

FSM leaders endorse key policies and resolutions at 13th SNLC

FSM Information Services

August 16, 2024

Pohnpei—Leaders from across the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) recently gathered at the 13th State and National Leadership Conference in Pohnpei, to address critical issues under the theme "Promoting Social, Environmental, and Economic Resilience." The conference, chaired by H.E. President Wesley W. Simina, saw a united effort towards fostering collaboration and sustainable development across the nation and culminated with the endorsement of the 13th SNLC Communiqué, four resolutions and the adoption of the National Oceanic Fisheries Investment Policy.

In the FSM's recent history, the SNLC has been the platform for the heads of the national and state governments, presiding officers of the



state and national legislative bodies, representatives of both the private sector and non-governmental organizations to come together as a nation to strategize on priority issues.

In his welcoming address, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph of Pohnpei State set the tone by highlighting the importance of unity among FSM leaders to tackle pressing challenges and drive

meaningful actions for the nation's future. President Simina underscored the significance of inclusivity, sustainability, and infrastructure development in his address, outlining key areas for discussion including social, environmental, and economic development.

Notable outcomes included the adoption of the National Energy Policy for 2024-

2050, the endorsement of the National Oceanic Fisheries Investment Policy 2024-2029 and the endorsement of the FSM Trade Policy Implementation Plan, signaling a concerted effort towards long-term growth and sustainable development.

Leaders also agreed on coordinated measures to address environmental and climate change challenges by increasing the allocation of Compact funding towards the environment sector, which has historically been categorized in the 2003 amended compact as a "small sector" rather than a compact sector of higher priority. This decision underscores the leadership's commitment to the areas of environment and climate change as critical issues that require greater attention and resources.

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U.S. Coast Guard rescues a disabled fishing vessel crew near Satawal Atoll

*By Chief Warrant Officer Sara Muir
U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia /
Sector Guam*

August 19, 2024

SANTA RITA, Guam—On Aug. 18, 2024, the USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) crew successfully rescued six fishermen and towed their disabled fishing vessel to Satawal Atoll in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), marking the end of a coordinated search and rescue operation showcasing strong international and local partnerships.

"This operation underscores the vital importance of Personal Locator Beacons in maritime safety. By quickly alerting us to the fishermen's location; the PLB effectively took the 'search' out of 'search and rescue' by narrowing the

search area significantly and allowing us to focus on the swift recovery of the vessel. This highlights the strength of our regional partnerships and the profound impact of technology in enhancing our mission effectiveness," said Cmdr. Patton Epperson, the search and rescue mission coordinator on the case, highlighting the collaborative nature of the mission.

The Joint Rescue Sub-Center (JRSC) Guam watch received a distress alert from a 406MHz Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) registered in the United States at approximately 9 a.m. local time on Aug. 17. The beacon, lent out by a Yap-based owner to outer island fishermen, was activated, signaling potential distress about 27 nautical miles north northeast of Satawal.



Upon receiving the alert, the JRSC Guam team launched a coordinated rescue effort involving the Oliver Henry and Panamanian-flagged Zhong Yu Marine, a 97-meter cargo vessel approximately 138 nautical miles north of the PLB location participating in the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel

Rescue (AMVER) program. They also coordinated with the Department of Defense to secure aviation support.

Oliver Henry diverted from their patrol

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Strengthening FSM-New Zealand relations - New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister pays historic visit to the FSM

FSM Information Services

August 13, 2024

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On August 13th, 2024, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) was honored to welcome the Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt. Hon. Winston Peters, along with a delegation of Parliamentarians, marking his first official visit to the FSM. This milestone visit underscores the importance of the bilateral relationship between the FSM and New Zealand, reflecting on 36 years of diplomatic relations and opening doors to deeper cooperation in various sectors.

The engagement between H.E. President Wesley W. Simina and Deputy Prime Minister Peters in Pohnpei is a part of the Deputy Prime Minister's 4-country tour of visits throughout the region and follows on the heels of their first meeting on the margins of PALM10 in Tokyo last month. President Simina expressed the FSM's deep appreciation for New Zealand's ongoing support and welcomed the diverse delegation, commending the non-partisan composition of the visiting Parliamentarians, reflecting New Zealand's inclusive approach to Pacific diplomacy.

At the regional level, President Simina emphasized New Zealand's vital role within the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and commended its leadership in addressing regional challenges. Both leaders discussed the upcoming Forum Leaders Meeting in Tonga and exchanged views on key issues facing the region.

President Simina reaffirmed the



importance of Pacific unity despite differing perspectives and stressed that, as a Pacific family, the FSM remains committed to the "Pacific Way" of dialogue and consensus. The conversation also touched on the potential for a meeting between President Simina and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon

during the Forum, further reinforcing the spirit of regional solidarity.

On the bilateral front, President Simina reflected on the longstanding relationship between the FSM and New Zealand, noting the shared history since

formalizing relations in 1988. The President conveyed the FSM's desire to enhance these ties, particularly in areas such as climate change, economic development, and education. President Simina also noted that this visit serves as an opportunity to commemorate 36 years of friendship and cooperation, which was honored that evening in a reception and traditional sakau

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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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September 11, 2024

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Monday, September 9, 2024

Koa Moana 24: U.S. Marines transform Pohnpei Public Library in community-centered initiative

By 1st Lt. John Carter
1st Marine Logistics Group

August 14, 2024

Pohnpei—In a demonstration of international camaraderie and community spirit, U.S. Marines and Sailors from Koa Moana 24 have delivered a transformative makeover to the Friends of the Pohnpei Public Library. This significant initiative, led by Combat Logistics Detachment-East from Combat Logistics Battalion 13, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, has revitalized the library, turning it into a vibrant beacon for local families and youth.

The project, which started in late June, was executed in three phases. The initial focus was on the library's exterior, where Marines and Sailors meticulously cleaned and upgraded the playground and benches. They pressure-washed the benches, assembled new swings, and scrubbed the playset to create a safe and welcoming space for Pohnpei's young residents.

Phase two introduced crucial enhancements, including reinforcing the swing set to ensure it could safely support children and installed new security screens to cover the windows around the library's perimeter. The team also revamped outdoor picnic tables, creating a pleasant area for communal meals and reading.

The final phase saw Marines scaling new heights — literally. They painted the library's roof which required detailed safety protocols for the elevated work. Additionally, they refreshed parking lot lines. These final touches completed the library's stunning transformation, making it a big win for the Pohnpei community.

