



a shared commitment  
to conserve



the  
micronesia  
CHALLENGE  
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at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources  
and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

## **A Report on Progress to Implement the Micronesia Challenge 2006-2011**

*Submitted by the  
Micronesia Challenge Steering Committee  
to the  
Micronesia Chief Executives Summit  
July 2011*



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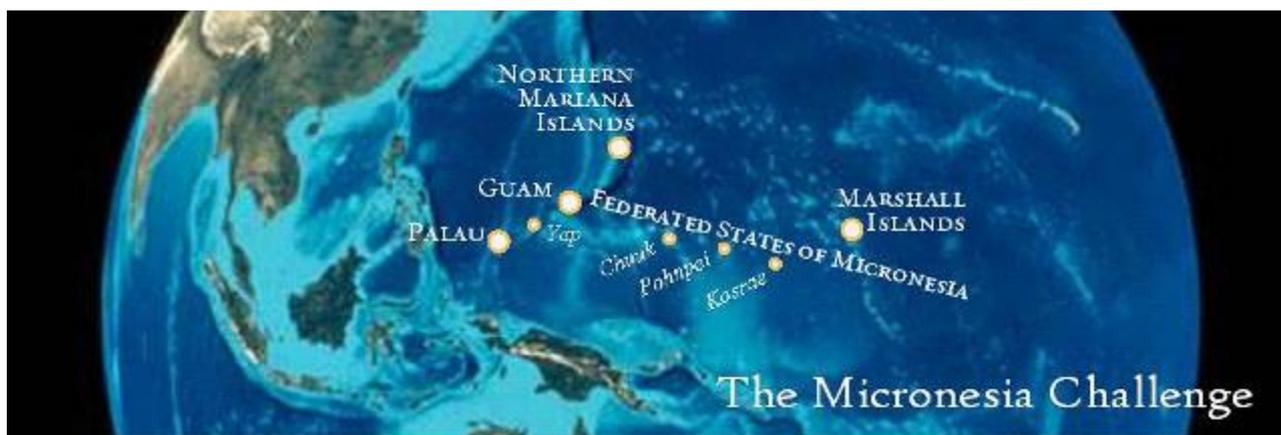
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## Introduction

A vast Pacific seascape nearly the size of the continental United States, Micronesia contains some of Earth's richest variety of plant and animal life. The region's highly diverse marine and terrestrial resources are the natural capital for the local people, who are traditional stewards of their lands and waters.

Due to a rare combination of geographic isolation and biological diversity, Micronesia's islands are exemplary microcosms for conservation, with some habitats and natural communities found nowhere else on Earth. Yet the features that make these islands exceptional also make them especially vulnerable to environmental threats such as deforestation, unsustainable fishing practices, invasive species, and climate change. Half of the species in the world that have become extinct have been island species. Without immediate action, the people of Micronesia face continued degradation of the natural resources on which their culture and livelihoods depend.

To sustain the island biodiversity of Micronesia in order to ensure a healthy future for their people, protect their unique island cultures, and sustain the livelihoods of their island communities, the Chief Executives of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the Republic of Palau, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) launched the Micronesia Challenge.



## The Micronesia Challenge

The Micronesia Challenge is a shared commitment to *effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020*. This ambitious challenge far exceeds current goals set by international conventions and treaties, which call for countries to conserve 10% of terrestrial and marine resources by 2010 and 2012 respectively. The challenge also emphasizes the need for Micronesian leaders to work together at the regional level to confront environmental and sustainable development issues, in a rapidly changing world.

Covering 6.7 million square kilometers of ocean, the Micronesia Challenge represents more than 20% of the Pacific Island region – and 5% of the largest ocean in the world. The Challenge will help protect at least 66 known threatened species, 4% of the global total reef area and over 480 coral species – 60% of all known species of coral. The annual net benefits from coral reefs to the Pacific, in terms of fisheries, tourism, coastal protection and biodiversity, has been estimated at \$2 billion, and approximately \$800 million worth of benefits annually may be distributed across Micronesia. The Micronesia Challenge was signed by each of the five Chief Executives in early 2006 and presented to the international community at a high level event at the

8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP8) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in March 2006 in Brazil.

The announcement of the Micronesia Challenge in 2006 was the culmination of decades of work by Micronesian people and organizations to raise awareness and strengthen the capacity across this region to sustainably manage natural resources and conserve biodiversity.

## **Implementing the Micronesia Challenge**

### *Micronesia Challenge Action Planning Meeting*

To begin the process of implementing the Micronesia Challenge, eighty representatives from the five signatory jurisdictions participated together in the '*Micronesia Challenge Action Plan Meeting*' met in Palau in early December of 2006. This meeting resulted in a comprehensive set of recommendations including:

- The establishment of a Steering Committee, comprised of a focal point from each of the jurisdictions;
- The budgeting for and recruitment of a regional coordinator and support staff;
- The development of an annual report process;
- The development of a regional fundraising strategy in coordination with national strategies for public and private funds to support the Challenge;
- The proposal that the Micronesia Conservation Trust house a single endowment in support of the Challenge; and
- The commitment that each jurisdiction takes the appropriate steps to institutionalize the Challenge, including the engagement of traditional and community leaders.

These recommendations were endorsed by the Chief Executives of Palau, the CNMI and Guam at the 7th Western Micronesia Chief Executives' Summit and the Presidents of the FSM and the RMI at the 7th Micronesian Presidents' Summit.



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### *Governance, Coordinating and Implementing Bodies of the Micronesia Challenge*

## **Micronesia Chief Executives**

The MC is a commitment by the Presidents of the FSM, Palau and the Marshall Islands, and the Governors of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. They jointly discuss the MC's progress every six months during the Micronesia Chief Executives Summit.

## **MC Steering Committee (MCSC)**

Established in early 2007 to oversee the regional coordination and implementation of the MC, the Steering Committee is made up of the five MC Focal Points (designated by the Chief Executives from each of the MC jurisdictions), the Executive Director of the Micronesia Conservation Trust, and the Chairman of the MC Regional Support Team.

## **Micronesia Challenge Regional Office (MCRO)**

In November 2008, the Chief Executives of Micronesia signed an agreement formally establishing the Micronesia Challenge Regional Office and awarding it the full legal status necessary to operate as an official intergovernmental agency. The agreement also gives the office the capacity to function as a semi-autonomous body under the auspices and direction of the MC Steering Committee.

The MC Regional Office also coordinates and contributes to the development, improvement and implementation of the MC Young Champions Interns Program, MC Regional Communications Strategy, MC Regional Monitoring Framework and MC Regional Sustainable Finance Plan.



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## **Micronesia Challenge Regional Support Team (RST)**

Several regional, international, and U.S. Federal agencies and organizations came together after the launch of the MC in 2006 to form the MC Regional Support Team (RST). They joined forces to provide a higher level of support to partners in Micronesia in their efforts to implement the MC. The RST is comprised of many key partners including: The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which currently chairs the group, the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), Conservation International (CI), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional

Environment Programme (SPREP), RARE International, Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC), the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), the Pacific Marine Resources Institute (PMRI), the Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMA) Network, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Environment Protection Agency (USEPA), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and the local conservation NGOs in each island.

## **Micronesia Challenge Communications Working Group (CWG)**

The first MC meeting in December 2006 in Palau brought together jurisdictional representatives from across Micronesia as well as Support Team members to discuss implementation of the MC, including how communications for the MC should be developed. Recommendations from this meeting included:

- Incorporating MC messages into existing programs,
- Hiring a communications specialist,
- Development of communications tools, and
- Formation of a working group to continue to develop a unified message for the MC that could be used regional (detailed in final workshop report.)

Immediately following the 2006 workshop, the Communications Working Group was established with one communications point of contact appointed by each jurisdictional focal point. Since that time, much of the effort of the communications group has been spent on drafting a communications plan that could then be used to advocate for a communications consultant or full-time specialist to support implementation. In June 2008, a subsequent workshop was held in Pohnpei to finalize the MC Communications Plan and move into the implementation phase. The group also discussed the purpose, membership, process, roles and responsibilities to work as a team.

