



Protecting Fish Habitat In Guam

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Overview

- Habitat Conservation Division Mission
- Coral Reef Conservation Program Priorities
- Activities in Guam
- Opportunities for Partnership



Habitat Conservation Division

Goal: To conserve, protect, and restore marine habitat and coastal ecosystems in the Pacific Islands Region

- Charged under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act (MSA) to conserve Essential Fish Habitat
- In addition:
 - Coral Program
 - Regulatory Support
 - Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Review
 - Marine Debris, Invasive Species, Oil Pollution Act, Coastal Zone Management, etc.



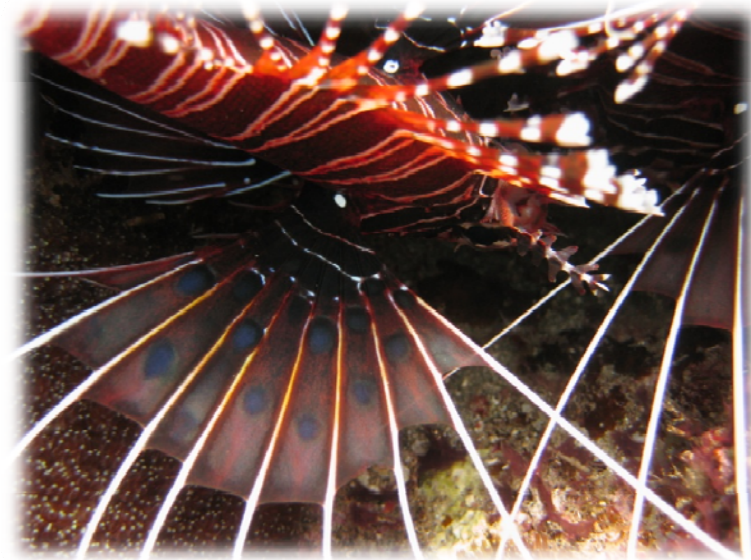


- The CRCP supports effective management and sound science to preserve, sustain and restore valuable coral reef ecosystems for future generations.
- 3 focus areas:
 - Impacts of Land Based Sources of Pollution
 - Fishing Impacts
 - Climate Change Impacts



HCD Activities in Guam

- Guam Buildup
- Essential Fish Habitat Reviews / Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Reviews
- Coral Reef Conservation



Guam Buildup



- HCD team working to address impacts to EFH from multiple stressors associated with the buildup
- Coordinate efforts with the Government of Guam, US Environmental Protection Agency, and US Fish and Wildlife Service among others
- High priority for the region and has been selected as a focus of the Habitat Blueprint for the Pacific Islands Region





NOAA HABITAT BLUEPRINT

*A Framework to Improve Habitat for
Marine Resources and Communities*

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NOAA HABITAT BLUEPRINT OVERVIEW



- *NOAA's Objective*—
Healthy habitats that sustain resilient and thriving marine resources and communities
- We protect and restore habitat for:
 - Sustainable and productive fisheries
 - Threatened and endangered species
 - At-risk habitats, including corals, shellfish, and wetlands
 - Resilient coastal communities and economies



WHY IS THE BLUEPRINT NEEDED?



- Widespread habitat loss and degradation
- Lack of coordination between habitat activities
- “Random acts of kindness aren’t working”
- Limited resources to address challenges



WHAT IS THE NOAA HABITAT BLUEPRINT?



- Improve the way we do business
- Focus on improving habitat conditions for priority species and habitats at risk



WHAT IS THE NOAA HABITAT BLUEPRINT?



- Make decisions in broader ecosystem context and consider competing priorities
- Leverage partnerships to better execute our authorities, tools, and capabilities



FOUR KEY APPROACHES



- 1) Implement Regional Habitat Initiatives
- 2) Establish Geographic Priorities
- 3) Implement a Systematic and Strategic Approach to Habitat Science
- 4) Strengthen Policy and Legislation





HABITAT BLUEPRINT REGIONAL INITIATIVES

*To preserve or improve habitat conditions to
address specific challenges to living marine
resources within a geographic area*

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ESTABLISH GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES TO FOCUS HABITAT CONSERVATION