Beyond the physical upgrades, Koa Moana 24 made a significant impact on the community's daily life. Marines and Sailors committed to visiting the library twice a week to read to local youth, fostering a love for literacy. They also assisted in unloading and delivering hundreds of new books to enhance the library's collection. Additionally, the medical team trained library staff in basic life support and first aid, strengthening their ability to serve the public effectively.

The culmination of this project was celebrated on August 8, 2024, with a heartfelt certificate-of-appreciation ceremony. Attended by Jennifer Johnson, the U.S. Ambassador to the FSM, Friends of the Pohnpei Public Library Board Chair, Suzanne Gallen, other library staff, and community members, the event highlighted the profound effect of the Marines' work.

"It was so heartwarming to see the Koa Moana Marines and Sailors making a difference in our community by reading to youth in the library, providing medical training to library staff, and engaging in various

Their upgrades to our library, engagement with our children, and staff training have made a significant impact," Albert said.

Hainrick Panuelo, Director of the FSM Office of Veterans Affairs, also recognized the Marines' contributions. "The work of Koa Moana 24 is transforming Pohnpei," Panuelo said. "Their dedication and selfless service are evident in every project, and their impact on our community is deeply appreciated."

1st Lt. Elissa Boyle, officer in charge of CLD-East, reflected on the project's success. "Seeing the Marines and Sailors come together to support the Pohnpei community has been an honor," Boyle said. "Their efforts not only reflect our commitment to service but also our dedication to building lasting relationships with our partners."

LtCol Brian McCarthy, commanding officer of Koa Moana 24, emphasized the broader significance of the project. "Our mission here is about more than just physical improvements," McCarthy noted. "It's about strengthening partnerships and contributing to regional stability. The work we've done with the Pohnpei Public Library is a clear example of how we can make an impact that is meaningful to current local leadership that also lasts for generations to come."

As Koa Moana 24 continues their mission across the Pacific, their legacy of goodwill and collaboration promises to reinforce the enduring bond between the United States and its Pacific partners. This project stands as a testament to the power of community-focused initiatives and international cooperation, embodied by the Compact of Free Association.



beautification projects. I commend our Marines and Sailors and all the local volunteers whose personal efforts are so impactful to all library users," said Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia Jennifer Johnson

Trueleen Albert, the head librarian, expressed deep appreciation. "We are incredibly grateful for the support and hard work of the Koa Moana 24 team.

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U.S. Ambassador reaffirms commitment to FSM's development through compact grants

U.S. Embassy to the FSM

August 23, 2024

FSM - The U.S. Embassy was pleased to participate in the Second Development Partner's Roundtable meeting hosted by the FSM Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) Office of the FSM National Government. The event took place at the College of Micronesia on August 15. The meeting addressed ongoing and upcoming projects, strategic development plans, data tracking best practices, and stakeholder engagement.

In her remarks, Ambassador Jennifer Johnson expressed gratitude for the initiative and highlighted important priorities covered by Compact III funds. She shared key data and examples of the infrastructure, economic, and social development projects that the United States Government is providing for the FSM, which include funded programs for FSM's health services, U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue operations, College of Micronesia Center for Entrepreneurship's hydroponics project, subject matter experts visiting FSM to provide support and training, and much more.

She reaffirmed the United States Government's commitment to the FSM

National Government and all four states' efforts to advance the nation's development. "The United States is 100% committed to supporting FSM's development", she said. "The Compact III funds are flowing, to the tune of \$140 million each year in sector grants. The FSM-U.S. Trust Fund has received this year's \$250 million, and we will add another \$250 million next year, too." She added that funding alone is not sufficient, and thus the reason why the U.S. Government holistically leverages all of its resources for FSM's development.

U.S. newly appointed Deputy Chief of Mission Vincent Mut-Tracy, Economic and Consular Officer Amy Gradin, USAID Country Coordinator Rodger Garner, Public Affairs Officer Dennis Coster and other members of the U.S. Embassy staff also participated.



China's Ambassador presents support to FSM for successful Micronesia Expo

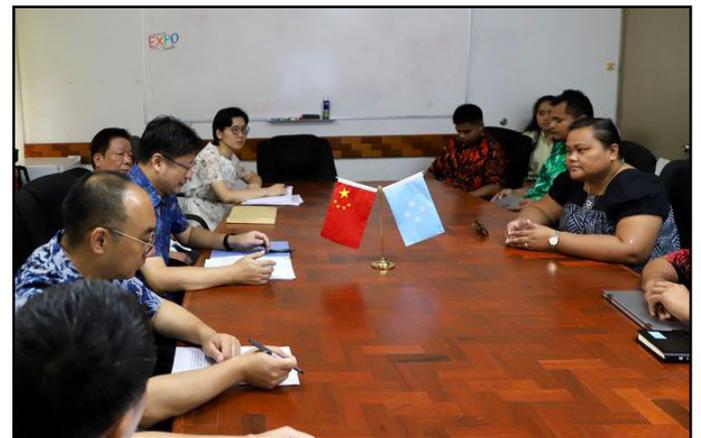
FSM Information Services

August 12, 2024

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On August 21, 2024, His Excellency Ambassador Wu Wei of the People's Republic of China met with Mrs. Elina Akinaga, Secretary of the Department of Resources and Development, to officially hand over China's support for the Micronesia Expo that was held in Chuuk from July 22-26, 2024.

During the handover ceremony, Ambassador Wu Wei expressed his appreciation for the ongoing collaboration between the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and China. He emphasized the strong relationship between the two nations, describing them as partners in development.

The Ambassador also highlighted the importance of continuing dialogue on the



recently signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between China and the FSM, which were formalized during H.E. President Wesley W. Simina's recent state visit to China.

In her remarks, Secretary Akinaga expressed gratitude for China's ongoing support for the FSM's various projects and initiatives and echoed Ambassador Wei's eagerness to advance discussions on the MOUs, particularly those under the R&D portfolio, with the goal of achieving mutually beneficial outcomes.

The ceremony concluded with Ambassador Wu Wei presenting Secretary Akinaga with the \$10,000 contribution from the People's Republic of China, to assist with covering the costs of the Micronesia Expo.

