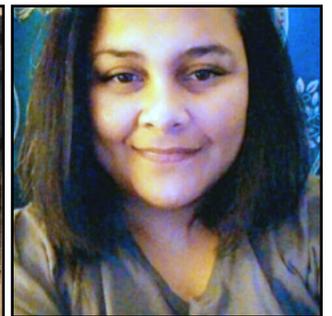


Exciting new Pohnpeian artist works with yarn and other materials to create stunning island themed rugs

By Bill Jaynes
 The Kaselehlie Press

January 31, 2022

Austin, Texas—If you visit AA Getaway, Pohnpei’s newest resort in Oumoar, developed by Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso, on some of the walls you will find the work of an exciting new artist from Pohnpei. Of Mwokillese descent, Sunijiah Joel who was born and raised in Pohnpei and has been an artist for as long as she can remember but only recently started applying her artistic skills to a new medium for her. Joel designs and makes custom carpets that can be used as floor coverings or, as AA Getaway is doing, as beautiful wall hangings.



Joel designs and makes custom carpets that can be used as floor coverings or, as AA Getaway is doing, as beautiful wall hangings.

“Growing up, whenever me and my siblings would draw (we love drawing comics), we’d be told that drawing will not bring us money and to save our notebooks for

school work,” she wrote. “It was pre-internet, so while most little girls watched Disney movies for the story, me and my

[Click here for continuation](#)

Australian Embassy to the FSM hosts Australia Day celebration in Pohnpei

By Bill Jaynes
 The Kaselehlie Press

September 28, 2022

Pohnpei, FSM—“Australia Day is about reflect, respect, and celebrate,” said Vy Duong, Deputy Head of Mission of the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei who served as the Master of Ceremonies at the Australia Day celebration. “Our national holiday provides us and opportunity for us to acknowledge and to learn about our nation’s past and to reflect on what it means to be Australian. On Australia Day we reflect

on our nation’s history. We respect one another’s stories, and we celebrate our nation for its achievements, but most of all for its people.”

Cupids’ Bar and Grille, the restaurant beautifully situated on a hill overlooking Pohnpei’s harbor, Sokehs island, the northern lagoon and the deep ocean beyond was the venue for the Australia Day celebration hosted by the Australian Embassy in the FSM where more than a hundred invited guests gathered.



[Click here for video of Australia Day](#)

[Click here for continuation](#)



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FSM vessels' final journey completed

Marine Surveillance Advisor
January 31, 2022

Brisbane—FSS Micronesia and FSS Independence have safely completed the final passage of their long and illustrious nautical life having arrived in Brisbane, Australia. The vessels travelled over 3000 kilometres taking 11 days to complete the transit.

They passed through the China Strait in Milne Bay province of Papua New Guinea between mainland New Guinea and Samarai Island prior to entering the Coral Sea where they encountered some rougher weather for the transit to Cairns Australia. The vessels stopped in Cairns for 5 hours to refuel, clear immigration and conduct COVID testing prior to commencing the passage through the Great Barrier Reef south to Brisbane. Having made good time both vessels

took the opportunity to anchor off Frazer Island, north of Brisbane for two days prior to entering the port of Brisbane on time at 1000 25 January 2022. LCDR Ward, the Pacific Maritime Security Program transition manager met the vessels on arrival in Brisbane and commented that there was much disbelief about the excellent condition of the vessels noting they were 30 years old. ' It truly is a testament to the care that FSM puts into their patrol boats and reflects the fact that FSM is acknowledged as a leading nation for maintenance of patrol boats in the Pacific.

Both vessels were formally handed back to Australia at 1200 28 January 2022, thus marking the end of their service with the FSM Division of Border Control and Maritime Surveillance. Nineteen members, under the Command of LCDR Paulino Yangitesmal, have now flown to Fremantle Western Australia where they will commence training for the new Guardian Class patrol boat NUSHIP Tosiwo Nakayama, four other officers flew to Cairns to undertake technical training at college prior to joining the crew for the second Guardian Class patrol boat in June 2022.



Majuro Port CEO says six week retrofitting project should open airport for passenger service soon

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

January 31, 2022

Majuro, RMI—Larry Hernandez, Jr., new Chief Executive Officer of the Marshall Islands Port Authority said today in an email that the Port intends to have the airport open for passenger service within six weeks.

United Airlines recently announced that for the safety of its ground employees, it would be suspending flights to Majuro Islands Amata Kabua International Airport. The announcement cited pressing safety concerns with the facilities at the airport regarding the integrity of the roof.

Hernandez says that a recent announcement from United said that “flight 155 and 154 have the schedule of operations but at this time (there will be) no inbound and outbound passengers until further notice.” He posted United’s revised schedule, which does allow for freight but will not disembark or take on passengers.

Contrary to previously published announcements, freight and postal services will continue as renovations are made. “USPS, DHL, and FedEx inbound and outbound is still operational,” Hernandez wrote. “No large outbound shipments are happening until the UA’s Temporary Outbound facility is completed and inspected by all parties involved.”

“Currently, the terminal is being retrofitting to make it usable for at least five or more years until funding can be found to build a new terminal,” Hernandez wrote. “The retrofitting should be completed in about six weeks. We hope to have UA fully operational with(in) this six-week time frame.”

Hernandez, a long time Port Authority board member, became the CEO for the Port due to mismanagement issues uncovered by the Port’s legal counsel that resulted in a management shakeup. Those issues had nothing to do with the infrastructure problems that led to the recent decision of United Airlines.

The Kaselehlie Press

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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE KASELEHLIE PRESS
WILL BE RELEASED ON:
February 16, 2022
Deadline for submission of articles or
advertisements for this issue is the end
of working hours on:
Monday, February 14, 2022**

Chief of Staff, Mr. Kapilly Capelle, represents Governor Oliver during Education week

Pohnpei Enginkehlap "news"

January 27, 2022

Pohnpei—Chief of Staff, Mr. Kapilly Capelle, represented Governor Reed B. Oliver during Education week activities at the Kolonia/China Friendship Gym. Elementary Schools from Kolonia and Sokehs were represented and academic awards for teachers and staff were presented during the activity.

Ms. Phyllis Silbanuz was the keynote speaker for the event. Drawing on this year's theme: "Navigating with passion, collaboration, and perseverance

to succeed", she spoke of passionate educators and success. During his remarks, Chief of Staff Capelle conveyed Governor Oliver's gratitude and appreciation for the good work that has been carried out at the Department of Education and especially with Education week activities to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of Teachers and Students. He shared the importance of Education as a means to creating a better life, explaining that it is our responsibility to do so.

Congratulations to all the Students, Teachers, and Principals for navigating



the school year with passion, collaboration, and perseverance to succeed. Congratulations to Ohmine Elementary School for being awarded the Statewide Competition Winner of the Year!

Editor's note: DOE did not inform us of this event which leaves this coverage as the only official or otherwise coverage of the event other than what exists on social media.

Governor Oliver attends the first high school "Jeopardy" competition

Pohnpei Enginkehlap "news"

January 12, 2022

Pohnpei-- Governor Oliver attended the first-ever high school jeopardy competition that took place at the PICS High School Gymnasium on January 12, 2022. Seven public and private high school teams competed against each other in subjects ranging from math, language, science to Pohnpei studies.

Reverend Bruce Enicar blessed the opening of the event, and Director of the Department of Education, Mr. Stanley Etse welcomed Governor Oliver and all the high school students, teachers, parents, and family to the first-ever Pohnpei High School Jeopardy competition.

In his brief remarks, Governor Oliver thanked Director Etse and the organizing committee for helping to motivate and inspire the future of Pohnpei through this competition. He expressed gratitude for being able to attend such an inspiring event among intelligent and bright students, saying "I know I will learn something new, today". He reassured the students that their teachers, parents, school, and the Department of Education all share a common goal, to help each of them grow in mind, body, and spirit. He encouraged each of them to move forward with their education and remember to return home to help Pohnpei. Governor Oliver closed his remarks saying thanks and appreciation are just words, but our

actions always express the greatest thanks and appreciation.

After 50 questions and a 5-minute break in the middle of the competition, the team with the most points was Our Lady of Mercy High School.

Our Lady of Mercy High School – 37 points

Seventh-Day Adventist High School – 34 points

PICS High School – 33 points

Madolenihmw High School – 29 points

Nanpei Memorial High School – 29 points

Pohnpei Catholic High School – 27 points

Calvary Christian Academy – 26 points

Closing the event was Mr. Pressler Martin, Chief of Curriculum & Instruction. He told the students that they are all winners for stepping up to compete today. He thanked them for their participation and advised them that this will be an annual event that will get better and better each year.

Congratulations to all the students who competed in the first-ever Pohnpei High School Jeopardy competition.



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...Australia Day

Continued from front page

“The marking of Australia Day on the official date of 26 January has changed over time,” said Australian Ambassador Jo Cowley. “It’s tied to the arrival of the first fleet of British ships in Sydney in 1788. It started as a celebration for emancipated convicts and has evolved into what is now a celebration of Australia that reflects the nation’s diverse people.

“These days, as Vy has said, Australia Day is a day to reflect on what it means to be Australian, to celebrate contemporary Australia and to acknowledge our history. In particular, we acknowledge that Australia’s story began over 60,000 years ago, and that Indigenous Australians are the traditional custodians of our lands and waterways,” she said.

Ambassador Cowley told the gathered crowd about the “Australian of the Year Awards” and summarized the achievements of this year’s winner of the prestigious award and those of some of the past recipients. This year’s award was presented to Dylan Allcott only just this week. Allcott is a gold medal Paralympic basketballer and quad wheelchair Grand Slam tennis champion. He has won 23 quad wheelchair Grand Slam titles, and recently became the first male in history, in any form of tennis, to win something called the Golden Slam (all four tennis grand slam tournaments and an Olympic gold medal all in one year).

Allcott is also an engaging disability rights campaigner, philanthropist, and outstanding role model for Australians living with a disability. He describes himself as “the luckiest man alive,” Ambassador Cowley said.

Previous winners included Grace Tame in 2021. Tame is an advocate for survivors of sexual assault. Senior Australian of the Year in 2021 was Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM - Aboriginal activist, educator and artist. In 2019 the winners were Dr Richard Harris, SC OAM, and Dr Craig Challen SC OAM, who were part of the international rescue team for the trapped Thai soccer team in flooded caves in Chiang Rai. Professor Michelle Simmons, a Professor in Quantum Physics was the winner in 2018.

2018 : AOTY Professor Michelle Simmons, Professor in Quantum Physics

2017: AOTY Emeritus Professor Alan Mackay-Sim, Biomedical Scientist treating spinal cord injuries

There are categories for Australian of the Year award for “Local Heroes”. In 2022, those awards went to Leo op den Brouw, a volunteer with Murrumbidgee State Emergency Service (national finalist, Victorian State winner), and Sarah Tinney of South Australia, She founded the Marilyn Jetty Swim the biggest community fundraiser to end cancer in her state in which women and men dress up as Marilyn Monroe for a swim off the main town Jetty. Other previous winners also included Eddie Woo, a Maths Professor who founded popular Internet channel, “Woo Tube” to make Mathematics



fun, and Ash Barty, an indigenous professional tennis player who was scheduled to compete in the Australian Open on January 29.

“All countries have their leaders and local heroes, including in FSM. You know who they are in your community. The late Kikki Stinnett from Chuuk and the late Dr Rally Jim are two that come to mind. Australia is proud to work with partner countries – including the FSM – through our programs to help support the making of leaders and local heroes,” Ambassador Cowley said.

Australia has previously awarded approximately 160 scholarships to students in the FSM since 1988. This year, nine students will begin studies under the Australia Awards scholarships. Four of the recipients were at the Australia Day celebration in Pohnpei and Ambassador Cowley introduced them.

Rothger Lopez, currently Vice Principal at Pohnpei Catholic School will be studying for a Bachelor of Psychology and Social Work at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji. Reginall Joseph, currently with the Pohnpei State Government will be studying for a Bachelor of Law at USP. Shania Felix, currently with National Health Dept /at Pohnpei Hospital will be studying for a Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science at Fiji National University (FNU). Suzanne Gallen, currently with the UN and already an Australian alumn, will be studying for a Masters of International Relations at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Ambassador Cowley concluded her remarks with currently ongoing collaborations between the FSM and Australia. One of the projects is an enhancement of efforts to address leaking oil from World War II wrecks in Chuuk Lagoon.

Another is Australian financial support of a new submarine cable over 1200 miles long connecting Kosrae, Tarawa, and Nauru. She said that Australia is working in collaboration with the United States

and Japan in partnership with the FSM, Kiribati, and Nauru.

Lastly, she mentioned the long-running gender support program to protect women through a plan for safe spaces for victims of gender-based and family violence.

“All this is in addition to our ongoing cooperation in maritime security, education, climate change, health, and our volunteers program.” She concluded with a toast.

FSM Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Kandhi Eliesar also addressed the crowd giving high praise to the long-standing diplomatic relations between the FSM and Australia.

The evening concluded with a dinner and staff members of the Australian Embassy set up what they called a “social media” corner with large stand-up figures of a kangaroo, and emu, and a koala for photo opportunities.



College of Micronesia-FSM

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President's Message to the Community – January 2022

Happy New Year and welcome to 2022!

FY 2023 Budget was submitted to FSM Congress by the deadline of January 15, 2022. Details of the proposed budgets can be viewed in the Board Directives for December 02, 2021. FSM Congress will consider the budget requests over the next months and inform the college prior to fiscal year 2023 if the budget has been approved. The spring semester started on January 3, 2022 and ends mid-May with National Campus graduation on May 13, 2022. Enrollment college wide is approximately 1,698 students. 50% of the courses offered are residential and 50% of the courses offered are online for a total of 299 sections.

Accreditation Update: The college will be submitting the Institutional Self Evaluation

Report (ISER) for reaffirmation of accreditation on August 1, 2022. A peer review team will review the ISER and send any comments and questions to the college by October 2022. The college will have until the March 2023 visit to respond to the peer review team. The peer review team is scheduled to visit the week of 13 March 2023. The community will have an opportunity prior to the March visit to submit third party comments. Information on the process for third party comments will be published later this year. I want to thank all those who have taken time to write responses for accreditation Standards and reviewed the information for accuracy.

Employee of the Month-January: Congratulations to Ms. Eileen Nena as the Employee of the Month – January 2022! Ms.

Nena has worked 17 years at COM-FSM Kosrae Campus. She started working as a secretary for Director Kalwin. Later, she became a Student Service Specialist with Financial Aid Office under supervision of late Rev. Willer Benjamin. From 2019 until today, she has been in charge of OARR. With all those years, filing FAFSAs for so many students, they started calling her FAFSA lady. Ms. Nena says she loves the COM-FSM community very much. Finally, she is happily married and the mother of one child.

I express my heartfelt appreciation to you for all your work, efforts, and dedication to the students we serve. The mission, values and plans that have carried us forward the past few years will continue to guide COM-FSM's purpose.