The MC Communications working group recently worked on updating the Micronesia Challenge website (<http://www.micronesiachallenge.org/>) to make it more interactive. In addition to background information, meeting reports, and references, the website now features profiles of the Young Champions, blogs, news updates, and a new web-based series called “Into the Islands” featuring stories about the various aspects of implementing the Micronesia Challenge.

## **Micronesia Challenge Measures Working Group (MWG)**

During the 1<sup>st</sup> Regional Action Planning meeting in 2006, base definitions for the various components of the commitment and broad categories of indicators to track regional progress on achieving the goals of the MC were also developed. In 2008, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Meeting of the Micronesia Challenge included a technical workshop “Moving toward Measuring our Effectiveness: the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the MC Measures Working Group” to continue the discussion on regional indicators. The workshop succeeded in the majority of its objectives including forming a technical working group, identifying overlaps in monitoring approaches, developing a set of shared results chains related to the MC Goals, and developing an initial proposed set of indicators to be collected across all jurisdictions to help measure our collective progress toward achieving the MC. However, it was determined that monitoring the proposed set of indicators would be extremely ambitious and may not be possible for all jurisdictions. As a result, it was recommended that these indicators be further refined and narrowed down to an essential set of indicators that must be monitored in order to measure our collective progress. Identifying and agreeing on this essential set of indicators was the main objective of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MC Measures Workshop in 2010. This workshop allowed jurisdictions to make significant progress in the process of establishing a feasible, realistic regional monitoring protocol and allowed us to create a solid foundation for future collaborative efforts as a firm monitoring framework is created to meet the needs of each jurisdiction and the region as a whole. Three small working groups (i.e.,

Marine Ecology, Socioeconomics and Score Card) were also created and tasked to continue discussions and work out the details via email, or other virtual means, on the respective indicators. Full meeting reports for the above workshops can be found at [www.micronesiachallenge.org](http://www.micronesiachallenge.org).



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The 3<sup>rd</sup> MC Measures Working Group Meeting was recently held in Chuuk, FSM from 27 June-1 July, 2011, and focused on fine-tuning terrestrial measures first discussed in 2008 at the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the MC Measures Working Group. Terrestrial managers from all MC jurisdictions participated. Key outcomes from the meeting included:

- Consensus to keep all the conservation targets (native forests, freshwater system and mangroves) proposed during the first workshop in 2008, except for “birds” which became one of the agreed indicators to be measured across the jurisdictions
- Agreement on a minimum set of regional indicators and methods for measuring them
  - Adoption of US Forest Service Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) method with modification for the monitoring protocol for the native forest and mangroves - the modified method will be developed and agreed upon after consultation with US Forest Service staff during the PIC Foresters meeting to be held in Honolulu late October/early November this year
  - Adoption of the bird monitoring method practiced in Palau by the Belau National Museum for the native forests
  - Adoption of a monitoring method for freshwater systems building upon the existing water quality and quantity monitoring programs currently practiced by agencies across the jurisdictions
- Agreement to wait on further discussion of a set of socio-economic indicators developed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the MC Measures Working Group in 2010, after consulting with socio-economic measures team led by Isao Frank
- Agreement to wait on further refinement of the scorecard, once socio-economic indicators and methods are agreed upon

A full meeting report is currently being finalized and will be available on the Micronesia Challenge website as soon as completed.

### **Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT)**

MCT was formally established in 2002 as a charitable and irrevocable corporation organized to manage and provide funds “to support biodiversity conservation and related sustainable development for the people of Micronesia by providing long term sustained funding.” In 2006, MCT was selected by the five MC jurisdictions to house the MC endowment and has since fully regionalized its Board and organizational structure and services. The Trust adheres to policies and standards set out in its Articles of Incorporation, By-

Laws and Operations Manual, as well as with the terms of the MOUs MCT has executed with each of the MC Jurisdiction Governments.

## **Micronesia Challenge Young Champions Internship Program**

The Micronesia Challenge Internship Program has brought together some of the region's brightest young people in order to:

- build the next generation of conservation leaders in the five MC jurisdictions
- promote the goals of the MC and Protected Areas Networks and increase/expand participation of all relevant entities in the Micronesia region

The MCRO coordinates the program and members of the MCSC and RST also provide support to help the Young Champions gain as much from the internship and to give as much back to the MC as possible. The interns have developed and implemented a variety of innovative projects to help spread the word and increase participation in the MC in each of the jurisdictions including:

- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands: Since the start of the Young Champions Program, CNMI has hosted a total of 5 young champions. CNMI YC Sharisse Rivera created the *Take the Challenge*, activity book featuring the importance of conservation areas for both marine and terrestrial resources. Approximately 3,000 copies of the 24-page booklet have been printed and distributed directly to 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade educators on Saipan, Rota and Tinian. Another project called *I and I: Islands and Issues* is an ongoing environmental podcast series created by CNMI YC Kid Cabrera. Current CNMI YC David Sablan is finalizing a storybook project on the CNMI's endangered species. David has enlisted the help of local wildlife biologists in creating the book. With his book he aims to educate elementary students about the islands endangered wildlife.
- Guam: The current Young Champion is working with households to establish neighborhood rain gardens using native plants to reduce sedimentation impacts in coastal marine ecosystems.
- Palau: A Young Champion worked with the Micronesian Shark Foundation on various projects including Photo I.D. shark clips; and creation of a Shark Comic Activity Book. Another organized tree-plantings and clam restoration efforts as part of a 350 organization global work party to draw attention to climate change impacts. Currently Young Champions are working as interns at the Palau International Coral Reef Center and Palau Conservation Society
- FSM: Currently, there are two Young Champions based in Yap and Chuuk. They have been focusing their efforts on community-based awareness activities, including school presentations and beach clean-ups.
- RMI: Current Young Champions have been working on building local teams to raise awareness on the value of conservation in adapting to climate change impacts.

## **Climate Change Adaptation**

The MC jurisdictions recognized that their first Regional Meeting did not include adequate discussion on the threat of Climate Change and how this will impact the MC. As a result, in 2009 a workshop entitled **“Climate Change and the Micronesia Challenge: Ways forward in Collaboration and Adaptation”**, was held in Majuro, RMI with a focus on Climate Change. This workshop brought together relevant groups of stakeholders from the MC jurisdictions to meet with experts from climate, natural, and social sciences. The common pressing climate-related issues identified by the MC countries include coastal erosion, salt water inundation, threats to corals, periodic extended droughts, and other disasters. These issues are quite pronounced in low-lying and atoll islands, particularly in RMI and FSM. For other volcanic and high islands, although some of these problems are not immediate, the risks of changing climate and the uncertainty of predictions are recognized as hampering development. A range of needs that should be met to

allow for national climate adaptation were identified, including: increasing community awareness and risk perception regarding climate change; identifying immediate livelihood priorities; collecting baseline data that allow for better understanding of climate impacts; increasing technical capacities, augmentation of human resources; and both sustainable funding and methods to plan for climate risks and effectively implement adaptation projects and activities. On the national level, there are needs to mainstream climate issues into national development policies, and to initiate and sustain planning and strategy development in relation to specific climate issues. Finally, there is also a need for coordination among agencies and organizations at both national and local levels in adaptation efforts.



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Sustained communication and coordination across the region are crucial to the success of efforts to cope with climate change at local, national and regional scales. The Micronesia Challenge is seen as an ideal framework for spearheading these efforts. The full meeting report is available at <http://www.micronesiachallenge.org/>.

