



Regional Coral Reef Ecosystem Monitoring Program in Micronesia

Sebastian Marino, Palau International Coral Reef Center Shauna Slingsby, NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program





Why Micronesia?







Challenges



- Limited human and financial monitoring capacity
- Vast region to monitor- 30,082 km² shallow water habitat
- Coordination among various island nations
- Serving different needs and interests of each jurisdiction

GOALS → bottom-up approach to include all regional governments, colleges, communities and NGOs



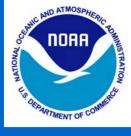
Collaboration is the key!



- NOAA project implementation and regional coordinator
- PICRC regional collaboration and planning
- Dr. Robert van Woesik designed monitoring program
- Regional governmental and non-governmental agencies staff, time, in-kind resources
- Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) & Marine Resources Pacific Consortium (MAREPAC) travel \$ for regional coordinator + site exchange program



Goals



- Standardized monitoring protocol among region
- Assess changes in coral and fish communities
- Provide marine managers and policy makers with accurate data on coral reef resources
- Share information with global coral reef community

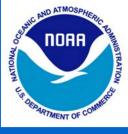


Photo: Shauna Slingsby

Photo: Rob van Woesik



Process



- Met with regional managers and government officials to:
 - discuss local needs, priorities, and challenges
 - interest in future monitoring activities
 - select appropriate personnel for training program
- Hired regional monitoring coordinator and Dr. van Woesik
- Networked with other active groups in region (The Nature Conservancy, Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network)
- Evaluated progress annually and adapted plan





Accomplishments



- 2005 coral and fish taxonomy and i.d., reef sampling methods, experimental design and applications
- 2006 statistics, data analysis and presentation, and database management
- 2007 jurisdiction-level retreats tailored to needs of monitoring team (review of taxonomy, statistics, expansion of monitoring sites, etc.)
- 34 total participants trained over three years representing 6 NGOs, 5 local governments, and 2 academic partners



Lessons Learned



- Follow-up training and consistency of personnel
- Consistent communication between staff and managers and ongoing agency support for monitoring program
- Build alliances among jurisdictions + align different priorities (local, regional, and international)
- Sufficient funding and resources to implement longterm monitoring activities



Where we are now



- FAS monitoring teams continue to collect data on coral and fish resources
- NOAA's 2008 State of the Reefs Report includes updated information and reef trends for Palau, Yap, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Marshall Islands
- NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program increased federal funding for ecosystem monitoring in FAS by \$70k!



Thank you



Chuuk Marine Resources **Chuuk Conservation Society** Conservation Society of Pohnpei Florida's Institute of Technology (Dr. van Woesik) Japanese International Cooperation Agency **Kosrae Marine Resources** Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization Pohnpei Marine Resources & Marine Conservation Unit Marine Resources Pacific Consortium Marshall Islands Marine Resources College of Marshall Islands Palau Conservation Society Palau's Coral Reef Research Foundation Yap Marine Resources

Yap Community Action

Yap Environmental Protection Agency