Australia engages at FSM Second Development Partners' Roundtable

Embassy of Australia to the FSM

August 17, 2024

Pohnpei—FSM held its 2nd Development Partners' Roundtable on 15 August at the College of Micronesia Gym with the theme 'Aligning Priorities and Strengthening partnerships for Nation-Building.'

The National Government, state Governors, donors, UN agencies and civil society came together to listen to the development needs of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae.

President Simina said blue and marine infrastructure was especially critical to underpin FSM's resilience and the Micronesian way of life.

State Governors underscored the need for better road and improved transport between islands and to the outer islands.

Ambassador Grant-Curnow said Australia's development support to FSM was built on principles of trust, mutual respect, partnership and optimism. It now included programs in support of maritime security, climate change, renewable energy, connectivity, gender equality and people to people.

The Ambassador announced Australia's support for a new AUD2.3 million



Family Protection Partnership in FSM to be implemented in partnership with [UNICEF](#). She also announced two new solar mini grid projects for Wolleai in Yap and Pingelap in Pohnpei to be implemented by [Pacific-Community-SPC](#), in addition to the two being built in Chuuk on Etten and Piis Paneu.

Ambassador Kagomiya attends the Second Development Partner's Roundtable

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

August 20, 2024

Palikir, Pohnpei—On August 15, Ambassador Kagomiya attended the 2nd Development Partner's Roundtable. On his presentation, Ambassador reaffirmed the strength of Japan's ODA projects that every project carefully tailored by the development needs by the recipient country and the recipient country have primary responsibility for implementation of the project. Ambassador also expressed his support for prospective development cooperation with the FSM national/state governments together with other donor countries and international organizations.

attended by Speaker Moses, Governors, representatives from the national and State Legislatures, diplomatic corp, representatives from the civil society organizations, and private sectors.



The roundtable was chaired by President Simina and Vice President Palik, and

Genetically modified mosquitoes released on Ebeye in the global fight against mosquito-borne diseases

Pacific Island Health Officers Association

August 19, 2024

Ebeye, RMI—The Republic of the Marshall Islands Ministry of Health and Human Services (RMI MOHHS) has announced a significant step forward in the fight against dengue by using Oxitec's Friendly™ mosquito technology to drastically reduce the local population of the invasive, disease-carrying mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*.

Friendly™ mosquitoes are genetically modified (GM) male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes. Male mosquitoes do not bite. The non-biting Friendly™ male mosquitoes emerge from just-add-water boxes, and find local female *Aedes aegypti* to mate with. The female offspring of the Friendly™ *Aedes aegypti* do not survive. As a result, over time there are fewer *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, thereby reducing the risk for transmission of mosquito-borne diseases like dengue. These



mosquitoes are safe for both people and the environment.

The invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is the most important vector of dengue and Zika viruses in the RMI and globally. In 2019, the RMI faced one of their largest dengue outbreaks, putting significant strain on the local healthcare system. In response, the RMI MOHHS reached out to PIHOA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to seek out a longer-term solution to address and prevent dengue and other mosquito-borne disease outbreaks in the RMI.

After considerable local stakeholder and community consultation, the RMI MOHHS selected Oxitec's Friendly™ technology, and by late 2021, the Man Nam Ne (Fight the Bite) project was established, with Ebeye selected as one of the first sites to implement the project. The Ebeye-based Man Nam Ne team consists of a field team of six locally hired Marshallese who are residents of Ebeye. Since 2022, the team has received specialized training from PIHOA's Medical Entomologists in mosquito surveillance and identification, as well as training specific to the application and evaluation of Oxitec's Friendly™ technology.

Pohnpei Governor signs historic agreements at the conclusion of the 13th State and National Leadership Conference

Pohnpei Public Information

August 16, 2024

Pohnpei—The 13th State and National Leadership Conference (SNLC) concluded on the evening of August 16, 2024, with a significant closing and signing ceremony at Mangrove Bay, Pohnpei. In a momentous display of unity and shared vision, President Wesley W. Simina, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph of Pohnpei, Governor Alexander Narruhn of Chuuk, Governor Tulensa Palik of Kosrae, and Governor Charles Chieng of Yap signed the SNLC Joint Communique, a comprehensive Fisheries Policy, and four pivotal resolutions.



The SNLC Joint Communique and the Fisheries Policy, along with the four resolutions, represent a collective commitment by the national and state leaders to address pressing issues facing the Federated States of Micronesia. These documents, now signed, will be made available to the public, marking a new chapter of collaboration and action.

The four resolutions adopted during the conference are as follows:

Resolution on Compact Funding Allocation: Expressing support for increased allocation of Compact funding, through the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), towards establishing a nationwide program to address critical environmental and climate change-related challenges during the first five (5) years of the

Compact period.

Resolution on Decentralization of Infrastructure Compact Implementation: Expressing support for a bill to amend Title 55 of the FSM Code to decentralize the implementation of infrastructure projects under the Compact.

Resolution on National Petroleum Corporation and State Utilities:

Expressing appreciation for the role of the National Petroleum Corporation and State Utilities while calling for a review and increased transparency in fuel prices and utility tariffs.

Resolution on Extension of Compact Sector Grants Deadline: Expressing the endorsement by Leaders to seek JEMCO's approval for an extension of the deadline for the obligation of FY2024 Compact Sector Grants.

In his closing remarks, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph expressed deep gratitude to the organizers and participants of the 13th SNLC. He commended the leaders and participants for their dedication and noted, "For the past week, we have sat and discussed important issues; now is the time to simply go forth and do it."

The resolutions and agreements signed at this conference are expected to pave the way for significant advancements in environmental sustainability, infrastructure development, and economic transparency across the Federated States of Micronesia.

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph meets with local Chief Executives on strategic development and data collection

Pohnpei Public Information

August 21, 2024

Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph convened a meeting with the local chief executives at the Lieutenant Governor's Conference Room today, focusing on key development strategies for Pohnpei State. The meeting featured presentations and discussions aimed at aligning state and municipal development efforts.

The session began with a presentation by Mr. Churchill Edward, who briefed the attendees on the ongoing progress of Pohnpei's Strategic Development Plan. Mr. Edward highlighted the importance of ensuring that municipal governments also formulate their strategic development plans in coordination with the broader state objectives. Local chief executives were invited to contribute their insights on

the subject, and discussions centered on the necessity of harmonizing efforts to meet shared goals for sustainable development.