It is an honor for me to serve you as interim president.

*Karen Simion
Interim President*

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

College of Micronesia - FSM Mission Statement

The College of Micronesia-FSM is a learner-centered institution of higher education that is committed to the success of the Federated States of Micronesia by providing academic and career & technical educational programs characterized by continuous improvement and best practices.

The College of Micronesia-FSM is searching for qualified candidates to fill the following position:

Director of Procurement and Property

Location: National Campus | Annual Salary: \$30,194.00 | Closing Date: February 27, 2022

Position Profile: The Director of Procurement & Property Management reports to the Vice President for Administrative Services and is responsible for developing and providing an effective, timely and comprehensive centralized purchasing program that supports the goals and objectives of the college in the acquisition of supplies, materials, equipment and services. Generally, work includes but not limited to overseeing, coordinating and managing the activities of the Procurement & Property Management Office, maintaining policies, inventory control standards and ensuring compliance with purchasing standards and policies.

The Director also oversees the management of property and fleet in establishing policies and procedures which foster accountability across the institution for moveable property, annual reporting on the inventory and disposal of surplus property.

Serious inquiries can be made to the Human Resources Office at email address hro@comfsm.fm and telephone number (691) 320-2482 extension numbers 179, 180, 181

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Employee of the Month



Eileen Nena
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...Pohnpeian Artist

Continued from front page

siblings would rent the same movie over and over just so we could learn how to draw the characters.”

Indeed, at least one of her rug offerings picture super-hero comic book characters but it really was her desire to decorate her own home with images from her home that moved her toward the art of hand crafting rugs. She says that she bought a house in Texas where she currently lives and went looking locally for area rugs, but all of the rugs she could find were Texas themed. She searched online as well and couldn't find any island themed rugs. So, she decided to make her own.

After a great deal of online research, she bought two rug tufting guns, each with different capabilities and set to work learning the craft. She started her first rug in March of 2021 and after what she called “many accidents and hiccups” she nearly gave up, thinking that she might not have the skills. But her mother, who saw the half-completed work, wanted it and encouraged her to finish it. After many more mistakes and accidents, she did complete the rug and then started on another which sold before it was completed.

She's now on her eighth rug and is still learning as she goes. Still, all of her rugs have sold before she could complete them including the dolphin motif rug she only just started. She says that she has considered setting up a website for her artistic rugs, but she wants to build up an on-hand stock before she does, but again, her rugs sell too quickly for her to be able to build up a stock.

Part of the reason for that, besides the obvious artistic value of the rugs themselves, is that Joel posts photos and videos of the progress on each of her carpets as she progresses as she has done with her just begun dolphin motif design (see her Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/sunijiah.poll>). Another reason may well be the very reasonable, and perhaps even too low prices she is charging for rugs that are mostly six by six feet in size. You can get on a waiting list to order any of

the patterns she currently has listed at https://www.thecustommovement.com/xi_tuft, or you can contact her to discuss a custom option. She says that from start to finish, it takes her about four weeks to complete a rug.

Joel is a graduate of the College of Micronesia FSM. A year after her graduation she enlisted in the US Army where she served for six years in Alaska and Italy working in Information Technology. After the Army she worked at FSM Telecommunications Corporation in the IT department. She then went to work in the US for Nike where she worked trouble-shooting the company's call center software. She is currently employed at Apple in the Austin, Texas area. She has three children.

“(The FSM) doesn't have art school, yet we have so many talented people,” she wrote. “Imagine if we had. The only times I remember art in school was when we'd have drawing competitions for things like Earth Day and other events.”

“I encourage the kids back home to explore their creativity...I hope my rugs will inspire them,” she said.



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UNDP strives to support the Pacific by coordinating UN activities at country level and through direct policy advice in four key areas: Poverty Reduction and attainment of the MDGs, Strengthening Institutions of Democratic Governance, Crisis Prevention and Recovery and Sustainable Environmental Management. UNDP provides services to the Pacific through the UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji, Joint UN Presences in Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Palau, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, as well as projects in each of the 15 countries.



Vacancy Announcement 2022/02

RE-ADVERTISEMENT

The UNDP Pacific Office seeks to recruit a suitably qualified FSM Nationals for the following position to be based in Pohnpei.

Programme Associate

The Programme Associate ensures effective delivery of the CO programme by entering and managing data and supporting programme implementation consistent with UNDP rules and regulations.

Summary of Key Functions:

- Supports the formulation of programme strategies and the implementation of the Country Programme Action Plan.
- Provides administrative support to the Programme Unit
- Supports resource mobilization
- Ensures facilitation of knowledge building and knowledge sharing in the North Pacific Office

Minimum Qualifications and Experience

Secondary Education, preferably with specialized certification in Accounting and Finance. University Degree in Business or Public Administration, Economics, Political Sciences and Social Sciences would be desirable, but it is not a requirement. 6 years of progressively responsible administrative or programme experience is required at the national or international level. Experience in the usage of computers and office software packages (MS Word, Excel, etc) and advance knowledge of spreadsheet and database packages, experience in handling of web-based management systems. Proficiency in English. Working knowledge of other UN language desirable.

Level: G6

Contract Type – Fixed Term Appointment

General Terms and Conditions of Employment: Various benefits including health insurance, pension and annual/sick leave apply.

Closing date of applications: 16 February 2022 (NY Time).

Applications are to be submitted electronically on <https://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/jobs.html>. Applicants should provide all relevant information required, to the best of their ability. Incomplete applications will not be considered and only candidates for whom there is further interest will be contacted. Full job description is available on <https://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/jobs.html>

UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

UNDP does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse, any kind of harassment, including sexual harassment, and discrimination. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks.

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U Corona volunteers hand over bathroom facilities

Pohnpei Enginkehlap “news”

January 21, 2022

Pohnpei—On Friday, January 21, 2022, the keys to two brand new toilet facilities were turned over from the U Corona Volunteers (UCV) to Awak Elementary School, Pohnpei State Department of Education. The toilet facilities include two fully functional toilets, sinks, and showers. The toilet facilities are part of UCV and the U municipality’s COVID-19 response efforts. A second pair of toilet facilities will also be installed at Saladak Elementary School. Mr. Kennely Marquez, President of UCV, turned over the keys to the toilet facilities to the Pohnpei State Department of Education, Chief of Primary Schools, Mr. Peter Ramirez.

Joining the ceremony to witness the handover was Vice Speaker of the FSM Congress, T.H. Esmond Moses, Chief Minister of U Municipality, T.H. Rufino Primo, Senators T.H. Stevenson Joseph, and T.H. Sonster Edgar of the 10th Pohnpei State Legislature. The facilities were constructed with donations from the FSM Congress and the U Municipal Government.

UCV is a group of local volunteers from U municipality who have dedicated their time and energy to help U’s COVID-19 response efforts. Their efforts have included addressing food security through the teaching and preparation of local foods like “mahr”, vaccination efforts, and this recent turnover of toilet facilities to Awak Elementary School and another set of toilet facilities for Saladak Elementary School that will be done soon. As part of UCV’s COVID-19 response plans, both elementary schools in U have been designated as quarantine sites in the event of community transmission of COVID-19.



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(Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae & Yap)
Call for Proposal – 2022
Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Programme
Global ICCA Support Initiative (GSI)

COVID-19 support to areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs) in The Federated States of Micronesia

Objectives

Phase 2 of the Global ICCA Support Initiative (GSI) has been extended to provide support to territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs), with a focus on forty-five (45) countries participating in the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP), implemented by United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The ICCA GSI is funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry of the Environment and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

In alignment with the SGP Country Program Strategy (CPS) in The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) for the SGP 7th Operational Phase (OP7) running from 2020-2024 and relevant National COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan, applications from qualified organizations are invited to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. National and local civil society organizations (including community-based organizations, NGOs, and Indigenous Peoples organizations) are encouraged to apply based on the list of eligible criteria presented below.

ICCA-GSI thematic categories	COVID-19 response: examples
Communication and lessons sharing through culturally appropriate means	Translating and communicating medical and sanitary information on COVID-19 into local and vernacular languages.
Food production systems: agroecology and agroforestry	Strengthening sustainable and biodiversity-friendly food production systems in ICCAs focused on agroecology and agroforestry techniques.
Sustainable and well governed wildlife consumption	Promotion of sustainable and regulated wildlife consumption through good governance, customary regulation, and awareness raising.
Prevention of zoonoses and future pandemics	Strengthening of ICCAs to provide barriers for zoonotic disease transmission and habitat conservation through reduced fragmentation.
Transmission of traditional medical knowledge	Documentation and transmission of sustainable techniques for harvesting, quality control, and transmission of traditional medicinal practices.
Territorial mapping and demarcation for self-isolation and conservation	Mapping and demarcation to increase territorial zoning, self-isolation procedures, buffer zones and defence of conserved areas.
Deployment of traditional knowledge of fire control and management	Techniques to control bushfires (adapted to different savannah, forest and other ecosystems) leading to green recovery and employment opportunities.
Local bio-circular economy approaches based on reciprocity	Income-generation activities, reciprocal food exchange networks, community-based ecotourism-based ventures, provision of food to at-risk populations, locally-made personal protective equipment.

Criteria

Civil society organizations (CSOs) wishing to apply to the ICCA COVID-19 initiative will be expected to submit an application in line with the prevailing socio-economic, cultural and sanitary context of the COVID-19 pandemic in The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

Individual ICCA COVID-19 projects will be expected to last for a duration up to 18 months and to have a maximum budget of US\$50,000. All proposals will be reviewed and approved by the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC). The organization will compile a plan of action to respond to the COVID-19 crisis affecting either individual or multiple ICCAs in The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). As part of the submission, the applicant must include the following elements:

- a. A work plan and justified budget about when and how it will take action to fulfil an appropriate combination of activities, indicating but not limited to: (i) overall context on the specific ICCA, or group of ICCAs; (ii) information on previous grants and partnerships to strengthen the ICCAs; (iii) proposed activities to be undertaken to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- b. The list of expected activities and timing of delivery for a period of up to 18 months, starting in early 2021 through to mid-2023, should be in line with and respond to the SGP OP7 Country Program Strategy. The applicant will be expected to work closely with the SGP National Coordinator (NC) in, as well as other partners such as the national ICCA network and/or global ICCA Consortium.

- c. Details on the specific experience and capacities of the applicant civil society organization, including with respect to (i) community-based conservation; (ii) facilitation of networks and joint learning; (iii) monitoring and evaluation of conservation and/or governance initiatives; and (iv) capacity to work with spatial and monitoring data.

Qualifications

- Demonstrated commitment to protect and defend territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs);
- Knowledge and awareness of biodiversity conservation efforts at the national level;
- Experience in organizing and hosting consultations and capacity development activities with indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Capacity to produce high quality written reports according to deadlines;
- Familiarity with key issues related to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), especially as they relate to indigenous peoples and local communities, considered an advantage.

Applications are open from 15 January 2022 to 30 January 2022 and can be requested Via Email or by visiting our office at the following Address:

Lavernie L. Pretrick
 OIC National Coordinator
 P.O. Box 2466
 Kolonia, Pohnpei FM 96941
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 Email: lavernie.pretrick@undp.org
OR Visit us at our Location:
 GEF Small Grants Program
 2nd Floor J&T Sonden Bldng
 Across the Post office/above MCS

Governor Oliver and First Lady of Pohnpei attend the funeral service of the late Honorable John Ehsa

Pohnpei Enginkehlap "news"

January 23, 2022

Pohnpei—On the morning of Sunday, January 23, 2022, Governor Oliver and First Lady of Pohnpei, Mrs. Estle G. Oliver attended the funeral services of the late Honorable John Ehsa, 5th Governor of Pohnpei at Alohapw Church in Madolenihmw. The actual services were held in Wichita, Kansas, USA, and streamed live to Pohnpei via video. IsoNahnken of U, Mr. Ihlen Joseph, and IsoNahnken of Madolenihmw, Mr. John Adolph also attended the event.



On behalf of the Pohnpei State Government, Governor Oliver conveyed sincere and profound gratitude for the life and service of the late Honorable John Ehsa. He paid special respect to the former First Lady of Pohnpei, Ms. Julilnida Weital. Governor Oliver noted that the late Honorable John Ehsa not only contributed to Pohnpei but also to the Federated States of Micronesia during his long and distinguished public service career. He spoke of the popular motto that Governor Ehsa started during his administration, Pohnpei Met, which later gave birth to Kairoihr Ehute, which in turn gave birth to Enginkehlap which continues today. Chief of Staff, Kapilly Capelle followed Governor Oliver and read the Executive proclamation signed by Governor Oliver in honor of the late Honorable John Ehsa. IsoNahnken of U, Mr. Ihlen Joseph also said a few words to memorialize and pay tribute to the late Honorable John Ehsa, noting their long friendship and relationship from the Trust Territory times to his selection as Governor Ehsa’s Chief of Staff and State Public Auditor.

Rest in Peace, late Honorable John Ehsa, Fifth Governor of the State of Pohnpei.



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UNFPA supplies ensure essential, lifesaving services continue in aftermath of volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga

UNFPA

FIJI, 27 January 2022 – In the late afternoon of 15 January, the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga Ha’apai underwater volcano in Tonga erupted violently in the South Pacific, sending a plume of ash thousands of feet into the air and triggering tsunami waves that crashed into coastal areas of Tonga’s capital, Nuku’alofa, along with several other low-lying Tongan islands. It is estimated that around 84 percent of the population, over 84,000 people, have been affected in the island groups of Tongatapu, ‘Eua, Ha’apai, and Vava, while the thick volcanic ash has transformed the once vibrant Tongan landscape into a moonscape.

As soon as the ash settled, and before the runways were cleared, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Pacific, the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, were on the ground, working with the Government of Tonga and partners to ensure that immediate response efforts prioritized the needs of affected women and girls. Volunteers from the Tonga Family Health Association distributed more than 250 dignity kits, containing basic health



and hygiene items such as soap, sanitary napkins and underwear in Kanokupolu village, on the main island of Tongatapu – critical items for women and girls so easily overlooked in a disaster response.

Working with the Australian Government, more than 1,500 dignity and 600 clean delivery kits to arrive in Tonga aboard the HMAS Adelaide. UNFPA Pacific was able to respond so rapidly as it maintains prepositioned, essential life-saving supplies at its regional hub in Brisbane.

“Limited access to reproductive health services puts the lives of many women and newborns at high risk when disaster strikes,” said Jennifer Butler, Director and Representative of UNFPA Pacific. “With the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, we’ve been

able to move quickly to ensure that women and girls’ reproductive health needs are at the front and centre of the humanitarian response in Tonga.”

With access to safe water challenging, and damage to infrastructure, including health facilities, still being assessed, the kits will support the reproductive health needs of more than 2,000 women. Essential equipment, medicines and supplies for 10 midwives will make childbirth safer for the 400 pregnant women who are expected to deliver in the next three to six months, while hygiene and sanitary supplies will ensure women and girls can take an active part in the rebuilding of their communities.

