In 2014 and 2015, the Hawaiian Archipelago suffered the consequences of extreme coral bleaching spurred by high ocean temperatures.

Coral Bleaching is a stress response where the coral animal will expel dinoflagellates called zooxanthellae that live within their tissue.

Coral mortality caused by the 2015 event was estimated at 50% in the West Hawaii region, which holds some of the state’s richest coral reefs and unfortunately also experienced the highest sustained ocean temperatures.

DAR’s work to identify effective management actions to promote coral recovery following these events began by gathering information including a global survey to collect opinions from over 80 coral bleaching scientists and a review of all existing scientific literature—a synthesis of over 200 articles.

Most recently, a workshop was convened on August 11, 2016 with a total of 44 Hawaii-based scientists and managers to apply a Hawaii lens to the information previously gathered as well as identify management recommendations in four priority locations.

These areas were chosen because they were exposed to the most severe thermal stress over the 2014/2015 coral bleaching event.

DAR is committed to timely implementation of management actions to promote the recovery of coral reefs severely affected by the most recent bleaching event.

**THE TOP RATED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FROM THE WORKSHOP:**

1. Establish a network of permanent, fully protected, no-take Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
2. Reduce land-based stressors
3. Effectively manage herbivore populations

Development of a decision-making process of where and how DAR implement management actions was a clear next step.

DAR is committed to timely implementation of management actions to promote the recovery of coral reefs severely affected by the most recent bleaching event.