U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC)
Report to the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force

St. Croix, USVI
November 2013

Fran Castro, AIC Chair
Introduction

- Thank you to Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr. for hosting us this week
- Welcome to Governor Eloy S. Inos from CNMI, Governor Eddie Baza Calvo from Guam, and Lieutenant Governor Lemanu Peleti Mauga from American Samoa
- Welcome new Task Force co-chair, Dr. Mark Schaefer, Assistant Secretary for Conservation and Management for NOAA
AIC Updates

- New POC for American Samoa: Dr. Ruth Matagi-Tofiga
- Affiliate Member representatives:
  - Alissa Takesy, Federated States of Micronesia
  - Umiich Sengebau, Republic of Palau
- New Secretariat and executive director of the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee: Carey Morishige
AIC Updates cont.

*New* AIC Website - allislandscommittee.org

*New* Facebook - www.facebook.com/AllIslandsCommittee

*New* AIC Blog - allislandscommittee.wordpress.com

*New* AIC and LAS 1-pagers

*Coming soon* UPDATED Jurisdiction 1-pagers
General Updates
**ESA Coral Listing**

Priority issue of the AIC

- Concern re: two items:
  1. “Risk of extinction” determination tool – method = subjective → potential bias
  2. The quality and quantity of science used in applying the tool

The AIC encourages NOAA to determine the final listing by: incorporating new information available:

- Dr. Charles Veron’s eco-regional plan
- “Climate Change 2013” IPCC’s Fifth Assessment Report
Coral Reef Institutes

- CRIs in FL, PR, Hawaii, and Guam
- Provide critical research capacity & support to management entities
- Gaps at the national level; could benefit from expanding the geographical scope of the CRIs
- Gaps at jurisdictional level
- AIC working to characterize the status of the CRI’s engagement in each jurisdiction + ID a strategy to address gaps
Habitat Blueprint

- NOAA initiative
- Focus and share resources
- Site selection; measurable and meaningful improvements in 3-5 yrs.
  - Final stages of NOAA clearance
- Pacific: 9-month effort + workshop
Micronesia Challenge

- **27th Pacific Islands Environment Conference** (June 26-28, 2013 in Guam) – plenary panel & presentations
- **Regional MC Communication Strategy and Framework** – finalizing
- **NEW* Celebrating Seven Years of Progress** fact sheet
- **MC Endowment Fund** – $500K from CI to RMI + $500K from TNC to FSM; part of initial pledges of $3M each to the (currently over $13 million)
Micronesia Challenge

- Micronesia Challenge Business Plan – possible endorsement at Micronesia Chief Executives Summit (Saipan in December)
- *Indicators for Monitoring Social Impacts of the Micronesia Challenge: An Addendum to SEM-Pasifika Regional Socioeconomic Monitoring Guidelines* – developed by MC Measures Working Group
- Regional marine ecological indicators – collected baseline data in nearly all of the main islands in Micronesia and inputting to centralized MC database
- Forest Inventory and Assessments (FIAs) – Working with U.S. Forest Service
Caribbean Challenge Initiative

- **Caribbean Summit of Political and Business Leaders** – May 17-18 in British VI; **Result:** Commitment of $75M and immediate action to protect the region’s marine environment and accelerate renewable energy.

- **Caribbean Biodiversity Fund** – Currently $42M; will be ready to disburse funds to National Protected Area Trust Funds in the near future.

