



FSM Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project Newsletter

Strategic Environmental Assessment in Kosrae



In January 2020, the Kosrae State Government received technical and financial support from the FSM Ridge to Reef Project to undergo a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA), a rigorous process used to update Kosrae's Land Use Plan (LUP). Under the guidance of an international consultant, the R2R Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority (KIRMA), the Kosrae R2R team and local partners, a local consultant group, the Ethnographic Mile, was contracted to facilitate the SEA in Kosrae.

The first two key outputs include preparation of a Kosrae State baseline (environmental/social) profile

R2R Project launches signing ceremony for implementation of the Sappo Oror and Ununo (SOU) Forest Stewardship Plan

On July 10, 2020, the FSM R2R Project, through the Chuuk Conservation Society (CCS), held a signing ceremony for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Chuuk State Government, CCS and landowners from Sappo, Oror, and Ununo (SOU) in Fefan.



In October 2019, the R2R project approved funding for the implementation of the SOU Forest Stewardship Plan, an effort aimed to reduce pressures from competing land use across the High Islands of the FSM. Furthermore, in May 2020 the R2R project engaged CCS as the lead implementing entity for the implementation of the SOU Forest Stewardship Plan. The MOU serves the purpose of obtaining permission and support from the land owners, whose lands comprise the SOU managed area in Fefan, for the implementation of the Forest Stewardship Plan and its related activities. The signing of the MOU is a significant milestone for the R2R project in Chuuk, as it paves the way forward for implementing the SOU Forest Stewardship Plan.

to be included in the SEA report and assessment of existing capacity of State Departments, agencies and NGOs – both completed in June and July 2020. From July to August, multiple intensive consultation workshops and meetings were held with the five key communities in Kosrae (Tafunsak, Lelu, Malem, Utwe and Walung), to collect on information on key environmental and socioeconomic trends and pressures based on community perspectives. Additionally, a State Expert Panel was established to provide critical inputs to the prioritization of key issues, assess the impact of the four different growth scenarios, and identify where changes of the LUP are needed.

The Kosrae Land Use Plan (KLUP) has not been updated for nearly 20 years, thus, the SEA process allows for a new and more effective approach in revising the plan. KIRMA looks forward to continuing efforts with the SEA team in order to reach its goal of having all relevant information at hand required for the update of the KLUP. The next step will be for the local consultant to prepare a draft SEA report for review.

“Protect our Home, from Land to SEA”

R2R Project Completes Expansion of Compost Facility in Yap



On August 10, 2020, the expansion of the Division of Agriculture and Forestry's (DAF) compost facility, funded

by the R2R project, was completed and certified by the Department of Public Works & Transportation. Despite setbacks due to shortage of available building materials and the temporary cease of government operations, all in connection to the ongoing COVID-19, the construction work completed successfully.

The compost shed is an extension of the Dry Litter Piggery in Dachngar, Yap, where DAF is situated. This facility will support rehabilitation of degraded areas in Yap, including savannah lands, by developing compost to help improve soil qualities.

R2R Partners endorse Nanwap Resource Management Plan

On July 29, 2020, the Nanwap community and supporting partners presented their management plan to the late paramount chief (Nahnmwarki) of Madolenihmw for endorsement. The event signified the outcome of collaborative work and commitment to effectively manage the Nanwap Marine Protected Area (MPA). The visit with the Nahnmwarki included key members of the Nanwap Community, Madolenihmw Municipal Government, Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP) and the R2R Project's Pohnpei State Team.

During the visit, the Director of CSP, on behalf of the visiting team, stressed the importance of the management plan and how support from the Government and Traditional Leadership of Madolenihmw is crucial in order to successfully implement the plan.

The "Nanwap MPA 5 Year Management Plan" clearly lays out a total of seven (7) Management Goals. It includes steps to increase population of rabbit fish (target fish species) by deterring illegal fishing and addressing the issue of land-based threats. The plan seeks to raise awareness on the rules of the Nanwap MPA, and pursue environmentally friendly practices. An important component of the plan is to inform its surrounding



communities on ways to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The late Nahnmwarki offered closing remarks by bestowing his full blessing and endorsement – marked by his own signature – on the Nanwap Management Plan. Co-management has been proven as the best practice for natural resource management and conservation in culturally sensitive areas such as Pohnpei State

The whole process of management plan development to the endorsement of *Wasa Lapalap Isopahu*, Nahnmwarki of Madolenihmw was made possible through the support of R2R Project, in close collaboration with CSP.

One Step Forward Towards Legalizing the Lelu MPA

On September 2, 2020, the Lelu Marine Protected Area (Awane) passed its second and final reading by the Kosrae State Legislature during its Fourth Regular Session. With this new development, Kosrae has now moved one step forward in its efforts to legalize its Marine Protected Areas, which will contribute to goals and objectives of the FSM Ridge to Reef Project, the Protected Area Network (PAN), and the Micronesia Challenge.

