in the world, in part because of their relative remoteness. Our primary aim of the 2025 ICERS is to highlight the plight of these South Pacific reefs, and the severe cultural and economic impacts of their decline. In doing so, we aim to encourage more research in the South Pacific, and to inform and promote policies for the protection of these globally-significant coral reef systems.

We hope that you view our bid favourably and look forward to welcoming you to New Zealand in 2025.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Simon K. Davy
On behalf of the Organising Committee

SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
Te Kura Mātauranga Koiora
FACULTY OF SCIENCE
Te Wāhanga Pūtaiao
P.O. Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand
Telephone +64-4-463-5339, Facsimile +64-4-463-5331
Email Biosci@vuw.ac.nz

There is strong support to host the 2025 conference in Auckland from prominent leaders, including Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand.



"Bringing the International Coral Reef Symposium to NZ would be a great opportunity... enabling leading researchers & Pacific communities who have cared for their reefs for generations to come together, share knowledge & help ensure the survival of our coral."

Support letters from other prominent leaders include:

Phil Goff ([click here](#))
Mayor of Auckland

Hon James Shaw ([click here](#))
Minister for Climate Change

Steve Armitage ([click here](#))
General Manager – Destination
Auckland Tourism Events and Economic Development

Stephen England-Hall ([click here](#))
Chief Executive
Tourism New Zealand

Why New Zealand and the South Pacific

The International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS) is an important forum to highlight the plight of coral reefs in the South Pacific and discuss management solutions with global applicability.



Hongi, the traditional Māori greeting

Coral reefs are a vital part of marine ecosystems and are under threat from global warming and ocean acidification, as well as more localised threats such as agricultural run-off, poor fishing practices and coastal development. Hosting the ICRS symposium in the South Pacific would provide a unique place to come together to identify solutions to these problems and to provide guidance to help governments, NGOs and industry make informed decisions to protect our coral reefs and the livelihood of those affected.

Coral reefs in the South Pacific play an important role for global biodiversity and the well-being and livelihoods of millions of Pacific islanders. Coral reefs are home to many millions of species, from fish and plant life to microscopic bacteria. But they also provide a source of food and income for many of our people, as well as provide other important cultural services and provide protection from wave and storm impacts. If these reefs are lost, some of these islands could find themselves in dire straits, with negative well-being impacts to Pacific peoples. There has therefore been much work done on a local level across the South Pacific to build on traditional knowledge systems as the foundation for modern management of coral reefs to strengthen resilience against future global change.

The Pacific is a unique part of the world. The nations of the Pacific consider themselves Big Ocean States. The Pacific Ocean occupies about a third of the surface of the globe and about 25% of the world's coral reef area, supporting a dizzying array of unique and endemic species.

New Zealand works in partnership with Pacific countries to support peace, prosperity, and environmental protection in the Pacific region. Now, more than ever, the well-being of New Zealand's people, economy and environment is closely linked to the well-being of the Pacific region in which we live. We are committed to sustainable development with and for the Pacific and tackling the global challenges —

particularly climate change — that affect our region. That gives New Zealand — as part of its international stewardship role — responsibility to try to help stem the deterioration of the reefs and minimise the potentially devastating effects their demise might have on the health of our regional economy.

Due to the size of the recent ICRS conferences, New Zealand would be the natural hosts of the ICRS conference in 2025 in terms of venue, accommodation and its reputation as a world class host. And while New Zealand does not have coral reef ecosystems, its waters support deep-sea and shallow coral communities, for example around the Kermadec Islands.

New Zealand has strong cultural connections to the rest of the South Pacific that inspire them to be stewards over the environment. Māori have strong spiritual bonds with the land and water, as do indigenous Pacific Islanders. They regard land, soil and water as taonga (treasures). Māori see themselves as the kaitiaki (guardians) of this taonga, which provides a source of unity and identity for tangata whenua (local people).

New Zealand is also a hub for Pacific Islanders, as many Pacific nations (e.g. Cook Islands, Niue) have special diplomatic relations, meaning there is already a large presence in the country. Bringing the ICRS to New Zealand for the first time will give a truly unique opportunity to feature Pacific Islander knowledge and traditions for reef management, as well as providing a platform to share the latest science for understanding how to best preserve coral reefs in the face of global change.



