

“Yachtie” freely shares new design for human and solar powered amphibious vehicle

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

June 5, 2023

Pohnpei—“We would save ourselves so many problems if we would just slow down and take the time to smell the roses,” he said while sitting aboard the 30-foot trimaran he had built with his own hands in the late 90s. While we talked, his traveling companion sat busily working on devising a homemade solution of her own, devising to the problem of loss of traction on her shoes’ slick, worn soles.

Curtis Nettleship and Novia Feby recently arrived in Pohnpei from Thailand after they experienced mechanical problems with their vessels that needed their immediate attention before they could continue their homeward journey to Nettleship’s home in the United States.

The arrival of “Yachties” in Pohnpei, even on vessels they built themselves is not particularly newsworthy. Many have come before, and many will follow, though, due to some negative reports of previous arrivals in Pohnpei regarding difficulties they claimed to have faced when dealing with FSM Customs and Immigrations officials that spread among the community of sailors, the number of arrivals of people who choose to live aboard a sailboat and travel the world is lower than it might otherwise be. Indeed, Nettleship and Feby initially had some



difficulty because they had not radioed FSM before their emergency arrival. Nettleship said that though they were initially issued a \$1000 citation, they appealed it, and the citation was rescinded. “Otherwise, I had absolutely no problem with the Customs and Immigration people.

They treated us really well, actually,” Nettleship said.

No, the arrival of the “Kellowyn” and its intrepid passengers is not at all unique. However, though every yachtie to enter Pohnpei has an interesting story, we certainly have not heard them all. But I found his story to be compelling enough to tell readers about it. As

[Click here for continuation](#)

FSM National Election Office releases unofficial list of candidates for Chuuk and Kosrae At-Large seats

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

May 26, 2023

FSM—The selection of FSM’s President Wesley Simina and Vice President Aren Palik by members of the FSM Congress resulted in two at-large vacancies in the Congress for the States of Kosrae and Chuuk. As a result, a special election to fill those seats has

been called for July 4, 2023.

Today, FSM National Election Office Director Lambert issued the unofficial list of candidates who filed their nomination petitions by the deadline of 5:00 PM on May 25. The cover letter says that the election office said that it would submit the official list after background checks are completed.

The unofficial list of candidates for the State of Chuuk At-Large four-year seat in no particular order are:

Ben K. Enlet, Fabian Sitan Nimea, Gillian N. Doone, Jimmy S. Mori, Johnson S. Elimo, Marvin Bernard, Redley Killion, Sabino S. Asor, and Wisney Nakayama.

The unofficial list of candidates for the

State of Kosrae At-Large four-year seat, again, in no particular order but as the election office has them listed in their communication are:

Alokoa Joab Sigras, Arthy G. Nena, Artson S. Talley, Canney L. Palsis, Gerson A. Jackson, Gibson T. Siba, Johnson A. Asher, Rolinson B. Neth, and Yoslyn G. Sigras.

Cook Islands and Federated States of Micronesia join over 50 Countries calling for an end to plastic pollution by 2040



Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP)

May 30, 2023

Paris, France—Two Pacific Island countries, the Cook Islands and Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), have joined Ministers from 56 countries to sign a Ministerial Statement calling for an end to global plastic pollution by 2040.

The statement released by the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) called for a range of mandatory provisions to be included in the global plastic pollution treaty, currently under negotiation at the second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC2) in Paris, France.

These include reducing the production and consumption of primary plastic polymers to sustainable levels; eliminating and restricting unnecessary, avoidable or problematic plastics, chemicals and products; and eliminating the release of plastics into nature, amongst others.

“In the Cook Islands, we have a zero-waste target for 2050 and it was only natural we align ourselves with other ambitious countries around the world that share our vision,” said Mr Halatoa Fua, Director of the Cook Islands National Environment Service.

“Our position is to ban unnecessary, avoidable, or problematic plastics, as well as the plastic polymers, chemical constituents and plastic products that are of particular concern due to their adverse effects on the environment and human health.

Since 2012, the Cook Islands has had a Single Use Plastics regulation in place to guide their fight against plastic pollution, coupled with the promotion of the Reuse, Reduce and Recycle values. The HAC statement builds on Cook Islands’ accelerating efforts to combat plastic pollution in all phases of production, use and legacy.

“The Cook Islands aims to pass a new Solid and Hazardous Waste Bill this year which will include a new schedule of banned plastic items including plastic straws, polystyrene containers, single serve butter and spreads as well as products containing microbeads. This new bill will also introduce an advanced disposable recovery fee,” said Mr Fua.

A negotiator from FSM, Mr Dennis Clare said “plastic pollution harms our environment, our bodies and our climate system. Without ambitious measures we will not be able to address this crisis,” he said.

“Pacific islands are very much disproportionately impacted by the global plastics pollution crisis. Preventing and remediating ocean plastics pollution is essential for protecting our people’s health and greatest resource, and for meeting our region’s 2050 Vision for the Blue Pacific Continent.”

The HAC was formed upon the adoption of resolution the UN Environment Assembly passed in February 2022 to develop a legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution including within our marine environment. The Cook Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia are two Pacific Islands Members of the HAC.

The second Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment is taking place in Paris France from 29 May to 2 June 2023.

The Pacific Islands are represented by the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu through the support of the Government of Australia and the United Nations.

They are supported by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), working with partners the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, Environmental Investigation Agency, Centre for International Environmental Law, University of Wollongong, WWF and Massey University.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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June 21, 2023

**Deadline for submission of articles or
advertisements for this issue is the end
of working hours on:**

Monday, June 19, 2023

FSM China Pilot Farm kicks off the 12th phase of operations in Pohnpei

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

June 2, 2023

Madolenihmw—Staff members of the FSM Pilot Farm located in Madolenihmw today gave a tour of the farm, followed by a cooking demonstration to celebrate the official opening of the 12th phase of the farm program. The program, which is part of the China-Aid Agricultural Technical Cooperation Program, was initiated in 1998 and has since then provided training on planting and cultivation techniques, pig breeding and biogas, operations and the symbiosis of the two to thousands of local farmers throughout Pohnpei.

Invited visitors included students and teachers of Madolenihmw High School who have a small training plot within the farm, a representative of the Pohnpei's Department of Resources and Development, and Senator Nelpert Perez, chairperson of the committee on land at the Pohnpei Legislature.

Senator Perez challenged the staff members of the farm to work on their transparency, particularly with the Pohnpei State Legislature. He said that he ventured to guess that since the farm was set up through the National Government and that most of the communication between the farm staff members was with the President's or Governor's offices, most of the Legislatures currently have no idea about the farm and what it does. That lack of understanding could hamper legislative support for the farm program at the State level at a time when that body is considering legislation to set aside several pieces of Pohnpei land in each municipality for agricultural purposes.

The materials provided by the farm's staff members said that the implementation goals of the program are to:

- cultivate special agricultural products to assist FSM in preparation of the export of produce to neighboring countries and regions,
- To assist FSM in fostering a sustainable agricultural economy with diversified and localized food resources that ensure improved diet structure, and an ample supply of agricultural products on the market,
- To expand the application of clean and renewable biogas that reduces the energy expenditure for local people and protect the environment in active response to the issue of global warming thus contributing to the poverty alleviation and improvement of people's livelihoods.

So far, the Chinese experts at the farm have successfully introduced and cultivated sweet peppers, chilies, corns, cucumbers, beans, Shanghai greens, cabbages, eggplants, pumpkins, bitter gourds, leeks, watermelons, water spinach, wax gourds, musk melons, tomatoes, coriander, chives, okras, green beans, radishes, head cabbages, gingers, luffas, zucchini, lettuces, etc. Among them,



cucumbers, eggplants, Chinese cabbages, head cabbages, corn, watermelons, musk melons, and okras are the most popular among local people, which are their key promotion varieties.

They say they have adopted such technical measures as increasing the application of organic manure (compost, biogas slurry), using greenhouses and drip irrigation, adopting measures such as crop rotation, soil improvement, plastic film mulching, physical control of diseases and pests, artificial pollination and seedling nursery cultivation. The farm not only does not sell the produce they harvest but are legally barred from doing so. They have transferred the produce they grow and harvest to the Agriculture Division, thereby meeting part of the demand of the local market and also providing fresh vegetable supplies for Chinese scientific research ships.

