

# **U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC) Report**

**32<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting  
Maui, Hawai'i  
September 8-12, 2014**



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### **AIC Vision**

Thriving coral reef ecosystems, effectively managed to protect their cultural, environmental, and economic value for future generations.

### **AIC Mission**

To be a unified voice for the effective management of coral reef ecosystems in the U.S. and Freely Associated States.

*Cover photo courtesy of J. Martinez.*

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## FROM THE CHAIR

Hafa adai, Talofa, Aloha, Hola, and Hello,

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC), to present this report on our activities, accomplishments, and emerging issues since we last met in Washington D.C. in February 2014.

We would like to welcome Governor de Jongh, Lieutenant Governor Tsutsui, and Lieutenant Governor Lemanu and thank them for their continued support of the AIC and coral reef conservation across our nation.



We would like to thank our previous Guam POC, Joseph Cameron, for his work and participation on the AIC.

And, we welcome Lorilee Crisostomo, Director of the Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans, new Governor-appointed coral reef POC for Guam, and Glen Joseph, Director of the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority as the new affiliate member to the Task Force for the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

*Mahalo nui loa* to the State of Hawai'i for planning, coordinating, and hosting this meeting. In particular, to Emma Anders, Austin Shelton, and their conference team for their time and hard work in putting together a productive and effective itinerary for this week. And, thank you to the Steering Committee co-chairs for their work in coordinating this meeting.

We look forward to a successful Task Force meeting and continuing open communications and partnership building to help conserve our precious coral reef ecosystems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fran Castro', written over a white background.

Fran Castro  
Chair



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### THE AIC...

#### Final Determination for ESA-listing of 20 Coral Species

- Greatly appreciates all the time and effort that NOAA and its staff in the Caribbean/Atlantic and Pacific put into the final determination of the 20 species.
- Is supportive of the final determination; however we maintain that ESA is not the right tool for managing coral reefs specific to the risks of climate change.
- Appreciates NOAA taking the time to consider additional information in evaluating the risk of extinction.
- NOAA has done a good job implementing a solid and inclusive process and the AIC hopes this will continue through continued communications, trainings, etc.
- [NOAA Ask] The AIC would like to know what the next steps, process, and timeline are for these new determinations. Additionally, the AIC would like to know what opportunities exist for States and Territories to engage in the process moving forward (e.g., critical habitat designation, 4D rule-making). We look forward to continuing communication as this process moves forward.

#### Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program

- Greatly appreciates Task Force member agencies, NOAA (Dana Wusinich-Mendez, John Tomczuk, and other staff) and DOI (Karen Koltes), for their support and involvement in renewing this important program.
- [USCRTF Ask] Because this program directly helps in building local jurisdictional capacity, one of the Task Force's identified target issues, the AIC continues to ask Task Force member agencies to help build a sustainable, long-term, and effective Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program. The AIC is more than happy to work with the Steering Committee to brainstorm ideas for sustainable funding.

#### Coral Reef Conservation Act Reauthorization

- Commends the suggestion (February 2014) to develop a new working group to plan a coordinated effort to support the reauthorization of the CRCA.
- Holds two components of the CRCA as particularly important to the jurisdictions:
  1. Formalizing the definitions of *coral* and *coral reef*; and
  2. Ratifying the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force.
- Is currently reviewing components of the CRCA reauthorization bills of concern in preparation for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress.
- [USCRTF Ask] The AIC requests that the Task Force Steering Committee convene the new working group to begin discussions and coordination on a collaborative reauthorization framework or statement in preparation for the beginning of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress in January 2015.

#### Watershed Partnership Initiative

- Recognizes the success of the three current priority watersheds and the work of the Watershed Working Group.
- Remembers the original intent of the Initiative was to build a template that could be applied in other places.
- [USCRTF Ask] The AIC would like to revisit this National effort to map out a timeline and process for expanding the Watershed Partnership Initiative to other watershed locations, recognizing that much will depend on funding availability. The AIC is happy to work with the Steering Committee and Watershed Working Group in building such a plan, with the intent to present at the minimum, an outline at the next Task Force Meeting.

#### Additional Task Force Requests

- **Steering Committee:** The AIC would like to request your consideration of our Executive Director as a 3rd co-chair to the Task Force Steering Committee.



- **Freely Associated States:** The AIC would also like to request that the Task Force better define the partnership and role of the Freely Associated States within the US Coral Reef Task Force.