Mr. Jorg Anson, Administrator of the Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture, addressed the group next. He sought the assistance of local leaders in improving data collection efforts regarding fish being caught and sold within their respective jurisdictions. Mr. Anson emphasized the economic importance of the fishing industry, citing an earlier study that estimated fish sold in Kolonia in one year was valued at approximately \$1.2 million. He further shared data from Kitti, where one species of fish alone (pwulak) generated over \$40,000 in sales over a year. Mr. Anson stressed that reliable data is essential for future policy decisions that can support both local fishermen and broader

sustainability efforts.

Governor Joseph responded to these presentations by underscoring the challenges that had emerged during the recent State and National Leadership Conference (SNLC) regarding poor data collection and quality. He stressed that accurate data is crucial to making informed, data-driven decisions that impact all levels of government and affect development efforts across the state.

The meeting concluded with Governor Joseph presenting checks to the Municipal Chiefs for initial damage assessments following the El Niño weather conditions. The financial support, which totals \$143,211.13, was made available through a Presidential Executive Decree administered by the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management

(DECEM) in coordination with the Pohnpei State Government. The funds were allocated to help municipalities address damages caused by the El Niño event.

The breakdown of the funds dispensed is as follows:

Nett: \$34,454.24
Sokehs: \$19,149.95
Kitti: \$37,123.99
U: \$19,149.95
Madolenihmw: \$26,909.68
Kolonia: \$6,423.32

Governor Joseph expressed his appreciation for the ongoing collaboration with the local chiefs and emphasized the importance of continued partnership in addressing the challenges and opportunities facing Pohnpei State.



COM-FSM Unveils New Strategic Plan at Summit

Palikir, Pohnpei - The College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) successfully hosted its Strategic Plan Summit on August 20, 2024, gathering over 200 participants both in person and online in all four States of the Federation. The COM-FSM Board of Regents Chairwoman, Suzanne Gallen delivered a powerful opening address, warmly welcoming attendees and emphasizing the pivotal role of COM-FSM graduates in shaping the future of the Federated States of Micronesia. Chairwoman Gallen highlighted the college's commitment to championing education through nurturing talent and providing the necessary skills to drive the nation's progress and development. College President and CEO Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono presented the Strategic Plan 2024-2029, emphasizing the fundamental importance of the college

mission, vision and core values: Learner-Centeredness, Commitment, Excellence, Professionalism, and Teamwork. A sixth value, "respect" will be presented to the Board at their September meeting for endorsement. The Plan is anchored by three overarching goals, "Access, Innovation and Resilience" which in turn launch operational initiatives for student success. These goals will serve as the basis for promoting and enhancing student achievement and overall institutional development and progress. Attendees were actively engaged in group discussions, tackling various scenarios and proposing solutions in alignment with the college mission and strategic goals. The Summit marked a significant milestone for COM-FSM as it embarks on a new chapter with clear strategic directions.



Top left photo: College President & CEO Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono giving her presentation on the COM-FSM Strategic Plan 2024-2029
 Top right photo: The COM-FSM Board of Regents Chairwoman, Suzanne Gallen delivering her welcoming remarks.
 Bottom Photo: Participants of the COM-FSM Strategic Plan Summit.



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ceremony.

Discussions also focused on potential collaboration between the FSM and New Zealand on significant development projects, including the proposed One UN House Project. This initiative aims to establish a centralized UN office complex in the North Pacific, with FSM hosting the facility in Pohnpei. The project is envisioned as bolstering the FSM as a regional hub to accommodate further UN agencies and regional organizations. President Simina expressed hope for New Zealand's support for this project, noting the benefits it would bring not only to FSM but to the wider Pacific region.

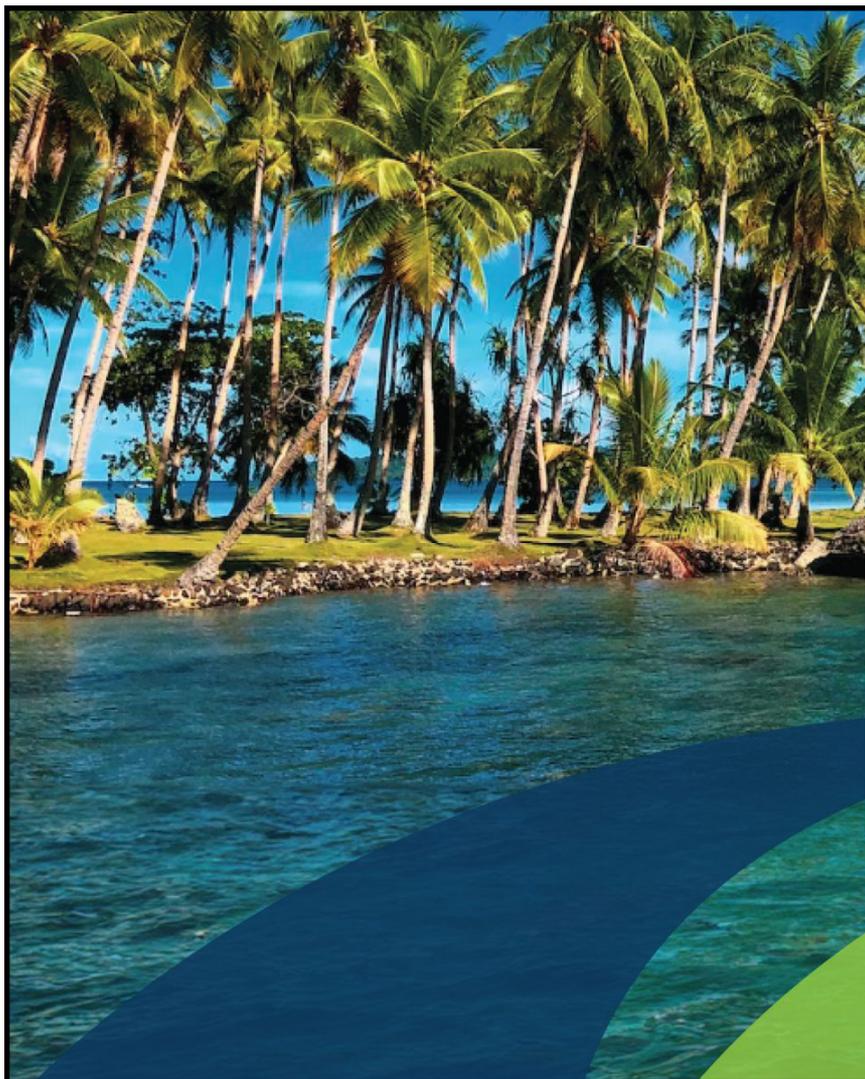
New Zealand's contributions to the FSM over the years have been substantial, including support for education, fisheries management, and environmental initiatives. Notably, New Zealand has provided scholarships for FSM students, supported the removal of oil from Chuuk Lagoon, and contributed to COVID-19 recovery efforts. Recent investments in climate

finance and support for UNICEF-led projects to improve early childhood development further demonstrate New Zealand's commitment to sustainable development in the FSM.