The materials say that through the use of learned techniques and technology, the farm has had a success rate of 80 percent of healthy piglets, and a total of 848 pigs have been transferred to the Agriculture Division of Pohnpei's Department of R&D. Staff members also aid the 49 families who host biogas facilities that were provided through the program to ensure that the pigs providing the waste products for the biogas products remain healthy and also are able to successfully reproduce. They also perform on-site inspection services of the biogas demonstration sites, as well as assistance with maintenance on the digesters to ensure that they are operated safely. The staff says that the biogas generated by one biogas digester can save an equivalent of nearly \$3000 in annual LP gas expenditures.

"It is the best way for FSM government to solve a series of difficult problems effectively in such pressing issues as reducing environmental pollution, comprehensive utilization of organic waste and replacement of high-cost energy by renewable clean energy. It is of great significance in protecting ecological environment and maintaining sustainable agricultural development," the presentation materials said.

During the tour, staff members pointed out various advantages of agricultural procedures and benefits. At the first stop on the tour, the guide pointed out the use of 'biogas slurry', a by-product of biogas digesters, as fertilizer for the plants. He also pointed out the area where Madolenihmw High School students have been experimenting with cultivation methods of at least three varieties of plants, including corn. He pointed out one plant bed in particular that has no human consumption potential but is successfully used to supplement commercial pig feed for reduced cost in raising pigs.

After the tour and speeches were concluded, staff members gave a cooking demonstration using produce grown on the farm. Within a space of approximately 10 minutes, the cook produced three separate recipes, two of which were cooked in a wok pan over a stove fueled by biogas. After the samples were passed around for tasting, the staff treated the students to a lunch also, with the exception of rice and some beef dishes, consisting of foods produced at the farm.



...Amphibious Vehicle

Continued from front page

Nettleship brought out a small stack of yellowed papers from the cramped cabin of the trimaran, I discovered that I am not the only newspaper editor to have thought so. The stack was just a small sampling of dozens of articles published about him and his interesting project in small-town newspapers across a wide swath of the United States.

Curtis did not seek out the local newspaper editor in order to promote his story. He and Novi, as she refers to herself, a citizen of New Zealand though she was born in Bali, Indonesia and raised in Malaysia, were simply walking by the office when they saw me sitting outside and came over to introduce themselves. I quickly discovered that they are just friendly, outgoing people and like to get to know people wherever they land, and they do it well and prolifically around the world. As we both told stories about ourselves during easy conversation, I learned that in addition to growing, harvesting, and marketing huckleberries and other produce, Nettleship is an inventor.

To be frank, I have dealt with all manner of people coming through Pohnpei, many of whom have “amplified” stories. I initially looked upon Curtis’s claims to have designed and built a “people-powered” amphibious vessel that is part bicycle, part kayak, and part sailboat as just another “invention” by an inventive man. I initially doubted his claim to have traveled across America twice in the “vehicle”. However, we shared Facebook addresses, and after a couple of days, my curiosity got the better of me, and I went cruising through his photos. Each of the claims he made were absolutely substantiated there, and after we arranged to chat on board his trimaran, I had no more doubts as newspaper after newspaper chronicled the arrival of his home-built vessel in their small towns. Indeed, the strange-looking vessel and its occupant must have been irresistible to small-town newspapers as most of them ran their photos and articles on their front pages, one of them adjacent news on the Monica Lewinsky and President Bill Clinton issue.

Nettleship’s first journey in his vessel was not particularly ambitious, just a trip into town from the underground home he built for himself in Bonner’s Ferry, Idaho, a place he decided to move to because Border County was one of the last

counties in the United States that still had no uniform construction code. That lack of regulation allowed him to build his underground abode where few nails were used. Instead, hand-hewn mortise and tenon or tongue and groove joints abound. Inside is both an earth-cooled refrigerator and a solar-powered fridge. Outside is a hot tub that he heats with a wood-burning fire underneath it. Cooking is also done on a natural resources stove. He built his home for approximately \$8,000.

He said that his first couple of trips on his unique vehicle encouraged him, and he made a few adjustments before departing for a serious trip from Bonner’s Ferry in the north to La Paz, Mexico, just south of the California border. He said he hadn’t previously thought about the possibility of adding a sail to his “rig”, but he added that feature. His trip covered a distance of about 3300 miles both on water in lakes and rivers and on American roads. He said it took him about three months for him and his then partner to make the trip, camping along the way.

He said that it is by no means a fast way to travel, which led to the opening quote in this article. “Traveling this way,” he said, “you show your face. There’s no way around it, and you make connections. Driving in a car, you don’t connect with anyone. I think we could all benefit from slowing down.” As fast as it is not, he still managed to get a speeding ticket outside of Reno, Nevada. The unusual ticket was attributed to a “kayak traveling 45 miles per hour” on a road with a lesser speed limit.

Some time later, he did another trip of the same distance, again from Bonner’s Ferry, Idaho to St. Louis, Missouri following the Lewis and Clark trail as best they could. He had way too many stories to tell about that journey than are possible to print in this small space, but every one of them had to do with connecting with people. “It’s a great way to see the country,” he said and spoke of the incredible hospitality of people across America and the banquets they held in his honor all across the country.

I am not clear on whether his trip to the “Burning Man” event in Nevada was part of either of the two trips already somewhat described, or another trip entirely that he took in the “Nettleship”, one of the names of the iterations of his vehicle along with a temporary name, “Huckleberry Heaven”. His Facebook post with photos of his arrival at Burning Man said that he didn’t have a ticket, but he hoped they would let him in with his strange people-powered amphibious vessel.

They did.

In 1998 he was invited to a conference of powerful and influential people at Hilton Head, South Carolina, where he was asked to speak on the topic of environmental economy. There, he met such notable people as the CEO of Coca Cola, CEOs of many other huge corporations, and one Nobel prize winner. He presented his idea of a people-powered amphibious vessel and was well received by most, but one gentleman took him aside and told him, “This is not the direction America is going.”

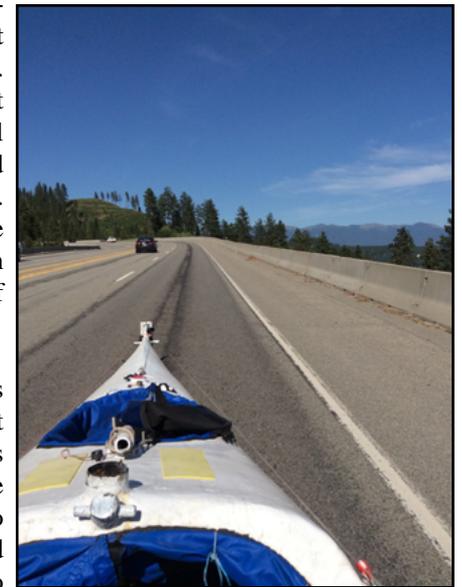
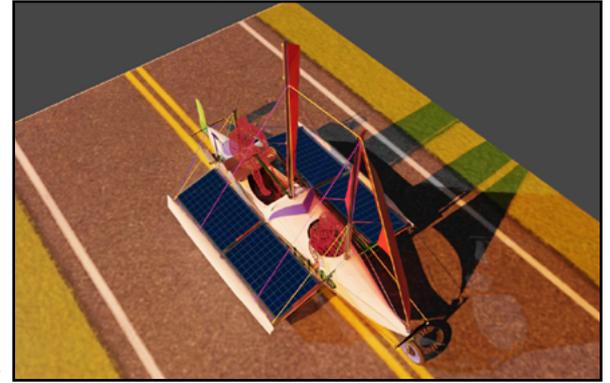
That was then and this is now, and Nettleship thinks that the world should think more carefully about the technology it pursues. He has entirely redesigned his water and road-going vehicle though he has not yet built it. His current design includes a significant solar power footprint to help to power the vehicle. One of his prototypes included solar power, but Nettleship says that his new design should allow the vehicle to recharge at a much faster rate than his prototype did.

His first design was entirely human-powered, which he said was fine until it was time to negotiate a long upward grade. Then, the operator would have to get out of the vehicle, strap into a harness and pull it up the hill. Still, his human-powered vehicle averaged 30 to 40 miles per day. He says that his solar-powered vehicle prototype does 100 and the new design would have room for twice the number of photovoltaic cells for faster charging.

He constantly thinks of new improvements that could be made and seeks the input of others. For instance, the kayak has the operator seated nearly astern of the vehicle, which makes edging out into traffic difficult. He has kicked around the idea of an operator-controlled video camera on the bow to make that task easier but hasn’t yet incorporated that feature into his design.