#### **AIC History**

- Appreciates the opportunity to share the history of how the AIC came to be with Task Force members and attendees of the Business Meeting. The intent of this presentation is to learn from the past and use that knowledge to build a better future, together.

## GENERAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

### **AIC STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019**

The AIC crafted new strategic goals in February and March 2014. We are refining these goals, but in general, they have to do with:

- Sustainable funding for coral reef ecosystem management priorities in the jurisdictions and Freely Associated States.
- Promoting our shared priorities to the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force agencies and decision makers.
- Sufficient capacity to meet coral reef management needs.

The AIC continues to update their strategic plan and held an all day planning workshop on Saturday, September 6, 2014 to focus on crafting strategic and S.M.A.R.T. objectives. We hope to roll out our new strategic plan during the Winter Task Force meeting.

### **AIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

The AIC has been working to update their Communications Plan, originally created in 2006. The plan has been reformatted and restructured and the information contained therein will continually be updated as the AIC grows. In this round of updates, the plan was reformatted to address internal and external communications as well as new communication tools such as the AIC blog and Facebook sites. Check the AIC website for updated versions (<http://allislandscommittee.org/whatwedo/publications/>).

## FINAL DETERMINATION FOR ESA-LISTING OF 20 CORAL SPECIES

The potential listing of 66 species of corals under the Endangered Species Act has been a major concern for the jurisdictions. The AIC greatly appreciates all the time and effort that NOAA and its staff in the Caribbean/Atlantic and Pacific put into the final determination of the 20 species. We are supportive of the final determination; however we maintain that ESA is not the right tool for managing coral reefs specific to the risks of climate change. We appreciate NOAA taking the time to consider additional information in evaluating the risk of extinction.

NOAA has done a good job implementing a solid and inclusive process and the AIC hopes this will continue through continued communications, trainings, etc. In particular with the designation of newly-listed threatened coral species, the AIC recognizes that the 4D rule is a powerful tool in helping protect, manage, and recover species and their associated ecosystems. The 4D rule allows for flexible application of management tools with the greatest chance of affecting the positive outcomes for coral reefs and stakeholders.

#### **AIC Ask to NOAA**

The AIC would like to know what the next steps, process, and timeline are for these new determinations. Additionally, the AIC would like to know what opportunities exist for States and Territories to engage in the process moving forward (e.g., critical habitat designation, 4D rule-making). We look forward to continuing communication as this process moves forward.



## CORAL REEF MANAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program has been ongoing since 2004 and successful in helping fill the capacity needs of the jurisdictions at the local level. The program was discontinued in 2012 and a FY14 proposal was submitted to NOAA CRCP's internal call for proposals was not funded.

Because of the noted importance and success of this program, NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) and U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC) have been in constant communication on how to re-envision a new, even more effective program. The AIC met with staff from the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program in Washington D.C. on February 21, 2014 to craft a shared vision and tenets for a new Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program. The results are below:

*Vision* – A thriving, collaborative fellowship program that builds excellent next generation leaders and capacity for effective local coral reef ecosystem management.

**A working group** (three CRCP staff, three AIC reps, + Karen Koltes, DOI OIA) was formed during the meeting to help keep this collaboration going and come up with feasible options (e.g., funding and coordination) for a new Fellowship Program to present to the larger group for their input. Since February, the working group met multiple times and expanded to include Karen Koltes of the DOI Office of Insular Affairs (OIA). The group drafted a preferred option for implementing the Fellowship Program (below), which was approved by CRCP staff and AIC POCs.

**A proposal was submitted to the FY15 CRCP Internal RFP on August 22, 2014.** The proposal, crafted by CRCP staff, outlines a new program that would merge funds from the CRCP, the DOI Office of Insular Affairs, and the CRCP State and Territorial Cooperative Agreements to administer a fellowship program.

Approximate cost-sharing responsibilities listed in the proposal are as follows (based on an estimated cost of \$600,000/year; includes all seven jurisdictions):

- NOAA CRCP funds program at \$325,000/year;
- DOI Office of Insular Affairs funds program at \$200,000/year; and,
- AIC (jurisdictions) fund program at \$75,000/year through cooperative agreement holdbacks to the CRCP.

