

Final Project Report (September 1, 2008 – February 28, 2010) to NOAA's GCRCGP Program

1. Organization Title:

Center for Cultural and Technical Interchange between East and West, Inc.

2. Project Title:

Enhancing Socioeconomic Monitoring to Support Coral Reef Conservation in American Samoa

3. Award Number: NA08NMF4630453

4. Report Period: September 1, 2008 – February 2010

5. Project Period Start and End dates: September 1, 2008 – February 28, 2010

6. Project Purpose:

This project is designed to build the socioeconomic monitoring capacities of local stakeholders; coordinate pilot implementations of SEM Pasifika (Socioeconomic Monitoring Guidelines for Coastal Managers in Pacific Island Countries) at three selected sites in the MPA network; and make use of the lessons learned from the socioeconomic assessment processes and results at pilot sites in establishing an effective MPA-wide socioeconomic monitoring program to support informed and improved management of coral reefs in American Samoa. The results of this project will be shared among other MPA networks, locally managed marine area networks, and coral reef conservation and coastal management efforts both in the Pacific Region and worldwide.

7. Project Objectives and Results

The objectives detailed in the proposal are listed below with related project results and achievements.

Objective 1: Train approximately 20-25 American Samoa MPA Network staff, coastal managers, key governmental partners and community representatives in SEM-Pasifika Guidelines for socioeconomic monitoring.

Result: This objective was successfully met with more than 25 people being trained. The comparison between the pre- and post-training surveys clearly showed that the participants gained knowledge and confidence in designing and conducting socioeconomic assessments. The capacities of at least 3 local staff members were built sufficiently for them to continue as assistant trainers for American Samoa. One experienced local socioeconomic assessment team was built during this project and successfully conducted the assessment in Aunu'u.

Objective 2: Implement regionally-specific socioeconomic assessment and monitoring in 3 selected pilot sites in the MPA Network.

Result: Only one of the three selected sites, Aunu'u, fully implemented the assessment, making use of household surveys and carrying through to the point of finishing the report. As mentioned in the previous progress reports, two other teams finished their work plans, drafted their assessment objectives, and decided upon initial indicators and data collecting tools (i.e. household survey). They received appropriate input from relevant technical assistants, but did not revise their plans or continue with the assessment due to other intervening priorities and a lack of commitment to finish project within the grant timeframe.

Objective 3: Apply lessons learned from the processes and results of the socioeconomic assessments conducted at the pilot sites to establish an effective socioeconomic monitoring program throughout the entire MPA Network aimed at supporting coral reef management and conservation.

Result: Socioeconomic assessments generated important baseline information that helps the MPA program understand the relationship between the Aunu'u community and their coastal and marine resources. The information is important for related decision-making processes and for planning and establishing a protected area. The MPA program has begun to integrate socioeconomic assessment into their MPA establishment process and to design monitoring protocols for no-take MPAs when they become established. The program will be working to develop a set of biological as well as socioeconomic indicators that can be incorporated into established/integrated monitoring regimes. The MPA program leader of DMWR stated the following:

It is important that biological results are combined with socioeconomic results in MPA monitoring. If biological effectiveness is proven through the monitoring results, but no enhancement in socioeconomic conditions are found, or vice versa, then the management activities would have to be adapted accordingly....Perhaps when they have narrowed down their focus to a few sites, they can begin site-based integrated monitoring that combines both monitoring methods in each of their MPA sites.

Objective 4: Appropriately and widely share the socioeconomic monitoring project results and lessons with other MPA networks and locally marine managed areas in the Pacific and worldwide.

Result: The assessment results and lessons were shared in presentations with community representatives and stakeholders from different agencies (including MPA Network, CRAG, DWMR, NPAS, ASDOC) at the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources and the Department of Commerce), and will be shared on the international level at the Second Asia Pacific Coral Reef Symposium (2nd APCRS) in Phuket, Thailand in June 2010. A report titled, "An Investigation into Marine Resource Use and Management in Aunu'u, American Samoa"