Nettleship was once upon a time, a long time ago, a money manager, but he has no interest in getting rich from his design. He just wants to share it because he thinks that it’s the right thing to do. He will freely share the plans with anyone who asks. “I only hope that someone will pick it up and do it.”

I do too.



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Achengicheng Aramasen Chuuk, Ach Kapong Ngeni Ami Meinisin!

I'm most humbled and grateful to our Almighty Father for this wonderful providence in which I'm allowed to personally reach out to you to convey greetings, pay respect, and humbly beseech your support and prayers as I announce my Candidacy for the 4-Year (At-Large) Congressional Seat for our State of Chuuk.

This is a very important moment of our nation's history as we seek partnership from all of Society to find practical solutions to the mounting challenges facing our country, particularly our State of Chuuk. We're still reeling from the adverse impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, which has exacerbated the devastating effects and challenges of the structural fragility of our island economy, climate change, sea level rise and frequent weather events, geopolitical tensions, and the alarming ongoing outmigration of our people seeking means of livelihood elsewhere. Just over the past week, our neighboring island of Guam, where a lot of our people reside and work, witnessed first-hand the wrath of Typhoon Mawar. The extent of its devastating and disruptive effects is felt throughout Micronesia. It is a reminder that the magnitude of these challenges is ALARMING, and warrants our collective efforts to tackle them with a sense of urgency. And we all can agree that Business-as-Usual without positive and impactful results is no longer affordable and must not be embraced as it could only prolong the difficulties our people have struggled with for far too long. It is for these reasons, I commit today, and if given the chance, to work ever more harder and closely with you the People of FSM, President Wesley Simina's Administration, Congress, and leadership of the four States, Private Sector, Civil Society, and the International Communities to tackle these issues with the utmost urgency. In my entire career, I've always put "Service for Others" at the centrality of all that I do. Now with the FSM Development Bank for nearly 10 years, I have been helping people and businesses finance their investment projects to succeed and prosper in order to generate employment and income opportunities for themselves and others to uplift their standards of living, improve their wellbeing, and contribute to the advancement of sustainable development of our great country. I have every intention to do the same at wider and larger scale, if and when you give me the the opportunity to serve you as 4-Year Term Congressman.

I fervently believe in the Might and Wisdom of the people, and when joined hand-in-hand, and guided by our Almighty Father, anything is possible. As a wise man once said, "the Stars are now Aligned and Shining Brightly, and therefore, we shall see a clearer pathway forward in our Journey. If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together." That simply underscores the paramount importance of PARTNERSHIP all across our nation. It is the bedrock and foundation of our Constitutional Government that ensures a peaceful, democratic, and prosperous society.

My Fellow Chuukese, the predicate of my humble imploration to represent you in Congress is best summed and culminated into two Pillars:

1. **RESTORE HOPE**
2. **CREATE OPPORTUNITIES**

Together, we can restore hope for our people by focusing on and tackling the aforesated challenges everyday to ensure real solutions are achieved for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable environment for all. That can only be accomplished through creating opportunities for employment and income generation for our people while protecting our natural resources and the very livelihoods of our communities from the adverse impacts and effects of climate change, sea level rise, and frequent weather events. These require first and foremost building, strengthening, and fortifying resilient economic and social infrastructure, human capital, and technological advancement for productivity growth of our economy. And yet again, genuine and durable partnership shall underpin these efforts to have meaningful and impactful results. If and when you, my fellow citizens, know and feel your needs are at the core and forefront of our collective work, you will not loose hope and opt for the most difficult choice of migrating elsewhere because you know opportunities at home are not a distance away, but have to be created here and now, and seized through the spirit of partnership.

Fellow Citizens, the winds of change will move our journey forward and our national canoe will sail through the waves as we forage the dawn and glimmer of hope and opportunities hovering around the horizon. Together, we can and we shall succeed to reach the PROMISE LAND.

In closing, let me express profound gratitude to you for your time. I am humbly seeking your support for my candidacy to represent you as your 4-Year (At-Large) Congressman.

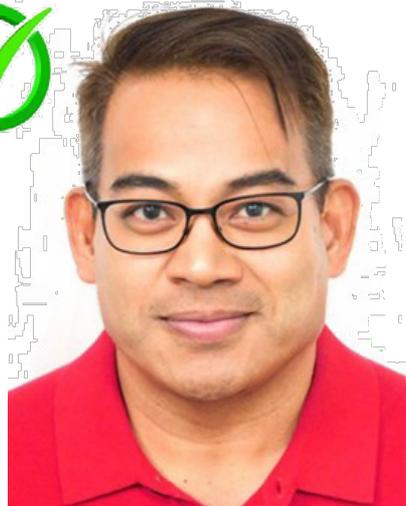
Killisou Chapur and May God Bless you, our State of Chuuk, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

FABIAN SITAN

NIMEA

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Educational Background

- Harvard University - Climate Change & Policy Making
- Pacific Cost Graduate Banking School - Banking
- Creighton University - International Relations
- Creighton University - Business Management
- Xavier High School

Work Experience

- Senior Vice President/COO, FSM Development Bank
- Sustainable Development & Energy Advisor, AOSIS at United Nations
- Investment Advisor, Office of the FSM President
- Director, FSM Office of Statistics, Budget & Economic Management, Overseas Development Assistance, & Compact Management
- Consultant, Private & Public Sectors
- Executive Vice President, Bank of FSM
- Instructor, College of Micronesia - FSM
- Project Officer, National Fisheries Corporation

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Money continues to grow on trees in Yela

The Yela Landowners Association (YELA), Inc. recently convened a meeting to receive their dividends from the Yela Conservation Easement Fund, managed by the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT). For the seventh consecutive year, MCT has disbursed funds ranging from \$20,000 to \$30,000 per annum to the ten families who possess shares in the Yela "Ka" Forest located in Kosrae. The ka tree, a unique species endemic to Kosrae and Pohnpei, thrives abundantly within the entire watershed of Yela, distinguishing it as the sole watershed dominated by this native tree. Renowned as *Terminalia carolinensis*, or the ka tree, it features umbrella-shaped canopies and moss-covered buttresses. The ka tree, alternatively known as kehma on Pohnpei, finds utility in various applications such as timber, canoe construction, cabinetry, flooring, medicinal purposes, and the consumption of its edible nuts.



This exceptional initiative, a collaborative endeavor among the Yela Landowners, the Kosrae Island Resources Management Authority (KIRMA), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the US Forest Service - Forest Legacy Program,

the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the Micronesia Conservation Trust, stands as the first of its kind in Micronesia. The Easement Fund embodies a mutually beneficial arrangement for all stakeholders involved, as well as the ecosystem itself.

The landowners retain ownership of the land and possess the prerogative to engage in traditional agroforestry and climate-smart agricultural activities. Additionally, they enjoy the freedom to utilize ka trees for canoe construction and partake in eco-tourism endeavors within the splendid forest. Moreover, they shoulder the responsibility of managing the area, including the eradication of invasive species and the cultivation of native flora when necessary. KIRMA assumes ownership of the conservation lease and collaborates with the landowners to ensure their adherence to the easement's provisions. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, TNC and the US Forest Service provide financial resources and technical support whenever required, while MCT oversees the endowment management and disburses annual payments to the landowners.

The landowners shall have perpetual access to their endowment funds, contingent upon their compliance with the easement's terms. "It's akin to an insurance policy for the ka forest. Even in the event of a typhoon or other natural disasters that devastate the forest, the landowners will still be able to access their annual funds," affirmed William Kostka, Executive Director of the Micronesia Conservation Trust. Dr. Tholman Alik, the Executive Director of the Yela Landowners Association, expounded, "This demonstrates that conservation generates tangible benefits, resulting in collective triumph. Indeed, money does grow on trees in Kosrae."

Yap DHS releases alert on the increase of Leptospirosis in villages and municipalities

Yap Media

May 25, 2023

Keng, Weloy--DHS/Public Health has reported that there has been an increase of Leptospirosis or Lepto in different villages and municipalities on our island. Lepto is spread by animals such as rats, pigs and dogs urine in the water and soil. The germs get into your body through cuts and scratches on your skin.

Lepto is also able to get through the pink moist tissue called the "Mucous Membrane". That is the moist inner lining of some of your body organs and cavities. Such as mouth, nose, lungs and stomach.

Symptoms of Lepto are fever, chills, muscle aches and headaches. Other symptoms are dry cough, whites of the eye turning red, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach ache, pain in the joints and bones and sore throat.

