

Strategic Plan for the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration

An Archipelago-wide Approach to Management and Conservation

**As Adopted at the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration Meeting
November 7th-8th, 2011
Apia, Samoa**

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INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan for the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration (Strategic Plan) articulates a set of strategic management priorities for the shared natural ecosystems of the Samoan archipelago. This document guides the actions of the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration (Two Samoas) to direct future investments in activities that both jurisdictions agree will be beneficial to the Samoan archipelago. Future actions and investments will be designed in consideration of cross-boundary cooperation, and should fall under the Goals and Objectives outlined in this document.

The Goals and Objectives presented in this Strategic Plan are based upon the input of government officials and managers from Samoa and American Samoa through a series of meetings over the past three years. Technical staff from Samoa and American Samoa prioritized over 50 different environmental issues, which were developed into four of the five Goals listed in this Strategic Plan through consultations with staff. The first Goal, “Build a regional partnership between the Two Samoas for improved archipelago-wide environmental management” reflects the overarching purpose of the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration.

This Strategic Plan serves as a guide for future funding opportunities and investments of the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration. The development of a joint approach to protecting the fragile environments of the Samoan archipelago marks the first collaboration amongst two NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) areas of interest: one within the International Program and the other under the US Domestic, Territory program. Following the formal adoption of this Strategic Plan, the Two Samoas will secure funding to support a full-time Two Samoas Coordinator, who will be responsible for guiding future Two Samoas actions under the agreed upon Strategic Plan, and to ensure continued momentum of the effort. The US Coral Reef Task Force is officially in the process of recognizing the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration as an active body of coral reef management in the Southwest Pacific Region.

BACKGROUND

The Samoan people have depended on the marine and terrestrial resources of their islands for almost three thousand years and continue to do so today. The connection at the land/sea interface is inherent at any location, but particularly in the Samoan archipelago where the natural topographic relief of these steeply sided volcanic islands lends an intimate relationship between the two nations’ people and natural resources. Environmental managers cannot work in one area without considering the other. The Two Samoas proposes to address shared environmental concerns simultaneously and collaboratively.

TWO SAMOAS ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATION

Although political boundaries separate the Samoan Archipelago into the two jurisdictions of American Samoa and Samoa, drifting larvae, migrating species, and circulating currents traverse across these anthropogenic boundaries. Recognizing this interconnectedness, the Prime Minister of Samoa and Governor of American Samoa proclaimed the Two Samoas Environmental Collaborative in 2007 to develop an archipelago-wide cooperative ethos of natural resources conservation.

The Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration is a program established between environmental organizations in Samoa and American Samoa to collaborate effectively on shared environmental concerns. Leaders of these two jurisdictions called for an annual forum to discuss environmental issues, along with the creation of an archipelago-wide Marine Protected Area Network; sharing knowledge on US Coral Reef Task Force activities, Coastal Management Programs and National Parks; and the development of compatible regulations for the protection of certain marine species.

OPERATIONS STRUCTURE

During the November 2010 meeting of the Two Samoas in Apia, Samoa (through a signed Memorandum of Understanding) “parties acknowledge(d) that the establishment of a Two Samoas Secretariat with a Steering Committee to work on enhancing and organizing the collaboration for the two parties is in the best interest of both parties.” Nominations of the Steering Committee were suggested during the January 2011 meeting in Utulei as Directors of the four American Samoa CRAG agencies (ASCC, DMWR, DoC, and ASEPA) and the CEOs of the Samoan agencies (MAF and MNRE).

At the time of writing, the Two Samoas was in the midst of establishing a Two Samoas Secretariat/Coordinator Position. During the interim, the Points of Contact (PoCs) of the Two Samoas has been identified as the Coral Reef Initiative Coordinator in American Samoa and the ACEO of MNRE in Samoa. As PoCs, the two communicate on a regular basis to represent the consensus of their respective jurisdiction and ensure the progress of action item.

Samoa: Placeholder for Samoa’s Governance structure (specifically those of MNRE and MAF).

American Samoa: The American Samoa Governor’s Coral Reef Advisory Group (CRAG) is a formalized collaboration of five different agencies in the American Samoa territory, and has been the leading participating body from American Samoa. All of these agencies have links to the coral reef environment and its management: the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR), the Department of Commerce (DOC) who comprise offices of American Samoa Coastal Management Program (ASCMP), Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary (FBNMS), American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency (ASEPA), American Samoa Community College (ASCC), and the National Park of American Samoa. The group receives its mandate via the Office of the Governor as a functioning advisory task force. CRAG member agencies work together via mutual consensus to manage coral reefs in American Samoa by

planning achievable programs, identifying and collaborating with other partners, obtaining funding for projects, tracking project compliance, promoting public awareness and developing local capacity for eventual self-sustainability.

CRAG implements its coral reef management actions and efforts via four Local Action Strategies (LAS). LASs are a U.S. Coral Reef Task Force-led initiative designed to identify and implement actions aimed at reducing key coral reef resource threats in U.S. coral reef jurisdictions. LAS development is a locally driven process, involving collaborative and cooperative action among Federal and Territorial partners. In AS, there are four active LASs including Fisheries Management, Climate Change, Land-Based Sources of Pollution, and Population Pressure. Each LAS is managed by a dedicated working group made of various government agency members and non-governmental organizations, and is coordinated by CRAG. Through each LAS and working group, CRAG has implemented countless successful projects since its inception.

CRAG receives funding and guidance via NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (NOAA CRCP) and Department of Interior's (DOI) Coral Reef Program. Thereby, the actions and efforts of CRAG align with those specifically articulated by NOAA and DOI.