As a follow-up to this important workshop, the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), working with MC Support Team partners, launched several new tools to support community based climate adaptation in Micronesia. These tools were developed through a collaborative process with community members, resource managers, conservation practitioners, and climate change experts in Micronesia. They reflect local needs to overcome challenges faced in adapting to regional climate change conditions. The *Adapting to a Changing Climate Outreach Toolkit* provides community members and stakeholders with an understanding of climate change concepts and promotes adaptation planning and strategies among community leaders and members. The toolkit has already received both regional and international recognition. MCT has secured funding to begin trainings on these tools in each of the jurisdictions and that we will be working with the MC Focal Points and other partners to carry out these trainings in RMI, FSM, Guam, CNMI and Palau.

## Financing the Micronesia Challenge

One of the first actions that each jurisdiction undertook is the development of sustainable finance plans. These plans identified the funding needed to effectively meet the goals of the MC and key strategies to secure the necessary funding from local and international sources. It is currently estimated that interest income from an endowment of approximately \$55 million will be needed to supplement local sources for the long-term sustainability of the MC in all five jurisdictions.

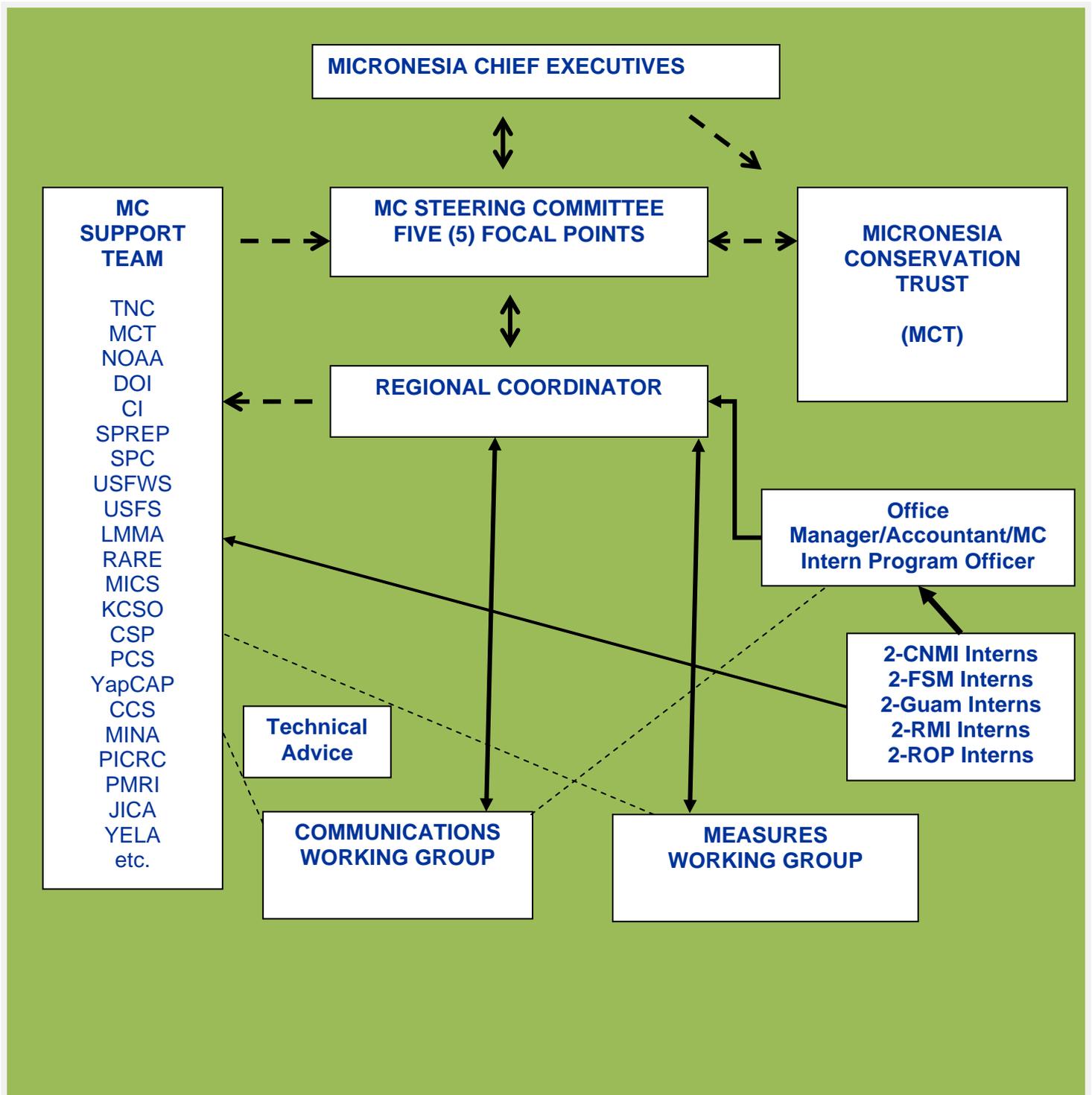
Selected to house the MC endowment by the Chief Executives, MCT provides the financial security and management needed to maximize the return on these funds and provide long-term support to each of the five jurisdictions of the MC. Although the endowment funds are invested together, each jurisdiction has their own sub-account and will develop their own dissemination mechanisms for their interest income. The MC endowment is currently valued at over \$8 million, with additional pledges secured in the amount of \$10

million. The full capitalization of the endowment for the MC will provide a targeted, yet flexible and accessible, source of direct finance for conservation initiatives and projects in each of the jurisdictions, implemented by communities, organizations, agencies and institutions. In the past five years, Guam and CNMI have also raised substantial public funds of nearly \$6 million to support management and monitoring for implementation of the MC. Updates on sustainable finance have been provided for all five jurisdictions and are currently being reviewed.



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# MC Organizational Chart



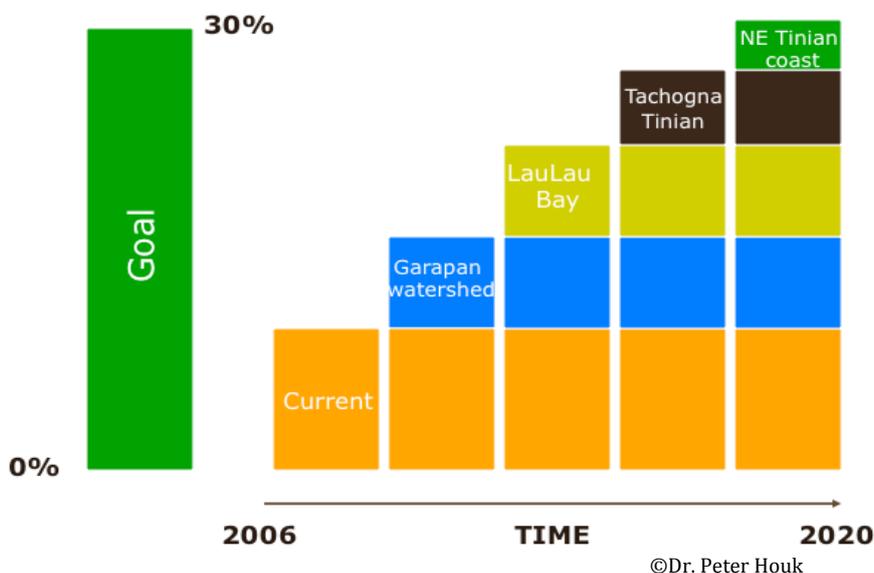
## Jurisdiction Highlights

Each jurisdiction has been designing their own strategies to implement the MC involving partnerships between Government agencies, NGOs and local communities. A tremendous amount has been accomplished in the past five years. Following are some highlights from each jurisdiction.

### *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*

Since the launching of the Micronesia Challenge, the CNMI has been diligently working on their approach to effectively conserve 30% nearshore and 20% terrestrial resources. We have reviewed the current status of our marine and terrestrial resources and the objectives of the Challenge to come up with our approach.