Lepto can be fatal if not treated right away.

Always remember to wash your hands with running water and soap before touching your food or face. Avoid mud puddles and waters that drain from a pig pen or water that may have animal waste in it.

See a doctor if you have any of the mentioned symptoms or call Jason Figir Sulog at Environmental Health Services/Sanitation at Public Health at 350-2100 or 350-3446.

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FSM launches the fledgling Digital FSM Office for enhanced access to government services

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

May 27, 2023

Palikir, Pohnpei—After a ceremony this morning at the offices of the Department of Transportation, Communications, and Infrastructure in Palikir, Pohnpei, the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia declared that the Digital FSM Office (DFO) is now officially open. “This momentous occasion signifies a remarkable milestone in FSM’s journey towards a digital future as we embark on a mission to uplift and empower the lives of the FSM’s people,” a press release on the opening said.

“Our ultimate mission is to improve the lives of the people of FSM,” the press release said. “Through technology, we aim to streamline administrative processes, enhance citizen services, and promote digital literacy. We envision a future where accessing government services is seamless, efficient, and empowering. We are committed to putting the needs of our people at the forefront, providing them with a modern and citizen-centric government that they can rely on and be proud of.”

“This landmark establishment represents a difficult step in our nation’s digital transformation agenda,” said the FSM’s still new President Wesley Simina. “...in this era of rapid technological advancement, digitization holds tremendous potential to revolutionize the way our government operates and serves its people. This office stands as a shining symbol of our commitment to harness the power of digital technologies to enhance governance, improve service delivery and empower our citizens.”

The President said that the various digital portals would provide access to government services to FSM citizens, no matter where they are located. Among other benefits, the new services that the FSM will provide as the DFO begins to be fully implemented would allow citizens to remotely apply for licenses, benefits, register businesses, and access educational resources. “...with just a few clicks, citizens will be able to avail themselves of these services from the comfort of their homes or offices, eliminating the need for time-consuming and cumbersome paperwork.”

Though the DFO is now fully staffed, one DFO employee said that the launch made the office official and that employees will now begin their training in earnest to develop a wide variety of services which it will announce as soon as they are available to access.

The President said that the new system would “reduce red tape, and expedite decision making. By implementing a vast e-governance system, we will enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in our government operations.”

“Are we really going to do this,” said the President, deviating from his prepared speech and eliciting chuckles from those in attendance at the launch. “I really want to see this,” he exclaimed.

“Our aim is to create a seamless and citizen-centric experience where government works in harmony with its people,” he said.

He said that the new system would unlock greater individual participation in the FSM’s democratic process. It would leverage new platforms for public consultations, gather feedback on policies, and encourage active civic involvement by “harnessing the collective wisdom and experience of our citizens.”

It would also be a tool to help develop the FSM’s economy and entrepreneurship to drive the FSM’s economy. There will be access to e-commerce platforms, online marketing channels, and digital payment systems, expanding business reach beyond the FSM’s borders and tapping into global markets.



The World Bank has supported the development of the DFO and will continue to do so. Three of its representatives were present at the launching ceremony. There were also representatives from the Telecommunications Regulation Authority and the FSM Telecommunications Cable Corporation, the FSM’s open-access entity, along with cabinet-level officials and staff of FSM TC&I.



“In our journey towards digital transformation, we pledge to keep the community at the heart of everything we do,” the advance press release on the launch said. “We will engage, listen, and collaborate with you, our fellow citizens, every step of the way. Your voices matter; we are dedicated to transparency, inclusivity, and meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Regular updates, progress reports, and opportunities for public input will be provided, ensuring that we shape the future of FSM.”

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the participants were given a guided tour of the new Digital FSM Office housed at the FSM Department of TC&I.



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PICRC exchanges giant clam mariculture knowledge with Singapore researchers

Palau International Coral Reef Center

May 31, 2023

In mid-May, the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) hosted Dr. Mei Lin Neo and Ms. Teresa Tay, marine scientists from the National University of Singapore (NUS), for a research study trip to visit and observe how giant clams are cultured in Palau, and to exchange ideas on improving the breeding and rearing techniques.

Dr. Neo has been studying the giant clams at the National Marine Laboratory, St. John's Island since 2006. Previously she led a major restocking program in Singapore between 2011 and 2018, with the aim to breed and raise baby clams for restocking local reefs. Her current projects focus on improving mariculture techniques via experimental approaches for endangered marine species.

While in Palau, Dr. Neo and Ms. Tay discussed their research with the marine scientists at PICRC, visited various giant clam farms and partner organizations,



gave a night lecture to the public, and went SCUBA diving to see wild giant clams.

"In the 1970s, the mariculture of giant clams was pioneered in the Pacific Islands and one of the locations was Palau showing that it really is one of the leaders in giant clam mariculture," stated Dr. Neo. "It was incredible to see species of giant clams that are critically endangered or locally extinct in Singapore thriving in Palau's waters." PICRC hopes to further exchange ideas with Dr. Neo and her research team as the development into giant clam mariculture in the Palau Aquarium continues.

Kosrae Governor Palik pays courtesy call on FSM President and Vice President

FSM Information Services

May 22, 2023

PALIKIR, Pohnpei— On May 22, 2023, the Honorable Governor Tulensa W. Palik of Kosrae State, paid his courtesy visit to His Excellency Wesley W. Simina – President of



the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) – and Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the FSM. Governor Palik was in Pohnpei at the invitation of President Simina to witness signing of the FSM-US Compact Amendments on May 23, 2023. The signing is the culmination of both the FSM and US Governments long negotiations towards strengthening the nation's Enduring Friendship.

On behalf of the Kosrae Government and its People, Governor Palik conveyed warmest greetings and congratulated President Simina and Vice President Palik on their elections to the highest offices of the Nation. Governor Palik

expressed his support and optimistic outlook for the new national administration. President Simina expressed the National Government's commitment to refocus on the States and their priorities under the Simina-Palik administration. Vice President expounded on the said commitment by sharing plans for the President's State visit in the coming weeks. Items of discussion included Kosrae's preparations for the Joint Committee Meeting (JCM) set to be hosted by Kosrae in June 2023 and the upcoming 2nd FSM MicroExpo slated for mid July 2023.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with President Simina and Vice President Palik reiterating support for Governor Palik and the State of Kosrae, in maintaining the momentum and progress made towards the East Micronesia Cable (EMC) and other pending projects.

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The primary purpose of the Rotary Club of Pohnpei College Scholarship is to encourage and enable FSM citizens to pursue a post high-school education. Any FSM citizen who is a high school senior, a currently enrolled college student, or a high-school graduate (or has a GED) and is accepted to attend an accredited institution of higher education during the upcoming academic year will be considered.

TO RECEIVE AN APPLICATION FORM, PLEASE SEND THE APPLICATION REQUEST TO:

Rotary Club of Pohnpei, Inc. - Scholarship Committee
P.O. Box 1861 Kolonia Pohnpei, FM 96941
Email: rotarypohnpei@gmail.com

Deadline

MUST APPLY BY
July 1, 2023

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Australian Embassy Pohnpei

The Australian Embassy is seeking applications from suitably qualified people for the following full-time position:

Administrative Officer (Property)

This position plays an important role at the Embassy to ensure the chancery, staff residences, facilities, equipment, furnishings and official vehicles are safe, well maintained and reliable. The position also includes the role of Ambassador's driver. It requires well developed interpersonal, communication and coordination skills and the ability to work effectively and proactively in a small team. Experience in a property-related field would be advantageous.

The salary range is USD \$17,065 – \$19,963 per annum.

The position is a full-time two-year contract. The contract may be extended on the basis of need and performance.

The application forms, including the duty statement and selection criteria can be downloaded at: www.fsm.embassy.gov.au

Application closing date is 5pm Friday 16 June 2023.

President of Bank of Guam visits Governor Oliver on a tour to re-establish, solidify and build relationships

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 29, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver received the President of the Bank of Guam, Mr. Joaquin Cook and Vice President for Governmental Affairs, Mr. Asterio Takesy, former FSM Ambassador to the United States of America.

Cook informed Governor Oliver that his visit to Pohnpei and the rest of Micronesia was to re-establish, solidify and build relationships with the communities. He shared the position of the Bank of Guam as a member of the community, looking for ways to assist their fellow community members.