With the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s support, the prepositioning of essential reproductive health supplies means that UNFPA Pacific is better prepared to respond faster and more efficiently across the disaster-prone Pacific region. This ensures that access to life-

saving reproductive health services and supplies are restored in the immediate aftermath of a crisis and continue throughout the humanitarian emergency response.

Leon Panuelo Jr. chosen as new FSM Social Security Administrator



Pohnpei Enginkehlap “news”

January 21, 2022

Pohnpei—Governor Oliver was joined by Speaker T.H. Marvin Yamaguchi, Senator Brian Etschiet, members of the Governor’s cabinet, and Governor’s Office staff to bid farewell to Budget Officer, Leon Panuelo Jr., on Friday, January 21, 2022, at the Governor’s Office, Peilapalap, Kolonia.

Mr. Panuelo has been selected for the position of FSM Social Security Administrator.

Before presenting Mr. Panuelo with a certificate of appreciation for his service to the people of Pohnpei as the State Budget Officer from July 2020 to June 2022, the Governor delivered remarks. He expressed his gratitude to Mr. Panuelo for his service to the people of Pohnpei in a challenging position and congratulated him on behalf of the Speaker and Pohnpei State Government for his selection to an important position as the FSM Social Security Administrator. Mr. Panuelo thanked Governor Oliver for the opportunity to serve as the State Budget Officer and praised the staff of the Budget Office for their hard work and dedication during their time together.

Congratulations and Farewell to Mr. Leon Panuelo Jr.

contact us :Tel : 320-6505
Email:micronesianproductions@gmail.com

Groups or individuals who wish to compete need to register by Sat, Feb 19th (\$15-)

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ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL OZONE2CLIMATE ART CONTEST

For more information or to enter the contest,
Go to: www.ozone2climate.org

16 September 2021 - 31 March 2022



Artwork Categories



Graphic Design

Computer assisted designs and graphic program/applications from computer or mobile phone applications



Drawing

Traditional hand-drawing/painting or other two-dimensional hand-made art and digital drawing

Photography



Original photographs taken from a camera without heavy digital manipulation



Artwork Content

1. Achievements, actions, benefits to ozone layer protection and climate change attributed to the Vienna Convention, the Montreal Protocol including the Kigali Amendment.
<https://ozone.unep.org/ozone-and-you>



WORLD OZONE DAY

2. Theme of World Ozone Day 2021 - Montreal Protocol - Keeping us, our food and vaccines cool.
<https://ozone.unep.org/ozone-day/montreal-protocol-keeping-us-our-food-and-vaccines-cool>



Eligibility & Submission Info

- **Youth:** Age 15 years or below with parental consent
- **General:** Age above 15 years
- **Artwork submission:** in JPEG/ GIF/PNG; at least 2,000 pixels; Max size 1 MB with information of name, title, date and caption



About The National Contest

Please join!

Winner and runner up of each category at the national level will receive the following prizes:

Winner: \$ 200.00
1st Runner up: \$150.00
2nd Runner up: \$100.00

For inquiry about **The National Contest**, please contact:

National Ozone Unit (NOU)

Iakop Ioanis

E-mail:

iakop.ioanis@decem.gov.fm



unesco

Vacancy Announcement: 2021/42



The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) provides non-governmental and community-based organizations (NGO/CBO) in developing countries with grants to help them tackle climate change, conserve biodiversity, protect international waters, reduce the impact of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and prevent land degradation. With these environment-centered 'grant projects' the programme also seeks to generate sustainable livelihoods and reduce poverty in the world's neediest countries and regions. The SGP motto is "Community Action – Global Impact!"

Through UNDP/UNOPS, the FSM GEF Small Grants Programme seeks to recruit a suitably qualified national for the position of National Coordinator.

VACANCY DETAILS

Post Title: National Coordinator
Post Level: SB-4
Contract Type: Service Contract
Duty Station: Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
Duration: Initially one year, renewable subject to satisfactory performance

KEY RESULTS EXPECTED / MAJOR FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Effective technical, financial, and operational management of the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme and its portfolio.
- Effective managerial function, by building an effective SGP Country Programme team and foster teamwork within the SGP Country Programme team, the National Steering Committee members, and with the UNDP Country Office team
- Mobilize and leverage financial and other resources as well as establish strong partnerships at the programme and project levels for sustained and scaled up initiatives.
- Effectively facilitate knowledge management, share and exchange knowledge on lessons learnt and best practices of SGP programme and projects..

Minimum Qualifications and Experience:

Education: Advanced university degree in environment or natural resource management, Environmental Economics, Development, Business Administration or similar field.

Experience: At least 3 years of relevant experience in environment and development work, which should include programme management, preferably

with an extended specialized experience in any of the GEF-SGP thematic areas at the national level. Excellent teamwork, people management and interpersonal skills. Excellent analytical, writing, and communication skills. Strong negotiation, conflict resolution and problem-solving skills Experience in the usage of computers and office software packages (MS Word, Excel, etc) and advance knowledge of spreadsheet and database packages, experience in handling of web based management systems.

Language Requirements: Fluency in the official national language and English is required. Knowledge of other UN languages is considered asset.

Level: SB4
 Contract Type – Service Contract (SC)

Full details of positions are available on UNDP Jobs website: <http://jobs.undp.org/>

General Terms and Conditions of Employment:

Various benefits including health insurance, pension, dependency allowances and annual/sick leave apply. Contract duration is 12 months initially with the possibility of an extension depending on performance and availability of funds.

Closing date of applications: Wednesday 16 February, 2022 (NY Time).

Applications are to be submitted electronically on <http://jobs.undp.org/>. Applicants should provide all relevant information required, to the best of their ability.

Incomplete applications will not be considered and only candidates for whom there is further interest will be contacted. Candidates shortlisted for interviews will be required to provide a completed and signed P-11 form at the time of interviews. Additional information including the Post Profile, Results-Oriented Curriculum vitae format and P-11 form is available from the UNDP website: www.fj.undp.org or the UNDP Office.

UNOPS SGP Programme is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Department of Health and Social Affairs Short-term Statistician TOR

I. Introduction:

The Short - term Statistician position is located at the FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs to support the Gender Project Manager for the India-UN Development funded Strengthening the FSM's Gender Machinery Project which is implemented by United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) through the OHSA's Division of Social Affairs.

II. Control of Position:

The incumbent works under the Secretary of the FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs through the Gender Project Manager and the Acting Assistant Secretary of Social Affairs. Incumbent will perform duties stated in this TOR including other duties that the Secretary of DHSA may require of the position.

II. Scope of Work

Under the guidance of the Gender Project Manager and the Assistant Secretary for Division of Social Affairs, who will report to the Secretary of FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs, the United Nation Development Programme Team and the Project Board, the short-term Statistician will perform the following tasks:

- Collect and review available local and regional gender related data.
- Provide guidance on the quality of the data collected.
- Designing survey questionnaire on existing Gender programs.
- Analyze data.
- Preparing the final report of the survey results as per the guidelines of the project team.
- Develop the "Where we stand publication" on gender statistics.
- Assist other related OHSA programs.
- Assist Gender Project Manager on other duties as assigned.

IV. Required Qualifications

- A degree in statistics or related field.
- A minimum of 3-5 years' experience in conducting surveys and data analysis.
- Report writing skills

V. Duration of the consultancy

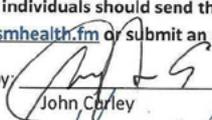
From 1st of February 2022 to 31st June 2022 - 5 months

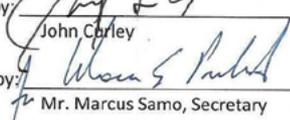
VI. Remuneration

A remuneration of \$2,000.00 a month or \$10,000.00 for five months is offered for this position.

- A remuneration of \$2,000.00 a month or \$10,000.00 for five month is offered for this position.

Interested individuals should send their resume/cv to the emails below : health@fsmhealth.fm; JCurley@fsmhealth.fm or submit an application at the FSM Personnel Office in Palikir.

Prepared by:  Date: 1/18/22

Approved by:  Date: 1/18/22
 Mr. Marcus Samo, Secretary

Pacific Islands Development Bank selects Ms. Lindsay Motil Timarong to be the next President & Chief Executive Officer for the regional development finance institution

The Board of Governors of the Pacific Islands Development Bank (PIDB or Bank) has selected Ms. Lindsay Motil Timarong to be the next President & Chief Executive Officer for the regional development finance institution. Ms. Timarong is the first woman to hold this prestigious position and by virtue of her seat as President of the Bank, she becomes Chairwoman of the Board of Directors. Her new role becomes effective February 1st. Ms. Timarong was offered the role of the Bank's Vice President in 2019 and joined the PIDB team in January 2020. Her selection follows the departure of former PIDB President & CEO Christopher A. Cruz.



Lindsay is a proven leader who has excelled at strategic planning and execution and is well-positioned to lead the Bank in its continuing mission to serve the people in the region's island communities, and in supporting local and regional economic development. With more than 15 years of experience in the finance and banking sector, including serving as Senior Bank Examiner for the Republic of Palau Financial Institutions Commission for over a decade, Lindsay has demonstrated a strong track record in initiating and leading change, driving results, strengthening operational risk management and compliance, and innovating amid a rapidly evolving financial services landscape.

Ms. Timarong has continued to move the Bank forward in a focused and transparent way. Her financial and customer service acumen, integrity, passion for diversity and inclusion, commitment to the Bank, and dedication to strong talent management are some of the important qualities considered by the Bank's board in their selection.

"This is a tremendous honor and I am very grateful for the trust that the Board of Governors and Board of Directors have shown. I am energized by the opportunity to assume leadership of this great institution, which has an important role in our region's economic development, and in the midst of fundamental changes that we're seeing in impact lending and investment," said Lindsay. "I have deep

respect for the vision with which the Bank's founders established PIDB and all the work that has taken place to grow and evolve the Bank. I look forward to working closely with the shareholders, Board members, and our exceptional team, and I am committed to fully engaging with all of our stakeholders including our customers, elected leaders, partners and investors, in exploring ways to improve the economic and social wellbeing of people in our communities."

Prior to her role at PIDB, Lindsay was a Consultant and Founder of HeartKey Synergies, a business and financial consulting firm in Palau. Before starting HeartKey Synergies, she was Senior Bank Examiner for the Republic of Palau Financial Institutions Commission. Ms. Timarong is U.S. FDIC trained and is a qualified Examiner-In-Charge. In addition, she has retail banking experience, and holds the distinguished Accredited Investment Fiduciary Analyst® (AIFA®) designation. She was awarded the AIFA® designation in 2017 from the U.S. Center for Fiduciary Studies™, the standards-setting body for fiduciary education and training worldwide. As an AIFA®, Lindsay has also served as Adjunct Faculty Instructor for New Zealand based fi360 Pacific, providing fiduciary training courses facilitated by the Guam-based Asia Pacific Association of Fiduciary Studies (APAFS).

Ms. Timarong is the Chairperson for the Republic of Palau Compact of Free Association (COFA) Trust Fund Board of Trustees, having been appointed by Palau former President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr. in October 2015, and reappointed by current President, His Excellency Surangel Whipps, Jr., in 2021. Lindsay has served in various capacities on other boards and committees for the Republic of Palau at the state and community level. She has attended and given presentations at several conferences throughout the Pacific including for the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre (PFTAC), a regional arm of the International Monetary Fund.

Lindsay earned a Master's degree in Economics from the University of Hawaii and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Washington State University. She was born and raised in Palau, and had resided and worked in the United States for fifteen years prior to returning home to give back to her country and the region. In accepting her role with PIDB, she moved to and will continue to be primarily located on Guam.

The Pacific Islands Development Bank was chartered on July 5, 1989, and in July 2021, celebrated 31 years of service to the region. The bank was established as a regional development financial institution with the goal of aiding in the economic and social development of the Pacific nations. Current members/shareholders comprise the governments of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the four state governments of the Federated States of Micronesia—namely Chuuk State, Kosrae State, Pohnpei State, and Yap State—the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Territory of Guam, and the Kwajalein Atoll Development Authority as an associate member. PIDB offers commercial, residential and consumer loans to citizens of its member jurisdictions. More information is available on their website at www.pacificidb.com.



Pacific Sub-Regional Office
Title: Assistant Representative, NOC
Federated States of Micronesia

Call to Action

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UNFPA is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA is seeking candidates that transform, inspire and deliver high impact and sustained results; we need staff who are transparent, exceptional in how they manage the resources entrusted to them and who commit to deliver excellence in programme results.

Job Purpose:

The Assistant Representative will contribute to the management of UNFPA programme activities in the areas of population and development, sexual and reproductive health and gender. Working to advance the ICPD policy agenda in a politically sensitive environment, you will respond to changing priorities of Governments. Promoting partnership and strategic alliances with counterparts in government, multilateral and bilateral agencies and civil society will be key to your role. S/he will coordinate technical advisers and contribute to UN systems coordination through participation in policy dialogue and provision of inputs into joint common system initiatives. Reporting to the UNFPA Director Pacific, the Assistant Representative will act on their behalf as required.

Qualification and Experience:

Your Education

-An advanced degree (Masters) in Public Health, Medicine, Sociology, Demography, Gender, International Relations, International Development, Economics, Public Administration, Management or other related discipline.

Your Experience

- Minimum of five (5) years professional experience in the field of development and population activities, including programme designing, appraisal and management.
- Demonstrated ability to refine programme design to ensure alignment of organizational programme objectives to national priorities/capacities.
- Proven ability to lead and manage teams to achieve demonstrable results.
- Familiarity with UN procedures and working methods, particularly with UNFPA's agenda, policies and procedures, is highly desirable;

Find out more and apply by clicking "Apply Now" at <https://bit.ly/3Ds8XK8> where full details of the position is available.

CLOSING DATE: Sunday 20 February 2022 (Midnight New York Time)

Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs announces TAP, MAP, and Coral Reef and Natural Resources grant application deadlines still open until April 1

U.S. Department of the Interior

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs today announces that the fiscal year (FY) 2022 discretionary grant application deadline for the Technical Assistance Program (TAP), the Maintenance Assistance Program (MAP), and the Coral Reef and Natural Resources (CRNR) Initiative remain open for applications until April 1, 2022.

“Interior encourages applications from the Insular Areas to address critical issues and needs,” said Keone Nakoa, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs. “We are especially interested in applications that address several of the Biden-Harris Administration’s highest priorities related to climate change, energy production, natural resources, and health care.”

As first announced in the Fall of 2021, applications for the FY 2022 TAP, MAP, and CRNR grant funding, may be submitted by insular government entities, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations whose grant proposals are in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and will directly benefit the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands or the freely associated states, which are the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau.

Fiscal year 2022 funding for the Brown Tree Snake Control program has also been made available to OIA by Congress and will be divided among several governments and federal partners to include Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Hawai’i, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of the Interior to continue efforts to mitigate and eradicate the Brown Tree Snake.