EFFORTS TO DATE

MEETINGS OF THE TWO SAMOAS ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATION:

Following the high-level meeting between government leaders, staff from several agencies in American Samoa and Samoa met in Apia, Samoa in late 2007 to discuss the next steps for the Two Samoas. A list of issues for collaboration was created and the key contact for each issue was identified. The issues were fleshed out at a second, larger meeting held in April 2008 in Pago Pago, American Samoa which included many of the key contacts identified at the preliminary meeting in Apia. The April meeting resulted in the identification of actions that each agency can undertake to increase coordination and collaboration, next steps and implementation tasks, and a message board was set up to help facilitate communications.

In November of 2010, the meeting of the Two Samoas was held in Apia, Samoa. Primary outcomes of the meeting include prioritization of a list of collaborative efforts that were deemed most pertinent and tangible in the upcoming months; discussions to establish a Two Samoas Secretariat, coordinated by a dedicated hire; development of a Strategic Plan for the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration; development of on-the-ground collaborative projects; and a Memorandum of Understanding documenting the consensus.

The Two Samoas continued its annual meetings in January of 2011 in Utulei, American Samoa during the Climate Change Summit. The meeting continued momentum on tasks deliberated upon in November, such as the continuation of NOAA CRCP Int'l grant application, steps towards the development of a

strategic plan, and development of the Two Samoas Secretariat. Following the meeting, the Two Samoas successfully received funding for its proposals via NOAA CRCP's International grant.

ACTIONS/EFFORTS:

As a cooperative investigation between NOAA, Samoa, American Samoa, Conservation International (CI) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), a bio-geographic assessment of the archipelago was completed in 2011. The bio-geographic assessment reveals spatial and temporal distributions of organisms, their associated habitats, and the historical and biological factors that include species' distributions. The assessment supports the Two Samoas by identifying shared environmental problems, exchanging management approaches, and considering resources that would benefit from coordinated management. The assessment will assist in the development of collaborative conservation projects and management practices between the two nations.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE TWO SAMOAS ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATION

This document captures the final set of priorities agreed upon by the technical staff from Samoa and American Samoa. From a list of over 50 issues covering eight broader categories, 11 were prioritized with the highest possible rating. All 11 of these items fall into the following categories:

Threats:

- Minimize **land-based pollution** and marine debris to improve water quality and ecosystem health.
- Build community and ecosystem **resiliency to climate change**.
- Protecting and maintaining the rich and natural heritage of the Samoan islands from the impacts of **invasive species**.
- Manage **fisheries** to ensure continued harvest and use of marine resources.

Solutions:

- **Increase scientific understanding** of natural resources for evidence based policy/planning/decisions support.
- Ensure **effective management** of shared natural resources.
- **Communication, education/outreach, and partnership building**.

The four threats identified were developed into four of the Goals listed in this Strategic Plan through consultations with technical staff. The first Goal, “Building a Regional Partnership between the Two Samoas for improved archipelago-wide environmental management” reflects the overall purpose of the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration, and aims to ensure a collaborative approach to the remaining four goals. The solutions identified were integrated into the Objectives that support each Goal.

For the purpose of this Strategic Plan, the following definitions were used:

Goals are defined as the highest-level result the Two Samoas seeks to achieve.

Objectives are defined as the environmental, social, and institutional outcomes that the Two Samoas must achieve to reach its Goals.

Actions are specific projects that were identified as necessary to achieving the objectives.

This Strategic Plan serves as a living document and Actions can be modified throughout continued consultations. Any new additions or modifications must be developed in a transparent consultation process consistent with the collaboration that led to the development of this Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis.

These Priority Goals and Objectives will help guide Samoan and American Samoan practitioners develop funding opportunities for projects that fall under this Strategic Plan. Samoa and American Samoa have already developed their own management plans; it is imperative that any actions under this Strategic Plan be connected to existing programs to prevent a duplication of work already being undertaken.

TWO SAMOAS MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

In order to comprehensively and effectively address shared environmental threats to the Samoan archipelago and carry out priority management goals, management agencies and organizations must approach their work collaboratively with a shared set of guiding principles. This document aims to foster coordination, information sharing, and resources-sharing between the environmental management agencies of Samoa and American Samoa.

GOAL 1 – BUILD A **REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP** BETWEEN THE TWO SAMOAS FOR IMPROVED ARCHIPELAGO-WIDE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Objective 1: Strengthen collaborative relationships between the Two Samoas' government, industries, private sector, villages, individuals, as well as regional and international organizations.

Action 1: Develop a Two Samoas Strategic Plan, which will guide all actions that occur under the Two Samoas process.

Action 2: Hire a Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration Coordinator, based in Apia, to coordinate and oversee the implementation of projects that fall under the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration.

Action 3: Develop the operational structure of the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration by establishing the Steering Committee members, Points of Contact, and stakeholder membership.

Objective 2: Improve transparency and communication of Two Samoas actions with outside stakeholders and environmental managers.

Action 1: Build and maintain regular communication between American Samoa's Coral Reef Advisory Group agencies and Samoa's Department of Fisheries & Agriculture and Ministry of Natural Resources through annual meetings.

Action 2: Build and maintain a website to serve as a portal into the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration, including an online archive of all related documents and materials.

Action 3: Develop a schedule of quarterly status updates and calls that allow each of the agencies that collaborate on programs and projects to dialog, exchange ideas and revise activities.

Objective 3: Increase an archipelago-wide scientific understanding and transfer of knowledge.

Action 1: Build and maintain an archipelagic-focused marine-science center.

Action 2: Exchange scientific and traditional ecological knowledge between Samoa, American Samoa, and other Pacific Island Nations.

Action 3: Assess and strive to maintain the nature of biodiversity of the terrestrial and marine life in the Samoa archipelago.

Action 3: Strive to maintain the terrestrial and marine biodiversity in the Samoa archipelago.

GOAL 2 – MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE STATUS OF FISH STOCKS TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES THAT WILL SUPPORT FUTURE GENERATIONS OF SAMOANS.

