

## Fisherman Learning Exchange to Palau Summary

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It has been demonstrated through the Babledaob Watershed Alliance that a learning exchange involving key community people can lead to successful implementation of conservation strategies. In an effort to build community support for conservation in Guam and CNMI, where resource management is the responsibility of government agencies, we worked with CRI focal points in Guam to implement a fisherman learning exchange to Palau.

The learning exchange was held from July 12-15, 2010. Two participants from Guam and one participant from CNMI, who were selected by their respective CRI focal points, joined two fishermen from the State of Ngarchelong in the learning exchange. During the exchange, Speaker Noah Idechong, from Palau National Congress and a renowned conservationist, gave a presentation on the history of the conservation movement in Palau and focused on traditional fisheries stewardship and conservation ethics in Palau. The fishermen also had a chance to interact with the Yimnang Golbuu, a researcher from the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) and the Chairman of the Northern Reef Planning Team as well as Governor Salvador from Ngarchelong State. Governor Salvador introduced them to the community-driven management planning effort for the conservation and management of the northern reef system. In exchange, the fishermen from Ngarchelong had the opportunity to show their fishing grounds to the guest fishermen and the guests had a chance to do some fishing and got to understand first hand why Ngarchelong State is working so hard to conserve their fisheries. While the focus is on learning fisheries management, and they had the chance to see examples of management in the northern reefs, it was also important for the guest fishermen to see other management approaches currently being implemented in Palau. The guest fishermen had a chance to visit the Rock Islands Southern Lagoon where the focus of management is on managing tourism activities rather than simply on fisheries. The learning exchange was filmed by a consultant from Guam who has tried to create a low impact series of the exchange in support of providing awareness to the Micronesia Challenge. A video has been produced and can be viewed at <http://vimeo.com/14027024>.