For marine resources, we look at 30% effective conservation of each reef type in the Southern island reefs and the Saipan Lagoon. Current evidence suggests that the Northern Islands comprise a healthy ecosystem, therefore we do not focus upon them for the Challenge. Based on our long-term monitoring data, we have current deficiencies based upon negative trends. In Saipan, 18% is effectively conserved (Laolao Bay and Garapan Lagoon to Tanapag) and in Tinian 15% effectively conserved (San Jose and Northeast Coast Watershed). Therefore, we are taking a watershed-based plan to meet the Challenge, and we have identified priority watersheds to address in order to accomplish our goals. In order to meet our goal, we will need to address 4 major concerns (all aspects; social, legal, financial) in Garapan, Laolao Bay, Tachogna (Tinian); and enhance our understanding of Tinian NE coast watershed.



Laolao Bay has always been a priority site for CNMI, thus on December, 2008, representatives from various resource agencies and organizations came together to complete a conservation action planning (CAP) process for Laolao Bay and to convert it into a management plan for the site. These agencies included: Division of Environmental Quality, Coastal Resource Management Office, Division of Fish and Wildlife, and the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance. This effort was coordinated by the CNMI Coral Reef Initiative and facilitated by The Nature Conservancy – Micronesia Program, and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The group agreed that the purpose of the Conservation Action Planning (CAP) process was mainly to: 1) better understand the priority threats to Laolao Bay, 2) build on the work that has been done there and ensure the additional management activities identified by the group get completed, and 3) coordinate agency efforts to more effectively share resources and improve management including evaluation of performance indicators.



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The group agreed that CNMI should continue to address specific threats or focus areas such as Land Based Sources of Pollution, Impacts from Fishing, Climate Change, Outreach and Education, etc. These four priority areas are encompassed by two larger overarching goals that guide coral reef management efforts in the CNMI. Those are the Micronesia Challenge and the CNMI Coral Reef Program. The CAP provides a framework to guide resource management and conservation in the CNMI. However, the implementation should reflect an ecosystem-based approach based on a comprehensive planning process such as the CAP. The group also recognized that existing agency mandates and efforts could not be redirected. However, they felt that the CAP, within the CNMI LAS process, provides the opportunity to comprehensively address threats in one location through partnerships and combined support from all agencies.

It is recognized that the right technical resources to provide input and support implementation of the CAP exists. To ensure implementation, it has been noted that there needs to be a combination of bottom up and top down efforts. From the bottom up, the group felt it was important to carry out stakeholder outreach activities to help gain support for and participation in management activities. However, it was also recognized there's a need to have buy-in from appropriate agency directors to ensure the CAP was prioritized in both funding and staffing support. Some of the key objectives of the Laolao CAP that would address the Micronesia Challenge included:

- Statistically significant positive trends in the abundance of carnivorous fish, surgeon fish and adult parrot fish by FY2015 compared to baseline
- By the end of FY2015 water turbidity is reduced below 1997 ambient levels by 10%, and by 50% by the end of FY2018, at both Laolao water quality sample sites.
- Statistically significant positive trends in the abundance of the coral density per unit area and mean colony size by FY2015.

- Under normal weather conditions the acreage burned by fires in the Laolao Bay Watershed has been reduced by 50% by the end of FY2010.

The completion of the Laolao Bay CAP was very timely considering the funding opportunities from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). CNMI used the Laolao Bay CAP to compete for funding under ARRA, which resulted in funding awarded in the amount of \$2.3 million to the CNMI to address strategic actions in the CAP. This significantly increased our ability to reach our goals of a watershed-based approach to meet the Challenge in both marine and terrestrial areas. The grant funded a road and drainage improvement project to minimize sediment runoff into Laolao Bay including a revegetation project in the upper watershed, which is another major contributor of sedimentation runoff into the Bay.

### *Marine Resource Summary (Fisheries)*

In 2006 and 2007 the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) developed a framework approach to estimate the conservation benefit of jurisdictional management measures including MPAs, moratoria, regulations, laws and public awareness for the southern islands of Saipan, Tinian, Aguijan and Rota. From that effort we found our marine resources to be somewhere between 22% and 32% effectively conserved which was largely driven by successful restrictions on the use of nets and scuba for harvesting resources.

Over the past four years several factors influencing the effectiveness of our research, laws, regulations and enforcement have evolved thus shifting our conservation benefit estimates. Research has largely improved with an increase in local agency staff, increased Federal presence, more NGO activity, a variety of new surveys, as well as several peer reviewed publications. Enforcement at DFW has improved their equipment and resources since the original estimates were established, but they have seen a reduction in capacity and experience which has reduced the value of this driver. Benefits created by the new National Monument, and a regulation protecting sharks and rays have been balanced against the reduction in MPA size on Tinian. The overturning of the net ban restriction on Rota has decreased management effectiveness, and the potential passing of a bill currently in the CNMI Senate that would allow the use of nets throughout the CNMI would have a considerable impact on effective conservation.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the recent changes within these management drivers are unlikely to move the CNMI too far from the current 22% to 32% estimate for effective conservation if the restriction on net usage remains. An overturning of the net ban would cause these estimates to drop nearly in half, and amount to a huge step backwards in reaching our goal of 30% effective conservation in the CNMI.

### *Terrestrial Resources*

The CNMI will effectively conserve at least 20% of total land area containing priority terrestrial types and as much as possible, distribute the 20% on each island of the Mariana Archipelago giving mangroves special attention. The CNMI priority areas are land areas composed of native forest and/or natural terrestrial communities that have high biodiversity value or provide an especially high level of ecosystem services.



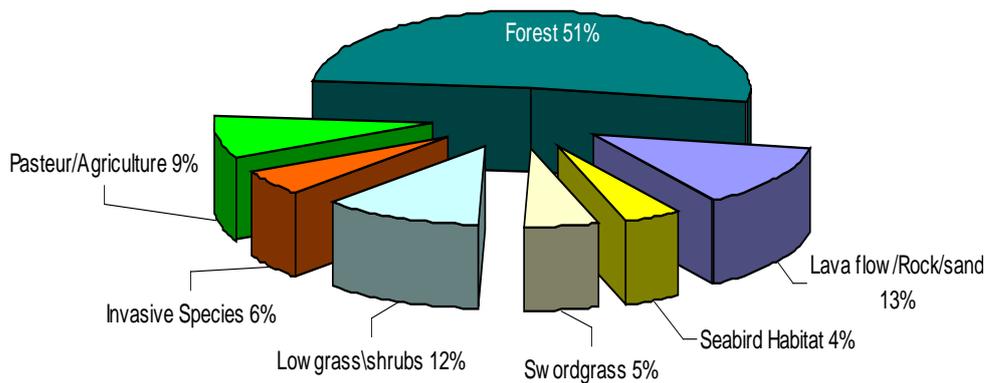
At the start of the Challenge, we have gathered the best and latest information and selected priority terrestrial types to protect, which are wetlands, native limestone forests, mixed introduced forests, agroforests-coconuts, and ravine forests. To achieve our goal, we needed to restore by priority types where it was most ecologically feasible. A coastal and estuarine land conservation plan (CELCP) was developed and submitted to NOAA and has been approved for application for funding.

We are working on creating GIS shapefiles to map priority terrestrial types currently protected in conservation areas. We also recognize the need to determine the percentage of protected priority terrestrial types throughout the archipelago and confirm GIS shapefiles using new imagery or where feasible, by ground-truthing. There is also a possibility of identifying additional areas for conservation purposes.

In 2010 we began to identify areas to increase percentage of effective conservation by ranking effectiveness of protection for each priority type in each conservation area on a scale of 1-3. Identification of conservation areas that need enhancement; and revisiting areas identified for conservation purposes.

Our desire is to create conservation plans for selected areas by evaluating threats, targets, funding, feasibility; and then select high value and/or service areas that can be successfully enhanced or newly protected.

Approximately 25% of terrestrial areas that are in conservation areas could be improved, thus increasing the percent of important terrestrial habitat. Types of terrestrial habitats that could be restored through planting include cropland, other shrub and grass, and savanna complex, especially surrounding wetlands. Another 6% could be enhanced through the removal of invasive plants and feral animals.