To apply, visit grants.gov and use CFDA# 15.875. The deadline for submissions is April 1, 2022, however, it is highly recommended that applications be submitted as early as possible. Applications will be reviewed beginning May 2022 once OIA receives full-year appropriations.

Applications related to public safety and emergencies will be reviewed in a timely manner, prior to the April deadline.

Complete instructions on how to apply for these discretionary financial assistance programs as provided through the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs may be found at: <https://www.doi.gov/oia/financial-assistance>.

The Assistant Secretary of Insular and International Affairs and the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) carry out the Secretary of the Interior’s responsibilities for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, OIA administers and oversees federal assistance under the Compacts of Free Association to the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. OIA also administers a discretionary Technical Assistance Program for all the insular areas. Find information about OIA and its work on www.doi.gov/oia, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

Helping hands help education bloom in Koror - Meyuns 160 backpack donation

Meyuns Elementary School, situated on the coast in Koror, Republic of Palau, is a recipient of 160 backpacks containing school supplies through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church's Koror Branch President John Ngiraked recently helped with a large donation of backpacks and school supplies to nearby Koror Elementary.

As this tourist-based community still struggles from the pandemic, President Ngiraked, aware of the children's need, requested backpacks and school supplies for Meyuns Elementary School through the Church's Welfare Department.

Under the direction of Elder William HK Davis, The Church’s Welfare and Self-reliance senior missionary couple Elder and Sister Green visited Koror, Palau to locally purchase the needed packs and school supplies from WCTC. The Koror church branch is experienced in performing service projects so when the senior missionaries left, the purchased supplies were delivered to the Koror Chapel where Branch President Ngiraked and his wife, Angelina, donned their Helping Hands vests along with a Koror Branch member family, the Nacionales, and then the fun began as they opened packaging and started preparing the school supplies for assembly into the backpacks.

There is so much heartfelt joy and good feelings that come from these projects that lift and help others. President John Ngiraked, when asked how he felt doing these projects said “It is a great feeling I get doing these services as I can feel the spirit of the Lord. That feeling of sacrificing your time and effort to help others really increases your ability to see how the Lord works through us.”

The backpacks were passed on to a very grateful principal, Ulai T. Ikesiil, who also expressed her feelings. “I would like to thank [the Church], on behalf of all the students, teachers, and our parents. The generous donation that has been given us made a very huge impact in our learning capacity. Students from Meyuns are so lucky to benefit from this generous act from people like you. Teachers are happy that all the students have their own new supplies and won’t have to share so they can complete their work on time. We are very thankful.”

The Church Welfare Department’s hearts are warmed at hearing how very excited the students were to receive such a complete set of school supplies of their own and how they no longer must share colors with friends. The principal and teachers felt that some students were truly blessed to receive these backpacks. They heard parents express their gratitude and how it spares them from buying mid-year replenishments of school supplies for their children.

In such challenging times, it does many hearts good to hear these kind remarks. Like flowers still in bud, these children will bloom as they are more effective in their school endeavors and be excited to learn. What a great way to start off a new year.

YouTube video link: <https://youtu.be/1wRYEzyQ0nM>



Tonoas has electricity

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On January 25th, 2022, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—joined the Honorable Wesley W. Simina, Speaker of the 22nd FSM Congress; the Honorable Dr. Perpetua S. Konman, Senator representing Southern Namwoneas; the Honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of the State of Chuuk; the Honorable Gradvin Aisek, Mayor of Tonoas; the Honorable Ricky Robon, Deputy Mayor of Tonoas; Former Vice President of the FSM and contemporary President of the 4th FSM Constitutional Convention, Redley Killion Sr., who also serves as the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of FSM Petroleum Corporation/Vital; Mr. Kembo Mida Jr., CEO of Chuuk Public Utilities Corporation (CPUC); Bishop Julio Angkel; Reverend Hanster Reynold; and many more distinguished men and women, for the Tonoas Lighting Ceremony.

For the first time since the former Empire of Japan ruled over Chuuk Lagoon, Tonoas has electricity.

The lighting of Tonoas means that approximately 500 Micronesian households now have access to power and the freedom that power brings, from an increase in food security to an increase in social program accessibility. Additionally, the Integrated Coconut Processing Facility—which also provides Tonoas power in partnership with CPUC—will bring new job opportunities,

a 24/7 revenue source for Micronesian farmers, and the capacity for Micronesia to export its goods to the World.

In his statement, President Panuelo noted that the requests from the people of the State of Chuuk are undeniably humble, but by extension it is also essential that they be met in full. As such, the President described the more than \$40,000,000 in grant project support to CPUC that is presently ongoing. This includes the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded Renewable Energy Development Project & Disaster Risk Reduction program, including \$825,000 for Chuuk; the ADB-funded Chuuk Water Systems & Sanitation Project, valued at \$20,000,000; the ADB-funded Outer Island Access to Potable Water Project, valued at \$2,500,000; the World Bank-funded Sustainable Energy Development & Access Project, with a value of \$10,200,000 to expand renewable power on Weno; the European Union-funded EDF11 which is expected to electrify twelve (12) more islands with 100% renewable energy mini-grids, with \$5,000,000 allocated for Chuuk; the United Nations Development Program & Global Environment Facility Micronesia Public Sector Buildings Energy Efficiency Project, with a value of \$1,300,000; the Japan International Cooperation Assistance-

funded program of providing ongoing



training to CPUC staff with diesel operation technical training and solar-diesel hybrid technical operations and maintenance training, valued at \$1,250,000; a Japan-funded grant to support access to safe drinking water, valued at \$1,300,000; and the FSM-funded upgrade of the Tonoas Island distribution line, with \$150,000 of financial support to the program.

“We know that Chuuk lags behind the other states of the FSM with only 30% of the people having access to energy, and only two (2) of the forty (40) municipalities having reliable energy and water supply,” President Panuelo said. “The FSM National Government is committed to working with all of you at the state and municipal level, at Vital, and at CPUC, to work hand-in-hand to make this Paradise in Our Backyards another promised land.”

After the lighting ceremony proper, President Panuelo toured Tonoas with Mayor Aisek and the community. “I have



given instructions to Postmaster General Ginger Porter Mida,” President Panuelo said, “For her to travel to Chuuk at the nearest opportunity, and for the purpose of exploring the opening up of another Post Office in Southern Namwoneas, in addition to the Post Office being prepared for Faichuk.”

Chuuk commits to work in partnership to develop marine spatial plan for its coastal water

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On January 26th, 2022, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia—joined the Honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of the State of Chuuk, in a signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of the FSM, the State of Chuuk, and Blue Prosperity Coalition, so as to declare their collective commitment to Blue Prosperity Micronesia. Ted Waitt, Founder & Chairman of the Waitt Institute, signed in absentia and on behalf of the Blue Prosperity Coalition. Also joining the ceremony were members of Chuuk State’s leadership, including the

Honorable Lester Danny Mersai, Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Honorable Arno Kony, President of the House of Senate, numerous Members of the Chuuk State Legislature across both Houses, as well as the Honorable Justin Fritz, Chair of the Chuuk State Mayor’s Association, and numerous Mayors of Chuuk’s Municipal Governments.

Citizens may recall that the FSM and Blue Prosperity Coalition signed an MOU in July 2019 to support the nation’s efforts to advance sustainable ocean use. The resulting program generated by that MOU is Blue Prosperity Micronesia, a five-year nation-wide initiative with the aim to protect 30% of the FSM’s waters, develop strategies for economic well-

being, and strengthen existing fisheries management to support the sustainable growth of the FSM’s marine resources for current and future generations.

Blue Prosperity Micronesia remains one of the Panuelo-George administration’s top priorities. What the MOU signed between the FSM National Government, the Chuuk State Government, and Blue Prosperity Coalition represents is, firstly, an acknowledgement of Blue Prosperity Micronesia’s overarching goals and intentions; secondly, to clarify and confirm that the State of Chuuk has the authority to manage its marine environment zero to twelve nautical miles from shore, including authority related to economic activities, human

use, fisheries, and protected areas; thirdly, a recognition that the State of Chuuk has committed to achieving the goals of the Micronesia Challenge (which seeks to protect and effectively manage 50% of coastal territory and 30% of terrestrial territory by 2030); fourthly, an agreement that broad consultation among stakeholders is essential, as such consultation would consider community-based conservation and management efforts, traditional knowledge, and practices of local communities with respect to sustainable and equitable conservation; and fifthly, to agree to support the July 2019 MOU between the FSM Government and

Click here for continuation

FSM repatriation flights to Pohnpei & Chuuk delayed; flights to Kosrae & Yap canceled until further notice

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—Due to the rapidly evolving situation in many Pacific Island Countries as a result of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has determined that it is in the Nation’s collective public health interest to delay the forthcoming repatriation flights to the States of Pohnpei and

Chuuk, and to cancel until further notice the repatriation flights to the States of Kosrae and Yap.

The repatriation flight to Pohnpei State will be delayed to February 2nd. Repatriating persons will remain in the pre-quarantine site, and undergo a third (3rd) PCR-based COVID-19 test prior to arrival in the Nation.

The repatriation flight to Chuuk State will be delayed to February 7th. Repatriating persons will remain in the pre-quarantine site, and undergo a third (3rd) PCR-based COVID-19 test prior to arrival in the Nation.

The repatriation flights scheduled for Kosrae State and Yap State are canceled until further notice.

wide that the government there is no longer reporting the distinction between border cases and community-spread cases in formal releases. The Republic of Kiribati is in a lockdown, with at least forty (40) community cases as of the evening of January 24th, 2022. Solomon Islands is in a lockdown, with at least three hundred (300) community cases as of January 25th, 2022. The Independent State of Samoa is in a lockdown, with fifteen (15) border cases, though thankfully no community spread at this time. Meanwhile, other jurisdictions in the Indo-Pacific have seen the start of Omicron-related community spread, such as in New Zealand (which has entered a Code Red status), and the Republic of Indonesia, which has announced its first case of the Omicron variant.

It is the view of the FSM National Government that Palau, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Samoa, New Zealand, and Indonesia possess more capacity to handle COVID-19 surges than the FSM does; by extension, if the Nation’s brothers and sisters in these countries are struggling to contain or limit the spread of COVID-19 in their jurisdiction, then citizens can expect the arrival of COVID-19 in the FSM to be destabilizing, and both directly and indirectly harmful.

If the third PCR-based tests for the repatriation flights to Pohnpei State and Chuuk State result in no new infections, then it is likely the repatriation flights will occur without further delay or hindrance.

The first reason for the delay is due to the high rate of positive cases of COVID-19 being found in the pre-quarantine process so far. Eleven (11) persons were removed from the repatriation flight to Pohnpei State as a result of the first PCR-based test, of whom eight (8) were positive. An additional seven (7) persons came back with a positive COVID-19 test result after the second test, for a total of fifteen (15) positive cases so far. For reference, the original size of the repatriating group is eighty (80) persons.

The second reason for the delay is that the U.S. Territory of Guam has been seeing new records of daily cases of COVID-19. As Guam is the location of the Nation’s pre-quarantine site, the COVID-19 situation in Guam is used as the Government’s litmus test to determine the risk of bringing COVID-19 into the FSM.

The third reason for the delay is due to the paradigm shift in COVID-19 containment and prevention across other Pacific Island Countries. The Republic of Palau’s community spread is sufficiently

... Chuuk marine conservation

Continued from previous page

Blue Prosperity Coalition, including to work in partnership to develop a comprehensive, legally-binding marine spatial plan for Chuuk’s coastal waters that uses best available information with a series of steps and expected timelines, and with technical and financial support from the Blue Prosperity Coalition. Blue Prosperity Micronesia seeks to work across all levels of government and, with this MOU, acknowledges that the work within Chuuk must support the Chuukese communities, while also strengthening the prosperity of the FSM as a whole.

As a first step following the signing, the MOU partners will convene to develop a work plan for Blue Prosperity Micronesia in Chuuk that is expected to include a coastal marine spatial planning process, and broad community consultations in water science, policy development, and outreach.

“I am so glad you are here to witness the signing of this MOU,” Governor Narruhn said at the signing ceremony, “Because... we live for the ocean and die for the ocean. This is how important our ocean is for us, culturally, socially, and economically. As we say in Chuuk: our ocean, our life.”

Entering into an MOU for Blue Prosperity Micronesia will protect our ocean, and will strengthen the important partnership between Chuuk State and the National Government.”

“I know that protecting 30% of our ocean

sounds bold and ambitious,” said Yolanda Joab-Mori, the Blue Prosperity Micronesia Coordinator, “But we need to be ambitious, and we need to be bold.”

“Blue Prosperity Micronesia can prove that sustainability and development can not only co-exist, but thrive for a just and prosperous future for all,” President Panuelo said. “Initiatives like Blue Prosperity Micronesia build our resilience to Climate Change, because Ocean Action is Climate Action.”

“Chuuk has already taken steps to secure their resources well into the future with the Micronesia Challenge and community-based management of the nearshore areas,” said the Honorable Elina Akinaga, Secretary of the FSM Department of Resources & Development, and on behalf of Ted Waitt, Chairman and Founder of the Waitt Institute, “Blue Prosperity Micronesia will build on these efforts.” The signing of the MOU occurred on the margins of the 2nd Resources & Development Conference, with representatives from the States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, the FSM National Government, and members of the private sector and civil society. Citizens will appreciate the ambitious nature of this plan, and are strongly encouraged to make their voices heard throughout the process, as this is to be Chuuk’s plan.



Declaration of public health emergency extended to May 31st, 2022

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—The Office of the President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has received from the 22nd Congress of the FSM Congressional Resolution (C.R.) 22-89, which amended His Excellency David W. Panuelo’s January 31st, 2020 Declaration of Public Health Emergency, and extended the expiration of the Declaration to May 31st, 2022.

and significant amendments to the Declaration after C.R. 22-33, C.R. 22-06, C.R. 21-252, C.R. 21-228, C.R. 21-185, and C.R. 21-175. There are no changes to the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, nor on repatriation methodologies (i.e. non-medical professionals, including teachers, consultants, engineers, etc. remain eligible for entry into the FSM on a case-by-case basis as determined by the COVID-19 Task Force).