During the dinner reception held in honor of the visit, T.H. Vice President Palik reflected on the 36 years of FSM-New Zealand diplomatic relations, "we must be reminded of the fact that in the early days of our country's quest for formal recognition, it was New Zealand that came forth and became the fifth country in the world to boldly declared to the international community of its formal recognition of the sovereignty and independence of Micronesia." he stated.

"This early noble act of recognition laid the very foundation for the cherished and respectable relationship that we enjoy together this evening. For this noble act, the FSM and our people will continue to remain deeply grateful."

As the Deputy Prime Minister continues his tour, the FSM looks forward to building on this momentum and further strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two nations.



We are committed to improving the lives of the people of Micronesia by contributing to Micronesia's socio-economic development.



Madolenihmw Municipal Government awarded \$88,100 grant from U.S. Department of the Interior

Pohnpei Public Information

August 22, 2024

Pohnpei—The Governor's Office is pleased to announce that the Madolenihmw Municipal Government has been awarded a grant of \$88,100 by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA). This grant was awarded through the Technical Assistance Program

(TAP) to support the Madolenihmw Municipal Government's Solid Waste Program for Fiscal Year 2024.

The funding, as detailed in the municipality's February 21, 2024, proposal, aims to enhance solid waste management and collection efforts across the municipality. This program seeks to address the growing need for improved waste handling, ensuring a cleaner and healthier environment for the residents of Madolenihmw.

The Madolenihmw Municipal Government's Solid Waste Program is critical in helping the local community tackle waste-related challenges by promoting sustainability and ensuring effective waste collection. The funds will enable the expansion of current efforts and the implementation of new waste management initiatives.

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Opinion Editorial

“We can only achieve our biggest goals by working together” - Australia’s Foreign Minister Penny Wong on why the Pacific Islands Forum is more important now, than ever before

By Penny Wong
Australian Foreign Minister

Across the Pacific, there are many goals we share: creating more good jobs, better health services and schools, building safe communities – and we all want to fight climate change.

We can only achieve our biggest goals by working together.

And when the countries of the Pacific are united, we can achieve much more.

This is why the Pacific Islands Forum - the PIF - is so important.

The PIF is where 18 Pacific members, including the Federated States of Micronesia and Australia, come together to solve problems and work

towards our shared goals.

For more than 50 years, PIF members have been building a peaceful, stable and prosperous region, which has made progress possible.

With so many big problems to solve now, the PIF has never been more important.

In Tonga this week PIF leaders will meet, including FSM’s President Wesley W. Simina and Australia’s Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

And Australia sees these meetings as our best chance to hear from Pacific leaders about Pacific priorities.

In recent meetings, Australia has heard how Pacific countries want to be more ready to respond to natural

disasters, such as cyclones and floods.

And Australia is acting on what we hear. In Fiji this month, Australia and New Zealand announced a major investment in Pacific humanitarian warehouses.

This will set up warehouses of emergency supplies across the Pacific, ready for whenever they are needed.

Wherever I travel around the Pacific, it’s clear that climate change is the greatest and most immediate threat.

Now, we are making Australia’s energy supply cleaner – with 82 per cent of our energy mix coming from renewables by the end of this decade. That’s part of how we’ll get to net zero emissions by 2050.



And we are helping the Pacific family to prepare for the effects of climate change.

The Pacific is our home. As we face so many challenges, we will keep playing our part in the Pacific Islands Forum.

By working together, we can keep our region peaceful, stable and prosperous for many years to come.



FSM Telecommunications has announced the recent promotion of Mr. John Minoru Mori, VP of Chuuk Branch, to the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Operation Officer. Due to ever increasing changes and the competitive environment in the telecom industry, the FSMTC Board of Directors have decided that it is about time to fill the position, which has been vacant for over 7 years, to help with the daily operational matters and to help the CEO with current and upcoming projects.

“Mino needs no introduction as he has been a trusted hard working team member that has easily earned the respect and admirations from all of FSMTC,” says CEO Fredy Perman. “As Mino begins his journey to be stationed at HQ, let us all give him the warm welcome that he deserves and also provide him the usual full cooperation he needs.”

FSMTC congratulates Executive Vice President/COO John Minoru Mori!

Greenhouses help overcome challenges of climate and geography

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

August 16, 2024

Kosrae - Growing vegetables and legumes in Kosrae, FSM has never been easy. The 300+ inches of annual rainfall oversaturates the soil, and torrential downpours pound and destroy fragile seedlings and plants. Any garden plant that might beat the odds and overcome the water-logged soil is quickly eaten by land crabs and other garden pests.

In addition, “Many people live in locations where there is no topsoil, or on filled land, or beachside, having coral, sand and rocks around their houses,” explained Nora Sighrah of the Lelu Farmer’s Association (LFA).

Since vegetables and legumes are essential for a healthy diet, discovering effective methods to grow and harvest them on Kosrae has been a priority for local leaders and residents.

In recent years The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has partnered with the non-profit LFA and other charitable organizations and government entities to overcome the challenges of western vegetable gardening in Kosrae.

An exciting solution which has emerged from LFA’s efforts has been greenhouses specifically designed for Kosrae’s unique climate and geography.

These open-air greenhouses are constructed of sturdy wooden frames and covered in plastic, which shelters seedlings and plants so that watering can be appropriately regulated. Plants grow in containers and grow bags that rest on elevated platforms inside the greenhouse, keeping them out of the reach of land crabs and other garden pests.

LFA also supplies island-friendly seeds, seedlings, and other necessary supplies such as trellises, mulch and fertilizer to be used with the greenhouses.

Since 2016, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has worked in partnership with LFA in funding the construction of



over 100 of these greenhouses for families throughout the State of Kosrae.