The proposed new program is based on the expectation that:

- CRCP will provide a part-time fellowship program coordinator and that the AIC will also provide some level of coordination support for the program;
- There is an ability to find an entity that is willing and able to administer the program and that both the CRCP and DOI are able to obligate funds to that entity; and,
- The jurisdictions provide adequate oversight of and mentorship to the fellows placed in their jurisdiction.

This proposal for internal NOAA funding support is a short-term solution to sustaining this valuable program. A long-term solution is still needed to help build a sustainable and effective ongoing program.



The AIC greatly appreciates Task Force member agencies, NOAA and DOI, for their support and involvement in renewing this important program. The AIC appreciates the partnership, time, and effort of NOAA CRCP staff, in particular Dana Wusinich-Mendez and John Tomczuk, in re-envisioning a new Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program. The AIC also appreciates Karen Koltes, DOI OIA, for her willingness to step in and help support this program.

#### AIC Ask to Task Force

Because this program directly helps in building local jurisdictional capacity, one of the Task Force's identified target issues, the AIC continues to ask Task Force member agencies to help build a sustainable, long-term, and effective Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program. The AIC is more than happy to work with the Steering Committee to brainstorm ideas for sustainable funding.

## CORAL REEF CONSERVATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION

The reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Act (CRCA) of 2000 remains one of the AIC's top priorities. With the end of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress coming up and elections pending it is unlikely that the CRCA will be reauthorized this year. However, the AIC believes it is important to keep CRCA reauthorization *on Congress' radar* and lay the ground work for a collaborative approach, as possible.

To that end, the AIC was very pleased with the suggestion for development of a new working group to coordinate support for the reauthorization of the CRCA during the February 2014 Steering Committee in DC. The working group could coordinate a reauthorization framework/statement to submit to the Steering Committee for review and to solicit additional Federal input. The AIC looks forward to engaging in the new working group.

The current reauthorization bills (H.R. 71 and S. 839) contain critical measures to protect and manage coral reef ecosystems in the states and territories where the management needs for the nation's coral reefs are greatest. There are two components of the CRCA of particular importance to the jurisdictions:

- Formalizing the definitions of *coral* and *coral reef*; and
- Ratifying the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force.

The AIC is currently reviewing components of the CRCA reauthorization bills of concern in preparation for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress.

#### AIC Ask to Task Force

The AIC requests that the Task Force Steering Committee convene the new working group to begin discussions and coordination on a collaborative reauthorization framework or statement in preparation for the beginning of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress in January 2015. The AIC looks forward to engaging in the new working group.

## USCRTF WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

The Watershed Partnership Initiative was begun by the USCRTF in 2009 with funding commitments to watershed locations: Guanica (Puerto Rico) in 2009, Ka'anapali (Hawai'i) in 2010, and then the +one, Faga'alu (American Samoa) added in 2012. Since then, much work has been done within each of the priority watersheds. The Initiative has been successful in increasing coordination of activities across agencies, making these watersheds priority areas, and providing support through various funding mechanisms (e.g., National Fish and Wildlife Foundation). Additionally, much progress has been made by the Watershed Working Group in beginning to



develop metrics to evaluate the success of this Initiative as well as a commitment made to develop a strategic framework for current watershed activities.

The USCRTF Watershed Partnership Initiative was intended from the beginning to build a template that could be applied in other places. In developing this initiative it was recognized that it would take time for successes to materialize. For this reason a five to ten year horizon was identified. Federal officials also highlighted that no commitments could be made to additional future efforts due to funding limitations. This was done with the understanding that similar initiatives would be desirable in those jurisdictions that did not have one of the three focus watersheds or in other watersheds within Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and American Samoa. While Resolution 28.1 (2012) captures some of the background and information on the Watershed Partnership Initiative, the bigger vision is not presented.

#### AIC Ask to Task Force

In continuing to look forward, the AIC would like to revisit this National effort to map out a timeline and process for expanding the Watershed Partnership Initiative to other watershed locations, recognizing that much will depend on funding availability. The AIC is happy to work with the Steering Committee and Watershed Working Group in building such a plan, with the intent to present at the minimum, an outline at the next Task Force Meeting.

## ADDITIONAL TASK FORCE REQUESTS

Two additional requests to the Task Force resulted from conversations during the AIC Meeting on Monday, September 8, 2014. The AIC put forward these two requests for Task Force consideration and action at the Steering Committee meeting (9/10/14) and during the Business Meeting (9/11/14).