Objective 1: Increase the scientific understanding of key marine species and biological areas, in order to improve science-based planning, decision making, and adaptive management.

Action 1: Conduct an archipelago-wide study to determine the population and genetic structures of key reef species, including but not limited to surgeon fish, parrot fish, jacks, and grouper to infer the dispersal patterns of these critical fish species.

Action 2: Conduct an archipelago-wide study to determine the spatial and temporal distribution of various life history stages of key reef species and their related habitat requirements.

Objective 2: Re-direct fishing pressure away from critical coral reef habitat – including spawning and feeding areas – through the development of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Action 1: Develop and facilitate culturally appropriate education and outreach activities to increase and improve community awareness of, participation in, and support for coral reef management and the development of village/community-based MPAs.

Action 2: Develop an archipelago-wide network of no-take MPAs.

Action 3: Expand upon existing village/community-based MPAs, marine reserves, sanctuaries, and special management areas.

Action 4: Investigate the possibility of species specific protected areas that incorporate the biological needs of shark and marine mammal populations in the Samoan archipelago.

Objective 3: Reduce fishing pressure on coral reef fish by introducing alternative sources of marine-based protein and economic livelihoods.

Action 1: Assess the social, economic, and cultural drivers of fishing activity throughout the Samoan archipelago via socioeconomic studies.

Action 2: Based upon socioeconomic studies, formulate appropriate strategies to encourage a shift from fishing to alternative and sustainable livelihoods, such as aquaculture.

Action 3: Conduct a species assessment of underutilized marine and freshwater species, including prawns, offshore mariculture, etc.

Objective 4: Improve and strengthen enforcement of fishing regulations to ensure the exploitation of fish resources is sustainable.

Action 1: Maintain a detailed record of reef fish catch data, including species of concern, to be used to better inform fishing regulations.

Action 2: Update/strengthen fishing regulations to include seasonal takes, size limits, and catch limits of key species, especially low abundance large species such as humphead wrasse, bumphead parrotfish, and all sharks.

Action 3: Maintain a regular review of fishing regulations to update regulations based on new, relevant biological and socio-economic factors.

Action 4: Identify mitigation measures for shark, turtle, and marine mammal takes in long-line fisheries.

Action 5: Develop an enforcement learning exchange to share existing fisheries regulations, capabilities and identify mutual areas that can be addressed in a regional effort.

1. Strengthen local and regional enforcement teams
2. Build capacity through the entire law enforcement chain, including the prosecution service.

Action 6: Develop and facilitate culturally appropriate education and outreach activities to increase and improve community awareness of, participation in, and support for fisheries management and regulations.

GOAL 3 – BUILD ECOLOGICAL AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Objective 1: Continue to support transboundary research, analysis, and evaluation of climate change and its evolving implications for the Samoan archipelago.

Action 1: Conduct and build upon climate change vulnerability assessments for all ecological and community sectors within the Samoan archipelago, including modeling for potential climate change scenarios.

Objective 2: Establish adaptive management strategies to maximize resilience of coral reef and mangrove ecosystems across the Samoan archipelago.

Action 1: Incorporate current climate change scenarios into policy development and management decisions.

Action 2: Ensure that evaluation and adaptive management techniques are an integral part of existing and future management strategies.

Action 3: Encourage continued exchange of climate change-focused ideas, experiences, and best management practices across political boundaries (i.e. include representatives from the Two Samoas in existing and future climate change initiatives of both parties).

Objective 3: Build an informed and prepared public in order to enhance the ability of the human communities of the Samoan archipelago to prepare for, adapt to, and withstand the environmental changes brought about by the effects of climate change.

Action 1: Build an informed public through climate change-focused outreach and education activities that highlight (a) factors that contribute to global climate change; (b) climate change impacts relevant to the Samoan archipelago; and (c) knowledge of applicable mitigation and adaptation options.

1. Assess the social, economic, and cultural issues that may hinder progress toward a climate-resilient archipelago.
2. Develop and facilitate education and outreach activities for a range of audiences to increase community awareness, preparedness, and buy-in.
3. Ensure community buy-in and ownership of projects that focus upon community resilience.

Action 2: Provide communities with feasible options for improving resilience to climate change and associated impacts by reducing vulnerability, improving adaptability, and encouraging resilience to environmental change.

Objective 4: Ensure the sustainability of potable freshwater resources.

Action 1: Work within existing frameworks to ensure that existing water resources are protected and conserved with the ultimate goal of sustainable use.

Action 2: Improve water infrastructure to ensure that all communities have access to potable drinking water.

1. Build an informed public that is aware of the impending climate-change related impacts to island water supplies.
2. Improve sustainable wastewater management throughout the Samoan archipelago.

GOAL 4 – IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND ECOSYSTEM HEALTH THROUGH THE REDUCTION OF LAND-BASED POLLUTION AND MARINE DEBRIS.

Objective 1: Improve our understanding of links between land-based pollution (both point and non-point sources) and coral reef health through scientific research and monitoring in order to create a standard archipelago-wide assessment of the impact of pollution on the archipelago’s coral reefs.

Action 1: Assemble existing water quality data and establish a long-term status and trends water quality monitoring program for the coastal and offshore waters. Compile this information in a biannual Samoan archipelago water quality status report.

Action 2: Based on the archipelago-wide water quality status report, target management activities to address the most vulnerable reef ecosystems as well as sources of pollution requiring urgent attention.

Objective 2: Reduce solid waste, runoff and resulting sedimentation loads to surface water and reef systems by developing and implementing best management practices.

Action 1: Reduce solid waste by establishing and implementing an effective 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) program throughout the Samoan archipelago.

Action 2: Strengthen and build upon existing legal frameworks and regulations emphasizing archipelago-wide cooperation.