“We were receiving many requests for donations related to helping those with health issues due to non-communicable diseases (NCD’s),” noted Bill Davis, Welfare and Self-Reliance Manager for the Church. “Supporting these efforts to improve the health of the Kosrae islanders and help people grow their own gardens was definitely something we wanted to help with.”

Greenhouses are provided for all regardless of religious affiliation.

As part of the Church’s self-reliance efforts, Bill Davis would like to take this program to other islands in Micronesia as well.

“The greenhouses provide families the ability to grow vegetables for their dinner table and to share, especially in areas where the soil is not suitable for growing vegetables,” explained Nora Sighrah.

The effort is a great partnership between the Church and other community organizations and members. “We do this because we believe in following the two great commandments the Lord has given,” said Bill Davis. “Those commandments are that we must love the Lord with all our heart, and we must also love our neighbor. This is why we make these contributions.”

Japanese Ambassador attends COM-FSM Strategic Plan Summit

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

August 22

Palikir, Pohnpei—On August 20, 2024, Ambassador Kagomiya participated in the College of Micronesia (COM-FSM) Strategic Plan Summit. The leaders and experts from COM-FSM as well as from a variety of organizations from private enterprises to the Diplomatic Corps were invited to the summit and discussed various issues related to the draft COM-FSM Strategic Plan 2024-2029, which was presented by Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono, the President/CEO of COM-FSM. We wish further development of COM-FSM in the areas of education and research.

Australia presents Onoun Community with nearly US\$20,000 grant

Embassy of Australia to the FSM

August 21, 2024

Pohnpei—The Australian Embassy congratulates Onoun Island Municipality, Chuuk, on receiving a Direct Aid Program (DAP) grant for their Solar Automated Farm Kits for Distillation of Sea and Saline Water Project.

Ambassador Jenny Grant-Curnow presented the project certificate and US\$19,196.40 to Onoun’s chiefly Queen, Fin Finen Samon Ms Julie Andon and community leader Mr Atson Nakayama at the recent ceremony. The funds will support the installation of solar-powered water farm kits to provide safe drinking water for Onoun Island, addressing the effects of the drought season.

DAP offers small grants for development projects up to \$20,000. Apply year-round at www.fsm.embassy.gov.au.



Governor Joseph swears in new board members for Pohnpei Trust Fund and Pohnpei Transportation Authority

Pohnpei Public Information

August 22, 2024

Pohnpei—In another step forward for the continuing formation of the Joseph-Ioanis administration, two Board members of the Pohnpei Trust Fund and two new members of the Board of Directors of the Pohnpei Transportation Authority were officially sworn in today at the Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture (OFA) conference room.

Pohnpei Trust Fund:
Albert Johnny
Thomas Pablo

Pohnpei Transportation Authority:
Salvason Salvador
Cassidy Shoniber

Public Affairs Officer Peteriko Hairens served as the Master of Ceremonies, while Executive Liaison Officer Denson David delivered the opening invocation, setting the stage for this significant event.

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph had the honor of swearing in the new Board members, while Lt. Governor Francisco L. Ioanis presented certificates of appointment to them. This marked a key moment in the administration's ongoing efforts to build strong leadership across essential institutions.

In his remarks, Lt. Governor Ioanis emphasized the historical significance of this occasion, noting that this is the first time board members of the



Pohnpei Trust Fund have been sworn in. He highlighted the importance of the Trust Fund in supporting the future of Pohnpei and expressed gratitude to the Legislature for their advice and consent in the process. Lt. Governor Ioanis also spoke about the Pohnpei Transportation Authority, an organization under his direct oversight, acknowledging the challenges it faces as it continues to navigate through organizational changes.

Governor Joseph also thanked the Legislature for their support and commended the new Board members on their appointments, stressing the importance of their roles and the responsibilities they carry. He encouraged them to approach their duties with dedication and reaffirmed his commitment to an open-door policy, welcoming any further discussions as they embark on their new responsibilities. He also mentioned that more nominations will be forthcoming for both boards.

This event symbolizes the Joseph-Ioanis administration's commitment to strengthening Pohnpei's future through leadership and cooperation, ensuring that vital institutions like the Trust Fund and Transportation Authority are positioned for success.

Governor Joseph informed of recent power outages and efforts by Pohnpei Utilities Corporation to address the issue

Pohnpei Public Information

August 19, 2024

Pohnpei—In response to the recent power outages that have affected Pohnpei residents, the Governor's Office would like to update the public on the ongoing efforts of the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC) to restore stable power across the island.

On Thursday, August 15th, 2024, PUC experienced the unfortunate loss of three generator units, Cat No. 1, 2, and 4. Through quick action, the technical team was able to repair and restore Cat No. 1 and Cat No. 2 the same day,

putting them back into operation. Cat No. 4, which had caught fire, was also repaired, tested this afternoon, and successfully carried up to 800 kW. However, later that evening, Cat No. 1 encountered another issue. As a result, PUC increased the load on Cat No. 4 to maximum capacity, and test runs will continue throughout the night to ensure optimal performance.

Further compounding the challenges, on Sunday, August 18th, 2024, the Kolonia 2 feeder breaker failed in the afternoon, leading to several outages across the island. The load on Kolonia

2 had to be transferred to both the Eastern and Western feeders, leaving only two feeders responsible for carrying the entire island's power. This put additional strain on the system and reduced overall reliability.

PUC also identified a short circuit on the Western Feeder's phase "A," contributing to multiple outages. In situations like this, where a short circuit is not easily located, more line patrolling and isolation of switches are required to narrow down the fault area. This necessary work will likely cause further power interruptions, but it is

crucial to solving the underlying issue.

PUC remains committed to restoring reliable power as soon as possible and appreciates the public's patience. The corporation assures the community that every effort is being made to address these outages swiftly and minimize their impact on residents.

Further updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

For inquiries, please contact the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation at 320-2374

Spencer brothers dominate Matson/ Amcres Fishing Tournament with top yellowfin tuna catches

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

August 17, 2024

Pohnpei—Today was a beautiful, sunny day—perfect for sitting on a beach somewhere, but somewhat brutal for the anglers participating in the annual Matson and Amcres Fishing Tournament of the Pohnpei Fishing Club. Many anglers returned with little more than a sunburn, but others managed to catch some nice fish. One angler caught two small marlins that, unfortunately, were just a few pounds short of the 100-pound requirement for marlins to qualify.

