



Regional Coral Reef Ecosystem Monitoring Program in Micronesia

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Photos: Rob van Woesik



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 long-term monitoring activities



Photo: Rob van Woesik



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!

Photo: Shauna Slingsby





Thank you



Chuuk Marine Resources
Chuuk Conservation Society
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Kosrae Marine Resources
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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