- **Defend Paradise campaign** – Launched at Summit; designed to generate funding for marine conservation in the Caribbean and raise consumer awareness of the marine environment.
Jurisdictional Capacity Assessments

- **FL** – Interviews just completed late Oct.
- **Guam and CNMI** – final draft in review
- **Hawaii** – nearly completed
- **American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and USVI** – completed
- **Synthesis document**
AIC Member and Affiliate Jurisdiction Updates
American Samoa  AIC Member

Crown of Thorns Outbreak

- COTS populations are spreading, and are now being found all the way around Tutuila
- Cooperative effort working to survey and remove COTS around Tutuila, utilizing the Assessment and Rapid Reef Response Plan

Two Samoa Marine Managed Areas Workshop

- Goal: Support Two Samoa’s Strategic Plan Objective to Develop an archipelago-wide network of no-take MPAs.
- Outcomes: 1) ID data gaps and needs; 2) potential projects on ocean circulation and mapping; and 3) messaging for no-take MPA outreach
American Samoa  AIC Member
Faga’ alu Watershed
CNMI AIC Member

- Coral Bleaching Response
  - Bleaching first reported on Aug. 3, 2013
  - Ongoing monitoring of four staghorn sites in the lagoon where bleaching has occurred in the past
  - Tracking bleaching severity of 59 colonies at Paupau
  - Characterizing water quality with YSI
  - Collaborating with the University of Guam in a spatial assessment of bleaching (30 sites on Saipan, 20 Tinian and 10 Rota)
CNMI cont.

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
- Social Vulnerability Index for Saipan
- Nine CNMI-Specific Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the Island of Saipan

CNMI-Wide Survey of Climate Change Knowledge
- Survey of 402 CNMI residents on the islands of Saipan and Tinian.
**CNMI** cont.

**Garapan Conservation Action Plan**

**GOALS:**
- To identify sources of pollution and habitat degradation in the Garapan watershed.
- To educate community members and visitors to become stewards of the watershed and adopt best practices.
- **2-5 year workplan**
- **Over 30 partner organizations** participated
- **Identified nine habitat and species targets**

The Garapan watershed and events. Photo credit: Kaitlin Mattos
Florida  AIC Member

Staghorn Coral Outplanting

- Nursery grown
- Florida Keys reefs
- Evaluate the effect of coral density on fish and invertebrate populations

Photos: The Nature Conservancy
Hosted by Florida’s Local Action Strategy: the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI)

www.OurFloridaReefs.org

A COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS FOR SOUTHEAST FLORIDA’S CORAL REEFS

STEP 1
COMMUNITY MEETINGS
Learn more about our reefs. Share your ideas.

STEP 2
COMMUNITY WORKING GROUPS
Local representatives develop recommendations for reef management actions.

STEP 3
SHARE RECOMMENDATIONS
Community meetings to review draft recommendations. Tell us what you think!

STEP 4
REEF MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
Final recommendations guide development of a reef management strategy for southeast Florida’s coral reefs.
Guam  AIC Member

- **Coordinating Bleaching Surveys Data Collection**
  - East side of Guam (2)
  - Northern Guam (3)
  - West Hagatna Bay –quantitative survey
    - Extensive Bleaching with Staghorn community involvement

- **Long Term Monitoring Program**
  - New Partnership with UOG Marine Lab and WPCRI
  - Contributed to the Community Coral Reef Monitoring Program
  - Sexual Coral Reef Reproduction Workshop and in-water coral nursery
Guam cont.

- **Coral Reef Fellowship – Roxanne Miller**
  - Data set analysis; 2010-2013
  - School & community coral presentations
- **Community Watershed Management**
  - Manell/Geus : Community Conservation Action Plan
  - Fouha Watershed: Humatak Community Fdtn.
- **Outreach**
  - Partner with STEM teachers to integrate coral projects in curriculum and service learning requirements
- **Micronesia Challenge**
  - Partnership with Guam Hotel Restaurant Association
Hawai`i AIC Member

Priority sites: South Kohala and Wahikuli-Honokowai

Wahikuli-Honokowai:
- West Maui Kumuwai Campaign kicked off
- Successful rain garden pilots and training workshops
- Kahekili Herbivore Enhancement Area Birthday Bash
- Reef-friendly landscaping project began
- Community continues to care for re-vegetated slope at a coastal cemetery

South Kohala:
- Full time coordinator
- Investigating interactions between nutrients and corals
- Beginning ungulate exclusion fencing with community partners
- Community outreach to ocean users continued through Makai Watch
- Roi round-up engaged fishers in removing alien fish
Hawai`i cont.

