

## PRESS RELEASE



On October 25-26, 2016, FSM partners, in collaboration with the UNDP, commenced its Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project inception workshop at the Pohnpei State Governor's Conference Room. Partners included government agencies, NGOs, and other community based organizations involved in conservation.

Through funding from GEF and facilitated through the UNDP, the R2R project in the FSM is designed to engineer a paradigm shift towards management of natural resources with an ecosystem-based management "ridge to reef". Inherent in this approach will be to strike a balance between coastal livelihoods and biodiversity conservation, risk reduction, climate variability and climate change. There are two key outcomes envisaged in this R2R project include: (1) Integrated ecosystems management and rehabilitation on the high islands of the FSM to enhance ridge to reef connectivity, and (2) Management effectiveness enhanced within new and existing PAs on the high islands of FSM as part of the R2R approach (both marine and terrestrial).

### **25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> October: National Inception Workshop**

For two days, stakeholders from the four states, national government, regional and NGO partner groups gathered to launch its "Ridge to Reef" project (worth USD 4.6m), otherwise known as R2R. This national inception workshop was presided by the Office of Environment & Emergency Management (OEEM) over the course of two intense days, with a mix of 66 stakeholders from across the four states to present on the project.

In his opening address to the participants, the Pohnpei State Lt. Governor, the Honorable

Reed B. Oliver, talked about connectedness of quote *“what affects our mountain ridges, impacts our lagoon reefs. What we do in our watershed will affect the marine resources we rely on for our livelihood”*. Lt Governor urged the R2R stakeholders to *“...carefully consider the type of activities needed to protect and sustain the management of our natural resources. Like any issue that we cannot afford to be bipartisan to, we cannot separate our ridges from our reefs”*.

The newly established project team, led by Rosalinda Yatilman and supported by UNDP assigned technical adviser and the four State Coordinators, facilitated the inception workshop program. The first day of inception was about setting the context of the work to be done in the first project year, against what was formulated when the project design was planned a few years back. Highlights of the second day centered on discussing management arrangements, clarification on reporting at inter-state, to national project implementation unit right up to UNDP. Over the course of the two days, group work led to the development of draft work plans for States of Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap.

Next course of action in November for State Coordinators will be to organize planning on-island with key stakeholders to finalize State-work plan of first year of project implementation.

More in the loop in our next R2R update.

**For more details on the R2R in FSM project, please contact:**

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