Citizens interested in reading C.R. 22-89 is thematically similar to C.R. 22-66, and retains its substantial

Citizens interested in reading C.R. 22-89 may find it here: https://gov.fm/files/C_R_22-89-compressed.pdf

Opinion Editorial

Further away from HOME: a tribute for Lih (women)

By Delihna Manuel Ehmes

Someone once said, “You can have a house but without a home, you will be devoid of love”. As we near women’s day (Rahn en lih) festivities, we are more drawn to reflect on us (as lih) women in our societies of all levels (i.e., family, community, work, church, etc.). It seems we get more energized and excited to participate in anything and everything that involves our roles as women, and the cycle goes on every time as we near Rahn en lih. Whether we participate indirectly or directly, all Lih play a role in the many processes of our societies. We continue to voice our concerns on gender equality and what it means to be heard. While only a few of us have gone through great lengths to ensure that our voices are heard, we must not forget that they did this for ALL lih. We should admire them for taking the bold steps to be the first in creating platforms where women can openly express their views. Today, as our small island nations strive to ensure environment, economic, and political sustainability. Some of us also march in this walk to help see that the goals are achieved in the process. We have seen great many changes from the collective effort of men and women on our islands. Yet, we can still sense that tension still exists. Why do we still sense this? I cannot tell for sure why but what I am about to share are based on my observations and experiences of being a part this cycle, as having worked with children, youth, and women. If what I am about to share offends anyone, I truly apologize for that but my views are simply my own. My observations and experiences have culminated into my knowledge of processes from my island living.

As an educator, I have come to develop a strong passion for “learning”. I would always tell my students that learning is central to survival and adaptation. If you don’t learn, you will find it hard to adapt. At least for me personally, what I’ve learned has been the result of moving in and out of the many social circles that I interact with. Whether it was working with children, youth, or women, one thing has become clearly evident for me—that problems develop and persist when we “move further away from home”. I have seen children who struggled in school and elsewhere because parents have moved away from home. I have seen teens that are hesitant to participate in their own peer networks due to lack of

parental supervision or parental support. Teens in their peak of life’s activities have witnessed and experienced for themselves the gaps and challenges in school, bullying from peers, misjudgment from teachers and their communities. This has become the consequence of parents, most particularly women who have moved further away from home, many times not by the choices they make but by the pressures and obligations that take them away from home. We have adopted a cash-dependent society and a market the demands us to produce cash in order to sustain us. Our preference to live has now changed to meet the demand of our now cash-dependent societies. Despite the type of lens we look through, our existing realities delineate from the same core-HOME. Today, priorities take us further away from our homes. We are more compelled to work outside our homes because we realize the need to bring cash home and to be providers and breadwinners to our families. Today, we are compelled to be a part of an NGO because we sense that we are the marginalized gender, and we realize the need to be heard in our larger society. Today, we choose to live with our immediate nuclear family unit because we realize the struggle of having to support the larger extended family unit. Today, we prefer convenience because we realize that living on traditional methods takes away time to be a part of the current social norms, expectations and obligations. And list goes on...Ultimately, all of this winds down to one thing—we need to move closer to HOME. Why? If we talk about school bullying, school drop-out, drug abuse, wife battering, teen pregnancy or at a larger scale, the problems of NonCommunicable Diseases (NCDs) and Migration—all of them have a relationship to the fact that we have moved further from home. We see school bullying and school drop-out because our move away from home leaves our children with little or no parental support and supervision. We see an increase in the number of NCDs because we view working on land as a family unit, while growing our own food to be more troublesome and thus, less appealing to us. The changes and problems we now see and experience are structural because they have affected us at a larger scale. Whether we realize it or not, our problems have evolved from our move away from HOME. I cannot say how exactly this can be done but I know that there is an urgent need to move closer to HOME. Our children need a warm and nurturing home, our husbands need a home-cooked meal and a clean nest, our siblings need a sister to talk to, and the people we call fathers and mothers need someone to share and pass on their knowledge, skills, and life stories. This is the HOME we used to know and the one we need to move closer to—A Micronesian HOME.

“Don’t forget leprosy”

The last Sunday in January is World Leprosy Day. Since 2006, I have issued an annual Global Appeal calling for an end to stigma and discrimination against persons affected by leprosy, endorsed by a different set of individuals and organizations each year. During the coronavirus pandemic, I believe this call to eliminate stigma and discrimination is more important than ever.

Leprosy, also known as Hansen’s disease, is a chronic infectious disease caused by the bacillus *Mycobacterium leprae*. It mainly affects the skin and peripheral nerves and is said to be one of the oldest diseases in human history. Each year, around 200,000 new cases are reported globally. In 2020, the Federated States of Micronesia reported 129 cases.

Today an effective treatment exists in the form of multidrug therapy (MDT) and with early detection and treatment, the disease can be cured without complications. But if treatment is delayed, leprosy can cause progressive impairment and lead to permanent disability.

Today there are an estimated 3 to 4 million people living with some form of disability due to leprosy. This, together with deep-seated fears and misperceptions about the disease, has subjected persons affected by leprosy and even their family members to severe discrimination, which continues to this day.

Since becoming WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination in 2001, I have visited some 120 countries to see the situation for myself. This has led me to think of leprosy in terms of a motorcycle: the front wheel symbolizes curing the disease, and the back wheel represents eliminating discrimination. Unless both wheels are turning together, we will not reach our ultimate goal of zero leprosy.

As regards the front wheel, efforts against the disease, including new case detection, have been badly disrupted by the spread of the novel coronavirus and efforts to prevent transmission. In 2020, the number of new cases reported was down some 37% year on year, according to the WHO, largely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Concerning the rear wheel, I have worked hard to have leprosy recognized internationally as a human rights issue since

the early 2000s, when I first approached the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. One result has been the adoption in 2010 of a UN General Assembly on elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members. But the real measure of success will be when principles and guidelines accompanying the resolution are fully implemented. Because of the pandemic, however, awareness-raising efforts in many areas have stalled, and some people are finding that COVID-19 is exacerbating the discrimination and social disparities they already experience as persons affected by leprosy.

This is why last August I launched a campaign called “Don’t forget leprosy” to ensure that leprosy and those affected by the disease are not ignored, even amid the pandemic, and to stress the importance of early detection and treatment, as well as the need to eliminate stigma and discrimination.

This message is as relevant for small-island states such as FSM as it is for a vast nation such as India, and as Goodwill Ambassador my commitment to supporting leprosy control in every country is unwavering. Indeed, I had planned a visit to FSM in March 2020, but this had to be cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic. However, I have visited many times in the past, and stay in regular touch with those in the region through the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting.

The past half-century has brought us closer to a world without leprosy, but our work is not yet done. If we are to continue to make progress, we need people all over the world to get involved in the “Don’t forget leprosy” campaign and speak out from their own perspective on why we cannot afford to neglect leprosy and those affected by the disease.

As individuals, our voices only carry so far, but together we can make ourselves heard everywhere. I sincerely hope that you will add your voice to this effort.

*Yohei Sasakawa
WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination
Japanese Government Goodwill Ambassador for the Human Rights of Persons Affected by Leprosy
Chairman, The Nippon Foundation*

Second Resources & Development Conference: Working together to build a sustainable & resilient tomorrow; day one sessions on the FSM Energy Sector, Overseas Development Assistance, Nationally Determined Contributions, & Health as an engine for Economic Growth & Security

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On January 24th, 2022, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—opened the second Resources & Development Conference. Held in the State of Chuuk, and inclusive of delegations from the FSM National Government, the Governments of the States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, and the private sector, the Conference intends to provide a platform to discuss and make recommendations on measures, and implementation modalities, to facilitate sustainable economic development in the FSM. This (lengthy) release will cover the first day of the Conference, inclusive of the President’s opening remarks, an overview of the FSM’s energy sector, and presentations on the FSM’s Overseas Development Assistance Priorities, Health as an engine for economic growth and security, and the Nation’s nationally-determined-contributions for tackling Climate Change.

The Conference began with opening remarks from both the Honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of the State of Chuuk, and President Panuelo. Governor Narruhn repeatedly described that professional communications within and between the various levels of Government are essential to the betterment of the Nation, noting that a primary outcome for the 1st Resources & Development Conference in 2018 was a mutual desire to strengthen collaboration between the National Government and the State Governments.

President Panuelo’s remarks covered two separate topics; the first of these was with regards to recent accomplishments and key information for public officials to know about, and the second was with regards to the content at the Conference proper.

On the former, President Panuelo described that although the negotiations for the Compact of Free Association are ongoing that “There has already been a crucial promise from the United States: there will NOT be a fiscal cliff. If the negotiations are not completed by 2023, the U.S. will simply extend financial support until the negotiations are completed,” President Panuelo said. “To say it another way: Fiscal Year 2024 will look identical to Fiscal Year 2023 if the negotiations are still ongoing. Additionally, the U.S. has guaranteed that



the financial provisions of the Compact’s Title 2 will absolutely continue; we are simply negotiating the details on those provisions.”

President Panuelo also reiterated other recent accomplishments, such as the Nation joining the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL); the establishment of the United Nations Multi-Country Office in the North Pacific; the forthcoming East Micronesia Cable, which is fully funded by Australia, Japan, and the United States; and that the FSM’s total debt has been decreasing year-after-year, capped by the fact that the FSM owes zero dollars and zero cents (\$0.00) to any foreign Government, which will continue per FSM National Government policy under the Panuelo-George administration.

Following the opening remarks, the first major item on the day’s agenda was an overview of the FSM’s energy sector. Completed and ongoing projects by the end of 2024 carry an investment of \$95,000,000 with the result, at present, being that the Nation has 12.05 megawatts of power generation from renewable energy, and 13.73 megawatts of power generation from diesel. An additional \$12,900,000 of investment is in the pipeline in the form of proposed or conceptualized projects, of which 100% of them are renewable energy projects that would produce a total of 3.90 megawatts of power generation.

By 2027, the Nation intends to connect 100% of households to electrical access; this is achievable, as in 2018 while only 67% of households had such access, the number was increased to 82% in 2020. While this is largely the result of State-owned utility corporations heading the charge, the Government notes that financial support for the energy sector includes approximately \$43,000,000 from the World Bank, approximately \$28,500,000 from the Asian Development Bank, \$16,000,000 from the European Union, \$15,000,000 from Japan, \$1,700,000 from the United Nations Development Program, and

\$5,300,000 from the United States.

After the presentation, the bulk of the morning’s session was a holistic and inclusive breakout discussion amongst ten separate groups of experts from across the Nation. The intention of the breakout discussion was for technical experts from the public and private sectors to engage in dialectic, answering essential questions facing the Nation and its energy sector specifically.

Citizens and stakeholders keen for more detailed information on the Nation’s energy sector are encouraged to review the presentation, a public document, here: <https://gov.fm/files/Day1-01-Energy.pdf>

The next session was on the FSM’s Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) priorities. Per the FSM’s ODA policy, there are six nation-wide priorities, and two state-specific priorities, the latter of which are determined exclusively by an individual state.

The nation-wide priorities are for the development of a vocational school; the construction of a medical diagnostic center; water security for the FSM; the Pave the Nation Initiative (which already commands more than \$75,000,000 of financial assistance to develop climate-resilient roads); renewable energy; and climate-resilient infrastructure for outer island transport.

The two priorities for Yap State are the construction of the Northern Roads, and the procurement of a passenger vessel; the two priorities for Chuuk State are the development of the port/s for inter-island transportation, and road improvements for Uman, Tonoas, Fefan, and Tol; the two priorities for Pohnpei State are road construction around the Nan Madol area, and the construction of a multi-purpose cultural center; and the two priorities for Kosrae State are the Lelu Causeway reconstruction and re-pavement of Kosrae’s roads.

The next session was on how investing in the health sector is equivalent to contributing to economic growth and economic security for the whole of the FSM.

Juxtaposing several distinct quality-of-life measurements, the Honorable Marcus Samo, Secretary of the Department of Health & Social Affairs, described how approximately 45 out of 1,000 children under the age of five would pass away

before their fifth birthday; over the decades, this has changed for the better, with 2019’s rate at approximately 12 out of 1,000 children under the age of five having the same fate.

Following the question of “What would you do differently in the next Compact period to dramatically improve the health of the people in the FSM?”, Secretary Samo noted that the Department came to the conclusion that capital improvement and infrastructure projects over the past twenty years had been, as far as the health sector is concerned, largely nonexistent. By extension, moving forward would require adequate resources for capital investment projects and infrastructure, including preventive programs for major public health concerns, and health systems development.

Citizens and stakeholders keen for more detailed information on the Secretary’s presentation, a public document, may find it here: https://gov.fm/files/Day1-03-Health_sector_presentation_for_RD_Symposium.pdf

The final presentation of the first day was with regards to the Nation’s nationally-determined-contributions towards tackling Climate Change. Arguably the most impactful item noted in the presentation is that the final draft of the FSM’s nationally-determined-contributions are up for final review by both the National and State Governments. Officials and citizens and stakeholders

interested in the Nation’s commitments towards tackling Climate Change are, by extension, strongly encouraged to contact the Department of Environment, Climate Change, & Emergency Management within the coming days, as it is the intent of the Department for the finalized draft to be submitted to the President in the coming weeks. If the President accepts the draft, it will then be submitted to the 22nd FSM Congress for its consideration and endorsement.

The 2nd Resources & Development Conference will continue until the end of January 28th, 2022. It is the intention of the FSM National Government to continue daily releases on the Conference until its conclusion. Stakeholders interested in the most-detailed reporting after the Conference will wish to be aware that the Department will develop such a report in early February, releasable as a public document.

FSM's coastal fisheries dramatically overfished, climate resilient food security for farming households beginning in earnest, & Chuuk State private sector provide feedback on tourism sector mitigation fund; day two of the Resources & Development Conference

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On January 25th, 2022, the 2nd day of the 2nd Resources & Development Conference was held in the Chuuk State Government Complex. The day's sessions covered the Pacific Regional Oceanscape Program and the Economic Recovery & Resilience Project, the Green Climate Fund grant on Climate Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the FSM, and the Honorable Eugene Amor, Secretary of the Department of Finance & Administration, meeting with the Chuuk State private sector on the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund and related Social Protection programming during the course of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This release—which is only slightly shorter than *À la recherche du temps perdu*—will cover these sessions, and will intermingle full titles and initialisms when appropriate for easier readability.

Structured for inclusivity and transparency, the Conference engages attendees through breakout sessions with emphases on dialectic, interaction, and truth-telling.

The first session of the day was with regards to the Pacific Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP). Funded by the International Development Association (IDA) grants under the World Bank, Phase One of PROP was in effect from 2015 to 2021.

PROP's objective was to strengthen the management of selected Pacific Island oceanic and coastal fisheries, and the critical habitats upon which they depend, with the intent that this would provide the basis for sustainable and increased economic benefits from the resource. The components funded by the IDA grants were for the sustainable management of oceanic fisheries, the sustainable management of coastal fisheries, the conservation of critical fishery habitats, and coordination, monitoring, and evaluation. In a layperson's terms: we wanted to know what we were fishing, how much we were fishing, and how we were doing the fishing—all so that we could collectively make more money from the fishing, while also ensuring that

the number of fish in the water tomorrow is the same or more than the number of fish today.