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### *Federated States of Micronesia*

The FSM has made substantial progress toward achieving the MC over the past five years and highlights include:

- Pohnpei State recently established four new marine sanctuaries – Ahnd (2010) and Pakin (2011) Atolls, Nanwap MPA in Madolenihmw and Senpehn Lehdau Mangrove reserve – expanding their protected areas network
- FSM’s Forestry Sector’s 2010 State-wide Assessment and Resource Strategies Framework links the MC goals to its biodiversity goal
- FSM was awarded 2 grants (2007 – 2010) from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The GEF funded “Supporting Country Action on the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Programme of Work on Protected Areas” Global Portfolio to support FSM’s National Implementation Supporting Partnership (NISP) Signatories to collectively coordinate the design and management of an effective protected areas network which would contribute to the MC goals
- In 2008, Yap established a Manta Ray Sanctuary protecting important habitat out to 12 miles offshore, an 8,243-square-mile area, comprising 16 main islands and atolls and 145 islets. A conservation action plan (CAP) for the Manta Sanctuary was completed in August 2009.
- MC collaboration was exemplified in the Second National Communication to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change’s Vulnerability and Adaptive (V&A) Assessment where the V&A was carried out by NISP Signatories, their local partners and Guam Coastal Management Program partner in key FSM outlying atolls/islands in 2010
- In 2009, the community of Ngulu Atoll inYap established a 112 square kilometer Marine Managed Area (roughly 70% of their lagoon) to recover and maintain the resilience and integrity of their marine ecosystems.

- Nimpal Marine Conservation Area (MCA) in Yap was endorsed by Council of Pilung in 2008 and the Nimpal MCA finalized its site conservation action plan (CAP) in 2010



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- Polle Channel was declared by Tol Paramount Chief as *mechen* (marine sanctuary) area in 2009
- Chuuk State completed its marine rapid ecological assessment (REA) in 2008 thus concluding the FSM-wide marine REA; Pohnpei in 2005, Kosrae in 2006 and Yap in 2007
- SPC-FSM Joint Country Strategy Plan: 2008 - 2012 incorporates and/or highlights the MC goals within the relevant sectoral strategic goals
- Epinup Community in Chuuk developed its site conservation action plan in 2007
- Utwe-Walung Community in Kosrae developed its site conservation action plan in 2006
- Organizations developed and/or facilitated the development of organizational strategic action plans
- Yela Environmental Landowners Association (YELA) initiated the proceedings to lead to the development of a 150-hectare conservation easement of one of the last stands of endemic Ka trees in Kosrae State. Once finalized, the easement will be the first of its kind in Micronesia
- To determine their progress toward meeting their MC goals of effective conservation of at least 20% terrestrial and 30% near-shore marine resources, FSM partners worked with TNC to conduct a gap assessment of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, including two nation-wide workshops and several state site visits. The assessment has been built in three sequential phases. Phase 1 involved determining the coverage of current protected areas (Marine 6.4% / Terrestrial 14.6%). In phase 2, analyses were completed to determine what additional conservation features were captured by Areas of Biological Significance (ABS) as suggested in the FSM Blueprint, which were based largely on expert opinion, and priority areas to implement conservation actions were identified. In phase 3 we have been using the systematic conservation planning tool called Marxan to provide guidance for states to reach their goals, as well as the overall MC goals. The entire process has involved consultation with relevant stakeholders in each of the four states and the national government.
- CSP in partnership with state, Sokehs municipal, FSM R&D and SPC completed a EBFMP strategic action plan for Pakin
- Pohnpei State government successfully established new Fish and Wildlife division under public safety department for effective enforcement, and passed fish size regulation, scuba banning, mangrove crab size limit, lobster size limit and net mesh size limit

- Pohnpei with OFA in the lead completed an island wide fishers awareness consultations for issues and threats facing our fisheries as way forward for comprehensive fisheries management action strategy development
- Pohnpei successfully regained momentum to demarcate and delineate Sokehs 3.3 watershed boundary line. Partnership MOU established and signed and implementation contract with Pacific survey company signed for full implementation
- Reformed Pohnpei Invasive Species Taskforce to iSTOP for effective invasive management in Pohnpei
- PRMC formalized by executive order signed by Governor Ehsa as a legally recognized high level advisory group to state regarding resource management issues
- Effectively facilitated a Pohnpei state watershed summit with state high level participation, local chief executives, high level traditional leaders, NGOs and CCOs paving way for formation of a watershed partnership alliance for Pohnpei state.



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- Completed a final draft CAP action strategy for Nett Municipal government focusing on ridge to reef management in Nett.
- Completed the 8<sup>th</sup>. Annual MPA Cross site Visit and learning Exchange of all MPA sites island wide in Pakin July 13-15. Outstanding turn out and achievements happening at sites everywhere in the LMMA network. Celebrated 10<sup>th</sup>. year of LMMA membership in Pohnpei.
- Established FSM GIS Spatial Data Clearinghouse for the FSM as biodiversity spatial data repository. This initiative can be linked at: [www.geomicronesia.org](http://www.geomicronesia.org). Good start and plenty room for improvement with this effort.

## *Guam*

Since the inception of the Micronesia Challenge, Guam has been working to meet the goals of the MC. Guam's Micronesia Strategy was recently updated to ensure that it reflects the need to effectively conserve our resources for future generations while balancing the needs of the community. One of the major changes from the original strategy and the updated strategy is the removal of increasing of marine conservation areas. The Guam MC strategy does not support any additional marine conservation areas or MPAs. A watershed management approach is being implemented to address the goals of MC. The Guam Territorial Seashore

Park will be an area of focus for watershed management and forest improvements. Guam is at a critical and unique point with regard to ecological conservation efforts. The proposed build-up and the associated potential for increased use of terrestrial and marine resources, recreational, and housing demands of the incoming people will have significant direct and indirect social, economic, and environmental impacts. Supporting responsible development and ensuring effective management of Guam’s natural resources under the framework of the Micronesia Challenge will help protect Guam’s environment, especially in the context of the impending DoD build-up.



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*Terrestrial*

Currently, approximately 22.12% of Guam’s terrestrial resources are placed within conservation areas (See Table 1 below). These areas include Government of Guam conservation areas (Cotal, Bolanos, and Anao) and U.S. Federally designated conservation areas including the War in the Pacific National Historic Park, Haputo and Orote Ecological Reserve Areas, and the areas that are part of the Guam National Wildlife Refuge Overlay. Although on paper, Guam has reached the goal of 20% for terrestrial resources, these areas are not yet under effective conservation and may be considered for development to support the DoD expansion.. Strategies to strengthen and expand terrestrial resource protection include conservation improvements of recreational parks, restoration of native flora and fauna, watershed planning, conservation easements, and incorporation of green infrastructure in developed areas.