Governor Oliver thanked President Cook and Ambassador Takesy for their visit. The Governor spoke of his long relationship with the Bank of Guam, through the former President and current Governor of Guam, Lou Leon Guerrero. Both the Governor and President

Cook discussed programs like the Bank's scholarship for graduating seniors, the possibility of another ATM machine to be placed in the newly renovated Pohnpei Administration building, home loans in collaboration with FSM Development Bank, and future possible programs to help economic development. President Cook noted that all Bank of Guam personnel are hired from the local community, utilizing local talent.

Governor Oliver closed with his sincere thanks to the President and his family for the services provided through the Bank of Guam, sending his regards to the Governor of Guam, Lou Leon Guerrero.



FSM Ambassador to Japan shares expanded accreditation of FSM embassy with Governor Oliver

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 18, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver and Lt. Governor Ioanis received H.E. John Fritz, Ambassador to Japan. Ambassador Fritz was accompanied by his daughter Mickey and staff from the FSM Embassy, Ms. Christina Shigeta, who hails from Kitti, Pohnpei.



Ambassador Fritz shared updates from the FSM Embassy in Japan with the Governor including expanding accreditation for the Embassy to Vietnam and the Republic of the Philippines.

Governor Oliver expressed his appreciation for the Ambassador's visit. He appreciated the updates provided by Ambassador Fritz, noting an upcoming

student exchange program involving Pohnpeian students, and looked forward to more educational opportunities in Japan for Pohnpeian students.

More information on the FSM Embassy in Japan can be found on their website: Embassy of the Federated States of Micronesia in Japan (fsmemb.or.jp)

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JICA Pohnpei Port Expansion advance team meets with Governor Oliver

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News
JICA Micronesia

May 19, 2023

Pohnpei--On May 19, 2023, commencing at 9:30 a.m., Governor of Pohnpei, Honorable Reed Oliver received a Preparatory Survey Team from JICA Tokyo for "The Project for Pohnpei Port Expansion" for a courtesy call. The team was accompanied by Mr. Keiichi MURAOKA, Resident Representative, Mr. Toshikazu NONAKA, Project Formulation Adviser, and Ms. Trish Billen, Program Officer from JICA Micronesia office. The overview is as follows:

At the outset, Governor Oliver welcomed the Team and expressed his deep appreciation for recent significant efforts by JICA. Governor Oliver also recognized the relationship between FSM and Japan Government through wide range of technical cooperation and grand aid assistance and that JICA has Pohnpei's full support during this mission and future cooperative relations.

In response, Mr. Hirotsugu MORI, Team Leader, explained the purpose of his mission which are to explain and discuss the inception report prepared by the survey team, to confirm the background, purpose, and contents of the grant aid project, and lastly to collect the information and data to support the outline design of the project.

Governor Oliver acknowledged the rolling plans of the project. Governor Oliver also delivered news regarding the current status of the project site which was temporarily used as MMA during COVID; all containers are being transported out of the area in preparation for the project which is expected to commence in early 2025.



Governor Oliver pays courtesy call on the President and Vice President of the FSM

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

May 22, 2023

Palikir--Governor Oliver paid a courtesy call on H.E. Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia and T.H. Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Governor Oliver reaffirmed Pohnpei State's commitment to work in cooperation and collaboration with the FSM National Government. Governor Oliver also thanked the President for the quick response of the National Government for a medical evacuation request only one day into President Simina's term.

President Simina thanked Governor Oliver for his visit. He expressed his appreciation for Pohnpei's role in the development of the nation, including the use of land at the Palikir capital complex, for the benefit of the nation.

He also expressed his appreciation for Pohnpei's contribution during the Pandemic, and looked forward to working with Pohnpei State, noting that there are many exciting things on the horizon.

Vice President Palik also thanked the Governor for his visit. He said he wanted to forge very close relationships with the States and will reach out for courtesy visits in the coming weeks, starting with Pohnpei State.

Joining Governor Oliver was Mr. Patrick Carl, Director of the Department of Public Safety, Protocol Officer Emerson Eperiam and Public Information Officer, Patrick Pedrus. Attending from the FSM National Government, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Khandi Elieisar, Chief of Staff Jane Chigyal, Special Assistant to the Vice President Ari Skilling and Andrew Falcam from the FSM PIO office.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES) FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA (FSM) NATIONALS ONLY

Country: FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Project: Strategic Climate-Oriented Road Enhancements (P177073)

Assignment Title: Transport Data Collection - Pohnpei

Reference No.: FM-DOTCI-288704-CS-INDV

The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Strategic Climate-Oriented Road Enhancements (P177073) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") will provide support to the management of transport-centric sectoral and spatial planning tools that inform decision making across FSM. In addition, the role will cover natural and climate hazards to the road infrastructure to support an integrated decision-making process when it comes to investment prioritization and maintenance.

To obtain the Terms of Reference (TORS) for this Request for Expressions of Interest, you are encouraged to write to the Project Manager at trevor.delandro@tci.gov.fm or the Project Officer at eileen.loyola@tci.gov.fm.

The Department of Transportation, Communication, and Infrastructure (DoTCI) now invites eligible consulting services ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.). The shortlisting criteria are:

Professional Experience

1. Degree or Diploma in science, engineering, or technology field preferably with at least 3 years post-qualification experience with decision support systems, relational databases, and/or road management software products.
2. Local driver's license (for field surveys and data collection).

Personal Attributes

3. Passionate about information management and providing support to the transport sector.
4. Team player and actively engages with people.
5. Strong communication skills.
6. Excellent computer skills.
7. Experience in providing pragmatic technical solutions.
8. Sound knowledge of databases and data analytics.
9. GIS and spatial mapping experience will be an advantage.
10. Ability to work independently and promote the growth of a new business unit within government.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraphs 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers July 2016, updated November 2020 ("the Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Individual Selection Method (INDV) set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1700 Pohnpei Time (Local Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by 4:00 p.m. (1600 hrs) Pohnpei Time on Friday, June 22, 2023.

Attn. Trevor De Landro
Project Manager
Department of Transportation, Communications, and Infrastructure (DoTC&I)
Palikir, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
Tel: (+691) 320 2080
Email: trevor.delandro@tci.gov.fm
Web: www.tci.gov.fm

And cc to:
Ciu.tci@gov.fm
Central Implementation Unit

114-pound yellow fin tops prize winners at Pohnpei Fishing Club Annual Tournament

By Pohnpei Fishing Club

May 20, 2023

Pohnpei—For those on land, May 20 was a beautiful blue-skied day, perfect weather for enjoying the outdoors but not quite so perfect for the anglers of the 16 boats that signed up to participate in the Pohnpei Fishing Club Annual tournament. At the end of the day, weary and sun-brutalized anglers weighed their meager catches to decide which of them would receive big prizes for the fish they had caught, if any.

Not all anglers were stumped at sea on that day. The ubiquitous young angler, Marvey Spencer, Junior, landed a 114-pound yellowfin tuna aboard “Dolphin” for the biggest prize of the tournament, \$700 in cash and \$150 worth of gift certificates from tournament sponsors. “Dolphin” anglers also won the second biggest prize of \$600 cash and gift certificates for a 93.8-pound yellowfin.

Third place for the big fish category went to Oneal Optaia for a 52.8-pound yellowfin garnering a \$500 prize along with gift certificates. Optaia also won \$400 and gift certificates for the fourth-place fish, another yellowfin of 34.5 pounds. Bonnie Chuang grabbed \$300 and certificates for a good-sized barracuda of 24 pounds. Eidre Sharp also landed a barracuda. Hers was 14.4 pounds and earned her the fifth-place prize of \$250 and certificates. Damian Lohn took home the final big fish prize of \$200 for a pretty mahi mahi of 13.4 pounds.

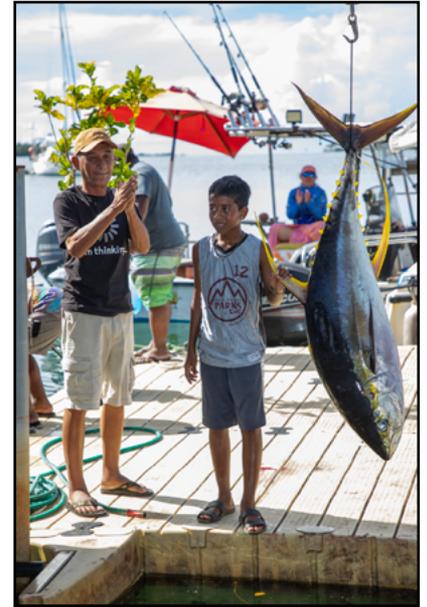
Prizes for the largest fish were available for nearly any species but other than yellowfin tuna, whose anglers had already won prizes in the big fish category, but ultimately, there were winners in that category only of skipjack and barracuda. Top winners in that category earned \$150 for first prize and \$100 for second prize. Darius Santo took the top prize with an 8.4-pound skippy, Oneal Optaia had the second-place fish at eight pounds. Mauricio Joseph had the biggest barracuda at 11.2 pounds. Anna Liu’s 10.6-pound barracuda took second place.

