AIC Chair’s Report

Fran Castro Houk
Chair, U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC)

36th U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
September 22, 2016 | Saipan, CNMI
Hafa adai and welcome
AIC Updates

Finalized our AIC Action Plan, 2016-2020
  • Internal working doc and spreadsheet of actions
  • Supplemental to AIC Strategic Plan

AIC Chair position held by Fran Castro extended 1 more year.
AIC Priorities
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Federal-Jurisdiction Integration

• Critical to the effective management and conservation of our coral reefs.
• Task Force = OPPORTUNITY
• Increased communication & outreach → increased collaboration
• SUGGESTIONS? What can we do to increase our outreach to and engagement of federal agencies and the greater Task Force?
AIC Priorities

Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program

• Main coral reef management needs in the jurisdictions
• USCRTL target issue (Strategy, Resolution 34.1)
• Benefits for all Task Force members
• Benefits to coral reef resources
• Updates in AIC Chair’s Report

• In and out of the box ways to sustain this program long term
• Look forward to working with Task Force + appreciate co-chair commitment to moving forward

Puerto Rico’s Coral Fellow, Mariana León, presenting her work and preliminary results at the Priorities and Recommendations Workshop. (DNER)
AIC Priorities

Coral Reef Conservation Act Reauthorization

- 114th Congress: H.R. 5771 and 5821
- Communications with Congressional offices
- Continue work with the USCRTF on the reauthorization of CRCA (e.g., finding areas of common ground).
AIC Priorities

USCRTF Strategy, Mitigation Handbook, & Watershed Partnership Initiative Strategy

• Appreciate USCRTF collaboration, time, and work

• Informative and impressive documents

• Great example of collaborative nature of USCRTF
Jurisdictional Updates
Member Updates

American Samoa

• COTS outbreak managed
• Faga’alu Community MPA
• Marine Debris Action Plan & trash collection + campaigns a success
• **Needed**: Funding and technical support for derelict vessel removal

CNMI

• Resilience assessments
• Community reporting via new website & mobile app
• Shoreline development, bleaching, vessel groundings
• **Needed**: Funding and support for bleaching and disturbance response plan
Florida

- Pillar coral emergency efforts
- Our Florida Reefs completed
- **Needed**: Emergency funding and response capacity for coral reef events

Guam

- Interagency Reef Response team
- Invasive bamboo removal success, resilience assessment
- **Needed**: Water quality and enforcement assistance
Member Updates

Hawai‘i

- Coral Bleaching Management Plan
- Senate Bill 2453
- Kaupulehu Marine Reserve established
- **Needed**: Federal support for beach renourishment and support for management strategies in South Kohala, Big Island

Puerto Rico

- Review of coral reef priorities
- NOAA Habitat Blueprint Implementation Framework
- **Needed**: Funding and surveillance support of coral reefs in protected areas

Focus group, with marine recreation concessionaries, working on the NE Reserves and Culebra. A. Montanez

Public meeting for the establishment of the Kaupulehu Marine Reserve. DAR
Member Updates

U.S. Virgin Islands
• Vessel grounding response team
• Derelict vessel survey in St. Croix
• Baseline data @ 2 monitoring sites
• **Needed:** Research support on invasive seagrass management

Federated States of Micronesia
• Commercial sea cucumber harvest
• Micronesia Regional Collaboration and Enforcement Workshop
• **Needed:** Enforcement resources, outreach and communications support
Member Updates

Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Resource management plans for 2 new proposed MPAs
- CMAC Strategic Action Plan and Terms of Reference
- Baseline assessments for fish, coral and inverts (Reimaanlok for Ebon, Ujae, Lae, & Wotho)

Republic of Palau
- Underwater and landings fisheries surveys in northern reef
- Ecological monitoring of all MPAs with coral and seagrass conducted
- 1st coral recruitment assessment completed
Governor Ralph Deleon Guerrero Torres and Governor Eddie Baza Calvo

Task Force co-chairs

Task Force members & member agencies

CNMI BECQ and Guam BSP – Jihan Buniag, Lola Leon Guerrero, and their teams

Austin Shelton and Raymond Jualin

AIC Secretariat
Questions?