For the sustainable management of oceanic fisheries, the inputs consisted of the implementation of Fisheries Information Systems (databases etc.), increased monitoring on fishing vessels via observers, increased surveillance patrols, institutional strengthening and training, and the development of a Competent Authority. The results were greater compliance with the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS), greater VDS monitoring and transparency, expanded VDS coverage, increased VDS flexibility, and an introduction-compatible system to long-line fisheries. Citizens who read the above and ask themselves "What is a Vessel Day Scheme?" will appreciate the following explanation. After 1992, through the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), the FSM, Solomon Islands, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Nauru, and the Republic of Palau, have worked to collaboratively manage tuna stocks within their waters. By cooperating with our neighbors and embracing the Pacific Way, through the use of the VDS, PNA members set the total number of days that can be fished in our combined waters, and the apportionment of the total number of days between each country. These allocations of fishing days are set for 12-month periods and can be set up to 3-years in advance. The practical effect is dramatically increased fishing revenues as well as assistance towards ensuring fishing stocks remain healthy, of which the Pacific can continue to boast one of the most well-managed tuna fisheries globally.

If the FSM's oceanic fishery is approximately healthy, the same is not true, unfortunately, for the FSM's coastal fishery. The key observations from the PROP Coastal Fisheries Resource Assessment include that overfishing is occurring throughout the FSM, in all four of its states, and is most acute near population centers. There is significant reduction in catches that threaten food security, health and nutrition, income, and employment



Representatives of Chuuk's private sector whilst attending Secretary Amor's presentation

in coastal communities—which for the FSM's context is virtually all of them. Management of coastal fishery resources is weak or non-existent in most areas, and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are described as "generally not working." Action, it was reported, needs to be taken sooner, rather than later.

The key problems cited to support the aforementioned observations are that FSM fishers engage in destructive fishing techniques, such as night-time spear fishing, fishing of spawning aggregations, and small mesh gill nets. Data to monitor the stocks is insufficient and out of date. Enforcement of fisheries regulations is weak, and awareness of the threats of overfishing, environmental degradation, and pollution, is low. The Government notes that—as these observations and problems were being discussed—several questions posed by the audience were not in response to the threats facing the Nation's coastal fisheries, but rather in regard to how individual state governments and persons can benefit more from revenues generated by oceanic fisheries, which are otherwise largely allocated towards supporting the FSM Trust Fund and public projects across the Nation.

It was described that eleven (11) thematic areas and forty-four (44) specific actions were identified to ensure sustainable development of inshore fisheries. Chief among these include a proposal to develop Inshore Fisheries Legislation & Policy at the National and State level, so as to reflect modern sustainable practices and expectations, and to provide a legal basis for the sustainable management and subsequent development of the

coastal fisheries resources of the Nation.

Citizens, perhaps particularly those newly aware of the threats facing the FSM's coastal fisheries, and the already developed proposals towards solving these problems, are encouraged to review the PROP presentation here: https://gov.fm/files/FSM_PROP1_OUTCOMES_RD_Conf.pdf

The second session of the day focused on the Pacific Regional Oceanscape Program—Economic Recovery/Resilience (PROPER) which, as its name suggests, is the successor program to PROP. While PROP was in effect from 2015 to 2021, PROPER was approved by the FSM in May 2021, and is inclusive of \$10,000,000 of funding from the National IDA, and an additional \$20,000,000 requested from the regional IDA. PROPER intends to be a 4-5 years-long project, again focusing on oceanic and coastal fisheries.

For coastal fisheries, PROPER intends to improve management by developing appropriate policies, engaging in additional monitoring, conducting studies that enhance the evidence base for sound decision-making, and scaling up community-based fishing. PROPER would also intend to diversify the coastal fisheries sector to reduce excess fishing, such as by developing central markets or marinas, creating fishing co-ops or associations with proper financing, developing aquaculture opportunities, shifting to nearshore pelagic fishing, and emphasizing biosecurity and safety at sea (e.g. by painting your boat orange so it can be seen by the U.S. Coast Guard, wearing a life jacket while in a boat, and carrying a personal locator beacon in the event you and your boat become lost).

For oceanic fisheries, PROPER intends to secure public revenue and expand economic benefits, such as through the FSM Fisheries Investment Policy, and developing the Nation's Blue Economy (i.e. combining Climate Change adaptation and mitigation efforts, environmental protection, and tackling

...R&D Conference Day two

Continued from previous page

marine pollution together).

Citizens are encouraged to review the PROPER presentation here: https://gov.fm/files/PROP_2_Concept.pdf

The next session of the day was on the Climate Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the FSM project, generously funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The \$9,600,000 program, approved by the GCF's Board in March of 2021, has a 5-year duration, and is the first comprehensive national effort to focus on increasing the resilience of the FSM's most vulnerable communities to food insecurity in the face of Climate Change.

Targeting all households in the FSM's high islands that undertake in agricultural activities, the project seeks to ensure a minimum of 68,250 direct beneficiaries by establishing an enabling environment for adaptive action and investment, enhancing food security of vulnerable households by introducing Climate Sustainable Agricultural Practices, and strengthening climate-resilient value chains and market linkages across the agriculture sector.

On the premise that the above language is arguably rather technical and exact, a question was posed: "How does my father-in-law, a farmer whose only source of income is the sakau and betelnut he grows, and whose food, aside from imported rice, is the taro, papaya, and breadfruit he grows, and who lives up in the mountains of Pohnpei State, benefit from this program?" The answer given was that the father-in-law might be able to, for example, benefit from training on how to increase his agricultural yields; how to diversify the types of food he grows; and tools and information on how to use the raw materials (e.g. lemons) and make a product from them (e.g. lemonade).

While the GCF project is financed by the GCF, and uses Micronesia Conservation Trust to manage funds and ensure project management milestones are completed, two other projects were also discussed in the session under separate donor partners: the Micronesia COVID-19 Response program (i.e.



Participants at the Climate-Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the FSM meeting pose for a photo

"MICCO19"), in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded FSM Social Protection programming, of which the latter's most well-known is the Low Income Household Assistance Program but also includes funding for a food security program.

MICCO19 addresses food and nutrition security impacts caused by COVID-19 through strengthened sustainable and resilient food systems and good governance. Activities in the project include strengthening biosecurity services capacity, upgrading sustainable production, integrating a people-centered approach across project work to improve food security, and supporting local-level governance on people-centered food security and COVID-19 response. Unlike the GCF-funded food security program and the ADB-funded food security program, MICCO19 is also implemented in the Republic of Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

For the FSM's purpose, it was advised there was \$500,000 each for the States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. It was described that the project is flexible on the premise that it allows individual states to choose the projects they want, and by extension to have the freedom to determine what success looks like and navigate the means for how to make that success occur.

Regarding the ADB-funded food security program, which was part of the \$14,000,000 FSM Social Protection programming developed by President Panuelo, there was significant discussion on whether or not the program was still viable, with funding available for disbursement.

When originally discussed in a release dated December 15th, 2020, the food security program was described to be for community groups and low-income households, with the intent to provide subsistence livelihood training, and an

equitable distribution of seeds, planting, and fishing materials, to vulnerable citizens at no cost. Approximately \$2,000,000 was originally scheduled for this purpose, though due to the enormous popularity of the other Social Protection programming, such as the Low-Income Household Assistance program—described further below in this (lengthy) release—funding was shifted from the food security program, and so what had been a \$2,000,000 program became a \$1,000,000 program. Staff from the Office of the President confirmed that this was a decision made by the Office of the President, as opposed to the Secretary of the Department of Resources & Development, her staff, or any other party.

Understandably, much of the discussion revolved around what public servants at the state level can do to both increase the funding of the program to its original level and, perhaps more importantly, how the funding can be expended for the program's applicants, who have applied for assistance, and are keen for assistance, but have not yet received any, leaving state officials concerned that they are unequipped to provide satisfactory answers to citizens in their communities.

It was described that approximately 38 applications for the program were submitted from Chuuk, with 42 applications from Kosrae, 52 applications from Pohnpei, and 11 applications from Yap. All of these applications from citizens were advised to be approved by the appropriate State Governments, and presently sitting with the National Government for both review by an appropriate committee and the Department of Finance & Administration. It was clarified that whatever funding assistance is granted would be used in the form of payments to vendors for seeds, planting, and fishing materials (as opposed to direct payments to citizens ala the Low-Income Household Assistance program).

The final session of the day was a meeting between the Secretary of Finance & Administration and Chuuk State's private sector to discuss the FSM-funded Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund (commonly referred to as the FSM Economic Stimulus Package), the FSM-funded Stranded Citizens Assistance Program, the U.S. Department of Labor-funded Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program (PUA) and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program (FPUC), and

the ADB-funded FSM Social Protection programming (and, of these, specifically the Low-Income Household Assistance Program).

The meeting began with the striking observation that real GDP growth for the FSM was down nearly 6% in Fiscal Year 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and down nearly 2% for Fiscal Year 2021. This can be most visibly seen, perhaps, in how tourism sector revenue was impacted, which brought in \$27,300,000 in Fiscal Year 2019, for example, but only \$15,500,000 in Fiscal Year 2021.

Public Law 21-211, which established the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund, ensured that the FSM National Government would pay 100% of all salaries and wages, 100% of all Gross Revenue Taxes, 100% of all utility costs, and 100% of all interest payments on existing loans with FSM-based banking institutions for eligible tourism sector businesses. Eligible businesses must be taxpaying businesses that incur a loss of 10% or more in revenue, and beyond the most immediately obvious categories of businesses in this sector (e.g. hotels, restaurants, diving operators), also included are exporters, apartments/rentals, taxi companies, LP gas distributors, cinemas, bars, beauty salons, water bottling companies, and laundromats.

Citizens who review the aforementioned list and find themselves wondering "Why are laundromats considered a tourism sector business in the FSM?" will appreciate the following explanation. While a majority of hotels in the FSM may include an attached restaurant, few carry laundry services within their own premises; the bulk of hotels in the FSM either have, or had, established contracts with laundromats that were the precise revenue source that made these laundromats financially viable. Fewer tourists in the FSM, by extension, necessarily means that there are fewer persons to ask their hotel to wash their clothes while they take a taxi down to the beauty salon to get a massage, and to the bar for a beverage, after a long day of exploring this Paradise in Our Backyards.

As of January 2022, forty (40) businesses in Yap State have benefitted from the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund, for a total of \$1,182,363 in direct stimulus and \$266,259 in interest paid,

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for a combined total of \$1,448,662.

Forty-three (43) businesses in Chuuk State have benefitted from the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund, for a total of \$1,984,312 in direct stimulus and \$357,590 in interest paid, for a combined total of \$2,341,902.

One hundred and twenty (120) businesses in Pohnpei State have benefitted from the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund, for a total of \$3,134,892 in direct stimulus and \$440,883 in interest paid, for a combined total of \$3,575,775.

Sixty-four (64) businesses in Kosrae State have benefitted from the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund, for a total of \$601,987 in direct stimulus and \$41,767 in interest paid, for a combined total of \$643,754.

Taken together, 267 businesses in the FSM have benefitted from the Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund, with \$6,903,554 in direct stimulus payments, \$1,106,499 in interest payments, and a combined total of \$8,010,053.

It was reported that the FSM Development Bank has provided a total of \$2,500,000 in loans to three hundred (300) small and micro enterprises, from a pool of 1,054 applications.

Regarding the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) Program, both of which have concluded, it was described that the FSM had a total of 1,538 eligible persons receive assistance from these programs, of which \$7,549,258 was via PUA and \$13,424,700 was via FPUC, for a combined total of \$20,973,958.

In terms of state breakdowns, for the State of Yap, there were 263 persons who received PUA and/or FPUC assistance, of which \$1,215,545 was sourced from PUA and \$2,232,300 was sourced from FPUC, for a combined total of \$3,447,845.

For the State of Chuuk, there were 406 persons who received PUA and/or FPUC assistance, of which \$2,093,701 was sourced from PUA and \$3,896,100 was sourced from FPUC, for a combined total of \$5,989,801.



Mr. Mark Kostka, GCF Food Security Project Manager, describes how the \$9,600,000 project will directly impact 68,250 beneficiaries

For the State of Pohnpei, there were 722 persons who received PUA and/or FPUC assistance, of which \$3,367,798 was sourced from PUA, and \$5,859,600 was sourced from FPUC, for a combined total of \$9,227,398.

For the State of Kosrae, there were 147 persons who received PUA and/or FPUC assistance, of which \$872,214 was sourced from PUA, and \$1,436,700 was sourced from FPUC, for a combined total of \$2,308,914.

U.S. law understandably only provided the PUA and FPUC programming to serve citizens of the FSM, and citizens of the United States who reside in the FSM. The FSM National Government, however, having taken the view that citizens of the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Fiji, Japan, Solomon Islands, the People's Republic of China, and so forth, who choose to reside in this Paradise in Our Backyards, are nonetheless as deserving as any other person to financial assistance in challenging times, purposefully built its own FSM-funded program for assisting unemployed non-citizens. Otherwise operating under the same rules as the PUA and FPUC programming, but relying

on FSM-generated revenues, as of January 2022 there has been \$152,379 of assistance delivered to unemployed non-citizens residing in the FSM.

Over the nearly two years that the Declaration of Public Health Emergency has been in effect, many FSM citizens have been stranded abroad and unable to return home. For the purpose of the Stranded Citizens Assistance Program—which was announced in May 2020, with an original allocation of \$300,000 and with the purpose of providing stranded individuals \$1,000 and stranded families \$1,500—the practical effect of hundreds of citizens unable to see their loved ones is that the program expanded its mission as well as



An attendee shares his concerns on the FSM's historical and contemporary management of its coastal fisheries, which are overfished and threatened

its funding.

As of January 2022, \$1,174,000 has been delivered to stranded citizens—of which, notably, \$619,500 has been directed to residents of Chuuk State. (This is partly on the premise that Chuuk State is the most populous in the FSM, partly on the premise that Chuuk State was the last to begin repatriation flights, and partly on the premise that residents of Chuuk State migrate out of the FSM at a higher rate per capita than other states).

The final program discussed in the session was the ADB-funded Low-Income Household Assistance Program. Originally setup with \$6,000,000 of assistance, the program was strengthened both by pulling funding from the food security program under the FSM Social Protection programming, as well as augmented by an additional \$2,500,000 from the 22nd FSM Congress. The program is intended to provide temporary cash relief for households outside of the formal labor sector, such as subsistence farmers and fishers, and specifically such laborers who otherwise were unqualified for the aforementioned PUA and FPUC programming.

As of January 2022, the FSM has received a total of 17,142 applications from eligible households, and paid out \$7,896,000 to 7,896 of them.

From the perspective of the individual states, for the State of Yap, the Government has received a total of 2,174 applications from eligible households, and paid out \$747,000 to 747 of them.

For the State of Chuuk, the Government has received a total of 7,200 applications

from eligible households and paid out \$4,358,000 to 4,358 of them.

For the State of Pohnpei, the Government has received 6,686 applications from eligible households, and paid out \$2,483,000 to 2,483 of them.

For the State of Kosrae, the Government has received 1,082 applications from eligible households, and paid out \$308,000 to 308 of them.