The intrepid and prolific Spencer brothers, Marvey and Dave, had the two biggest fish of the tournament, both yellowfin tuna. Marvey Spencer Jr.'s fish weighed 51.4 pounds, earning him the \$750 top prize. Dave Spencer's fish came in at 39.4 pounds, securing a second-place prize of \$550.

Nolen Narruhn landed the third-place fish, a 26.6-pound wahoo, earning him a prize of \$350. The fourth-place fish was a nice 17-pound mahi-mahi, with a prize of \$250. The Pohnpei Fishing Club identified the angler as "Renee/ Matson." Apologies to Renee for not



having her correct last name.

Lorenzo Nicholas landed a large skipjack tuna of 16.8 pounds, earning the final prize in the big fish category at \$200.

First and second-place prizes of \$150 and \$100 were also awarded for the biggest fish of each species caught by anglers whose fish did not qualify for the big fish category.

Lorenzo Nicholas had the biggest skipjack tuna at 16.6 pounds. The



second-place prize was split between Lensileen Nicholas and Selerina Martin, who each landed 15.4-pound skipjacks.

Jack Salik had the largest barracuda at 12.8 pounds. Berden Eliam's 10.4-pound barracuda took second place for that species. Eliam also won both first and second prizes for twin 3.8-pound giant trevallies.

Lensileen Nicholas was the top lady angler of the tournament with a 16-pound skipjack, earning a prize of



\$150. Lorenzo Nicholas was the top junior angler, winning a prize of \$50 for his 15.8-pound skipjack.

While waiting for the results to come in at the Mangrove Bay Bar and Grill, anglers enjoyed the kind of camaraderie that only comes after a long day of fishing. Prizes and checks were then presented to the prize-winning anglers by one of Matson's top representatives in the region.

Stay tuned for announcements of the next tournament.

...Satawal

continued from front page

238 nautical miles north-northeast of the PLB for a 10-hour transit at the best possible speed. Despite challenging weather conditions, including low visibility and thunderstorms in the area, the Oliver Henry and the Zhong Yu Marine arrived at the search area by 3 a.m.

"While the U.S. Navy P-8 Poseidon airplane and crew out of Kadena Air Force Base was en route to assist, the fishermen were located prior to their arrival. We deeply appreciate the readiness and support offered by our Department of Defense partners, which plays a crucial role in the success of our search and rescue missions," said Epperson. "The swift response from our AMVER partner vessel, Zhong Yu Marine, and the seamless integration of their efforts with the Coast Guard showcases our ability to overcome challenges in this expansive and remote area of Blue Pacific."

At 8:20 a.m. local time, the Oliver Henry crew located the disabled vessel, a 22-foot fiberglass boat with a white hull and blue interior, with six fishers in good condition aboard about 11 nautical miles off Satawal. The vessel, which had been adrift after experiencing engine failure, was towed to Satawal Atoll by the Oliver Henry, arriving roughly two hours later. The sea state, reported to be less than a foot with winds out of the east at 4 knots, was particularly favorable for the tow.

"Today's successful mission reflects the high level of training and readiness that the crew of the Oliver Henry maintains and has rebuilt following our significant crew turnover this year. I am incredibly proud of our team, who performed exceptionally to ensure the



safety of those on board the disabled vessel. This success builds on the achievement of our last patrol where we located and towed a distressed yacht and crew to Palau," said Lt. Ray Cerrato, commanding officer of Oliver Henry.

"Being part of these missions is a reminder of why we do what we do. It's about bringing people home safely to their families, no matter the obstacles. We were here in Satawal in April, and we medically evacuated a 9-year-old boy with a head injury safely to higher care and delivered aid from USAID

and the International Organization for Migration with support from the U.S. Embassy to combat drought," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Rodgers.

With the vessel and crew safely returning to shore, the Oliver Henry will return to Guam due to a mechanical issue and will conduct repairs before returning to sea.

"The successful rescue of the disabled vessel near Satawal Atoll highlights the Coast Guard's commitment to safeguarding lives at sea across the Pacific. The use of personal locator beacons significantly improves the chances of being found and shortens the search time as we cover these immense distances," said Capt. Robert Kistner, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. "Our coordinated efforts with local partners and international teams demonstrate our dedication to maritime safety in this vast and remote region."

Koa Moana 24: U.S. Marines extend network access for Yap Catholic High School, enhancing educational opportunities

By 1st Lt. John Carter
1st Marine Logistics Group

August 20, 2024

Yap—In a demonstration of partnership, U.S. Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 13, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group of Koa Moana 24 recently completed an infrastructure enhancement project at Yap Catholic High School. This initiative highlights the strong commitment the U.S. has for their partner the Federated States of Micronesia, underscoring the Marines' dedication to supporting local communities in the region.

For three years, Yap Catholic High School, a school that educates a third of all high school students on the island, had faced significant challenges in expanding its network access to additional classrooms, impacting students' ability to engage with digital learning resources. Technical and logistical challenges had stalled the school's efforts to extend its existing connectivity. This changed when a team of Marines from Combat Logistics Detachment West recognized an opportunity to apply their expertise.

Gunnery Sgt. Justin Laws, a network chief with the detachment, spearheaded the initiative. His team successfully extended the school's network by installing over 100 meters of new fiber, connecting two previously

unserved classrooms to the school's Internet Service Provider switch. To ensure strong and reliable connectivity, the Marines utilized Power over Ethernet adapters, enabling students to access their course materials via routers installed in each classroom.

Additionally, the Marines ran a new network line to the school library, enhancing connectivity and eliminating a hazardous overhead line that had previously been a safety concern. This modification was made in direct response to a request from Principal Michael Wiecek, who had long been concerned about the risk posed by the line.

Principal Wiecek expressed his profound gratitude for the Marines' contributions. "This project had been on our wish list for some time, but we lacked the necessary resources and expertise," said Wiecek.



"Gunnery Sgt. Laws, who was already collaborating with us on a Young Island Readers project, immediately offered his assistance when we discussed our network issues. Not only did he provide expert recommendations, but he and his team also took on the task of installation themselves. Our students now have reliable internet access across all classrooms, which will greatly enhance their learning experience and support our initiative to provide each student with a Chromebook, keeping them competitive on a global scale."