Anna Liu also won both top spots for the lady angler category with prizes of \$175 and \$125 each. Her 13.2-pound barracuda won the top spot followed by her 4.8-pound skipjack.

So that everyone went home a winner, at the end of the weigh-in, gift certificates that had not been awarded to top fish winners were raffled off, and each boat took home a case of Bud Light provided by Ambros, Incorporated.

The United States Embassy donated an EPIRB. Rodney Phillip of “Salt Bae” won that safety device.

Sponsors for the tournament were National Fisheries Corporation, Micronesia Conservation Trust, Bank of the FSM, MRAG, Budweiser and Ambros, Inc., Pohnpei Hardware, Mangrove Bay, Blue Nile, Panuelo Gas Station, Ace Hardware, CTSI, NORMA, US Embassy, Etscheit Enterprises. Many thanks to the sponsors. We cannot do it without you.



President Simina & Vice President Palik receive Close-Up students, offer insights for FSM's development



FSM Information Services

May 16, 2023

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On May 16th, 2023, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—and the Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the FSM, met with 11th and 12th grade students affiliated with the Close-Up extracurricular program, who visited the Office of the President as part of a larger tour of the FSM National Government.

The students, hailing from across the FSM and representing both public and private schools, were given the opportunity, and encouraged, to ask President Simina and Vice President Palik about anything they wanted to.

Over the course of the engagement, common themes emerged from the students regarding questions on what it means to be a leader, how it feels to take actions that impact the whole of the country, and philosophical dialectic on the proposed Constitutional Amendments to be voted on in July 2023. Of the latter, President Simina, Vice President Palik, and the students considered to what degree land issues should be heard in the FSM Supreme Court compared to the State Supreme Courts.

Both President Simina and Vice President Palik thanked the students for visiting their National Government and their Office of the President, and urged them to stay focused on their education and to find a way to turn their interests and passions into their future careers.

President Simina & Vice President Palik receive H.E. Takata Toshihisa, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Japan

FSM Information Services

May 17, 2023

FSM—On May 17th, 2023, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—and the Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the FSM, received His Excellency Takata Toshihisa, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Japan, the Honorable Kishida Fumio. The purpose of the Special Envoy's visit was to deliver a letter from Prime Minister Kishida to President Simina, as well as to further strengthen the FSM-Japan Kizuna (special bond), and to solicit the Simina-Palik administration's views on topics of mutual interest. Joining President Simina and Vice President Palik were His Excellency John Fritz, Ambassador of the FSM to Japan, and the Honorable Kandi A. Elieisar, former Secretary of Foreign Affairs and contemporary consultant during the political transition period. Joining Special Envoy Takata was His Excellency Michigami Hisashi, Ambassador of Japan to the FSM.

On behalf of the FSM and its People, President Simina conveyed warmest greetings to the Special Envoy, and emphasized that the FSM's Kizuna with the People and Government of Japan is important to maintain and uphold. "The People and Government of the FSM always take pride in our relations with the People and Government of Japan," President Simina said, "Your visit is a testament of Japan's commitment to our

Kizuna."

President Simina reiterated the FSM's commitment to extending peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity to all peoples and nations, including the People and Government of Japan, and by extension the FSM's continued commitment to a Free & Open Indo-Pacific and the rules-based international order.

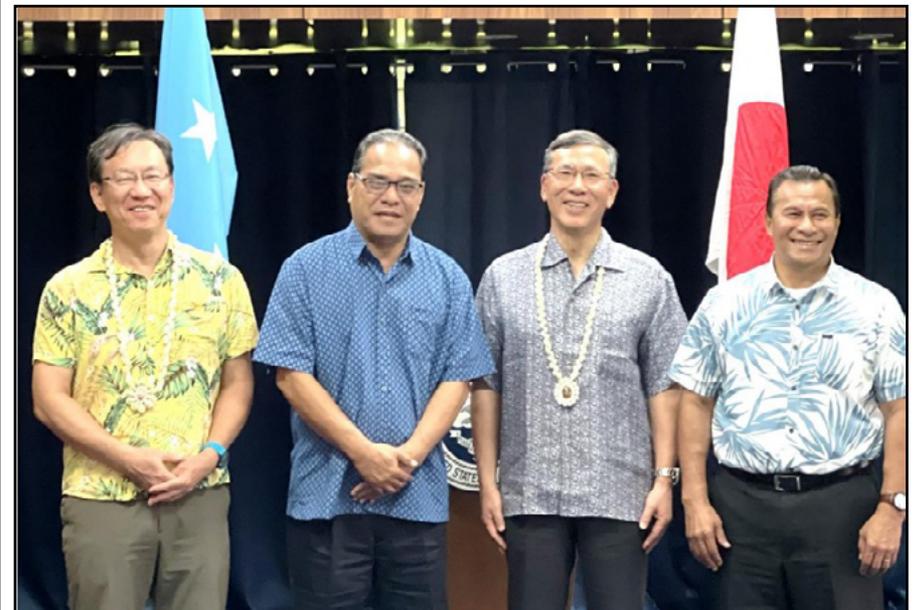
On the subject of the forthcoming release of Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS)-treated water into the Pacific Ocean, President Simina and Vice President Palik reassured Special Envoy Takata that the FSM's position remains unchanged, and that the FSM will continue to collaborate with Japan and other members of the Pacific Islands Forum to ensure that the ALPS issue is pursued in the best interest of all parties.

The meeting ended on a positive note, with President Simina and Vice President Palik extending an invitation to Prime Minister Kishida or his distinguished representative to the Joint Inauguration ceremonies to be held in July 2023 after the Special Election on July 4th. The FSM-Japan Kizuna began on August 5th, 1988, and in 2023 the FSM-Japan Kizuna will celebrate 35 years of diplomatic relations and continue to celebrate more than 100 years of traditional relations, inclusive of cultural and blood ties between our two countries.

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Pohnpei Legislators make courtesy call on FSM's new President

FSM Information Services

May 22, 2023

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On 22 May, 2023, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Vice President Aren B. Palik hosted the members of the Pohnpei State Legislature for their courtesy call on the new President of the FSM. The members included Vice Speaker McGarry Miguel, Sen. Dahker Daniel, Sen. Nelbert Perez, Sen. Herolyn Movick, Sen. Stevick Edwin, Sen. Helgena Johnson, Sen. Jack Harris, Sen. Sonster Edgar, Sen. Mitaro Simina, Sen. Mikail (Mike) Loyola, Sen. Kasinda Ludwig, Sen. Wilfred Edmund, Sen. Alfredson Ladore and their staff.

After all introductions were made, Vice Speaker Miguel began by presenting President Simina with a handicraft board with the picture of Nan Madol

on it. He went on by stating that the Legislature has adopted a resolution designating a site at the Pohnpei Botanical Garden for the new “One UN Micronesia House” complex, which will house the United Nations Multi-Country office. Afterwards, Vice Speaker Miguel then asked for the assistance of President Simina so Pohnpei State Government can give salary increases to all its employees. President Simina stated that the Sector Grants for Pohnpei Stated should be flexible for the state government to be able to give the salary increases that they are requesting. In addition, Vice Speaker Miguel also requested that the national government designate the Lady Pohnpei to be operated and managed by the Pohnpei State. President Simina responded by stating that that decision lies with Congress but he and the office of the president will do what they can to help.



President Simina and Vice President Palik both thanked all members of the Pohnpei State Legislature for their visit and that they are both looking forward

to working closely with Pohnpei and all the other FSM states. He also went further to inform them that there will be state visits coming up and will inform them of the dates.