Micronesia Challenge - Current Status of Managed Terrestrial Areas in Guam

	<b>Managed Areas</b>	<b>Area (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>% Total</b>
<b>Government of Guam Lands</b>	Anao	3.1	0.5535714
	Bolanos	11.6	2.0714286
	Cotal	2.7	0.4821429
	Parks and Recreation Lands	unknown	--
<b>Federal Lands</b>	GNWR Overlay	99.9	17.839286
	Ecological Reserve Areas	0.8	0.1428571
	War in the Pacific NHP	4.18	0.7464286
	Guam National Wildlife Refuge	1.58	0.2821429
	<b>Total</b>	<b>123.86</b>	<b>22.117857</b>

Guam has been working on reforestation of two major areas; Cetti Bay and Masso Reservoir. Approximately 500 acres have been reforested in an effort to improve native forest and reduce sedimentation in nearby coastal waters. In addition Conservation Action Plans (CAP) and Watershed Management Plans are being developed for Piti/Asan and Manell/Geus watersheds. Working with the Department of Agriculture, a comprehensive plan to restore Guam's native species is being developed for the Government of Guam's properties listed as conservation areas. Presently, the Department is working with the Guam Legislature to strengthen the legal status of Government conservation lands and put them under the control of the Department of Agriculture. Guam is also working to identifying conservation lands that need restoration. As part of the drafted North and Central Land Use Plan, conservation easements have been identified and indentified as a goal of the plan. To ensure the successful reforestation efforts, a social marketing campaign has been implemented to reduce forest fires and gain community support for reducing incidence of fires and increase the reporting of arson. The campaign includes the education of how sedimentation from exposed upland areas are negatively impacting to coral reefs. The campaign also provides alternative methods hunters can test for attracting of deer. Guam is also working on developing comprehensive forest conservation plans to include planting of native trees and plants, the establishment of conservation easement and the reduction of treats such as ungulate control and arson for the protection of terrestrial ecosystems. Working with the NGO community, Guam will start a community initiative for the removal of invasive species. The removal is essential for the continued success of native forest. This is critical in Guam's MC strategy.



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### *Marine*

Currently, approximately 15.45% of Guam's near shore marine resources are under protection (See Table 2 below). This includes Guam's marine preserves: Tumon Bay, Piti Bomb Holes, Sasa Bay, Achang Reef Flat, and Pati Point (Figure ); and federal properties including: Haputo and Orote Ecological Reserve Areas, the War in the Pacific National Historic Park, and the National Wildlife Refuge at Ritidian Point. The preserves were established in 1997 in response to decreasing reef fish stocks, but were not fully enforced until 2001. Fishing activity is restricted in the preserves with limited cultural take permitted in three of the five areas. In 2004, a law was passed creating a MP eco-permit to regulate non-fishing activity. A law was passed in 2006 to clarify existing regulations and restrict non-fishing activities within the marine preserves. This law has not yet been implemented, but it is part of this strategy to implement the law and gain approval of the rules and regulations for non-fishing activities. In addition, the Department of Agriculture recently completed a study on the Limits of Acceptable Change for the Tumon and Piti Bomb Holes MPAs (identified under the

Marine Objective, bullet five below). This was a highly participatory process involving key stakeholders and was well-received by members of the recreational community. The results of the study will be used in finalizing the rules and regulations of the eco-permit for non-fishing activities. To reach the goal of 30%, placement of the additional 14.55% of near-shore marine resources under effective conservation in Guam will require a variety of strategies, including enhanced watershed management, infrastructure improvements and improving effective management of existing MPAs.

Micronesia Challenge - Current Status: Managed Nearshore Marine Areas in Guam

	Managed Areas	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	% Total
<b>Government of Guam Areas</b>	Achang Reef Flat MP	4.85	1.76
	Sasa Bay MP	3.12	1.13
	Piti Bomb Holes MP	3.63	1.32
	Tumon Bay MP	4.52	1.64
	Pati Point MP	20	7.25
<b>Federal Areas</b>	Ecological Reserve Areas	1.24	0.45
	War in the Pacific NHP*	3.64	1.32
	Guam National Wildlife Refuge	1.63	0.59
<b>Total</b>		<b>42.63</b>	<b>15.45</b>

\* This is a preliminary figure it may change based on the definition of nearshore marine. MPAs include 10m above mean high tide, the other areas only include areas seaward of the shoreline.

\*\*This figure does not include area that overlaps with the Piti Preserve (approx. 0.36 km<sup>2</sup>).

It is clear that the people of Guam are not in favor of establishing additional MPAs. In light of this, Guam’s strategy focuses on effectively conserving marine resources by reducing pollutants, including sediment, into Guam’s coastal waters in order to enhance the habitat and health of coral reef ecosystems. By supporting increased implementation of best management practices and measures, watershed management and reforestation projects, we hope to improve the health of coral and other marine resources in order to achieve the 30% target. To strengthen MPA compliance and enforcement, additional conservation officers are being hired and trained. Within the next year, Guam will be able to hire three conservation offices. Recently, the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process was completed by the Guam Department of Agriculture. These studies identified areas within the Piti Bomb Hole Preserve and the Tumon Bay Marine Preserve where recreational and nonfishing activities are most appropriate. In addition, Guam has supported research with the University of Guam Marine Lab related to life cycle of critical fish species, coral disease, impacts from sedimentation and effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas. To address impacts to marine resources related to increase construction activities, Guam is working with the Guam Environmental Protection Agency, the Guam Contractor Association and the community of developers to identify areas for infrastructure improvements, identify areas where storm water drainage and roads needs improvement are critical and to educate the community of best management measures for managing stormwater. Guam has also begun implementation of a long-term marine monitoring program to include a variety of parameters in coastal and marine ecosystems.

*Sustainable Finance*

Guam is also reviewing the sustainable financing plan and will be working with the Guam Visitors Bureau, the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Guam Hotel and Restaurant Association to look at user fees for some of Guam’s diving sites. The fees will assist with the improvement of the marine resources.

## *Marshall Islands*

In 2007, the OEPPC was named as the Focal Point for the Micronesia Challenge and is currently a member of the MC Sub regional Steering Committee. For RMI, the MC provides benefits for the following reasons:

- Reaffirms our global commitments under the UNCBD and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (UNFCCC, MDGs, etc),
- Provided an opportunity to leverage additional funding
- Enhances partnerships within the Micronesian sub-region and donor partners.
- Provides added opportunities for advancing conservation efforts in the RMI



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However, it should be noted that a number of national initiatives had already been under implementation before the MC was officially launched. In many aspects, the RMI has shown much leadership in linking the MC with its own national initiatives and priorities primarily because there was an early recognition of the need to establish a mechanism for various agencies and offices to coordinate on issues that were of common interest. It is the view of the national offices involved in conservation initiatives in the RMI that strengthening existing national efforts in conservation will translate into achieving our commitments under the MC and other related regional and global efforts. There are a number of initiatives contributing to the conservation efforts carried out in the RMI.

### *Preparation of Sustainable Financing Proposal for GEF Financial Support (National/Regional Effort)*

The Nature Conservancy has assisted the RMI in completion of its 2nd iteration of the sustainable financial plan for the MC. With assistance from MC partners, the RMI has recently secured \$1.68 million from the Global Environment Facility and 200,000k from MIMRA. With only \$115,000 shortfall for RMI to meet its match under 2 to 1 from CI pledges for the endowment. Originally, the GEF Project proposal outlined 1.8 million commitment from the GEF and the request for allocation commitment from the RMI GEF OFP was 2 million. However, RMI was verbally informed June 10 that 10% fees for UNEP and global economic slowdown resulted in the reduction of GEF approved funds from 1.8 Million to 1.68 Million. The RMI will be seeking sources of funding to meet its matching for the MC endowment to meet the remaining balance of approximately USD \$100,000.