Rapid Response Contingency Plan for Coral Bleaching, Disease, and Crown of Thorns Outbreaks

- Anne Rosinski, Coral Fellow – coord. Implementation; 2-day workshop

Community Engagement and Empowerment

- New Makai Watch Coordination and Community-based Subsistence Fishing Area Planner
  - Place-based fishing rules: administrative structure and community engagement
- Strategic Plan for the Makai Watch program – Implemented by Luna Kekoa, former Coral Fellow
Puerto Rico  AIC Member

Education and Outreach at Mona Island Natural Reserve to Promote Implementation and Compliance of Fisheries Regulation

- Promoted management and conservation of coral reef fish populations
- Improved compliance with fisheries regulations

Main outcomes and project deliverables:

- 173 visitor surveys
- Educational short video & materials to visitors
- Fact-sheet provided for camping permits
- Off-site educational campaign – 25 businesses
- 300 educational materials to stakeholders & businesses
- Case-study analysis of interventions; 4 interventions on illegal fishing
- No-take zone boundaries – DNER Rangers’ GPS units
- Rangers’ surveillance and patrolling increased
Puerto Rico cont.

Education and Outreach

- Two PSA’s have been developed – shared through social media
  - Singing chef – lionfish control & consumption
  - “Chana” the brown pelican – land-based sources of pollution

Coral Farming Forums

- April 25 and September 11, 2013
- Promoted coral farming organization participation
- Dialogue among numerous partners
- Forums will continue on a regular basis to promote discussion and to share information
U.S. Virgin Islands AIC Member

- **Improving Enforcement Capacity**
  - Professional development and training opportunities
  - LBSP and fisheries training for officers and rangers
  - Partnership with NOAA Fisheries; support from NOAA CRCP

- **Watershed Management Efforts**
  - STEER contaminant work
  - Coral Bay sediment mitigation
  - STX East End rain gardens, Adam’s Gut project
U.S. Virgin Islands cont.

- Don’t Stop Talking Fish
  - Led by USVI Fisheries Mgmt. liaison
  - Initiative designed to celebrate and communicate the cultural significance of USVI fishing industry

- St. Croix East End Marine Park (STXEEMP) Watershed Stewardship Group
  - Led by Coral Fellow
  - Raise awareness of LBSP and effects on waters
  - Assist in implementation of mgmt. plan recommendations
Republic of the Marshall Islands
AIC Affiliate Member

• “Facilitator’s Guide to Implementing the Reimaanlok Conservation Planning Process” – Published and available online

• 4th Marine Conservation Certificate Program – 21 graduates; building local capacity

• “Landowner’s Guide to Coastal Protection” – Published and available

• Protected Area Network (PAN) Legislation – Drafted

• New Climate Change Certificate Program @ College of the Marshall Islands – Being piloted; for elementary school teachers and resource managers
The AIC...

- USCRTF and NOAA - continue to communicate and engage re: proposed ESA listing of 66 coral species;

- Governors and USCRTF - support the reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000;
  - definitions for *coral* and *coral reef*, capacity and authority for emergency response, and ratification of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
  - NOAA – work with AIC in defining a common path forward

- USCRTF - continued support of the watershed partnerships and
- USCRTF - continue support for the watershed partnerships over the long term

- USCRTF - support the jurisdictions in capacity building, particularly in restoring a Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program
Acknowledgements

- Governor de Jongh, Jr., and agencies and partners in the U.S. Virgin Islands, for hosting this Task Force meeting.

- All Governors and Lt. Governor for their continued support of coral reef conservation and management.

- NOAA and DOI for their support and partnership.