Global Green-grants Fund Advisory Board meets in Nadi, Fiji

The Global Green-grants Fund (GGF) Pacific Islands Advisory Board met in Nadi, Fiji on May 17-18, 2022, to approve several more proposals to Pacific Island community-based organizations. This is the first time the Advisory Board has met in person since the COVID19 pandemic broke out in 2019. Those in attendance included Anthony Noble, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the Global Green-grants Fund, William Kostka, Coordinator and Advisor of the Pacific Islands Advisory Board, members Ruth Konia of Papua New Guinea, Leah Nimoho of Vanuatu, Willie Atu of the Solomon Islands, Siotame Drew Havea of Tonga, Administrator Margaret Rimoni Yashuda of Samoa, Learning Exchange Coordinator Davila Talemaimaleya of Fiji, and Lavetanalagi Seru, GGF Next Generation Climate Board member. John Ericho, who is one of the advisors from Papua New Guinea was not able to attend the meeting, but did provide several proposals that were approved.

The board also discussed several issues including the need to fill two vacant slots for former advisors John Ericho of Papua New Guinea, and Hon. Toeolesulusulu Cedric Pose Salesa Schuster of Samoa, who recently left the board due to other work obligations. The board also discussed the need to develop a strategic plan that will guide the GGF Pacific Islands Advisory Board activities in the next 5 years, which will be based off GGF's existing Global Strategy.

The next round of applications are due on August 30, 2023. All those who are interested may contact William Kostka at director@ourmicronesia.org.



At the meeting the board approved 31 proposals in the amount of \$155,000. The approved grants included 4 for Micronesia, 17 for Melanesia and 10 for Polynesia. These \$5,000 per community grants are to support community development and resilience projects in the areas of resource management, climate adaptation, water and food security, community health and empowerment, and livelihoods.



IOM launches second Japan-funded project in Micronesia in 2023

International Organization for Migration

May 31, 2023

Majuro – The International Organization for Migration launched a new project in the Republic of the Marshall (RMI) Islands on Thursday (May 25) to strengthen immigration and border management and respond to public health crises in RMI.

The 24-month project, supported through funding from the Government of Japan and implemented in collaboration with the Government of RMI, aims to resume safe border management operations to revitalize social and economic sectors which have been hard hit by the impacts of Covid-19 in the region.

The project is part of a larger border management intervention worth USD 6.9 million being implemented by IOM in the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu with funding from the Government of Japan.

“The closure of borders for over two years, which began in February 2020 in RMI and FSM, significantly impacted operations in various spheres, including in the development and private sectors as it affected both the movement of goods and people,” said Angela Saunders, Head of Sub-Office at IOM in RMI.

Saunders added, “IOM is pleased to partner with the Government of Japan on this project to strengthen border management capacity which will contribute greatly to facilitating previously delayed movements and putting in place safety standards for future public health risks.”

The project entitled “Strengthening Capacity of Border Control for Responding to Infectious Diseases in Pacific Island Countries” will include upgrading border management technology and equipment and strengthening the capacity of frontline border officials.

This will be the second project funded by the Government of Japan that has been launched in Micronesia since the start of 2023, the first being a water, sanitation, and hygiene project for hard-to-reach islands in RMI and FSM.

In his remarks at the launch event, His Excellency Tanaka Kazunari,

Ambassador of Japan to RMI, said, “At the 9th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) in July 2021, the Government of Japan expressed its commitment to COVID-19 response and recovery and strengthening the foundation for sustainable and resilient economic development as some priority areas of cooperation.”

“I can tell you that the support for this project is proof of Japan's steady implementation of the commitment made at the PALM9 to support the RMI and other Pacific Island countries,” he said. In the Pacific Island nations of RMI and FSM, which already require lengthy travel times to reach, closure of land and sea borders, travel restrictions, quarantines, and lockdown measures implemented to prevent the spread of the outbreak have greatly impacted economic sectors such as tourism, remittance, and labor migration.

The new project will work to minimize interruptions to economic activities and limit the impacts of further outbreaks by ensuring borders are safer for travelers, border officials, and host communities at large.

Border management will be enhanced at strategic sea and air Points of Entry in RMI, including through the provision of air purifiers and ventilation equipment, COVID-19 screening area upgrades, thermal scanners, ambulance procurement, IT hardware and software (surveillance post equipment) and through training courses on health compliant procedures for border management officials.

IOM will work closely with regional bodies such as the Pacific Immigration Development Community for improved cross-border cooperation in immigration and border management.

For more information, please contact at IOM Micronesia: Haimanot Abebe, Email: haabebe@iom.int, +691 320 8735. SDGs 3, 10, 17



Yapese grand master navigator embarks on traditional voyage to preserve ancient seafaring knowledge

Yap Media

June 1, 2023

Colonia, Yap - On May 30, 2023, Sesario Sewralur, a skilled seafarer hailing from Satawal in the Yap region, set sail on a remarkable journey from Palau, demonstrating the art of traditional navigation.

As a Grand Master Navigator, Sesario relied solely on natural guides such as ocean currents, wind direction, and star orientations, rejecting modern navigation tools like GPS and radar.

Originally intending to visit Woleai and Guam on his sailing itinerary, Sesario modified his plans due to unforeseen

delays and the recent devastation caused by Super Typhoon Mawar in Guam. Consequently, he decided to limit his voyage to the islands of Yap, Satawal, Saipan, and then return to Yap before reaching his home port in Palau.

This extraordinary expedition is organized by the Micronesian Voyaging Society in collaboration with Palau Community College, with the primary aim of preserving the invaluable knowledge of traditional seafaring. Sesario emphasized that the training program combines classroom instruction with open ocean teachings. From August to December, students participate in classroom sessions to

acquire theoretical knowledge, followed by a practical application of their skills on open ocean voyages from January to May.

In addition to the students, the open ocean training initiative welcomes volunteers from Palau, Yap, Saipan, and Japan. These training sessions are available to all individuals interested in learning and upholding the esteemed discipline and art of Traditional Micronesian Navigation. To express interest or learn more about the program, Sesario can be contacted at sesariosewralur@palau.edu or patricktellei@palau.edu.

By undertaking this awe-inspiring

voyage and sharing his wisdom, Sesario Sewralur is actively contributing to the preservation of Micronesian seafaring heritage and ensuring that future generations inherit the remarkable skills of our ancestors.



Photo by Aveline Yang

Keynote by Forum Secretary General Puna at the Leaders' Summit Keynote Panel: Ocean Conservation in the face of Climate Change World Climate Industry Expo 2023

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

May 27, 2023

Busan, Korea—Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Friends Kia Orana and Warm Pacific Greetings to you all.

First, let me thank the Government and the people of the Republic of Korea for the invitation, and the opportunity to be part of this very important summit. Korea is a friend to the Pacific, and through your institutions such as the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology, your nation supports strong partnerships, on Ocean Conservation and Climate Change globally. It is an honour to be here, sharing some key Pacific perspectives on this very critical and timely global issue.

The ocean covers 70% of the planet; absorbs 30% of global CO2 emissions; absorbs over 90% of the heat from global warming; produces over 70% of the earth's oxygen. In essence, the Ocean is vital in our fight against climate change, and in our fight for our very existence.

For the Blue Pacific continent, we are the Ocean, and the Ocean is who we are. Indeed, our Leaders reaffirmed the region's stewardship of the Blue Pacific Continent, including through collective responsibility, commitment and investment, in its ocean and lands. It is the lens through which we see the world, and our place in it as people of the Pacific. The Ocean is our greatest resource, providing the basis for most of our economic and tourism activities, and home to the biggest tuna resource in the world. It contributes US\$2.5 trillion annually to the global economy – a figure which is expected to reach 3 trillion by 2030. It provides food, jobs and income for almost 3 billion people, mostly from developing countries.

Excellencies, let me get straight to the point. Ocean conservation is vital to our survival, our way of life, our economies, and, as the theme of this occasion clearly states, absolutely essential in addressing Climate change. The same ocean that sustains the Pacific, sustains Korea, and

indeed the whole world.

We MUST all do what it takes, to end over-exploitation of our ocean and its resources.

We MUST reduce global CO2 emissions to mitigate ocean acidification.

We MUST set aside ocean conservation areas, to preserve our unique coral and marine species.

We MUST protect our marine ecosystems, and the rich biodiversity of life that exists in our Oceans.

We MUST invest in Ocean research and observation systems, to fully study and understand the impacts of climate change on the ocean.

The science is clear. Warming ocean surface temperatures are also impacting long-term climatic changes, and climate change is in turn, impacting our oceans. We are now caught in a vicious cycle.