“Protect our Home, from Land to SEA”

The Lelu Marine Protected Area, formerly known as Awane Marine Protected Area, was established through a series of community consultation workshops and meetings. During the development of the Lelu MPA management plan, the community identified common threats to coastal and marine areas in Kosrae. Such threats identified include climate change impacts on the environment and food security, unsustainable fishing practices and decrease in mangrove resources, lack of awareness, and lack of enforcement of existing laws protecting the environment. The Lelu community believes that establishing a marine protected area is one of the solutions to addressing the threats identified. Temporary markers have been installed to mark the delineation of the sites.

The Lelu Resource Management Committee under the Lelu Town Government would also like to express their appreciation for all of the support provided by the Kosrae state environmental agencies and departments, NGO's, partners and the FSM R2R Project to make this effort a success.

R2R partners celebrate delineation of the Kitti Watershed Reserve

On September 4, 2020, a traditional ceremony was held at the WKS Community Center in Enipein Pah, Kitti, to celebrate and acknowledge the field team responsible for completing the long-awaited delineation of the Watershed Forest Reserve within the boundaries of Kitti Municipality.

Pohnpei State Public Law No. 1L-128-87, known as Pohnpei Watershed Forest Reserve and Mangrove Protection Act of 1987, was established to create and provide for the protection and maintenance of an effective watershed forest reserve, to protect important watershed areas, and to provide for the conservation and management of mangrove forests. It also called for a Watershed line to be delineated and demarcated on the ground to protect native forests from human encroachment. This particular law had an initial history of resistance from Pohnpeians, as community involvement in the development of the law was virtually nonexistent in the early years after it was passed, and the proposed rules and regulations failed to recognize traditional Pohnpei resource use and authority. It was met with fierce confrontations between Government officials and local sakau farmers. Many prominent environmental experts and advocates attempted to carry out the provisions of the law but were unsuccessful.

In 2017, the FSM Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project helped revitalize the need to complete the delineation of the Kitti Watershed Forest Reserve. It all began with a small outreach and awareness team that visited communities



throughout Kitti Municipality to galvanize support for the work to continue after so many years of dormancy. The community outreach efforts culminated in a decision made by the Kitti *Pwihnen Wahu* (Council of Traditional Leaders) for the delineation of the watershed. In 2019, the R2R Project contracted CSP to take the lead in facilitating all activities associated with the delineation of the watershed.

September 4, 2020 brought together everyone that played key roles in the achievement of such a significant milestone for natural resource management here in Pohnpei State. The survey was carried out from June 9 to September 4, 2020, covering over 12 miles of the delineation line. The R2R Project acknowledges CSP, Kitti Municipal Government, Pohnpei State Government field team members and other partners for their hard work, commitment and continued support

R2R Partners host 17th Annual Cross-Site Learning Exchange in Pakin

Through funding support from the R2R project, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), with support from State and NGO partners, facilitated a learning exchange for the Pohnpei Protected Areas Network, locally known as the Annual Cross-Site Visit (CSV). This year marks the 17th Annual Cross-Site Visit and was hosted by the Pakin Marine Protected Area (MPA) community of Sokehs. The two-day event was held on the island of Pakin from August 21-23, 2020 with the theme of "Laid Keneinei, Laid Poatoapoat" (Fish Smart, Fish Forever).



"Protect our Home, from Land to SEA"

Communities participating in the CSV included Sapwitik MPA, Depehk/Takaiou MPA, Nanwap MPA, Peniou MPA, Nahtik MPA, Palikir MPA, Pakin MPA, KP3R (Kipar, Pwoaipwoai, Pwok, Peil, Rohnkitti), and Peidie. State, National, and NGOs present included the Pohnpei State Department of Resources and Development (R&D), FSM DECEM (through the R2R Project), FSM R&D, Division of Fish and Wildlife (Department of Public Safety) and the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT).

Two key lessons learned that came out of the CSV were 1) funding and support is needed from donors and partners to implement projects that benefit the community sustainability (such as improved MPA monitoring, use of new technology such as drones, and sustainable fishing) and 2) stricter regulations, through support from the leadership and legislature, are necessary. Due to a decline in natural resources, it is critical for government and communities to be more vigilant in managing their protected areas. The event overall was a great success and opportunity to share valuable information.

R2R Partners Complete 2020 Coral Reef Monitoring across the FSM



In July, 2020, the CSP concluded its Coral Reef Monitoring (CRM) in Pohnpei State with support from partner agencies including State Department of R&D, Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture (OFA) and the R2R Project. Twenty (25) sites were selected around the island for assessment. In Yap, the CRM team concluded a long and intensive field work, collecting biological data in 21 sites around its main island, on August 30, 2020. The team included staff from the R2R project, Division of Marine Resources & Management Division (MRMD), Yap Community Action Program, NGOs and community members. In Chuuk, R2R partners concluded its 2020 CRM activities on October 30, 2020, collecting data from 19 different sites within the lagoon. The team included staff from the Department of Marine Resources, Chuuk Conservation Society and the R2R Project.

