



FSM Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project Newsletter

Findings of the FSM R2R Terminal Evaluation showcase great outcomes, as presented in the project's final Steering Committee meeting in Kosrae!

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A message from the FSM R2R Project Implementation Unit

On November 1-2, 2022, the FSM R2R staff and Steering Committee (SC) members congregated at the Sea View Conference Room on beautiful island of Kosrae for its final SC meeting. The first in-person gathering for the team in over 2 years due to COVID-19 restrictions, to say the event was memorable as it marked the end of more than 6 years of implementing sustainable land manage (SLM) and protected area (PA) management activities across the FSM. Representatives from all four states and the national government were in attendance, with others, including UNDP officials, joining in virtually.

Day 1 of the SC Meeting opened with remarks from government and UNDP, represented by Ms. Cynthia H. Ehmes, Chairperson of the SC/Assistant Secretary for Environment, DECEM, and Mr. Kevin Petrini, Deputy Resident Representative for UNDP. This was followed by a presentation from Mr. Roland Wong, an independent evaluator conducting the Project's terminal evaluation (TE), who gave a presentation on the initial findings. The TE is a non-biased examination of the Project's results, including measurement of the project's effectiveness and sustainability. Based on the TE findings, the Project was a success, with most targets being met. The final terminal evaluation report is expected to be completed in December 2022. Additionally, the Project Manager and National Technical Coordinator also presented on overall progress and challenges, with state highlights shared by the State Coordinators and Technical Officers. Discussions in the afternoon focused on the Project budget and expenditure, and final actions needed to close out the project. Day 1 concluded with the official closure of the project, with final remarks by UNDP and DECEM, recognizing the many accomplishments made, and hard work from the Project team and partners.

On Day 2 of the SC meeting, the group visited several project locations in Kosrae, where PA representatives gave a tour and shared information about each site, including support provided by the FSM R2R project. These included the Utwe Biosphere Reserve, Kupluc Mangrove Reserve, Pikensukar- Yeiyeis, Lelu and Tafunsak. At 7pm, the group returned to Tafunsak park for the Project's closing reception and presentation of gifts to all staff and SC members, from the PIU, in gratitude for all of their contributions to the Project.

Pohnpei State endorses Mwahnd and Sapwitik Management Plans



On Friday, November 18, 2022, the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), along with Pohnpei's Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture (OFA), the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), the U Municipal Government, the Nett District Government, and the community leaders from Mwahnd and Lenger convened at the Riverside conference room for the

signing of the Mwahnd/Dekehos and Sapwitik Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Management Plans. The Sapwitik MPA management plan was first developed in 2015 by the Lenger community, in partnership with CSP, OneReef Micronesia and the Pohnpei state government. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the team was unable to review and

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update the MPA management plan. Through support from the FSM R2R project, the community updating of the management plan. Through the same partnership, Mwahnd/Dekehos was also given an opportunity to develop its first-ever MPA management plan. Mwahnd was driven to develop an MPA management plan due to its islands being uninhabited for more than 20 years, while the community members scattered around the municipalities of U and Nett.

In addition, both MPAs also finalized their Joint Enforcement Agreement and Standard Operating Procedure (JEA/SOP). The terms of the JEA/SOP

were agreed upon by DFW, the Chief Minister of the U Municipal, and the district administrator of Nett, which led to the mutual agreement of both the U Municipal Government and DFW to sign the JEA/SOP for both communities.

FSM R2R project wishes to acknowledge CSP, the Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture (OFA), the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), the U Municipal Government, the Nett District Government and the community leaders from Mwahnd and Lenger for the vital roles they played in achieving this huge milestone.

Kosrae State hosts course refresher for the Kosrae Conservation and Enforcement Taskforce

On November 17, 2022, Kosrae held a short refresher course for the Kosrae Conservation and Enforcement Taskforce (KCET). Funded by the R2R project through KIRMA, and in collaboration with the Department of Public Safety, the course included a review of: (1) roles and responsibilities of the KCET; (2) environmental laws and regulations for the harvest of specific types of marine species; and (3) procedures for responding to violations, including properly filling out citation forms. The 1-day workshop aimed to enhance the knowledge and skills of the participants (4 women and 18 men) for effective protected area management.