Conference Venue



New Zealand International Convention Centre

The New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC) is located in the heart of Auckland City and is close to accommodation and public transport. The NZICC will be operating as a carbon neutral venue, the only one of its kind in the Asia Pacific region following completion of construction.

The NZICC is a vertically stacked, flexible and modern building. It will offer configurable spaces presenting opportunities for a wide range of events with intimate meeting spaces on all levels, pre-function capacity for 2,700 people and convention and event capacity for up to 4,000 people.

NZICC is the preferred venue in Auckland. However, other venue options are a possibility, for example, the Aotea Centre, also in the heart of Auckland city.

Visualising your event

NZICC will be a hub of innovation in the heart of a vibrant city.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH NZICC VIDEO](#)



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW NZICC INTERACTIVE FLOORPLANS](#)



32,500 sqm over four levels
Exhibition space size 3,960sqm (Hall 1 & 2)

THEATRE CAPACITY 2,850,
divisible into 2 separate theatres

MEETING SPACES up to 33
meeting rooms at any one time

NZICC Cross Sectional View

Security

New Zealand is generally a very safe place to travel, with a relatively low crime rate. However, it is advisable to observe the same precautions with your personal safety and your possessions as you would in any other country or at home. New Zealand is a democratic and politically stable country.

Accommodation

With over 7,000 rooms in the Auckland Central Business District ranging from five-star international hotels to budget-friendly lodges and hostels, and a further 2,000 expected within the next four years, there is an excellent range of accommodation choices to cater for every budget. The majority of accommodation options are within comfortable walking distance to the congress venue.

Food Outlets

Auckland is one of the great cities of the South Pacific, where stunning natural beauty and big-city style meet. With its compact CBD, everything is in close proximity in Auckland — generally within a 15-minute walk or less. Home to 1.6 million people, the city abounds with modern shopping areas, a myriad of excellent cafes and restaurants. Yet its setting is a natural paradise of sparkling harbours, native forests, dormant volcanoes and beautiful beaches.

Auckland is home to more than 200 different ethnic groups making it the fourth most ethnically diverse city in the world. This fantastic diversity is celebrated through the diverse style of cuisine on offer. There are options to suit all budgets.

Viaduct Harbour

This buzzing spot is a 15-minute walk away from the congress venue. It is a perfect spot to enjoy a meal and stunning harbour views. Options range from burger joints to seafood spots and special occasion eateries. It is home to Team New Zealand Americas Cup base.

Wynyard Quarter

Set on the water this area is a 19-minute walk or a quick taxi ride away from the congress venue and is home to restaurants and bars and also Auckland's Fish Market. An Auckland institution this has been the home to fresh fish for almost 100 years. It also features an up-market food court.

City Works Depot

Located a 5-minute walk from the congress venue this casual foodie precinct offers a wide range of eateries from takeaway sushi, a much loved Bagel café and a craft beer and pizza joint.

Queens Wharf

Located a 14-minute walk from the congress venue the wharf is home to The Māori Kitchen serving traditional Hāngi food. The Hāngi pits are on site so guests can be a part of this 100 year old tradition.

International Access

Entry to New Zealand is easy with a little preparation.

If delegates are citizens or residents of a country which has a visa waiver agreement with New Zealand, they can simply apply for NZeTA (New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority) before they travel. New Zealand has visa waiver agreements with 60 countries.

Delegates from non-visa waiver countries will need to apply for a visa at least 30 days before travelling to New Zealand. Auckland Convention Bureau can supply details of a Relationship Manager at immigration who can assist with this process.

Logistics

Auckland is the most connected city in New Zealand, with regular flights to and from cities across the globe and daily flights to all of the country's main centres and popular tourist destinations. 29 international airlines fly direct to Auckland from 44 destinations around the world.

Auckland International Airport is located just 35-minutes drive from the city centre. The SkyBus provides a frequent service between the airport and inner city hotels at a cost of NZ\$35 return or NZ\$18 one way. A shuttle service (share ride option) is available at NZ\$30 for the first passenger and NZ\$8 for each additional passenger to a maximum of seven passengers. The 35 minute taxi ride from the airport to central business district costs approximately NZ\$70.