After the discussion on the various programs, representatives of the private sector described their concerns on how the COVID-19 Pandemic has affected their families and businesses. It was described that businesses with expensive equipment (e.g. diving equipment, which need to be tested and maintained, and is difficult to do without appropriate parts or personnel) would greatly appreciate and benefit from additional support, as—for example—failing to properly test or maintain or upgrade diving equipment, which can require specialized personnel, becomes both a financial sink as well as a safety hazard. It was further described that businesses would find it productive for the Government to consider how it can extend no-interest loan periods presently set at six months to one full year.

The 2nd Resources & Development Conference will continue until the end of January 28th, 2022. It is the intention of the FSM National Government to continue daily releases on the Conference until its conclusion. Stakeholders interested in the most-detailed reporting after the Conference will wish to be aware that the Department will develop such a report in early February, releasable as a public document.

Fisheries Investment Policy broadly supported, & foreign investment plans highly debated, at third day of the Resources & Development Conference

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On January 26th, 2022, the 3rd day of the 2nd Resources & Development Conference included dialogue and debate on the FSM’s trade and investment sector, the FSM Fisheries Investment Plan, and the FSM’s Marine Resources Sector.

Regarding accomplishments as related to foreign investment into the FSM, it was described that the National Government has established a Competent Authority for aquaculture exports into the European Union; that Chuuk State has established new foreign investment regulations, and successfully recruited a foreign investment inspector; that Pohnpei State has passed two foreign investment legal amendments, one in 2018 and one in 2021; that Yap State has established foreign investment regulations; and that Kosrae State has issued a foreign investment permit to Da Yang Seafood Ltd., a Memorandum of Understanding with Australian investors to revitalize the operation of the former Kosrae Tropical Water, Inc., and the successful recruitment of a foreign investment officer.

Regarding ongoing projects as related to foreign investment into the FSM, it was described that the National Government has reviewed and recommended the establishment of Intellectual Property & Traditional Knowledge Law, as a means of strengthening the FSM’s reliability and trustworthiness with foreign investors. (It is the lack of intellectual property law, for example, that allows for businesses to legally sell pirated copies of films on DVD across the FSM). For the State of Chuuk, it was described that the State continues to work with the Pacific Centre in Tokyo to revitalize the CFTI dock for transshipment purposes. For the State of Pohnpei, it was described that the State continues the development of a consolidated foreign investment regulations package, as well as continued efforts to develop a Pohnpei Business Registry. For the States of Yap and Kosrae, it was described that both continue to review their own foreign investment laws, regulations, and forms. Regarding pending projects in the pipeline, it was described that the National Government will establish a Foreign Investment Data Management

System, and hire a Trade Advisor. It was described that the State of Chuuk will propose an amendment to its current foreign investment law. It was described that the State of Pohnpei will increase public awareness on foreign investment compliance. It was further described that the State of Kosrae will update its foreign investment laws, and develop a Foreign Investment Database.

A lengthy breakout session followed with the aims of having participants answer the following questions: “What are the current issues and challenges of the private sector?”; “How can the FSM trade and investment support or address these challenges?”; and “Does the Conference recommend harmonizing the Nation’s laws and regulations pertaining to foreign investment?”

Challenges facing the private sector were suggested to be voluminous in number and wide in scope. Frequently cited challenges included a lack of development on necessary infrastructure, such as roads and docks; a lack of human capital, made worse by brain-drain/out-migration and a continuing labor ban imposed from the Republic of the Philippines; and a lack of regular consultation from the Government.

Participants suggested that the private sector can be supported through a State & National task force inclusive of private sector membership, and designed to respond to issues facing the private sector; that the Government ought to negotiate with foreign shipping entities to ensure fair and consistent prices; that the Government ought to improve awareness and education on foreign investment laws, regulations, and policies, to include a discussion on what makes a law, regulation, or policy distinct from each other; and that the Government ought to provide subsidies where possible and appropriate, so to ensure the viability of private sector entities when engaged in unforeseen circumstances beyond their control, such as the COVID-19 Pandemic.



[final draft as of 9 1 2021.pdf](#)

The Fisheries Investment Policy signals a shift in focus for the FSM to ensure its fisheries sector generates more economic activities that can themselves contribute to economic growth. It is the FSM National Government’s intention for the Policy to galvanize all stakeholders to commit to actions in harmonizing and improving the fisheries investment climate in the FSM.

Considering that the very first Committee to Wait on the President of the 21st FSM Congress held on May 11th 2019 discussed precisely the same topics as the first Committee to Wait on the President of the 22nd FSM Congress on May 11th 2021—the proposed Foreign Investment Law, which the Executive Branch endorses, and which President Panuelo has requested for Congress’ consideration—citizens will be interested to know if there was agreement in the Conference, or not, towards harmonizing the Nation’s foreign investment laws and regulations. While there was not unanimous endorsement among the ten groups, there was a supermajority agreement for this harmonization to occur, albeit several endorsements came with caveats such as respecting an individual state’s foreign investment desires.

The relevant presentations for the trade and investment sector can be found here https://gov.fm/files/RD_Conf_-_Trade_Presentation_v01-25.pdf as well as here: https://gov.fm/files/RD_Conference_National_Investment_Presentation.pdf The next session of the day was with regards to the proposed Fisheries Investment Policy. This is the same policy submitted by President Panuelo to the FSM Congress on September 16th, 2021, formally entitled as the “National Oceanic Fisheries Investment Policy for the FSM 2021-2026: A Policy to Maximize Value of Participatory Rights under the Vessel Day Scheme” which can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/FSM_NATIONAL_OCEANIC_FISHERIES_INVESTMENT_POLICY_2021-2026

The strategic objectives of the Policy include to maintain and enhance resource sustainability; to secure and strengthen fisheries’ contribution to economic growth; to encourage and promote tradable export of fish in a processed and value-added format; to facilitate and support the growth of the fisheries sector; to safeguard profitability of the offshore fishery; to encourage effective collaboration and partnership between the National and State Governments; to identify and secure capital to stimulate investment in targeted economic development infrastructure and commercial projects; to encourage and attract Foreign Direct Investment to drive commercial development; to encourage and promote policies and reforms underpinning a conducive investment environment; to build human resource capital to effectively facilitate growth impacts of investment capital flows; and to leverage the FSM’s Party Allowable Effort to encourage the development of the domestic tuna industry. On the last item stated, the Government, through NORMA, is developing a long-term partnership with the Nation’s biggest and longest-residing partner in the fisheries sector, Liangcheng, to utilize the Nation’s large longline Party Allowable Effort that will translate into transshipment in all four FSM States.

The relevant presentation for this session can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/Final_NORMA_Policy_Implementation_01_26_22.pdf

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In the discussions that followed the presentation, participants were asked questions such as “What incentives should a state contribute to encourage onshore investment, and in what form?” and “Do you support the Fisheries Investment Policy?”

There was common agreement that direct flights to major markets, timely resolution of legal issues, incentives to limit the cost of doing business, and to either remove fines and penalties or—at least—to ensure they are not excessive. There was common agreement that incentives should broadly be increased in number and scope across the FSM, though what those incentives might be varied amongst the groups and the various FSM States.

With regards to whether or not there was support for the Fisheries Investment Policy, while a supermajority of attendees and their respective groups advised of their support, it was often couched by persons representing the States of Yap and Pohnpei with suggestions that further review for such a Policy may be necessary, or that individual states should determine their support for the Policy, or lack thereof, through their own internal processes.

The next session of the day was an overview of the FSM’s Marine Resources Sector.

At the national level, the Division of Marine Resources at the Department of Resources & Development described various accomplishments, such as the passage of the Protected Area Network Policy and Country Program Strategy, the previously discussed Pacific Regional Oceanscape Project (PROP) from Day 2, the launch of the Blue Prosperity Micronesia program, the FSM Aquaculture Management & Development Plan, and the National Seabed Resources Act of 2014. Several of these accomplishments are also ongoing in some form or capacity.

Projects pending and/or otherwise in the pipeline at the national level were described to include the Regional Island 2 Island (i2i) project concept, in development with SPREP, the previously discussed Pacific Regional Oceanscape Project—Economic Resilience/Recovery (PROPER) from Day 2, the development

of a Coastal Fisheries Policy, and the framework development for the National Seabed Resources Act.

The State of Yap described that recent accomplishments for their Marine Resource Sector included acquiring a marine specialist and several certified divers, and—in part due to assistance from the U.S. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Micronesia Conservation Trust—annual coral reef monitoring work has continued.

Ongoing projects in the State of Yap were advised to include data collection efforts in support of Blue Prosperity Micronesia, data analysis for coral reef monitoring, and supporting Blue Prosperity Micronesia on marine spatial planning and sustainable fisheries.

Concerns and issues for the State of Yap were described to include a lack of technical assistance (e.g., there is no marine biologist at the Division of Marine Resources), and that the completion of the Division’s building is slower than preferred and previously projected.

The State of Pohnpei described that recent accomplishments included the identification and designation of 13 and 14 mangrove protected areas and marine protected areas respectively, that the delineation and demarcation of the Pohnpei Watershed had been completed in all municipalities except for Nett, and that the regulations pertaining to the size of fish were updated.

Pending projects for the State of Pohnpei were advised to include an assessment of the cumulative impact of coral dredging and sand mining in Pohnpei State, as well as the identification and designation of aquaculture sites.

Consistent with other states across the FSM, challenges and issues as viewed by the State of Pohnpei included the decline in the average size of fish and numerical catch of fish, as well as overlapping mandates and responsibilities in various government offices and agencies.

The State of Kosrae described its accomplishments in the Marine Resources Sector as including the development of relevant legislation and policies, resource management and conservation programs, and coastal fisheries infrastructure development projects.



monitoring, hired a Chuuk State protected area network coordinator, and engaged in clam aquaculture training for various public servants, among others.

Ongoing projects in Chuuk State are similar to other states, including Blue Prosperity Micronesia, clam aquaculture in two marine protected areas, and the oil removal program with Japan’s JMAS team.

Ongoing projects in Kosrae were advised to include a fisheries extension and support service provided to local fishers, as well as aquaculture development projects, and a Fisheries Enhancement Project.

Pending projects for Kosrae were presented as comprising an establishment of sustainable near-shore fishing aggregation devices (commonly referred to as FADs), the establishment of a clam meat processing facility, and a fisheries stock enhancement project for trochus and clam spawning and reseeded.

Challenges for Kosrae were noted to consist of a broad decline in fishing stocks, the enforcement (or lack thereof) of existent fisheries-related laws and regulations, a lack of funding from the FSM National Government to implement priority projects, and the 2017 Joint Economic Committee (JEMCO) Resolution for Small Sector Grants which have restricted funding for recurrent personnel costs and other routine expenditures.

Recommendations from Kosrae on moving forward focused on the frequently cited request for strengthened National-State cooperation, but also included a broad, non-specific request for the National Government to transfer “major assets” to be used in Kosrae to implement priority projects.

The State of Chuuk’s list of accomplishments since the 1st Resources & Development Conference were significant and numerous, including the Chuuk Coastal Fisheries legislation, the Chuuk Protected Area legislation, shark finning legislation, legislation to protect Kuop atoll, the Chuuk Strategic Development Plan, the Chuuk Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan, and a Search & Rescue & Environmental Impact assessment. Additionally, Chuuk established five marine protected areas and one terrestrial protected area, completed significant coral reef

In Chuuk State’s project pipeline include projects on tackling alien invasive species and sustainable land management.

The relevant presentation for this session can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/RD_Conference_Marine_Overview_26JAN2022_FINAL_PRESENTED.pdf

In the breakout session that followed, participants were asked the following questions: “How do we best improve communications and coordination between FSM R&D and state counterparts?”; “How can FSM R&D best support your coastal fisheries and aquaculture priorities at the state and community level?”; “What fisheries policies and content are needed at the national level to aid in state/local level coastal fisheries management?”; and “How can we best support Micronesia Challenge 2030—given its new targets—and the FSM Protected Area Network implementation at the state and community level?”

There was broadly common agreement that if FSM R&D generated more frequent and formalized communications, that such communications would be an act of service to the states, such as monthly reports on programs, projects, activities, and information relating to donor partners. There was common agreement that legal and technical advice would be appreciated. It was discussed in some groups that they don’t know what they don’t know, and so proactive offers of assistance that could be confirmed or denied would be superior to the alternative of radio silence.

The 2nd Resources & Development Conference will continue until the end of January 28th, 2022. Stakeholders interested in the most-detailed reporting after the Conference will wish to be aware that the Department will develop such a report in early February, releasable as a public document.

The FSM's tourism destinations are preparing for open borders, & the FSM's agriculture sector hurts from lack of funding; day four of the Resources & Development Conference

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On January 27th, 2022, the 2nd Resources & Development Conference's participants engaged in highly spirited discussion on the tourism and agriculture sectors in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Consistent with previous days of the Conference, the agenda described various accomplishments, ongoing projects, pending projects, and challenges and issues facing a given sector, followed by rigorous debate and discussion.

The first session of the day focused on the FSM's tourism sector. The Honorable Elina Akinaga, Secretary of the Department of Resources & Development, noted that the FSM received 18,019 international visitors in 2019, of whom 60% arrived in Pohnpei State, 28% arrived in Chuuk State, 6% arrived in Yap State, and 6% arrived in Kosrae State. Without belaboring the common awareness that the COVID-19 Pandemic has largely put the tourism sector on life support, the Secretary described that the Nation has taken substantial actions towards strengthening the tourism sector's resiliency, and preparing it for the day when borders are reopened.

In terms of accomplishments since the 1st Resources & Development Conference, at the level of the National Government, the FSM Tourism Policy and State Investment Plans were both adopted and funded. The previous Tourism Unit was elevated within the Department to become the Division of Tourism. The FSM was the first Pacific Island Country to endorse the Pacific Sustainable Tourism Development Framework, and further the first Pacific Island Country to endorse the Glasgow Tourism Declaration on the margins of COP26.

Ongoing projects at the national level include the continued implementation of the State Tourism Investment Plans, as well as updates to the FSM's Tourism Policy.

Pending projects at the national level are focused on both branding and investment planning. For the former, there is significant effort towards formally adopting the term "Paradise in Our Backyards" as the FSM's brand (thematically similar to the Republic of Palau's "Pristine Paradise Palau" and New Zealand's "100% Pure").

Additionally, the FSM will be rolling out a US-EDA grant of \$1,800,000 to supplement the State Investment Plans, which will occur as soon as the Project Coordinator sets up his office.

The COVID-19 Pandemic's effect on border closures, limited domestic airline capacity, and arguably irregular scheduling of FSM vessels (as such vessels must conduct not only routine trips but also emergency and evolving situations), has impacted tourism from both international and domestic visitors.

The State of Kosrae presented next. The lack of travelers has given Kosrae a unique opportunity to develop and renovate its tourism and heritage sites. The practical effect is that the Lelu Ruins, the Yela Ka Forest, and Melak Park, have received significant upgrades to their user-experience. Tourism sites have seen the installation of road signage, and safety features such as ropes and bridges.