- **Steering Committee:** The AIC would like to request your consideration of our Executive Director as a 3rd co-chair to the Task Force Steering Committee.
- **Freely Associated States:** The AIC would also like to request that the Task Force better define the partnership and role of the Freely Associated States within the US Coral Reef Task Force.

## AIC HISTORY

The AIC wanted to take advantage of the opportunity, since this Task Force meeting is being held in Hawai'i where the AIC, to a large extent, began, to present an abbreviated history of the AIC and the USCRTF. The AIC and Task Force are strongly linked and share a rich history.

Our presentation during the Business Meeting shares the history of how the AIC came to be. The intent of this presentation is to learn from the past and use that knowledge to build a better future, together. Below is a brief summary of the information presented.

1993

International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) proposed by U.S. State Department; Clinton Administration environmental initiative - coral reefs are seen as "canaries in the [climate change] coal mine"

EARLY 1994

Office of Management and Budget noted that there are coral reefs in the US and said the US coral reef initiative should have a domestic component; Meeting to discuss ICRI held (January) - States/Territories left out and proposed initial funding did not include funds for



States/Territories or much management; Decision made for ICRI announcement at Small Island Developing States Conference in Barbados (April)

- APRIL 1994** During the Small Island Developing States Conference, state and territorial representatives proposed, to Ambassador Elinor Constable and Under Secretary Timothy Wirth, that the domestic component of the U.S. Coral Reef Initiative be led by states and territories. An agreement was struck that States/Territories should lead domestic components of the ICRI.
- JUNE-AUG. 1994** Pacific Basin Development Council (PBDC) convened a meeting of coastal zone managers on Maui, HI to follow up to the agreement struck in Barbados to have the U.S. domestic coral reef initiative driven by state and territorial governments; State Department agreed and Governors approved proposal to develop and lead this
- DEC. 1994** American Flag Pacific Islands (AFPI) Coral Reef Strategy Workshop held in Honolulu; the first All Islands Coral Reef Strategy was completed and Pacific Basin Governors endorsed it.
- 1995** AFPI workshop participants stayed connected via PBDC and the Island Affairs Committee of the Coastal States Organization; first International Coral Reef Initiative workshop was held in Dumaguete City, Philippines (May) and information on American Flag Pacific Islands Coral Reef Strategy was shared
- 1996** All Islands Coral Reef Coordinating Committee established by Governor-appointed POCs
- 1997** International Year of the Reef; U.S. Coral Reef Initiative established and chaired by NOAA and DOI; early discussions on establishing a U.S. Coral Reef Task Force; Executive order reviewed and States/Territories involved; meeting on Maui held to update the All Islands Coral Reef Strategy; Puerto Rico and USVI attended; Result: *U.S. Islands Coral Reef Initiative Workshop Summary Report* ( "Blue Book")
- 1998** International Year of the Ocean; Executive Order 13089 establishes U.S. Coral Reef Task Force and underscores importance of partnership and cooperation across all sectors (States/Territories, local government, NGOs, scientific community, commercial interests); 1<sup>st</sup> USCRTF meeting in Florida – Governors asked to become members and AIC formally recognized
- 1999** 2<sup>nd</sup> USCRTF meeting held in Maui - resolution that priority funding would be given to activities identified in the Blue Book; Blue Book updated - *U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Initiative Strategy* ("Green Book"); 3<sup>rd</sup> USCRTF meeting in USVI - endorsed draft National Action Plan and Task Force appointed
- 2000** *National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs* adopted at 4<sup>th</sup> USCRTF meeting; Coral Reef Conservation Act becomes law; Florida becomes Associate member of AIC; Freely Associated States become Affiliate members of AIC
- 2001** 7<sup>th</sup> USCRTF meeting - Charter and Oversight Policy adopted; beginning of Grants.gov use for coral funds
- 2002** AIC Secretariat was formally established to provide policy support and coordination for the Committee's participation in the USCRTF; *National Coral Reef Action Strategy* published; 8<sup>th</sup> USCRTF meeting in Puerto Rico - Puerto Rico Declaration: State and Territory programs/projects to be driven by threats-based Local Action Strategies
- 2003** 9<sup>th</sup> USCRTF meeting in DC - Guidance for grants to States/Territories; Sub-committees presented – 1 per basin, intended to secure funding for LAS outside of NOAA