Statistics New Zealand (2013 Census, excludes unspecified data)



Sponsorship

A number of international agencies have previously awarded sponsorship to the ICRS and we will approach those same agencies here, both for financial support and in-kind support. These approaches will be facilitated by co-chair Dr. Stacy Jupiter, who has existing relationships with a number of these agencies. Specific examples include:

- Australian Institute of Marine Science
- Australian Government
- Center for Ocean Solutions
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Frontiers in Marine Science
- Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
- New Zealand Government
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- The Rufford Foundation

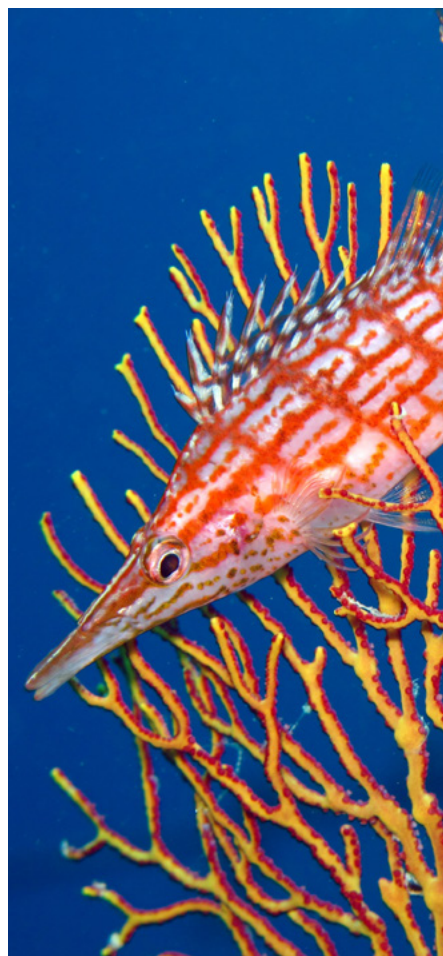
In addition, we will approach any of the governments that will be chairs of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) at the time (TBD), as well as the French Government, which influences a lot of coral reef work through the Pacific.

Tourism New Zealand, our National Tourism Organization, is committed to making every conference visiting New Zealand a success by offering practical and financial assistance to organizations that want to host a conference in New Zealand. Support is provided to the local committee to:

- Evaluate the budget of the conference to ensure that it is viable to host in New Zealand and that the conference will be a financial success, either breaking even or making a profit
- Provide financial and factual support to ensure a qualified bid document is submitted.

Once the Conference is won, the following support will be provided:

- Customised delegate marketing activity to help boost international delegate attendance
- Access to promotional videos and marketing collateral to be used on the conference website
- Local expertise and knowledge on pre- and post-touring ideas throughout New Zealand.



Budget

All New Zealand dollar figures, New Zealand GST (currently 15%) is excluded unless otherwise stated.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE FULL BUDGET](#)

INCOME				
REGISTRATION INCOME	2000	2250	2500	3000
All registration categories				
Sub total	\$1,728,435	\$1,944,489	\$2,160,543	\$2,592,652
SPONSORSHIP & EXHIBITION INCOME				
Sponsorship				
Domestic — NZ support	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
International support	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Contribution from TNZ to be used toward delegate marketing	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Open Public Lectures				
Allowance for 2 during Symposium @ \$20 ticket price based on 750 attendees each	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Exhibition				
Exhibition stands (based on est of commercial stands sold)	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
Subtotal	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$290,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,018,435	\$2,234,489	\$2,450,543	\$2,882,652
EXPENSES — FIXED				
Hosting, Site Inspections & Pre Symposium Meetings				
Sub total	\$33,250			
Symposium / Project Management				
Sub total	\$68,500			
Venue / Facilities				
Sub total	\$430,500			
Symposium Programme				
Sub total	\$67,100			
Symposium Production				
Sub total	\$323,500			
Symposium Marketing And Promotion				
Sub total	\$53,000			
Miscellaneous, Incl Insurance				
Sub total	\$12,250			
Sub total of fixed costs	\$988,100			
Contingency 2%	\$19,762			
Total fixed costs	\$1,007,862			
EXPENSES — VARIABLE FOR DAILY CATERING & REGISTRATION				
	2000	2250	2500	3000
Symposium dinner or similar evening event — participants pay additional ticket price, based on a cost recovery exercise	\$1,079,000	\$1,213,875	\$1,348,750	\$1,618,500
Contingency 1%	\$10,790	\$12,139	\$13,488	\$16,185
Total variable expenses	\$1,089,790	\$1,226,014	\$1,362,238	\$1,634,685
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,097,652	\$2,233,876	\$2,370,100	\$2,642,547
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	-NZD 79,217	NZD 613	NZD 80,444	NZD 240,105
	-USD 49,115	USD 380	USD 49,875	USD 148,865
	-EUR 45,721	EUR 354	EUR 46,429	EUR 138,579