Currently, at approximately 1.2 degrees Celsius of average global warming above pre-industrial levels, our seas are rising, our oceans are warming and becoming acidic. It is driving the endless cycle of increased frequency and intensity of tropical cyclones, typhoons, storm surges, water security issues...and the list goes on. We only need to look south eastward from where we are to see the truth of this statement with the damage being wreaked by Super Typhoon Mawar. Our communities' coastal defenses have been breached, our resilience continually tested, and it is wreaking havoc on our environment, and devastating the lives of our people. Ladies and Gentlemen, the tides are changing. And we need to hold back these changing tides. It is a monumental undertaking, but one we MUST face, and overcome.

Of all these impacts and calamities brought on by the Oceans-Climate nexus, I want to highlight the threat of Sea-Level rise. Rising sea levels have eaten away at our coastlines, caused coastal flooding and erosion,

displacing our people. Our Leaders have responded to this reality. They have led the charge with their Pacific Islands Forum Declaration, on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-related Sea-Level Rise. This is a key, collective response to ensure legal stability, security, certainty and predictability of our maritime zones, guaranteed under the Law of the Sea, notwithstanding climate change-related sea-level rise. It reaffirms for our large ocean states, the full enjoyment of sovereign rights, jurisdiction and privileges under the Convention. We continue to call on all states, to join this initiative.

Excellencies, our Pacific Leaders endorsed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent last year. At the heart of the 2050 Strategy lies the recognition that our ocean geography, ocean resources, and ocean identity, are central to our future well-being and security.

Excellencies, the shared prosperity and security of our Blue Pacific, and our people, can only safely exist if the international community pursues efforts, to limit global warming to below 1.5°C. Mobilizing action to limit global greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impacts is paramount. It will protect the ocean and its dependent communities from the threats described above and maximize adaptation opportunities. We call on the international community, to meet or exceed their obligations and the timelines set out under the Paris Agreement and deliver more ambitious climate action.

The good news is that even as our oceans are threatened by the impacts of Climate Change, they continue to be our biggest asset in the fight against climate change. Oceans are the biggest Carbon sequestration mechanism, but the sequestration process no doubt also puts pressure on the health and resilience of the oceans, through the inevitable increasing levels of oceans acidification as a consequence.

In the Pacific, our member countries have set ambitious marine conservation targets, with many

countries already setting aside sizeable areas as Marine Protected Area (MPAs) such as the Cook Islands. Some have also set their sights on 'No Fishing Zones' in their EEZs. For example, some member countries have a '30 by 30' marine conservation target, aiming to set aside 30% of their total marine areas as protected and marine conservation areas by 2030.

I am pleased to say that the Pacific nations carry a world-leading vision for the future of our ocean but are living with a disproportionate burden from the state of our ocean along with other small island nations, due to climate change, pollutions, and other impacts, not of our making. You could say our sea of islands is being left with a bill, that we did not incur.

Excellencies, I cannot end my remarks without mentioning the concerns raised by our Pacific Leaders, on Japan's plans to discharge over a million tonnes of contaminated nuclear wastewater into the Pacific Ocean, over the next four years. Our Leaders continue to reiterate strong concerns for the significance of the potential threat of nuclear contamination, to the health and security of the Blue Pacific, its people and prospects, and the importance of ensuring international consultation, international law, and independent and verifiable scientific assessments before any discharge can be allowed to proceed

In closing, let me commend and thank the people and government of Korea, for your ongoing work and support on the Ocean-climate nexus. Through the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology, your partnership with our region and our values is clear. We look forward to support from you on our Pacific call for an agenda item on the Ocean-Climate nexus at the upcoming COP28 in the UAE. The inclusion of the Ocean-Climate discussions to the apex of global climate negotiations, is not only logical, but necessary. With your support and together, I know we can ensure the development of a work programme on Oceans, within the UNFCCC process.

Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) speaks against radioactive waste release from Fukushima

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

May 26, 2023

Secretary-General of OACPS Rebelo Pinto Chikoti recently expressed deep concerns with Japan's decision to release radioactive waste from the Fukushima power plant into the Pacific in mid-2023. His statement follows:

On behalf of the 79 Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), I stand in solidarity with the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum to raise our deep concerns with the Government of Japan's decision to continue with its imminent plan to release the radioactive contaminated

cooling water from the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean in mid-2023, in the absence of comprehensive scientific information that would guarantee it will not cause harm to the ocean, environment, health and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific.

The OACPS recognises the important role of the Ocean as a key source of livelihood, cultural identity, and economic development for our 64 coastal Member States. This commitment is articulated in the OACPS Strategic Plan of Action for Fisheries and Aquaculture 2030, endorsed by the OACPS Ministers of Fisheries in Accra, Ghana in April

2022.

The Government of Japan has a duty under international law to prevent and control marine pollution and must therefore refrain from intentional and unilateral actions of dumping toxic radioactive cooling water, without regard to the health, wellbeing, livelihoods, environmental services, and national aspirations of other neighbouring States, and especially capacity constrained countries that are already at the frontline of the adverse impacts of climate change, sea level rise, biodiversity loss and ocean pollution.

As Secretary-General of the OACPS, I

am calling on the Government of Japan to defer the release of the radioactive contaminated cooling water from the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean, until there is absolute certainty that the radioactive contaminated cooling water is safe and will cause no harm to the Ocean and its ecosystems, and to the countries, communities and peoples whose lives and wellbeing depend upon it.

For the OACPS, this is not an issue for the Pacific Ocean alone. This is an issue that we all share as custodians of the Blue Planet. I am confident that sound political will and leadership shall prevail.

Bolstering the Pacific's monitoring of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 4: focusing on Education

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

May 30, 2023

Suva, Fiji—The Pacific Community (SPC) launched the Status of Pacific Education Report (SOPER) 2022, on 25 May in Fiji, which contains internationally comparable education statistics and monitors the region's education progress towards the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SPC's Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) partnered with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UIS) to ensure that internationally comparable education data from Pacific Island countries were available and used for regional monitoring and policy dialogues.

The indicators used to compile SOPER directly contributed to the monitoring and reporting of SDG 4 focussing on education.

EQAP's Director, Dr Michelle Belisle, emphasised that "EQAP remains committed to working with UNESCO, UIS and member countries to strengthen data systems and the utilization of data for policy and planning across the Pacific". "Through SOPER, the Pacific is able to advance its education progress to the global discussions led by

UNESCO," she added.

The SOPER 2022 is the second comprehensive report of a planned series of information papers on the status of Pacific education to be produced biennially by EQAP as part of the monitoring of the Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) 2018–2030.

PacREF is the Pacific's 12-year education roadmap that outlines the region's education and training priorities and strategies. EQAP not only leads the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) efforts of the PacREF programme but also has aligned its mandate set out by member countries with PacREF priorities.

The partnership between UIS and EQAP to produce SOPER also aims to equip Pacific Island countries to publish timely and regular high-quality education data for decision-makers at all levels to use proactively.

The Director of Education Administration of Palau, Raynold Mechol, explained that "The data provided in the report gives us a picture of areas of strengths as well as gaps that we need to focus on. There are parts of the report where Palau didn't have any data and so that gives us an area where to help make sure that we provide all the relevant data so that Palau's report could

be complete. This will allow us to compare reports with other countries in the region as well as for reporting SDG 4 goals and other important international conventions".

The UIS/EQAP partnership has been funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) since 2019. This funding agreement has supported the progress of the partnership's activities around the UIS questionnaire completion and submission and the production of the 2020 and 2022 Status of Pacific Education Reports.

The SOPER launch noted positive feedback from key speakers from DFAT and UNESCO.

DFAT's Senior Programme Manager, Natasha Verma, stressed that "Australia is very pleased to have supported this work through our ongoing partnership with EQAP alongside New Zealand. This is yet another example of the practical ways Australia and New Zealand are able to support our Pacific family".

On a similar note, Nisha, the Director of the Office and UNESCO Representative to the Pacific States, expressed to the attendees at the SOPER launch that "The



Status of Pacific Education Report is a critical step forward in understanding the education sector needs in the region as well as providing the building block to go beyond PILNA (Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment). PILNA remains important but the Pacific needs to go one step forward and in this regard, the report is quite significant".

SOPER is part of a series that is primarily designed to provide the region's education ministers, their senior executives, and the region's development partners with regular overviews of progress as it relates to education in the region, alongside emerging issues and challenges that are common to most, if not all, Pacific countries.

The 2022 report was endorsed by the Conference of Pacific Education Ministers (CPEM) in March 2023. Link to SOPER 2022: Status of Pacific Education Report 2022