FSM R2R Project hosts Learning Exchange follow-up with PA communities in Chuuk



On October 20, 2022, the R2R team in Chuuk, joined by the Chuuk Protected Area Network (PAN) Coordinator, facilitated a follow-up visit with PA community representatives from Oneisomw, Soponoch, Kuop, Witipwon and SOU at the Chuuk State Governor's auditorium. The follow up visit was an outcome of the project's previously held PA learning exchanges in May 2022, where participants requested for an opportunity to discuss and learn more about the FSM PAN Operations Manual (OM), particularly the Chuuk State Chapter.

A total number of 21 participants joined the event, 9 of which were females and 12 males. The event provided an opportunity for the PAN Coordinator, with support from the R2R team, to present back on Chuuk's Chapter of the FSM PAN Operations Manual, and for community members to raise questions and receive feedback on the OM, as well as get clarifications on what it means for them now that the R2R project is terminating.

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R2R project completes final activity for Weloy before officially closing

On November 14, 2022, the FSM R2R project, through a contract with the Weloy Youth & Sport Organization, completed the creation and installation of 9 signs within the Weloy watershed to help increase visibility and awareness. This was a priority activity in two management plans for Weloy: the Weloy Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP), which focuses on the Forest Stewardship Conservation area and was updated and endorsed in April 2022, and a new holistic municipal level plan, endorsed in July 2022, that builds on the FSP. The plans took several months to develop, with support from R2R and technical partners. The R2R project, in its efforts to help PA communities implement their management plans, also previously executed activities identified in the Weloy FSP, including tree planting to rehabilitate the watershed, and an economic evaluation of Weloy's agroforest through collection and analysis of household survey and field data, activities also prioritized in the Yap State chapter of the FSM Forest Action Plan. The Weloy signage is the final activity supported by FSM R2R.



R2R project completes restoration work for Witipon terrestrial PA



In December 2021, Chuuk State, through the support of the R2R project, endorsed three management plans for the Sponoch, Witipwon and Kuop protected areas (PAs). In 2022, the project allocated funds for implementation of priority activities with each of the management plans. The R2R project is proud to share that in October 2022, its well restoration in Kuop completed. Furthermore, in November 2022, through an agreement with SHIP HOOPS, a plant nursery was established and 500 different plant species were planted within the Witipwon terrestrial PA.

A Message from the FSM R2R Project Implementation Unit (PIU)

The FSM R2R Project Implementation Unit (PIU) would like to dedicate this final newsletter to its Chief Technical Adviser, Ms. Chiara Franco, and the following R2R State Coordinators and Technical Officers: Ms. Debra Laan, Yap State R2R Coordinator, Ms. Kriskitina Kanemoto-Marar, Chuuk State R2R Coordinator, Ms. Clarice Etop-Graham, Chuuk State R2R Technical Officer, and Ms. Tamae Waguk-Luckymis, Kosrae State R2R Technical Officer, for their time and commitment to the project.

The project would like to acknowledge the following Marine Aid Technician and Evaluator (MATE) and PA Rangers for their contributions toward improving PA monitoring and enforcement in the FSM: Mr. Michael "Gaag" Gidibmaa, Yap State MATE; Mr. Vincent Rikat, Mr. Akim Moses, Mr. Regino Orichy and Mr. Taitvin Urien, Chuuk State R2R Rangers,

and Mr. Lydon Nena and Mr. Takasy Waguk, Kosrae State R2R Rangers.

The FSM R2R project would also like to recognize and express sincere gratitude to its executing agency, the FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECEN), UNDP, the R2R Steering Committee members, former R2R project staff, the FSM Department of Resources and Development (R&D), state R2R focal points and staff, local government agencies, States PAN coordinators and NGOs for their continued support to the project. The Project was a huge success, and this would not have been possible without the strong support of all its partners. The FSM R2R project is truly grateful for the assistance and support received from everyone who has been involved over the years.

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