Delegate registration and payment

The planning team and PCO will establish suitable registration fees, striking the balance between making the Symposium accessible to a range of attendees while still attaining the financial aims of the meeting. Symposium registration will be fully automated through custom-built, secure online forms (offered in English) linked from the Symposium website. Different registration types, accommodation, satellite meetings, social functions, tour and activity options are easily incorporated into the registration form, with attendees given the ability to pay by credit card or invoice (direct credit). All fees are processed in NZ\$.

Delegate details are confirmed immediately while they are online and an invoice/receipt and letter sent by email confirming all arrangements, including special or dietary requirements. A currency converter would be linked to the portal for each delegates easy reference. A dedicated Delegate Services Team (DST) provides a personalised service to deal with any further attendee queries regarding registrations or accommodation, by phone or email. Knowledge of cultural sensitivities and social protocols is incredibly important and the DST adept at dealing with international delegate requests and questions in a friendly and patient manner.

The online registration and abstract management software is the EventsAIR system. Onsite at the Symposium, the same EventsAIR database and system is utilised to process any further registrations, make changes to attendee arrangements or requirements, scan attendees into sessions, and print name badges from specialised printers at the Symposium Welcome Desk – streamlining the entire registration process from start to finish.

In addition the software allows for the planning team to keep abreast of the financial position of the Symposium. Each are provided password access to live electronic registration reports, allowing them to view in “real-time” the latest registration statistics, abstract submissions, sponsorship, exhibition and social events and tour ticket sales.

Scientific programme

Our scientific programme will follow those of recent ICRS meetings, representing the full range of topics relevant to coral reef function and conservation, from molecular and cellular biology, through to ecosystem processes, climate change and other impacts, management and policy. The expertise of our Scientific Committee reflects this intention. A primary goal of our meeting is to highlight the plight of the South Pacific’s coral reefs, and we will provide a platform for this through dedicated sessions and the selection of plenary speakers. For example, plenary speakers will include those with specific interests in the coral reefs of the tropical South Pacific, and who can provide an authoritative overview of the cultural and socioeconomic value of reefs to the region. Similarly, given that the conference will be held in New Zealand, we will promote the significance of the marine environment, including New Zealand’s high-latitude and deep-sea corals to Māori culture. To reflect this cultural diversity, our intention is to approach the New Zealand Prime Minister and the leader of a South Pacific island nation to jointly open the conference. We already have written support for this bid from the New Zealand Government and are currently gathering support from other South Pacific nations via Victoria University of Wellington’s office of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor, the Hon. Luamanuvao Dame Winnie Laban, DNZM.