*National Conservation Area Plan for the Marshall Islands Reimaanlok-Looking to the Future* Reimaanlok builds on the strategic priorities identified by the RMI National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and provides the guiding principles to assist with National implementation efforts for the Micronesia Challenge. The plan is country driven and based on national priorities:

- It includes the use of GIS for planning & conservation purposes. Specifically acts as a central repository for all spatial biodiversity and resource management information.
- It includes guidelines for collection of local and traditional knowledge and processes for community based fisheries and resource management planning
- It is intended to provide guidance for conservation activities in the Marshall Islands for the next 5 years-reviewed annually and revisited at the end of 5 years.
- It was developed It recognizes the uniqueness of the RMI, it's people and their strong culture tied to their resources and further develops the principles, process and guidelines for design, establishment and management of conservation areas that are fully owned, led and endorsed by local communities based on their needs, values and cultural heritage;
- Links to the MC and CBD by identifying both terrestrial and marine targets to be under effective management
- MIMRA is currently taking the lead in the implementation plan for the Conservation Area Plan with collaboration from partners

#### *Fisheries Management Plans*

- Ailuk Fisheries Management Plan - The Ailuk Atoll Local Government has already endorsed its fisheries management plan in 2007 and has carried out a series of extensive assessments in biological, ecological, and socio-economic monitoring activities in relation to the terrestrial and marine resources and environment. Conservation areas established include:
  - Sanctuary area-no take zones
  - Semi subsistence fishing, subsistence fishing and recreationalThe implementation activities are monitored and enforced by the Ailuk Fisheries Advisory Committee comprising of women, men, and youth's group and one fisheries and environmental Officer.
- Arno Atoll –fisheries Management Plan - Arno Fisheries Management plan has been endorsed both by the local and national governments. The current activities include the following:
  - Biological surveys - Identification for zoning of 21 marine protected areas for conservation purposes in 11 island communities
  - Securing framework for monitoring of MPAs
- Likiep Fisheries Management Plan - A Fisheries management plan has been approved by both local government and MIMRA. Implementation of plan is progressive due to almost nil funds. However, a number of activities on-going. The local communities through the Local Government have received approval for funding to participate in a fisheries community project under the GEF-SGP programme. (see below upcoming activities).

#### *RMI Coral Reef Survey/Monitoring Project*

On-going survey activities in Majuro Lagoon and extending to other islands in collaboration with the College of the Marshall Islands

#### *RMI Coastal Zone Management Framework*

The RMI has completed its first Coastal Zone Management Framework. The document has been approved by the RMIEPA Board of Directors in 2007 and been endorsed by the Cabinet yearly this year. With this new framework, the RMIEPA has started asking construction companies to start looking for alternative and

sustainable methods of aggregates to replace dredging of the reefs through dynamites. In fact, a few contractors have already started looking at investing in suction dredging as well as obtaining offshore aggregates and sand from neighboring Pacific Countries with affordable costs.



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*Additional Conservation, Monitoring and Climate Change Community Activities Relating to the MC:*

Community projects have also been initiated since their approval for GEF-SGP funding starting in 2008 as outlined below. These are conservation, land management/monitoring activities relating to climate change which address the Micronesia Challenge in the Outer Islands with some funding assistance through the Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP) which is administered by a national Committee comprised of: OEPPC, NTC, MIVA, CMI, USP, MOFA, Chamber of Commerce, and Two Reps of Iroij/Senator Mike Kabua from Ebeye. These Projects are as follows:

Table GEF-SGP/NZAID Programme

#	Partner Name	Time frame
1	Mejit Diyo im Ukoj Club “The negative effects of climate change”	March 2008-2011
2	Namdrik Pearl Farming Project	Jan 2008-2011
3	Utrik Atoll Agroforestry and Replanting Project	March 2009- Sept 2011
4	Likiep Fisheries Monitoring Project	2009- 2011
5	Kili Island “Land Management for Food Security	Sept 2008-Sept 2010
6		Sept 2008- Sept 2010
7		Expected for 2009-2011
8	Ebje Island Pilot Climate Change Mitigation thru Renewable Energy Project	2010-2012
9	Airok Growers replanting Project	Expected for 2010-2013
10	Kwajalein Lijorjor SLM Project	Expected 2011-20013

*National Efforts relating to Invasive Species (Under the Umbrella of MC)*

Marshall Islands Invasive Species Strategic Action Plan 2008-2011 - The Marshall Islands has completed a draft Invasive Species Strategic Action Plan which is expected to be finalized and forwarded to Cabinet early 2009. The Plan identifies four thematic areas of concern for invasive species for short and long term management in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. These concerns include: Education, Public Awareness and Research, Funding and Resources, Prioritization, Planning and Collaboration, and Legislation. The Marshall Islands Invasive Species Action Plan provides an implementation framework for the Actions

identified as a priority in the RMI-National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan, Reimaanlok and other related plans.

#### *Work relating to Marine Pollution, Waste Management and Monitoring*

- RMI Marine Spills Strategic Action Plan - In October of 2007, a national workshop was coordinated by the OEPPC with national stakeholders including: Chief Secretary, Ministry of Transportation and Commerce, MPW, NTA, RMIEPA, Mobil, PII, Ports Authority, MIMRA, MR&D, Shipping Corporation, local governments, Chamber of Commerce, Air Marshall Islands, MIVA, MOFA, MOH, IA and others. The Spills Plan was expected to be finalized in December 2010. However, due to shortage of financial and human resources, the progress has been delayed slightly to be incorporated in 2011 work plans. Additionally, almost all Implementing Agencies have endorsed the plan, pending one. The importance of such a plan to the MC efforts is significant since conservation efforts maybe meaningless when pollution and oil spills play a crucial role in the health of species. Once a Strategy is completed, its implementation is expected to be handled by the RMIEPA.
- National Waste Strategy - In August 2008, a National Workshop was held to initiate the planning process for a National Waste Strategy. The Workshop was co-organized by the Majuro Waste Corp., MICS, RMIEPA and OEPPC with representation from local governments and traditional leadership in the RMI. A smaller drafting committee has been established to compile the outcomes of the workshop and to finalize the strategy.

#### *Energy Efforts*

- Renewable Energy (Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Livelihood): The RMI has an Energy Policy which supports renewable energy and climate change mitigation, the Energy Task Force has prioritized updating the current policy to provide a comprehensive picture of Energy priorities in the RMI along with an Action Plan to guide implementation of those priorities. The mandate for Energy Planning activities rests with the Ministry R&D in collaboration with the RMI Energy Task Force headed by the Chief Secretary, EPPSO, OEPPC, MEC, Mobil and the AG's Office and others. There are two primary objectives of Renewable Energy activities in the RMI:
  - Climate Change Mitigation through promotion of Renewable Energy
  - Sustainable Livelihoods for the communitiesWith these objectives, activities for the electrification of the outer island are on-going with some constraints, including delays in equipment delivery from the EU. Electrification priorities are for schools, community centers, fisheries centers and households and they have to pay an installation and maintenance fee but the investment is considerably smaller than using fossil fuel. Funding of the outer island projects courtesy of: ROC EU and now the GEF through the ADMIRE Project (GEF funding starting in June 2008-2012 to compliment on-going electrification of the OI).
- Energy Conservation and Emissions Mitigation - The MR&D and the ETF have launched an energy efficient campaign through and ADB supported TA including with the assistance of the RMI/GEF-UNDP ADMIRE Project through radio and a number of communications campaign such as school awareness, demonstration science camp carried out in collaboration with USP in 2010 and an energy fair which involved communities. Further, funding for a study on GHG Emissions has been secured for work to be carried out in the second quarter of 2011 to be handled by the OEPPC in collaboration with the Implementing Ministries and Agencies.

#### *Vulnerability and Adaptation*

Funding and technical assistance has been secured for training on the CLIMsystem software to be carried out late 2010 to early 2011. Implementing Partners will be invited to the training. A state of the vulnerability of the environment report will also begin 2011 March to July on at least four sectors including: Water, Health, weather, agriculture, and socioeconomic status. A draft report is expected April/May 2011.

### *Disaster Risk Management*

A Disaster Risk Management Plan has been prepared and approved in 2009 by the Cabinet of the Marshall Islands. The Implementation of the DRM Plan is coordinated by the Chief Secretary's Office in collaboration with the Planning and Implementing Ministries and Agencies. It is also intended to coordinate with the Local Governments as a Framework for local actions on preparedness and Disaster Risk Management. The DRM is a result of a two year series of consultations and workshops carried out by SOPAC and the Chief Secretary's Office with the assistance of the Director OEPPC, GM RMIEPA, Police Commissioner's Office, Director Weather Station, Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Deputy Chief Secretary.