Action 3: Effectively enforce existing land use regulations to manage the impacts of land-based sources of pollution.

1. Enhance existing enforcement activities through the use of new technologies such as GIS and satellite imaging.
2. Conduct enforcement training programs and workshops to enhance enforcement capabilities by relevant agencies.

Action 4: Preserve, restore, and protect mangrove and wetland habitats.

Objective 3: Increase public understanding of the impacts of land-based sources of pollution on the marine ecosystems, encouraging a “sense of guardianship” and improving public compliance with existing pollution and waste reduction measures.

Action 1: Conduct Participatory Learning and Action and Conservation Action Plan workshops to increase public awareness and enhance support for, and participation in, existing management programs.

Action 2: Conduct outreach activities that focus on proper disposal of solid waste and recycling.

Action 3: Organize community- and government agency-led clean-up programs that target youth groups, villages, and community groups to encourage local environmental stewardship.

GOAL 5 – ENSURE CONTINUED PROTECTION OF ENDEMIC TERRESTRIAL AND MARINE BIODIVERSITY OF THE SAMOAN ARCHIPELAGO FROM THE THREAT OF **INVASIVE SPECIES**.

Objective 1: Develop and build upon programs and procedures to minimize the impacts of established invasive species by eradicating them where practical, otherwise managing them.

Action 1: Identify the existing invasive species in the Samoan archipelago, their current and projected distribution, and their potential environmental, economic, and social impacts.

Action 2: Where feasible, develop and implement management programs to eliminate the invasive species or minimize the impact of established infestations of invasive species, taking into account community attitudes, resource requirements, and potential risks and constraints.

Action 3: Identify training needs and develop and implement necessary training and capacity building programs to strengthen the capacity of Samoa and American Samoa to manage invasive species.

Objective 2: Enhance public awareness and understanding of the sources and impacts of invasive species in order to increase levels of compliance and support for managing existing invasive species and preventing the introduction of new invasive species.

Action 1: Create an archipelago-wide information portal on exotic and invasive marine and terrestrial species. Information should include general background on species, how invasive species are introduced, and ways to prevent future introduction.

Action 2: Develop a comprehensive educational program that targets key stakeholders by:

1. Reviewing the curricula of education institutions and incorporate information about invasive species;
2. Reviewing existing government and community programs to identify opportunities to incorporate information about invasive species; and
3. Enhancing awareness of relevant legislation and enforcement.

Objective 3: Prevent the introduction of new invasive species by fostering regional and international cooperation.

Action 1: Compile a comprehensive list of invasive species present amongst trading partners

1. Ensure databases remain current and readily accessible to all relevant stakeholders
2. Include essential information for an effective response.

Action 2: Enhance current inspection and surveillance systems and procedures for potential invasive species.

Action 3: Reinforce Samoa's and American Samoa's existing partnerships and participation in regional and international conventions and treaties, in order to:

1. Maximize the sharing and exchange of information;
2. Recommend further action in relation to binding and non-binding instruments to prevent the introduction of new invasive species.

APPENDIX

A: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: TWO SAMOAS ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATION INITIATIVE – JANUARY 2011



Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration meeting

*An Archipelago-wide Approach to Management and Conservation
January 31st & February 3rd, 2011
Governor Rex Lee Auditorium – North Wing
Utulei, American Samoa*

OFFICIAL MEETING RECORD for 31st January 2011

During the morning session, both governments agreed to establish a Steering Committee with members to be determined by the respective governments. The American Samoa and Samoa delegation continued by identifying 5 actions for the technical staff to discuss during the afternoon session.

1. **Develop a broader plan consistent with 2004 & 2010 MoUs**
2. **Terms of Reference for coordinator position**
3. **Decide on format of strategic plan & sustainable financing**
4. **Tentative schedule of Activities**
5. **Prioritization of issues (see Annex 2)**

The following summary is a record of the agreements and discussions held during the afternoon session:

1. **Develop a broader plan consistent with 2004 & 2010 MoUs**

A suggested structure for a 'Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration Strategy' was agreed upon as follows:

- **Preamble** – include references
- **MoUs** from 2004 & 2010 – include in strategy, with references.
- **Action Plan - detail**
 - Priority issues - matrix
 - Actions

- Timeframe
- Goals & Objectives
- **Case studies** – showcase collaborative actions, why Two Samoas Initiative is important, detail what has been achieved so far, what are the challenges and why, highlight the gaps.
- **References** - include existing documents from both countries – link to the information and the resources we have.
- **Recommendations**

2. Terms of Reference for coordinator position

– completed at last meeting (see Annex 1)

3. Decide on format of strategic plan & sustainable financing

- agreed to use the NOAA Local Action Strategy (LAS) template (guidance document available separately)
- sustainable financing – identification of additional funding opportunities by Samoa and AS teams between March - October 2011.

4. Tentative schedule of Activities

Key steps	Dates	Who	Actions
Register for Grants Online	Immediately	Samoa team with assistance from AS	Register and acquire DUNS number etc.
Matrix – draft	By 7 th Feb	AS team	AS send to Samoa
Pull together draft application	7 th -14 th Feb	Samoa team	
Send 1 st draft of application to NOAA	14 th Feb	AS & Samoa	
Submit application	By Feb 20th	AS & Samoa	
Look for other funding	March – October	AS & Samoa	All to identify other funding opportunities
Identify further projects	March – October	AS & Samoa	Identify other projects that may require funding
Strategic Plan – draft			Development of draft
Identify teams		Samoa – Malama, MAiava, Joyce, Faleafaga. AS - TBD	Keep CEO's and Directors informed
AS Develop 1 st draft of strategic plan and send to Samoa team (Goals, objectives etc.)	March - April 2011	AS team & Samoa team	Send draft to each other over email
Samoa to develop ToR	March – April 2011	Samoa	Samoa to develop ToR and