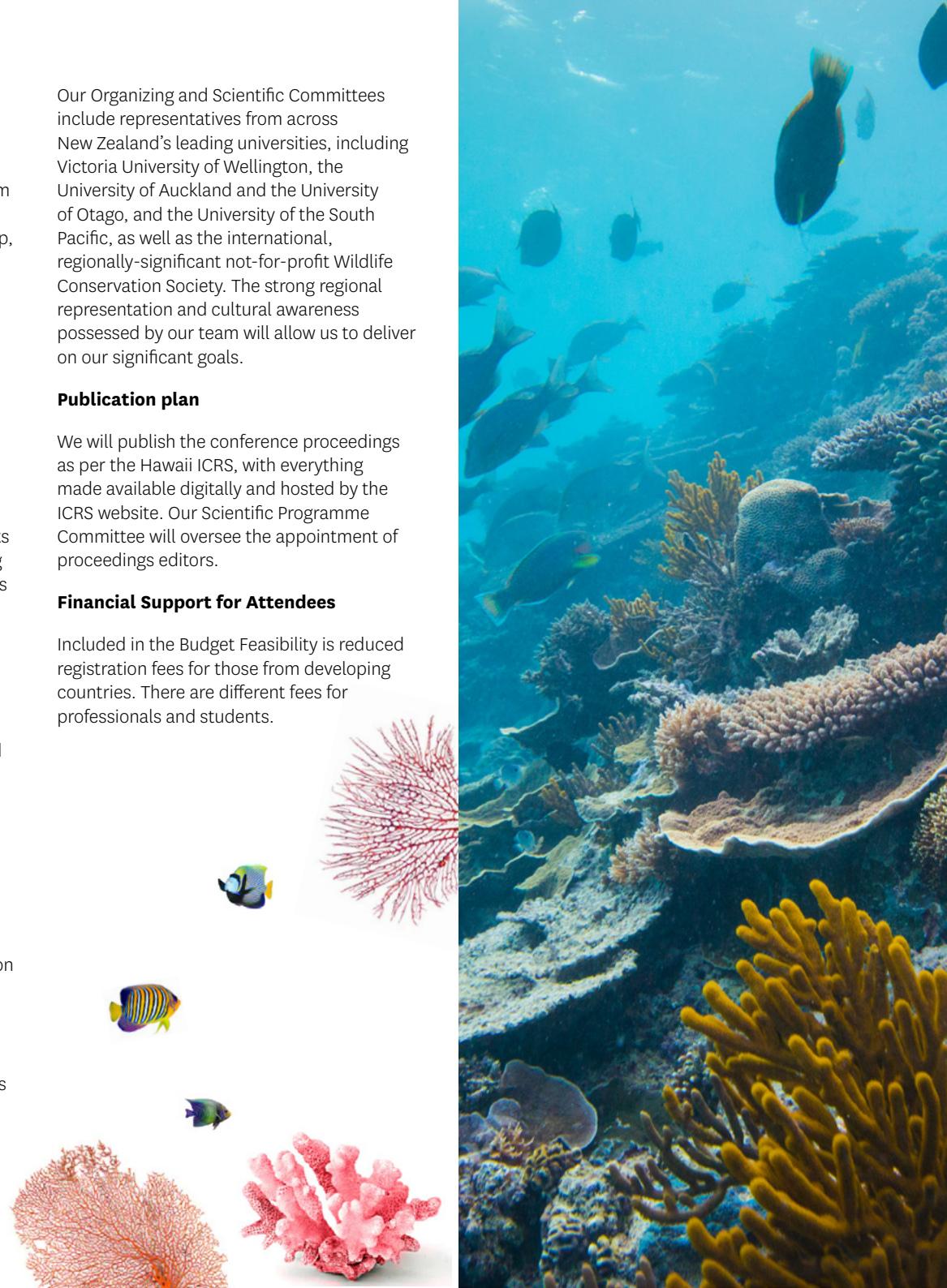
Our Organizing and Scientific Committees include representatives from across New Zealand’s leading universities, including Victoria University of Wellington, the University of Auckland and the University of Otago, and the University of the South Pacific, as well as the international, regionally-significant not-for-profit Wildlife Conservation Society. The strong regional representation and cultural awareness possessed by our team will allow us to deliver on our significant goals.

Publication plan

We will publish the conference proceedings as per the Hawaii ICRS, with everything made available digitally and hosted by the ICRS website. Our Scientific Programme Committee will oversee the appointment of proceedings editors.

Financial Support for Attendees

Included in the Budget Feasibility is reduced registration fees for those from developing countries. There are different fees for professionals and students.



Accompanying Persons Program

Auckland offers many exciting attractions. Ideas for the accompanying persons program are listed below:

Those interested in arts and culture will enjoy visiting the Auckland War Memorial Museum to see the collection of Māori taonga (treasures) or watching a traditional Māori cultural performance. The Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki is another great attraction which houses more than 15,000 artworks, from the old masters to contemporary New Zealand artists. Highly recommended is visiting the Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum to learn about the Polynesian people's epic migration to New Zealand on traditional sailing waka (canoes).