### *Sustainable Land Management*

Activities pertaining to sustainable land management include inter alia: agroforestry and Food Security/Planting and/or replanting, Coastal management and monitoring and waste management. In 2008, the Cabinet approved the Coastal Management Framework which was developed by the Coastal Advisor RMIEPA in 2006/2007 and endorsed by the Chairman and Board of Directors early 2007. This framework is intended to assist RMI move towards improved land management activities such as dredging. As well, the MR&D has been focusing on training of staff and the communities for a number of years now on replanting and planting of food crops including alternate types for adaptation to climate change and improved food security. The trainings also include alternate methodology for better land management and pesticide control. The OEPPC through the RMI SLM Project has supported a trainer for MR&D since its inception in 2009 with a contribution of approximately \$30,000. It is intended to also support a gender workshop in collaboration with WUTMI, RMI Gov Implementing Agencies, MICS and the Ministry of Internal Affairs the following year for early 2011 as well as secure the usage of funds for the improvement of MR&D sites. The OEPPC will also support the implementation of the Coastal Framework through the RMIEPA. The work on SLM is related to the implementation of the DRM Plan and the protection of coastal areas and is an important tool to address the negative effects of climate change and the economic aspects due to impacts.

### *Climate Change Policy and Action Plan*

The Climate Change Policy preparation dates were scheduled for early 2010. However, due to shortage of funds and technical assistance, the schedule was changed to cover all of 2010 to be carried out over a period of at least 6 months. This decision was made by the NC3 as a recommended advice and option to the Cabinet to ensure the development of the policy is done properly. The Scheduling was agreed for April 2010-January 2011 to take into account consultations, research, securing of financial assistance for workshops and technical assistance of the regional CROP agencies. A National Climate Change Committee (NC3) was established by the Cabinet in early 2010 to oversee the process of preparedness and completion. The work is being coordinated by the OEPPC in collaboration with the NC3. The Policy will provide an overarching framework for strategic goals relating to issues inter alia, Water, Energy, food security, land management and sustainable financing. It will build on existing and ongoing strategies, national plans and current efforts towards meeting national plans.

## *Palau*

Palau has made substantial progress toward achieving the MC over the past five years and highlights include:

- Palau passed legislation establishing a "green fee" of \$15 to support the Palau Protected Areas Network (PAN), which is paid by all visitors upon their departure, bringing in a total of over \$1.3M in "Green Fees" since inception of the program in November 2009. These funds will go toward community-managed PAN sites
- Members of the PAN Fund Board have recently been approved

- In 2009, Palau established a nationwide Shark Sanctuary becoming the first nation in the world to protect sharks in their entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), a total area of 240,000 square miles.
- There are currently 6 PAN sites: Ebiil, Ngarchelong; Olsolkesol, Ngjwal; Ongedechuul SCA, Ngardmau; Ngardok Nature Reserve, Melekeok; Mesekelat, Ngchesar; Helen Reef; and 4 upcoming sites: Rock Islands (Exact Area TBD); Ngerderrar, Aimeliik; Kerradel Network, Ngaraard; Ngelukes, Ngchesar



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- For both marine and terrestrial PAN sites to be “sustainably managed”, as called for in the PAN law as well as MC, Palau has moved to established monitoring protocols for the purpose of identifying sustainable management practices including:
  - Agreement on Marine Indicators--agreed to a Marine Measures meeting in 2010. Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) is now field testing the methods at pilot sites and hope to have a monitoring protocol that would be adopted by Palau's Protected Areas Network.
  - Agreement on Terrestrial Indicators--agreed to at a Terrestrial Measures meeting in Chuuk in 2011. Methods still needs to be developed based on the US Forest Service's Forest Inventory Assessment (FIA). Palau Forestry will work with Forest Service in conjunction with counterparts in the other MC jurisdictions to make modifications.
  - Conservation Effectiveness Scorecard--developed at the Marine Measures meeting in 2010. Palau has applied this score card to current PAN sites and to potential new sites in 2011.
- The Palau Conservation Society (PCS) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) worked with a number of states on Babeldaob to develop the Babeldaob Watershed Alliance (BWA) in 2006. The BWA unifies communities, traditional leaders, and state governments to collectively manage and protect their upland forest watersheds. The BWA has already been responsible for getting key priority sites designated as formal protected areas and submitting them for incorporation into the national Palau Protected Areas Network, thereby contributing to the goals of the Micronesia Challenge.
- Palau National Government is housing the MC Regional Office
- In collaboration with PEACE org. the PAN office is developing a “PAN Communications Strategy”

- The Palau government proposed a creation of a “Division of PAN” within the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment & Tourism to include water and terrestrial sections
- A rapid ecological assessment (REA) was conducted for the Northern Reefs in May 2009, and information from the REA is being incorporated in a management plan for the area. The Ebil Channel Management Plan, a component of the Northern Reef was approved in 2009.
- Palau Bureau of Marine Resources, PICRC/JICA Capacity Enhancement Project for Coral Reef Monitoring, and Palau Conservation Society (PCS), and TNC co-hosted a Micronesia coastal fisheries workshop in early 2011. The workshop brought in participants representing fisheries agencies, NGOs, and fishermen from all MC jurisdictions. The focus of the workshop was to define approaches to implementing an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. As a result of the workshop, fisheries agencies staff recognized that they have the mandate within their jurisdictions to implement an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAF), but that they need to collaborate more with NGO, fishermen, and other relevant resource agencies.



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- Palau completed several activities to work toward integration of EAF, including incorporation of the results from a recently completed assessment of the Bureau of Marine Resource (BMR) program to determine alignment with existing mandates, conducted by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in April 2011; hosting a fishermen forum to identify fishermen concerns and areas to collaborate, in May 2011, and meeting with all relevant stakeholders to roll out a new strategic direction for BMR incorporating recommendations from both the assessment and results of the fishermen forum.
- Aimeliik State, Ngchesar State, and Ngaraard State are currently undergoing management planning with PCS, Ngiwal State in Palau is one of 6 PAN sites that has received FY10 funding (\$50,000) from green fee to implement activities in their management plan
- TNC assisted Ngatpang State to complete a conservation action plan (CAP) in July 2010, in which sedimentation was identified as a high priority threat. Ngatpang joined the Babeldaob Watershed Alliance (BWA) and is now working with the adjacent States of Aimeliik and Ngeremlengui to implement measures to reduce soil erosion as well as to coordinate their policies on harvesting of marine resources in Ngermeduu Bay
- In April 2011, PICRC and TNC co-hosted a meeting of experts in the field of ocean acidification research to identify critical research needs to support adaptive management efforts. The group also agreed to develop a joint proposal to conduct pilot research in Palau to try and address this critical climate change impact for replication in the region and perhaps globally.

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## List of Acronyms

**CAPs** – conservation action plans  
**CI** – Conservation International  
**CNMI** – U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
**DOI-OIA** – U.S. Department of the Interior - Office of Insular Affairs  
**FSM** – Federated States of Micronesia  
**GLISPA** – Global Island Partnership  
**JICA** – Japan International Cooperation Agency  
**KCSO** – Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization  
**LMMA** - Locally Managed Marine Areas  
**MC** – Micronesia Challenge  
**MCSC** – Micronesia Challenge Steering Committee  
**MCRO** – Micronesia Challenge Regional Office  
**MCT** – Micronesia Conservation Trust  
**MIC** – Micronesians in Island Conservation leadership network.  
**NOAA** – U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
**PAN** – Protected Areas Network  
**PICRC** – Palau International Coral Reef Center  
**PIF** – Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat  
**PIMPAC** – Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community  
**PMRI** – Pacific Marine Resources Institute  
**RMI** – Republic of the Marshall Islands  
**RST** – MC Regional Support Team  
**SPC** – Secretariat of the Pacific Community  
**SPREP** – Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme  
**TNC** – The Nature Conservancy  
**UNEP** – United Nations Environment Programme  
**USEPA** – U.S. Environment Protection Agency  
**USFWS** – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
**USFS** – U.S. Forest Service  
**YapCAP** – Yap Community Action Program  
**YELA** – Yela Environment Landowners Association