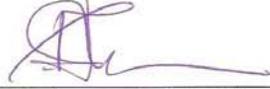
for Coordinator position			send to AS for comment
Two Samoas High level meeting	Tentative schedule for 16 th or 19 th April 2011		Meet in AS during Flag Day
Video Conference 1 - Formatting of strategy	Early May 2011		Agree on Vision, objectives, goals etc.
2 nd draft	End July 2011		
2 nd Video Conference	Mid August 2011		
Funding decision from NOAA	July - Sept 2011		
Funds available	October?		
Next 2S meeting – coincide with Environment week	Last week Oct – 1 st week Nov		Workshop to present draft strategic plan. Make available for comment to other stakeholders.
Incorporate final comments before Finalizing strategic Plan	End Nov -		

5. Prioritization of issues (see Annex 2)

- agreed on the existing list
- some additions captured in the existing list
- agreed to develop a matrix – see schedule
- suggested the need for evidence to assist with prioritization of issues

The above is a true and accurate record of the discussion that transpired at the Two Samoas Initiative meeting on January 31st 2011.

On behalf of the Government of Samoa:



Taulealeausumai Laavasa Malua
CEO
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

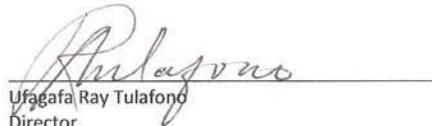


Fonoiaiva Sealiitu Sesega
CEO
Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

On behalf of the American Samoa Government:



Faleseu Eliu Paopao
Director
Department of Commerce



Ufagafa Ray Tulafono
Director
Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources

ANNEX 1 – Two Samoa Coordinator Terms of Reference**Two Samoas Secretariat Coordinator**

The Secretariat is proposed to be administered by a coordinator that is governed by the Steering Committee. The Coordinator will facilitate and strengthen coordination, communication, and partnerships among local members and international affiliates, and manage all actions within the Two Samoas efforts. The Coordinator will provide coordination, fundraising for sustainable financing, and profiling of the effort locally, regionally, and internationally for broader support and outreach. The Coordinator will also research, propose, develop and coordinate communication, policy, and new partnership opportunities amongst agencies and key partners to achieve a common mission to protect environmental resources of the Samoan Archipelago. The Coordinator is projected to be housed in the MNRE office in Samoa, whilst liaising with the CRAG Coordinator counter-part in American Samoa. Responsibilities of the Two Samoas Coordinator will include, though not limited to:

- Provide policy, administrative, and logistical support for the Two Samoas meetings and coordinate Two Samoas efforts.
- Provide administrative support and policy advice to the committee related to archipelago-wide environmental issues by researching and framing issues for POCs.
- Be a strong and effective liaison between the POCs, MNRE, MAF, the CRAG Coordinator counterpart in American Samoa, the CRCP, other partners, CI, SPREP, other NGOs, and other relevant regional, national and international organizations on issues related to coral reef conservation, by advocating the interests of the POCs, communicate relevant concerns of the various agencies, organizations, and institutions back to the POCs, and if necessary, mediate conflicting interests in order to achieve acceptable solutions.
- Serve as a facilitator when consensus is lacking within the 2SS or between the 2SS and its partners.
- Provide liaison and coordination with a diversity of locally, regionally, and remotely affiliated members, agencies, organizations, and institutions on management of coral reef resources.
- Organize and facilitate periodic Two Samoas meetings.
- Participate on conference calls related to the 2SS, working groups, and other coral reef governance bodies, as appropriate.
- Maintain, organize and manage a central repository of information for coral reef jurisdiction information.
- Facilitate implementation of the 2SS's strategic action plan, and related or future strategic planning endeavors.
- Develop any needed scopes of work, budgets, and accomplishment reports required by the 2SS.
- Identify funding sources for Two Samoas efforts, seek project proposals, produce regular grant applications, apply for relevant grants, and produce performance reports as necessary.
- Serve the 2SS and build institutional capacity within the 2SS.
- Oversee the implementation and administration of Two Samoas projects, including advising project managers on grant management, provide support, and manage Two Samoas projects.
- Assist the Two Samoas Steering Committee in responding to requests for the Two Samoas.

Annex 2 – Two Samoas Issues listTwo Samoas InitiativeEnvironmental Issues – suggested list

The Samoan people have depended on the marine and terrestrial resources of their islands for almost three thousand years and continue to do so today. The connection at the land/sea interface is inseparable in any location but particularly in the Samoan archipelago where the natural topographic relief of these steeply sided volcanic islands lends itself to a close connection with the coral reefs. The steepness, combined with the small size of the islands and intensified by the strong weather patterns and highly populated low lying areas means managers cannot work in one area without considering the other. For these reasons we have combined our marine and terrestrial issues and we prefer to work simultaneously and collaboratively on both important sectors. The six themes below are not in order of priority. In addition, the issues under each topic could also relate and tie in with other topics.

1) RESEARCH & MONITORING

How do the status and trends of terrestrial and marine resources in the two Samoas compare?

- Availability and spatial coverage of reef monitoring data (e.g. percent coral cover, fish biomass mt/ha etc) and terrestrial inventory and monitoring data?
- Methods used to collect monitoring data and ability to compare datasets
- Effects of tsunami on coral reefs and recovery programs in place (e.g. coral fragmentation and transplantation) -
- What are key connectivities among the islands for terrestrial species?
- Long-term monitoring of key species (to track effects of human impacts, habitat loss, climate change). Share monitoring protocols to collect comparable data on species of interest that occur archipelago wide.
- Assessment of habitat distribution in the Samoan archipelago using satellite imagery and ground-truthing to map habitat types and track changes to habitat distribution.
- Emergent infectious diseases – monitoring and response (terrestrial and marine)
- Erosion monitoring
- Sharing of information, education and outreach to support project development

2) MARINE & TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS

What and where are the key biological species and areas in the Samoan archipelago and how are they connected? Need to identify the key biological species for both countries.