The CRM is part of an ongoing coral reef monitoring effort across the region to gauge the ecological health of reefs and other marine resources. Results help measure progress toward the Micronesia Challenge goal of effectively conserving 30% of near-shore marine resources by 2020, and 50% by 2030. The wider monitoring is coordinated by the MCT with support from NOAA, University of Guam, and other partners. R2R leveraged funds to support the CRM this year, through a Low Value Grant to MCT, to help collect biological data relevant to its targeted fish species.

This year's coral reef monitoring was a success, and the result of healthy collaboration between government, NGO, and community members. The data is currently being reviewed, and results will be shared once analysis is complete.



R2R project commences management planning activities in Riken, Yap

Under the guidance and mentorship of TNC's Conservation Planner, Mrs. Berna Gorong, the R2R staff in Yap, in collaboration with MRMD and the PAN Coordinator, initiated a Local Early Action Planning and Management (LEAP) exercise with the community of Riken in Gagil on September 12, 2020, to kick-start their management planning efforts.

LEAP is a tool designed to be used by conservation practitioners and partners to help communities in Micronesia implement adaptation planning with a focus on ecosystem-based actions. The

LEAP tool helps community practitioners facilitate participatory activities to improve community understanding of climate

“Protect our Home, from Land to SEA”

change impacts, engage stakeholders and sectors in the planning process, and facilitate an understanding of which climate and non-climate threats to social and ecological resources are most important.

Riken is one of R2R project's marine protected area sites in Yap, provided support through the development of its management plan. This is an effort to help build strong and resilient communities.

The FSM R2R Project Team Welcomes New Additions



Mr. Regino Orichy joined the R2R project in July as a PA Ranger for Chuuk State. He recently graduated from the College of Micronesia (COM) – Chuuk Campus in 2019 with an Associate's Degree in Education. Prior to joining the R2R team, Mr.

Orichy was a Counselor's Assistant at COM. His interests are in conservation and natural resources management. As a newly hired member on the team, Mr. Orichy hopes to bring the knowledge he has along with the knowledge he will gain on the job into his community to help his fellow youth in learning more about conservation efforts and how they can make a change in their communities.



Mr. Vincent Rikat also joined the R2R project in July as a PA Ranger for Chuuk State. Prior to joining the R2R Project, he served as a conservation officer for the Soponoch Marine Protected Area (MPA). During his time as a conservation officer, he collaborated with

DMR by developing Giant Clam and Cucumbers farms out in the Soponoch MPA. Mr. Rikat applied for the PA Ranger position with hopes of continuing Chuuk's efforts in managing PAs and other key areas of biological significance.

The two PA Rangers are currently based with the Chuuk State Department of Marine Resources (DRM) and are responsible for supporting the project's partner agencies in Chuuk with implementation of PA activities including monitoring and enforcement of laws and regulations relevant to protected areas in Chuuk.



Ms. Tamae Waguk joined the Ridge to Reef Project in September 2020 as the Kosrae State Technical Officer. Ms. Waguk recently graduated from Sophia University on an APIC-MCT International Student Scholarship with a Master's Degree in Global Environmental Studies, and brings her knowledge and skills to the team. She strongly supports the R2R objectives to 'strengthen local, State and National capacities and actions to implement integrated ecosystem-based management through a "Ridge to Reef" approach' in Kosrae. Her vision is to enhance the sustainability of natural resources and the conservation of biodiversity for healthy and well-managed river basins and coastal areas where people and nature thrive.

Under the supervision of the FSM R2R Technical Coordinator, Waguk will assist the Kosrae R2R Coordinator, Mr. Marston Luckymis, will closely work with State, NGO, and community partners in planning, implementing and monitoring Kosrae's R2R activities. She will provide technical support and expertise to the project on the ground in order to reach target indicators and meet the Ridge to Reef objectives. Ms. Waguk can be reached at kosraer2rto@gmail.com.

For more information on the FSM R2R Project, please contact:

Project Manager, Rosalinda Yatilman,
rosalinda.yatilman@decem.gov.fm Tel: +691 320-8815

Chuuk State Coordinator, Kriskitina K. Marar,
krizk66@gmail.com Tel: +691 330-6729

National Technical Coordinator, Rachael Nash
nash.fsmr2r@gmail.com Tel: +691 950-8704

Yap State Coordinator, Debra Laan
debra.laan@gmail.com Tel: +691 350-2113

Financial Administrator, Fritzgerald Weilbacher
fritzweilbacher@gmail.com Tel: +691 320-8815

Pohnpei State Technical Officer, Gorden K. Lebehn
kodenlebehn@gmail.com Tel: 691 320-8151

Kosrae State Coordinator, Marston Luckymis,
mluckymis@gmail.com Tel: +691 370-3646

Chuuk State Technical Officer, Francis Stephen
francistephen543@gmail.com Tel: 691 330 6729

Pohnpei State Coordinator, Jorg Anson,
jorgyanson@gmail.com Tel: +691 320-1780

Yap State Technical Officer, Elijah Tarofalmaal
r2ryapto@gmail.com Tel: 691 350 2350

"Protect our Home, from Land to SEA"