*Focus expertise, resources and actions
in targeted areas to maximize benefits
to marine resources*



IMPLEMENT A SYSTEMATIC & STRATEGIC APPROACH TO HABITAT SCIENCE

*Prioritize our science & use a more
integrative approach for planning &
conducting quality habitat science*



STRENGTHEN POLICY & LEGISLATION TO ENHANCE HABITAT CONSERVATION

*Remove barriers & seize opportunities at
the national level to increase the durability
of the Habitat Blueprint*

Pacific Islands Region *Habitat Blueprint Initiative*

- To reduce habitat impacts through collaborative federal and local government partnerships.
- Implement Adaptive Program Management (APM) to protect and improve coral reef habitat condition for Guam through the no net loss of coral reef habitat while establishing a new national alternative for habitat conservation.
- Improve Essential Fish Habitat consultation tools and outcome
- Protect social, cultural, natural resources health and quality of life issues for Guam



EFH Reviews / FWCA Reviews

- Review any project with a federal nexus that may affect Essential Fish Habitat
- Projects include:
 - Maintenance Dredging
 - Wharf replacement/ repair
 - Marina Upgrades
 - Bridges
 - CVN berthing



EFH Reviews

- For each project, determine potential for impacts to EFH
- Work with project proponent to avoid or minimize impacts through pre-consultations
- Provide Conservation Recommendations to reduce impacts
 - Use of Best Management Practices
 - Restrictions on In-Water Work during Coral Spawning
 - Invasive Species Inspection for equipment



Coral Reef Conservation

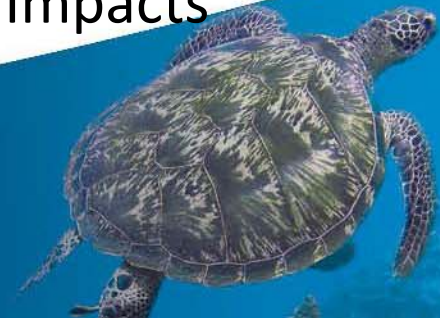
- Climate Change / Reef Resilience
- Biosecurity
- Response Team
- Monitoring
- Land Based Sources of Pollution
- Community Engagement