Auckland's Hauraki Gulf Marine Park encompasses 1.2 million hectares of coast, sea and islands. Just 35 minutes on the ferry from downtown Auckland is Waiheke Island — a haven of beautiful vineyards, olive groves and beaches and a range of adrenaline pumping activities as well. Or head to the volcanic island of Rangitoto where you can walk to the top or join a guided 4WD tour to the base of the summit and follow the boardwalk the last 900m. You'll be rewarded with breathtaking 360-degree views back to the city, harbour and islands of the Hauraki Gulf.

Adrenaline Seekers can bungee jump off Auckland's Harbour Bridge or take a spin on the harbour on a thrilling jet boat ride. For something more mellow hike along spectacular coastal paths or horse ride.

New Zealand offers many sightseeing options. If delegates decide to stay on after the conference they may wish to consider visiting Hobbiton. This is just 2 hours drive from Auckland. This popular attraction allows visitors to explore the picturesque Hobbiton Movie set, home of The Shire featured in the Lord of the Rings and Hobbit films.

Delegates can experience Māori culture and exhilarating outdoor adventure in Rotorua in the country's North Island. Built amidst a geothermal landscape of steaming geysers and bubbling mud pools, this tourist hotspot is home to many quintessential Kiwi experiences — from whitewater rafting and off road 4WD, to spine tingling Māori cultural performances.

Queenstown in the South Island is another popular destination, especially for those interested in skiing. This four-season resort town is known as the adventure capital of the world. It also offers plenty of opportunity for lakeside dining, boutique shopping and tours of the region's rich goldmining history.

Outreach — Growing awareness of the International Coral Reef Society and their legacy

Air New Zealand will look at the possibilities available in 2025 of utilising their inflight communication channels for a promotional sustainability piece that relates to the ICRS. The current in-flight magazine, Kia Ora is an ideal way to increase awareness and influence those travelling on all Air New Zealand flights around the world to understand how they can contribute to the protection of coral reefs.

A case study following the Conference is also a possibility which could be used as the communication platform to raise awareness of the work of the ICRS and increase membership.

Air New Zealand Fly Neutral Programme

Air New Zealand currently runs a carbon offsetting programme called FlyNeutral. Carbon offsetting via FlyNeutral provides a way to reduce the impact of air travel on the environment by purchasing emissions reductions from environmentally beneficial projects.

The carbon emission reduction projects currently supplying carbon credits to the FlyNeutral programme have been chosen carefully to provide permanent, verified and sustainable emission reductions. It is important to Air New Zealand that as well as tackling climate change now, these projects support innovation and investment for the future. The projects are based in New Zealand and in other destinations that Air New Zealand flies to.

More details on the FlyNeutral programme can be found [here](#).

Department of Conservation Marine

Projects supported by Air New Zealand

The following marine reserve monitoring projects are supported by the Department of Conservation partnership with [Air New Zealand](#).



Field Trips

We envision to offer a variety of trips that would be of interest to ICRS delegates.



Fiordland Marine Reserves

Fiordland is located in the South Island of New Zealand. Fiordland's ten marine reserves border the Fiordland National Park and are a fantastic example of protected natural environments. The reserves include a huge variety of habitats and species such as sponges, lampshells and a wide range of fish. These reserves also contain some of the world's biggest populations of black coral trees, some of which are over 300 years old. These trees provide a home to brittlestars that live entwined in their branches.



Fiji

Fiji is a short 3 hour flight from Auckland. With an area of 3,869 square miles, there are four major reefs and one major reef system. The major reefs include the outside barrier reef, inside barrier reef and fringing reef at Nameena Island, the Great Astrolabe Reef at Kadavu — also a fringing reef — and the Nuku Reef in the Mamanuka Island Group of Fiji.

There are dive liveaboard options in Fiji such as the Aggressor. This departs from Suva to explore and scuba dive the reefs, bommies and walls of Wakaya Island, Gau Island and others.