- USFWS and DOI/OIA for funding and hosting the 2013 Governor Sunia Summer Internships.
Regional Ocean Partnerships and Regional Planning Body
Pacific Regional Ocean Partnership

- **Established:** August, 2012
- **Main Objectives:**
  - Identify Coastal and Ocean Management Priorities
  - Promote regional sustainability of resources
  - Enhance mechanisms to manage ocean and coastal resources
- **2-day Regional ESA Workshop,** July 9-10; engaged Federal partners
- **All PROP Members sit on Pacific RPB**
PROP

- **University of Hawai‘i Regional Ocean Partnership (ROP) III proposal** – funded by NOAA

- **Next Steps:**
  - Regional disaster response training workshop; launch website, and implementing other priorities in the action plan.

- **“LIKE” us on Facebook:** [https://www.facebook.com/PacificROP](https://www.facebook.com/PacificROP)

- **Steering Committee Members**
  - Jesse Souki – Chair (HI)
  - Fran Castro – Vice Chair (CNMI)
  - Joseph Cameron – (Guam)
  - Dr. Ruth Matagi-Tofiga (AS)
Hawaii Ocean Partnership Status

**November 2013**
Policy Group will meet to adopt governance agreement, formalizing the Partnership

**May 2013**
Policy Group briefed on using a governance agreement to formalize the partnership

**November 2012**
Staff hired to develop the Partnership

**December 2013**
Action Teams form to focus on ORMP goals

**July- Sept 2013**
Agency staff and Office of Planning drafted agreement

**July 2013**
Ocean Resources Management Plan updated

**January 2013**
Policy Group meets to discuss concept and timeline to formalize the Partnership

Formalized
In progress
Not yet started
Pacific Islands Regional Planning Body

- Inaugural Meeting: July 11 and 12, 2013 (Honolulu)
- Co-Chairs: Michael Tosatto (NOAA) and Jesse Souki (HI)
- Members: 8 federal; 8 non-federal; 1 fishery council
- Charter: In Draft
- Mission
- Website: http://pacificislandsrpb.org/
- PIRPB Identifier: selected
- Next Steps:
  - Form a data work group
  - Finalize goals and objectives
U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee
http://allislandscommittee.org/

Relationships Between Partnerships

**Hawaii Sub-ROP**
- Focus on HI priorities and spatial plan
  - Includes more resource users

**Pacific ROP**
- Focus on regional coordination of ocean issues
  - Shared focus on resource management

**Pacific Islands RPB**
- Focus on a regional spatial plan
  - Current participation of Fed agencies and FMC

**Overlapping membership**
- Close communication
- Similar expertise

**State led**
- State/Fed led
  - Potential FACA req
Regional Ocean Partnership and Regional Planning Body Relationship

**ROP**
- Mostly state-led collaboration
- Focused on broader set of issues
- Includes more stakeholders and resource users

**Overlap Membership**
- Close communication
- Similar expertise

**RPB**
- Potential FACA requirement
- Greater variety of fed agencies
- Focus on Marine Spatial Plans

**Roles and Relationships unclear**
- Would like to use ROP as core RPB
- Composed of state, federal, tribal reps, and 2 Fishery Management Council members
ROP and RPB Opportunities and Benefits

- Collaboration at all levels of government (efficiencies)
- Leveraging resources, knowledge and expertise
- Developing a regional marine spatial plan
- Collaborating on regional issues
- Increasing science and data development
- Enhance data accessibility to benefit multiple users
Caribbean Regional Ocean Partnership

- Very active – meetings, CMSP training, etc.
- Data Portal – Under construction; also in process of creating spatial data where limited
- $358K secured for this upcoming year for continued CROP support
- Hope to begin human uses mapping in the upcoming year

Caribbean Regional Planning Body

- First meeting held during Task Force; however we have been working closely with federal partners within the region
- See as an opportunity where CROP can provide information on local needs
Questions?