Climate Change - Reef Resilience

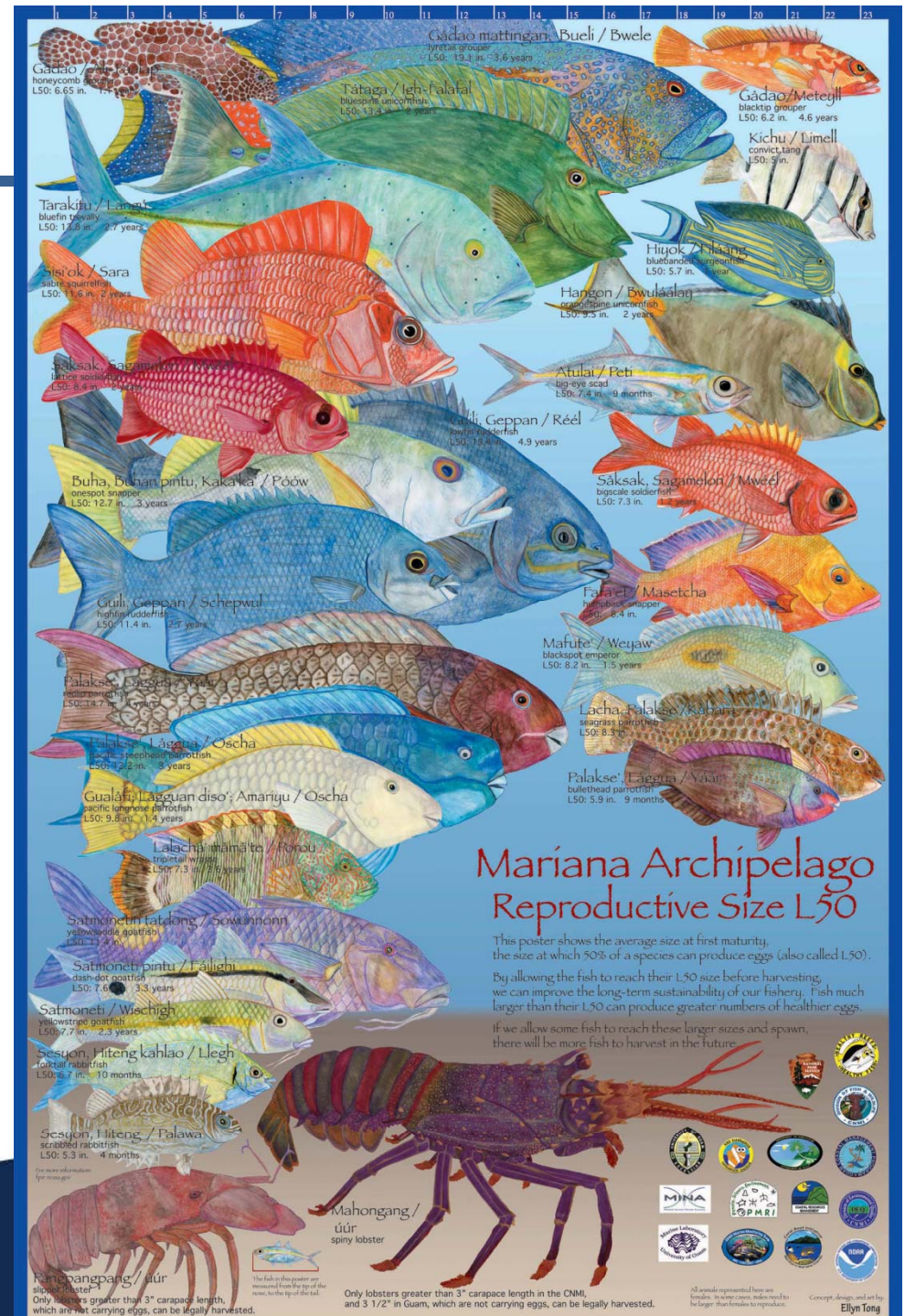


- Ecosystem Balance
 - Ensure that all parts of the ecosystem are in place
 - ◆ Herbivorous fish and invertebrates
 - ◆ Apex predators
 - ◆ Prevent Invasive Species
- Reduce Impacts
 - ◆ Pollution
 - ◆ Recreational Impacts



Size Matters

- Reproductive Size L50 Poster
- Measuring Guide
- Improve Fish Stocks by increasing reproductive potential



Rapid Response

- Part of multi-agency team to address issues such as:
 - Groundings
 - Coral Bleaching
 - COTS outbreaks
 - Disease outbreaks
 - Other acute events
- Efforts currently constrained by lack of funding and local legislation for addressing reef impacts



Land Based Sources of Pollution



- Secured funding to conduct two pilot projects in the Manell-Geus Priority Watershed in Merizo
 - Streambank stabilization
 - Buffer strips
 - Funding to help to improve the availability of erosion control plants and materials on Guam



Monitoring

- Provide Support for the Guam Comprehensive Long Term Monitoring Program
- Program seeks to evaluate the health of Guam's reefs and monitor changes over time
- Sites: Tumon Bay, East Agana Bay, Western Shoals, and Piti Bay
- Initial review of program complete, now working on additional analyses for a summary report



Community Engagement

- Community Coral Reef Monitoring Program
 - Facilitate community involvement in reef monitoring and management
 - ◆ Biological Monitoring
 - ◆ Water Quality Monitoring
- Education and Outreach
 - Ready, Set, Snorkel



Partnership Opportunities

- Watershed Restoration Projects
 - Assistance with Planting
 - Input on Project Sites
 - Additional Funding to Expand Project Size
- Community Monitoring Program
 - Seeking groups that are interested in being involved or partners who have projects that are complementary
- Size Matters
 - Looking for partners to distribute posters and measuring guides
 - Develop a curriculum module to improve the use in schools
- Marine Mammal Monitoring
 - Effort to improve our knowledge of marine mammals in Guam



Summary

- The Habitat Conservation Division continues to support efforts to conserve, protect, and restore essential fish habitat in Guam.
- We are working on a wide range of projects and welcome partnerships to improve the positive outcomes for Guam



Si Yu'os Ma'ase!