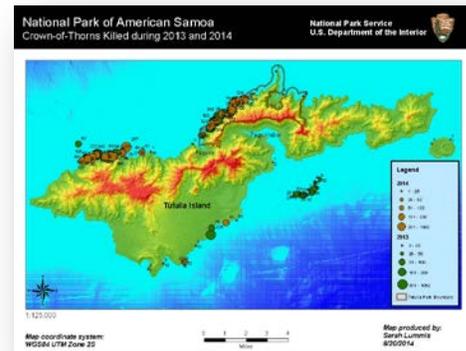


- 2004 NOAA and AIC meeting - Executive Director position for AIC Secretariat formed with jurisdictional agreement to jointly fund
- 2006 Florida becomes full AIC member
- 2007 AIC Strategic Plan for 2008-2013
- 2010 AIC Strategic Plan for 2008-2013 updated
- 2014 AIC Strategic Plan for 2015-2019 created

## UPDATES FROM AIC JURISDICTIONS

### AMERICAN SAMOA

- Crown of Thorns Starfish eradication efforts continue, with increasing populations being seen on the north side of Tutuila.
- A sea cucumber fishing moratorium was extended to support the establishment of long term, sustainable fishing regulations.
- A climate change outreach event in Aunu'u presented healthy community features, climate change facts, a historical timeline and resource mapping.



### COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

- Marine Monitoring Team's Northern Islands cruise observed mass mortality of shallow water corals in Guguan, Sarigan, and Anatahan from the 2013 bleaching.
- Thirty percent of streams in six priority watersheds were ground-truthed and mapped to inform National Park Service source identification work.
- Fifty-six students completed the initial "Watershed Warrior" program.



Garapan Elementary School students label a storm drain with "Don't Dump" stickers in Garapan, Saipan. Credit: Avra Heller, BECQ

### FLORIDA

- Elkhorn corals show an increase in live tissue and asexually-produced new colonies in the Florida Keys, while new fine-scale habitat mapping reveals 38+ acres of dense staghorn coral offshore southeast Florida.
- *Our Florida Reefs* Community Working Groups completed "educational phase" and began "management action phase" in August with a Marine Planner/Decision Support Tool workshop.
- Two sets of working group recommendations reviewed and approved for further consideration by Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council.



An extensive staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*) thicket offshore Miami, FL. Credit: Joanna Walczak, FDEP Florida Coastal Office



## GUAM

- At Wildland Fire Awareness Clinics, outreach to villages was conducted on preventing wildland fires to minimize exposed soil washing into rivers and ocean.
- About 75 high school students, trained to be *Guardians of the Reef*, taught over 2,000 third graders the importance of the coral reef ecosystem.
- Having a seat in President Obama's State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience, Governor Calvo brought forth impacts caused by climate change and the federal assistance needed to respond accordingly.



Coral reef staff, Christine Fejeran, starts off the Wildland Fire Awareness Clinic with the assistance from Smokey the Bear. Credit: Guam BSP

## HAWAI'I

- Began construction on a coral nursery to support management, research, and mitigation for damage; opening October 2014.
- Updated Hawai'i Coral Reef Strategy priority actions to ensure our management efforts are on track and that we are adapting to new knowledge.
- Successfully implemented reef response for urchin disease outbreak in east O'ahu; disease likely caused by viral agent with environmental drivers, but subsided naturally.



Diver monitoring disease outbreak in *T. gratilla* in eastern O'ahu in spring of 2014. Credit: Div. of Aquatic Resources

## PUERTO RICO

- Lionfish included in SoFo Culinary Fest resulting in 150,000 people reached, 500lbs of lionfish sold by participating restaurants, a culinary class for chefs on lionfish, a lionfish culinary competition, and educational materials and video.
- A *Coral Reef Strategic Plan* and *Coral Reef Communications Plan* have been developed (final draft form) for Puerto Rico as well as a *Volunteer Action Protocol, Data Collection, and Analysis Plan for Rapid Response to Coral Reef Emergencies*.
- In Isla Verde Marine Reserve, installed nine educational signs about the Reserve and its regulations, and conducted outreach activities for the public in the Reserve.