Local Organising Committee

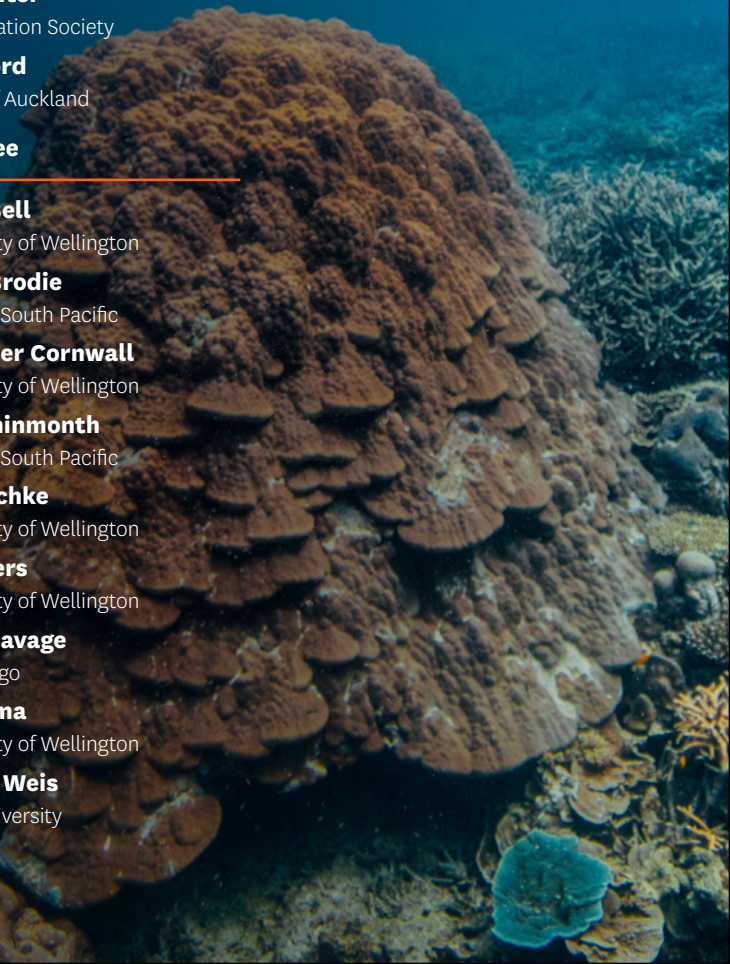
[Click here for Biographies](#)

Chairs:

- **Prof. Simon Davy**
Victoria University of Wellington
- **Dr. Stacy Jupiter**
Wildlife Conservation Society
- **Dr. Murray Ford**
The University of Auckland

Science Committee

- **Prof. James Bell**
Victoria University of Wellington
- **Dr. Gilianne Brodie**
University of the South Pacific
- **Dr. Christopher Cornwall**
Victoria University of Wellington
- **Dr. Stuart Kininmonth**
University of the South Pacific
- **Dr. Matt Nitschke**
Victoria University of Wellington
- **Dr. Alice Rogers**
Victoria University of Wellington
- **Dr. Candida Savage**
University of Otago
- **Prof. Jeff Shima**
Victoria University of Wellington
- **Prof. Virginia Weis**
Oregon State University



National and Local Government Support

Tourism New Zealand will provide practical and financial assistance as detailed in the sponsorship section.

Auckland Convention Bureau (ACB) is part of Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) — Auckland's economic growth agency. ACB helps conference planners create successful events from start to finish. ACB offers a wide range of support, including free, impartial advice on venues, accommodation, activities and service providers, site inspections of Auckland's infrastructure and marketing materials such as brochures, imagery and DVDs to help drive delegate numbers.

Auckland Convention Bureau has committed NZD\$15,000 to assist towards the success of the conference. This contribution is offered to support the conference and/or delegate marketing activity.

International and National Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Our organising committee has links to several big international NGOs (BINGOs) and we will reach out to these. We will also approach the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the regional organisation established by the governments and administrations of the Pacific that is charged with protecting and managing the environment and natural resources of the Pacific.

Make **Auckland** your choice for the International Coral Reef Symposium 2025

Simon Davy

Dean of Science
School of Biological Sciences
Victoria University of Wellington

P +64 4 463 5573
E simon.davy@vuw.ac.nz

Stacy Jupiter

Melanesia Regional Director
Wildlife Conservation Society

P +67 9 331 5174
E sjupiter@wcs.org

Murray Robert Ford

Senior Lecturer
The University of Auckland

P +64 9 923 6309
E m.ford@auckland.ac.nz



aucklandnz.com/meet