Ongoing projects for Kosrae include the renovation of the Kosrae Museum, which intends to be ready by mid-2022. Additionally, the historical site at Mwoth Mission School is being worked on.

In the pipeline for Kosrae State is the Kosrae Cultural Center, which is proposed but requires funding. Conversely, the Utwac Biosphere Reserve project has recently received funding sourced from EDA grants.

Moving forward, Kosrae State discussed that it needs to develop a Tourism Recovery Plan for when borders are reopened, and the Pandemic is no longer as significant of a threat.

Yap State described that the Yap Living History Museum has established an organized monthly Island Market, whose popularity within Yap itself is very high and, when borders are reopened, would likely be a place of interest for international visitors. Additionally, several tourism sites have been enhanced, ranging from a World War II site, a traditional stone path, and a traditional fish weir.

In terms of ongoing projects, the Yap Visitors Bureau is dedicating significant time and energy, with financial assistance sourced from the FSM Congress, on expanding the Yap Living History Museum. Construction drawings are presently being developed for what will

ultimately become a stage, a large gazebo, public restrooms, and canoe houses.

In terms of projects in the pipeline, Yap has approved funding for the creation of a welcome video to be shown upon arrival at the Yap International Airport, as well as a video library for marketing purposes. It has been advised that the reason the project remains pending—as opposed to being ongoing—is that the videographer is unable to visit the state until such a time when borders reopen.

Like Kosrae State, Yap State advised that it needs to develop a recovery plan for the tourism industry for when borders reopen, and tourists return.

Pohnpei State described that its accomplishments include a 5-year tourism implementation plan, inclusive of the construction of a visitor center at Nan Madol, and the establishment of Nan Madol as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Regarding ongoing projects, Pohnpei State relayed that it is developing a sustainable management plan for tourism sites, including consistent vegetation clearing and maintenance of directional signs. Additionally, the state described that it is providing financial assistance, when available, to eligible businesses in the tourism industry.

Pending projects for Pohnpei State were advised to include the development of Sokehs Ridge, as well as a Mangrove Board Walk that would allow persons to walk through a mangrove sanctuary somewhere in and/or around Kitti and Madolenihmw.

The State of Chuuk described its accomplishments since the 1st Resources & Development Conference as the completion of the Air Charter Feasibility Project, funded by support stemming from the Compact of Free Association, and the completion of small-scale tourism site upgrades, among others.

Ongoing projects for Chuuk were described to include beautification enhancements at tourism sites, as well as the development of marketing materials. Pending projects for Chuuk were advised to include a grant proposal for expanding and renovating the airport, and the creation of the Mount Tonachaw Hiking Trail.

The relevant presentation for the tourism sector can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/RD_Conference_Tourism_Sector_Presentation.pdf

In the following breakout session, participants were asked to consider the following questions: "What are the main three markets, as a Nation, we should focus on within the next two years?"; "What other tourist markets do you feel we should target?"; "What are the tourist products to be prioritized and developed for marketing?"; and "Identify training needs in your state for when our borders are open."

Suggested markets remained broadly consistent with previous direction, i.e. a benefit of targeting the U.S. market includes visa-free travel and a common language, a benefit of targeting the Japanese market includes significant blood ties and the FSM-Japan Kizuna (special bond), and a benefit of targeting the Chinese market includes both the close FSM-China Great Friendship, and that the latter's economic boom has resulted in an enormous middle-class with the money and desire to travel.

There was broad agreement that tourism sector products and activities ought to focus on Micronesian heritage and cultural sites e.g. shipwrecks, the Yap Living History Museum, Nan Madol, and Lelu Ruins, as well as a greater appreciation and emphasis on Micronesian food, both in its raw form (e.g. Yapese lemons, Kosraean tangerines, Chuukese mangoes) and processed form (e.g. taro chips). One group described that a formalized return of historical development-assistance programming such as the U.S. Peace Corps and World Teach could also mean an expansion of persons aware of the FSM who would promote the Nation abroad based on their lived experiences in the country.

There was common agreement that, as the state governments felt the need for recovery plans, training on how to sustainably bring tourists in would be helpful.

The next session focused on the Nation's agricultural sector.

At the national level, accomplishments

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...R&D Conference Day four

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include the Biosecurity Act of 2017, the FSM Forestry Action Plan for 2020-2030, and the recent United Nations Food Systems Summit and its corresponding dialogues.

Ongoing projects were described to comprise the Capital Improvement Project on Food Security, the FAO COVID-19 Related Food Insecurity in the Pacific Region program, the SPC/FAO Phase II MICCO19 Program, and the Safeguarding Biodiversity from Invasive Alien Species in the FSM project, among several others.

Pending projects were advised to consist of State Strategic Action Plans for the FSM, the Strengthening the Enabling Environment to Enhance Food Systems in the FSM project, the Enhancing Regional Animal Health Capacity to Prepare and Respond to the Risks of African Swine Fever project, the revision of Quarantine Memorandums of Understanding between the National and State Governments, the revision and creation of new sets of Quarantine Regulations to align with the Biosecurity Act of 2017, and the Little Fire Ant CIP.

Challenges and issues, beyond the Pandemic, include limited capacity (e.g. a total of four persons work in the Division of Agriculture at the National Government), data capture, retrieval, and management issues, and biosecurity in the form of inter-state movement of quarantinable items.

The State of Chuuk presented next, describing accomplishments such as the Coconut Rehabilitation in the Lagoon Islands project, with more than 5,000 coconut trees planted; the construction of artificial taro patches in the outer islands; the completion of the Forest Action plan; and the distribution of gardening guides, tools, and seeds, to more than 2,000 households.

Ongoing projects in Chuuk State were described to range from MICCO19 to the Ridge to Reef Project and Forest Stewardship project.

Chuuk's pending project was advised to focus on Invasive Plant Species.

Challenges for the State of Chuuk were expressed as concerning a broader lack of funding, the defunding of agricultural

sector projects, limited land for agriculture at large and particularly for State Government initiatives, and an absence of agricultural programming in school curricula.

The State of Pohnpei was proud to describe its accomplishment of an agricultural sector revolving fund, which has allowed for consistent availability of seeds, animal medication, fertilizers, and equipment to support farmers. Other accomplishments included a dry litter animal waste management project, and fifty (50) biogas systems.

Ongoing projects at Pohnpei State included the MICCO19 project funded by SPC, which in Pohnpei's context is used in part for the purchase of greenhouses, which are then sold at replacement cost. (Persons wondering why a greenhouse is necessary in one of the rainiest and most flourishing locations in the World will appreciate that it is exactly the intensity of rain in Pohnpei State that makes growing many non-native vegetables impractical, a problem that a greenhouse solves). Other ongoing projects included the ADB-funded food security project and training on the Coconuts 4 Life project.

Pending projects for Pohnpei State were suggested to consist of the development of a tissue culture lab, which would ideally support all FSM states, composting projects to support the production of organic fertilizer, and turning karat (Fei'banana) into baby food.

Yap State expressed that its accomplishments in the agriculture sector include 26,314 tree seedlings distributed to communities and private landowners, 929 piglets being sold to local farmers, the distribution of 5,471 packages of seeds, and the distribution of planting materials from the agriculture seed bank.

Ongoing projects for Yap State include nursery renovation, several U.S. Forest Services-funded projects, the ADB-funded food security project, a project tackling the Little Fire Ant invasion, and invasive plants and fruit-fly management.

Pending projects include FSM Congress' support to the Little Fire Ant project.

Issues facing Yap State in the agriculture sector included a lack of funding for food security projects, coconut rehabilitation, and tackling the Little Fire Ant invasion. Personnel needs include the hiring of a Livestock Supervisor and Extension Agent Coordinator for the Division of Agriculture & Fisheries. An additional concern is that every grant Yap State receives must go through the Yap

Legislature for approval (this is also true at the National Government), leading to significant amounts of time and energy focusing on the needs of bureaucracy.

The State of Kosrae rightly emphasized much pride and happiness in its discussion on its accomplishments, such as the establishment of a coconut nursery, the expansion of green enterprises e.g. Green Banana Paper, RJ Market & Exports etc., and local products such as banana ketchup, pineapple jam, taro flour, tapioca flour, banana chips, breadfruit chips, chili peppers and sauces, herbal medicines, and other products.

Ongoing projects for Kosrae are significant in number and scope, including citrus replantation and farming, poultry farms and piggeries, sweet potato farms, the Tofol Farm Project, and agriculture biogas.

Pending projects for Kosrae State range from biosecurity efforts on tackling whiteflies and coconut termites to multiple Climate Smart Agriculture & livestock projects.

Challenges facing Kosrae are varied, and were cited to include coordination, training and education, supply issues, production technique concerns, lack of technology, financing, and infrastructure, a lack of sufficient regulations and policies, a lack of effective enforcement towards tackling invasive species, and market access for farmers.

The relevant presentation on the agriculture sector can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/RD_Conference_Jan24_28_22_Agriculture_Compiled_Version_PPT.pdf

In the breakout session that followed, participants were asked to answer the following questions: "Will you please identify the gaps—institutional and structural—within the agriculture sector?"; "How can we improve the services we have in the agriculture sector?"; "What are the challenges and issues within the agriculture sector (and please share proposed solutions as well)"; and "In the next two years, what should be the priority focus area/s in the agriculture sector?"

Lengthy—arguably even slightly heated—dialectic as to what the definition of "food security" is followed, which might itself constitute an institutional or structural gap. Several groups suggested that a common

agreement on such a definition would be helpful for the development and dissemination of baseline agricultural census reporting, which were also requested to occur more frequently and in more detail. There was otherwise common agreement that lack of funding and staffing, and lack of political interest to ensure such funding and staffing would be existent, affected the sector in a significant way. Lack of centralized locations for selling products, and lack of Government-Farmer communications, were described as further gaps in the sector.

Regarding the improvement of services, there was lengthy discussion on the translation of technical findings into local vernacular, as well as the acquisition of further financial resources and information sources.

Regarding challenges in the agricultural sector—as distinct from the gaps previously discussed—it was described that there remains a significant misconception of the sector, juxtaposed with a cultural view that agriculture is simultaneously something that everyone knows and practices, but which carries an abject lack of prestige or value. A fundamental lack of interest in agriculture at scale, when compared with the low image of agriculture as a career path, was described to be threatening not only to whatever definition one chooses to ascribe to "food security", but also for the development and promotion of local goods for sale both within the FSM and abroad.

Regarding what ought to be priority areas of focus over the next two years, there was discussion that biosecurity regulations to support the Biosecurity Act of 2017 are genuinely essential for the Nation's long-term goals. Overwhelmingly, suggested priorities—from the development of scaled-up food products for both export and substitution of imports, climate smart agriculture techniques, and interstate trade of local produce—would indicate a broader need for both financial support and, just as critically, long-term political commitments from elected leadership at all levels.

The 2nd Resources & Development Conference will continue until the end of January 28th, 2022. Stakeholders interested in the most-detailed reporting after the Conference will wish to be aware that the Department will develop such a report in early February, releasable as a public document.

Final day of Resources & Development Conference explores issues regarding limited data sharing, minimal observance of operating procedures

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On January 28th, 2022, the fifth and final day of the 2nd Resources & Development Conference was held. Focusing exclusively on the Division of Statistics, the day’s discussions explored in detail the ways and means that data is contemporaneously gathered in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), how that data is (or is not) shared, and the relationship between the issues affecting data management and its influence on decision-making.

The session began with a discussion on major accomplishments for the Division of Statistics, which included the completion of the 2020-2024 FSM Strategy for the Development of Statistics and Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing, the latter of which was described as a “game-changer” on the premise that it allowed staff to conduct surveys with fewer persons and significantly less time focused on data entry.

Regarding the former, it was described that the Strategy for the Development of Statistics proposes to amend the 1998 FSM Statistics Act so as to establish and sustain closer links between statistics and policy, to strengthen the production and dissemination of State statistics, and strengthen data management and information management, among other objectives.

Regarding the latter, it was described that Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing is being used to execute the 2022 FSM Census of Population & Housing, which intends to occur during the month of June 2022. Supported by \$1,500,000 of funding, the Census will hire an estimated five hundred (500) persons and receive technical and/or financial or programmatic support from the Pacific Community, the World Bank, and the United Nations.

Other ongoing projects include the 2022-2023 Household Income & Expenditure Survey, which is presently in its preparation phase and seeks to “rebase the consumer price index”, and the 2022 National Social Indicators Survey, which seeks to assess the health and nutritional status of women and children across the FSM.

It was described that there remains ongoing work towards a Quarantine

Management System, which would seek to standardize information on the importation and exportation of plants, animals, and other quarantinable things. Pending projects for the Division of Statistics include the development of a National Indicators Framework, which would seek to consolidate FSM-developed indicators with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in addition to seeking a friendly and informative user experience (such as by being online accessible).

Challenges and issues were discussed at length, and are broadly consistent with citizens’ intuition that data sharing is severely limited (and further that this is true across the spectrum, from National to State, State to National, and between National agencies and State agencies, including dissemination to the public). Limited staffing, relatively few resources, and perceived political disinterest in obtaining quality data were also described as challenges facing the Division and its four field offices across the FSM.

The relevant presentation on the Division of Statistics may be found here: https://gov.fm/files/RD_Conference_-_StatsDiv_280122.pdf

In the breakout sessions that followed, participants were asked the following questions: “What could you, as data providers, do to improve data/information sharing and readiness?”; “What capacity building initiatives can the Statistics Division provide to data providers to improve information sharing and data readiness?”; “Are there any services that you would like the Statistics Division to provide you with, aside from those presented, that will benefit you specifically?”; and “Should domestic tourist movement be captured via Customs/Immigration/Quarantine systems?”

There was common agreement that improved communications amongst Government officials would be helpful, to include Memoranda of Understanding where necessary, and possibly the creation of online chatrooms. Where websites do not exist, it was advised, then they should be created. There was common agreement that dedicated personnel, equipped with the appropriate training, should be employed for data management purposes, if not already. There was broadly common agreement that domestic tourism data should be tracked, particularly if doing so is relatively easy to do (though there was not necessarily prolonged discussion as to the difficulty of implementing such an initiative).

After the conclusion of the day’s discussions, the Secretary of Resources & Development, the Honorable Elina Akinaga, and her State counterparts and/or their representatives, attended a signing ceremony wherein the FSM National Government and States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, confirmed their agreement on the discussions that took place at the 2nd Resources & Development Conference, and a uniformed approach for moving ahead.

The (unsigned version) of the outcomes document may be found here: https://gov.fm/files/RD_Conference_Recommendations_unsigned.pdf



Hadley Ampon Francis, Chuuk State’s Chair of the Resources & Development Committee, poses with Junior Nomau, Vice Chair of the Health & Welfare Committee



Three Xavier High School students join in the discussions on improving data dissemination throughout the FSM, which directly impacts their educational programming