- Key terrestrial species: Papilio butterfly, Friendly ground dove, Many-colored fruit dove, Sheath-tailed bat, Endemic snails, Reptiles (Pacific Boa), Coconut crab, Samoan fruit bat and Tongan fruit bat.
- Key biological areas (e.g. fish spawning areas, turtle nesting beaches and feeding areas, seagrass beds, whale use areas, seabird rookeries).

- How do the ocean currents within and around the archipelago vary by season and El Nino, La Nina etc?
- What is the key biological significance of barrier island-lagoon ecosystem in Independent Samoa?
- Identification of upwelling and other oceanographic features of interest.
- Extension of ADCP (current) surveys to Independent Samoa would allow for comparison and detailed connectivity studies.
- Sea Turtles – threatened and endangered status, develop coordinated conservation plan (including Fiji), quantification of population size and harvest numbers, need more satellite tagging (high scientific value and has public outreach appeal).
- Pelagic fisheries

3) RESOURCE MANAGEMENT and CONSERVATION

Regulations, enforcement, harvest and import/export issues

- Regulation types and effectiveness (marine and terrestrial).
- Enforcement capabilities (terrestrial and marine) and effectiveness in the two Samoas.
- Coverage of reef fish catch and effort data, number of turtles harvested per year (by species).
- Reef fish imports and exports (kgs/yr) between countries.
- What type aquaculture or restock programs exist in Independent Samoa?

What is the status of the protected areas in the two Samoas?

- Number, type, location, and effectiveness of protected terrestrial areas. Are there key biological areas (eg. whale use areas, sea turtle feeding areas and nesting beaches, seabird rookeries) that need protection?
- Number, type, location, and effectiveness of MMA's and MPA's in the two Samoas.
- Identification of larval sources and sinks between the two Samoas that could benefit from protection.

What are the key terrestrial and marine invasive species threats and how do we address them in the archipelago?

- Control of existing species (plants and animals)
- Prevention of introductions – transboundary
- Biosecurity and border control / quarantine
- Rapid response to emergent species
- What are successful restoration strategies?

What are the key watershed issues that need to be addressed? LAND-BASED SOURCES OF POLLUTION

- Waste water treatment (sewage, stormwater)
- Nutrient loads (e.g. from waste water, agriculture, piggeries, etc.)
- Pesticide use

- Sediment runoff
- Better construction methods to reduce sediment runoff during and after construction
- Enforcement of existing regulations
- Community involvement
- Waste management & Recycling – can we coordinate efforts to take advantage of economies of scale?
- Agriculture – what are the important issues, what types of herbicides and pesticides are used and in what quantities .

4) CLIMATE CHANGE

What are Climate Change impacts and adaptation strategies?

- Impacted reef areas – historic/current bleaching locations in two Samoas.
- Measures being taken to adapt/reduce climate change impacts.
- How might climate change impact terrestrial environments?
- Monitoring of changes in habitat distribution due to climate change and use of satellite imagery to map changes.
- Are there areas in either country that may be resilient to climate change?
- Food security
- Energy security
- Biological and social resilience towards climate stressor or impacts (resources and people)

5) COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Education & awareness – public support for projects is essential for success
- Share lessons learned between the two countries
- Update bibliographies on terrestrial and marine species – share information between both countries
- Update bibliographies of all published papers and unpublished reports available for sharing.
- Enhance capacity building opportunities for local students and resource management staff.
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge – how is it used within modern terrestrial and marine resource management?
- Need regular exchange between resource managers.
- Health & Wellbeing – link between ‘healthy’ ecosystems and ‘healthy’ people

Annex 3 - List of Attendees

Two Samoas Environmental Governance Meeting Participant List

January 31st and February 3rd, 2011
Rex Lee Auditorium, North Wing, Utulei, American Samoa

Samoa

Taulealeausumai Laavasa Malua
CEO
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Fonoiaava Sealiitu Sesega
CEO
Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

Faleafaga Toni Tipama'a
ACEO
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Malama Momoemausu
Principal Marine Conservation Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Joyce Samuelu Ah Leong
Principal Inshore Fisheries Officer
Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

Olofa Tuaopepe
Principal Fisheries Officer
Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

Maiava Veni Gaugatao
Principle Forestry Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Regional organization partners

Schanel van Dijken
Marine Conservation Officer
Conservation International

American Samoa

Faleseu Eliu Paopao
Director
Department of Commerce

Ufagafa Ray Tulafono
Director
Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources

Dr. Seth P. Galea'i
President
American Samoa Community College

Michael Reynolds
Superintendent
National Parks of American Samoa

Faamao Asalele
Acting Director
American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency

Dr. Daniel Aga
Director, Community and Natural Resources Division
American Samoa Community College

Lelei Peau
Coral Reef Advisory Group Chair
Coral Reef Advisory Group

Dr. Peter Craig
Natural Resources Chief
National Park of American Samoa

Gene Brighthouse
Superintendent Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Department of Commerce

Dr. Douglas Fenner
Coral Monitoring Ecologist
Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources

Tim Clark
Marine Ecologist
National Parks of American Samoa

Fatima Sauafea-Leau
Fisheries Biologist Management
NOAA Fisheries Pacific Island Regional Office

Hideyo Hattori
Coral Reef Initiative Coordinator
Coral Reef Advisory Group

Lainie Berry
Chief Wildlife Biologist
Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources

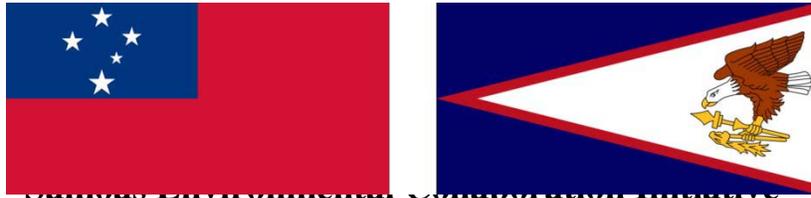
Lucy Jacob
No-take MPA Program Leader
Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources

Alice Lawrence
MPA Network Coordinator
Coral Reef Advisory Group

Sean Morrison
Legal Council
Department of Commerce

Tavita Togia
Terrestrial Ecologist
National Park of American Samoa

B: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: TWO SAMOAS ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATION INITIATIVE – NOVEMBER 2010



Apia, Samoa November 4-5, 2010

This Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Samoa and the American Samoa Government is hereby entered into a statement of interests in order to emphasize the cooperation between these two nations. This organized cooperation is to be known as the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration Initiative (“Two Samoas”).

WHEREAS, Samoa and American Samoa are part of the same archipelago, sharing resources, culture, and challenges. Many resources in the two Samoas overlap or are interrelated. Consequently, the actions of one jurisdiction often influence the resources of the other. Cooperation between the two Samoas on their shared issues will lead to more comprehensive and effective action.

WHEREAS, at the Seventh Meeting on the Cooperation Issues Between the Two Samoa’s in September 2007, the Prime Minister of Samoa and the Governor of American Samoa issued a joint statement promising to hold annual meetings between the jurisdictions to collaborate and work in partnership on overlapping environmental issues.

WHEREAS, further meetings were held between the two Samoas in December 2007, April 2008, and August 2009 where progress reports on environmental issues facing the two jurisdictions were identified and discussed.

WHEREAS, the two Samoas have worked together on a number of joint environmental projects with great success. Further, the two Samoas believe

that the joint cooperation is beneficial to both parties, and wish to move forward and continue the progress that has been achieved.

WHEREAS, the two Samoas met on November 4-5, 2010 in Apia, Samoa to discuss the future of the Two Samoas initiative, and came to a number of agreements.

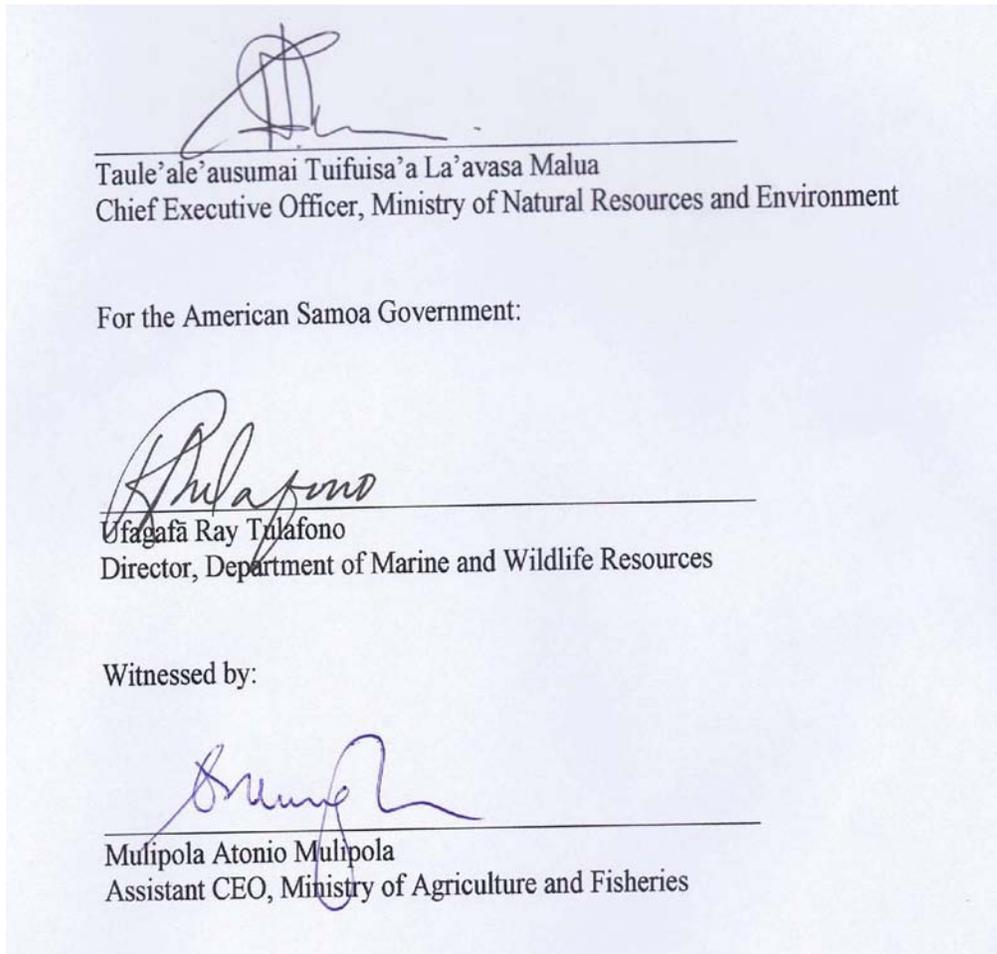
The two Samoas recognize the importance of the following:

1. The Two Samoas cooperation is beneficial and should be continued for the benefit of both jurisdictions. Greater organization will increase the benefits and collaboration between the two Samoas.
2. Cooperation can best be facilitated through an institution dedicated to the coordination of the two Samoas. To this end, the parties acknowledge that the establishment of a Two Samoas Secretariat with a Steering Committee to work on enhancing and organizing the collaboration of the two parties is in the best interest of both parties. The parties plan to pursue this proposal and to work together on the establishment of such an office.
3. The future of the Two Samoas will best be achieved through planning and guidance. To that end, the parties will endeavor to formulate a three to five year strategic plan for the Two Samoas. This plan will be created through the collaboration of both jurisdictions to identify the focus, goals, and scope of work of the Two Samoas organization.
4. Communication is central to the successful operation of the Two Samoas. The parties will continue the progress established to date, and increase communication between the interested institutions. Each party will endeavor to notify the other of the interested ministries/departments, updated points of contact, and the progress of individual projects of interest to the two jurisdictions.
5. Cooperative projects are the heart of the Two Samoas initiative. The parties will continue their collaboration on projects, and identify priorities and future projects that will benefit both Samoas. The parties will endeavor to carry out these projects.