Menu of lionfish offerings from six restaurants as part of the SoFo Culinary Fest. Credit: DNER

## U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

- Legislation drafted to revise the Territorial Park System statute, including the establishment of a national trust for the sustainable financing of territorial park units (MPAs included). Hopeful adoption of the revised legislation by the end of 2014.
- The USVI held its first ever "Don't Stop Talkin' Fish" event in St. Croix. The event highlighted the historical and cultural significance and contributions of the fishing industry to the territory.
- This summer, the St. Croix East End Maring Park hosted its new Eco-camp, educating 10 students on conservation targets within the





territory and designed so that current students can serve as counselors to future students.

## UPDATES FROM AIC AFFILIATE JURISDICTIONS

### FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

- On July 28, 2014, during the 45<sup>th</sup> Pacific Forum Leaders Meeting, FSM received its \$1 Million Pledge from Conservation International to support the Micronesia Challenge.
- Enforcement trainings conducted in FSM States with the assistance Guam Conservation Officers and Pacific Islands Marine Protected Areas Community (PIMPAC).
- First conservation easement of forested wetland in the Yela Watershed, Kosrae State was officially launched on March 31, 2014. Visit: <http://www.kosrae-environment.org/wordpress/conservation-easement-a-first-for-kosrae-and-micronesia/>



MoU signing with FSM President Mori and Conservation International's New Zealand and Pacific Islands Executive Director, Sue Taei. *Credit: Conservation International*

### REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

- Follow-up marine resource surveys were conducted on Rongelap, Ailuk, and Majuro Atolls.
- Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority authorized the sea cucumber fishery and approved the Sea Cucumber Fishery Management Plan, noting that the fishery is important to the national interest and requires measures for effective conservation and utilization.
- Implementation of a national climate change adaptation project, part of the Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States for protecting atoll habitability, land and infrastructure on Woja Island, Ailinglaplap Atoll. The overall objective = improve resilience to coastal climate change impacts.



Road inundation at high tide – Woja Island, Ailinglaplap Atoll. *Credit: Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination*

### REPUBLIC OF PALAU

- Palau International Coral Reef Center conducted a pilot course to train and certify Protected Area Network (PAN) State representatives on the ecological monitoring protocol.
- Palau Conservation Society completes Conservation Cohort on Negotiation and Effective Communication for States' PAN Coordinators.
- Angaur and Ngatpang became the 14th and 15th States to have sites accepted into PAN on June of 2014.



PAN Site Managers who participated on the Negotiation & Effective Communication Workshop. *Credit: Palau Conservation Society*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- *Mahalo* to Lt. Governor Tsutsui and the State of Hawai'i for hosting this meeting.
- Thank you to Governor de Jongh, Lieutenant Governor Tsutsui, and Lieutenant Governor Lemanu for participating in this Task Force meeting. Your continued support of the AIC and coral reef conservation and management is greatly appreciated.
- To the Task Force member agencies, particularly NOAA, DOI, EPA, and NRCS, thank you for your continued support and partnership over the years. We look forward to continued collaboration and cooperation.
- Thank you to Emma Anders, Austin Shelton, Anne Rosinski, and their conference team, for all your hard work in planning, coordinating, and executing this meeting.
- Also to the Steering Committee co-chairs, Shannon Simpson and Liza Johnson, thank you for your work in planning this meeting.
- Lastly, thank you to our Executive Director, Carey Morishige, and our three Advisors, Gerry Davis, Mike Hamnett, and Bob Richmond, for all their hard work in ensuring that the interests of the jurisdictions are recognized.

## AIC POINTS OF CONTACT AND SECRETARIAT

### POINTS OF CONTACT

Ms. Fran Castro, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, AIC Chair  
Ms. Damaris Delgado, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, AIC Vice Chair  
Dr. Ruth Matagi-Tofiga, Territory of American Samoa  
Ms. Lorilee Crisostomo, Territory of Guam  
Ms. Joanna Walczak, State of Florida  
Ms. Emma Anders, State of Hawai'i  
Mr. Jean-Pierre Oriol, Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands

### SECRETARIAT

Mr. Gerry Davis, AIC Resource Advisor  
Dr. Michael Hamnett, AIC Policy Advisor  
Dr. Robert Richmond, AIC Science Advisor  
Ms. Carey Morishige, Executive Director

### AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Mr. Don Hess, Republic of the Marshall Islands  
Ms. Alissa Takesy, Federated States of Micronesia  
Mr. Umiich Sengebau, Republic of Palau