6. Both parties will continue to meet annually to discuss the issues and goals embodied in this memorandum and the Two Samoas.

The parties hereby state their intentions to continue the cooperation and further the goals outlined in this memorandum of understanding, entered into this 5th day of November, 2010 in Apia, Samoa.

For the Government of Samoa:



C: SUMMARY OF HIGHEST RATED PRIORITIES

In January of 2011, a meeting of the Two Samoas was held in Utulei, American Samoa. Primary outcomes of the meeting included a master list of fifty current environmental issues that are threatening the Samoan archipelago and could be addressed by the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration.

Following the meeting, technical experts from Samoa and American Samoa prioritized these issues through individual surveys. Samoa and American Samoa compiled the surveys into one document that best represented the results from their respective jurisdictions. Finally, these were developed into a prioritized list of key issues to be addressed by the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration.

There were a total of 10 issues with the highest possible ratings (5). These issues covered all available categories (from Research and Monitoring to Communication and Community Involvement), except Regulations and Enforcement. In order to account for the Regulations and Enforcement category, the highest rated item within the category (4; "Coverage of reef fish catch and effort data, number of turtles harvested per year by species") was included as a top priority for a total of 11 items.

All other issues will be considered and articulated in the Strategic Plan, but with less emphasis as these the top 11 items.

All 11 items fell into four threats and three solutions:

Threats

- Minimize **land-based pollution** to improve water quality and ecosystem health
- Build community and ecosystem resiliency to **climate change**.
- Protecting and maintaining the rich and fragile natural heritage of the Samoan islands from the impacts of **invasive species**.
- Manage **fisheries** to ensure continued harvest and use of marine resources.

Solutions

- **Increase understanding** (science) of natural resources for evidence based policy/planning/decisions support.
- Ensure effective **management** of shared natural resources.
- **Communication, education/outreach, and partnership** building.

Mission

The solving (solutions) of these issues (threats) all fall under a general mission of: “Protect, conserve, and enhance natural resources of the Samoan Archipelago through collaborative efforts and actions between the two Samoan nations.”

THE PROCESS

Below is a list of issues identified as the highest of priority for the Two Samoas Environmental Collaboration to address and the rationale of how they were developed into the aforementioned Threats and Solutions. Both jurisdictions have commented throughout the prioritization process (see table ‘Issues Matrix_TOTALS’ for raw data).

RESEARCH & MONITORING- (Increase understanding of natural resources for evidence based policy/planning/decisions support)

1. Marine Monitoring methods: Need long-term monitoring of key marine species (to track effects of human impacts, habitat loss, and climate change). Share monitoring protocols to collect comparable data on species of interest that occur archipelago wide.
 - This item is considered a solution to impacts. Therefore, this item is considered: “Increase understanding of natural resources for evidence based policy/planning/decisions support”

MARINE & TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM- (Increase understanding of natural resources for evidence based policy/planning/decisions support)

- Key Marine Areas: Need to identify the key marine biological areas (e.g. fish spawning areas, turtle nesting beaches and feeding areas, seagrass beds, whale use areas, seabird rookeries).
 - As this priority is about garnering sound science, it fell under the solution category of: “Increase understanding of natural resources for evidence based policy/planning/decisions support”.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT and CONSERVATION – Enforcement (Manage fisheries to ensure continued harvest and use of marine resources; Ensure effective management of natural resources)

- Coverage of reef fish catch and effort data (i.e. determine which species of fish are overfished and how to rebuild stock), number of turtles harvested per year (by species).
 - This item identifies fishing as a threat and need more understanding as a solution.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT and CONSERVATION - Protected Areas (Ensure effective management of natural resources)

- Number, type, location, and effectiveness of MMAs and MPAs in the two Samoas. Are there key biological areas (eg. whale use areas, sea turtle feeding areas and nesting beaches, seabird rookeries, fish spawning aggregation sites, etc.) that need protection?

- This item falls under management.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT and CONSERVATION - Invasive species (Protecting and maintaining the rich and fragile natural heritage of the Samoan islands from the impacts of invasive species)

- Prevention of introductions – transboundary
 - Stand-alone unique category of invasive species.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT and CONSERVATION - Watershed & LBS Pollution

This category had two top-two items:

- Enforcement of existing regulations
 - Falls under the solution: “Manage fisheries to ensure continued harvest and use of marine resources” and threat: “Minimize land-based pollution to improve water quality and ecosystem health”
- Community involvement
 - Falls under the solution: “Communication and Community Engagement” and the threat: “Minimize land-based pollution to improve water quality and ecosystem health”

CLIMATE CHANGE (Build community and ecosystem resiliency to climate change)

- Climate Change adaptation: Measures being taken to adapt/reduce climate change impacts.
 - Threat: “Build community and ecosystem resiliency to climate change.”

COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (Communication, education/outreach, and partnership building)

All of the below items fall under the category of “Communication, education/outreach, and partnership building”:

- Research & Monitoring: Sharing of information, education and outreach to support project development
- Capacity building: Enhance capacity building opportunities for local students and resource management staff.
- Traditional Knowledge: Traditional Ecological Knowledge – how is it used within modern terrestrial and marine resource management?