"Koa Moana 24 is about building stronger relationships with our partners in the Pacific, and this project is a perfect example of how we can make a positive impact through collaboration," said Lt. Col. Brian McCarthy, the commanding officer of Koa Moana 24. "The Marines took this challenge head-on, and their work here communicates exactly who we aim to be – Marines of character."

For the Marines, this initiative was more than just a technical endeavor; it was an opportunity to exemplify the spirit of partnership central to the Koa Moana 24 mission. Gunnery Sgt. Laws emphasized the value of the project for both the school and the Marines involved. "Understanding the positive impact this would have on the school and community made our efforts incredibly rewarding. It was a privilege to contribute our skills to ensure continued educational opportunities."

As students return to Yap Catholic High School on Thursday, Aug. 22, 2024, they will not only benefit from the newly enhanced network but will also have the chance to interact with the Marines through sports and social activities, further deepening the bond between the community and the service members.

This project stands as a testament to the enduring partnership between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia. Through initiatives like Koa Moana 24, the U.S. Marine Corps continues to reinforce its commitment to Pacific Island communities, fostering cooperation and ensuring regional stability.

As Yap Catholic High School students log into their newly connected classrooms, they do so with the reassurance that their education is supported by a global partnership devoted to their future.

Charge d'Affaires ad interim Zhang Weitao meet with T.H. Charles Chieng, Governor of Yap

Embassy of the People's Republic of China to the FSM

August 13, 2024

Pohnpei—On August 13, Charge d'Affaires ad interim Zhang Weitao met with T.H. Charles Chieng, Governor of Yap State, who came to Pohnpei to attend the 13th State and National Leadership Conference (SNLC), to exchange views on China-FSM relations.

Zhang Weitao introduced the great significance, major achievements and measures of the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, stressing

that China's further deepening reform comprehensive to advance Chinese modernization will bring important development opportunities for countries around the world, including the FSM. Zhang said that the Chinese side appreciates the Yap State government's adherence to the one-China principle and will continue to strengthen friendly exchanges and deepen practical cooperation in various fields with Yap State on the basis of the one-China principle, so as to bring more benefits to the two peoples.

Charles Chieng recalled the history of friendly exchanges between Yap State and China, sincerely thanked China for



its long-term selfless assistance to Yap, and said that he will study the resolution of the third plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee to learn from China's successful development experience. Chieng stressed that Yap State adheres to the policy of "friend to all, enemy to none", and will continue to abide by the one-China principle, deepen friendly cooperation with China and promote the continuous development of bilateral relations.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints donates essential healthcare equipment for new Kosrae hospital

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

August 16, 2024

Kosrae - When people of faith work prayerfully to serve their neighbors, the Lord will open doors and remove obstacles to help accomplish His work. This was the sentiment expressed by Bill Davis, manager of the Church of Jesus Christ's Welfare and Self Reliance Department for Micronesia, at a donation ceremony on Kosrae for healthcare equipment donated by the Church on August 6, 2024.

In his conversations with government and healthcare officials on Kosrae, Brother Davis had learned that the Kosrae Hospital was in need of important medical equipment and furnishings.

Soon after learning of these needs, he happened to bring up the situation with an acquaintance in the medical field who had just started a business with the specific mission of providing quality equipment at affordable prices for healthcare providers.

Brother Davis quickly took advantage of this timely discovery, and after



ascertaining the specific needs for the Kosrae hospital, was able to secure funding and arrange for purchase and delivery of the necessary equipment.

A handover ceremony was held in the Kosrae Governor's Conference Room on Tuesday, August 6th. Deacon Kun Mongkeya opened the ceremony with prayer, followed by remarks by Dr. Tholman Alik, Director of DHS.

Dr. Alik, Director of Kosrae's Department of Health Services (DHS) especially thanked the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for its

generosity and expressed his hope that the friendship between the Church and the people of Kosrae may continue in the future.

Following Dr. Alik's remarks, Bill Davis expressed, "There is no such thing as a coincidence. I believe the Lord's hand was in all of this." He also credited all those who had worked together to make the donation a reality.

"We can all join in to bless the people of Kosrae."

The donation consisted of hospital beds

for adults and children, exam tables, dental chairs, wheelchairs, incubators and industrial water purification systems.

To conclude the ceremony Lieutenant Governor Arthy Nena, acting on behalf of Tulensa W. Palik, Governor of Kosrae State, signed documents accepting the donation. He also presented a certificate of appreciation, signed by Governor Palik and Doctor Alik, to the Church of Jesus Christ representatives "acknowledging and expressing appreciation for the generous donation of medical equipment to help the people of Kosrae."

"We are grateful for this kind support for the state hospital," said Lieutenant Governor Arthy Nena. "These donations will be put to good use."

Also in attendance were Semeon J. Phillip (Speaker of the State Legislature), Moses M. Thompson (Senator), Bob H. Skilling (Senator), and Sasaki L. George (Senator).

The Ceremony closed with a hymn of gratitude sung in Kosrae and a concluding prayer by the Reverend Alerson Alik.

PICRC researchers deploy sensors to monitor conditions leading to a coral bleaching event

Palau International Coral Reef Center

August 21, 2024

Palau - Coral reefs are vital to marine ecosystems, providing habitat, food, and protection for countless species. Unfortunately, these underwater environments are increasingly threatened. One of these threats is coral bleaching, which is triggered by rising sea temperatures. Coral bleaching occurs when the microalgae that live inside coral tissues, which give corals their color and energy, are expelled due to stress from elevated water temperatures. Without these algae, corals lose their color, turning white - or "bleached" - and become more vulnerable to disease or overgrowth of turf algae. Although bleached corals are not immediately dead, prolonged bleaching can lead to significant mortality, endangering entire reef

ecosystems.

Committed to protecting these essential ecosystems, the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) is intensifying its monitoring efforts. Between August 7 -9, PICRC researchers deployed 15 temperature and light sensors around Palau from the Northern reef to Peleliu and on both the east and west fore reefs. These sensors will remain deployed until retrieved in December. These sensors are continuously collecting data on water temperature and light levels that will provide researchers with valuable real-time, underwater conditions during a potential coral bleaching event. By linking this real-time data with bleaching surveys, scientists aim to better understand how different factors contribute to coral bleaching and identify which areas of Palau's

reefs are most at risk.

This work, led by PICRC researchers Dr. Piera Biondi and Chief Researcher Ikelau Otto, is part of a collaboration with Dr. Peter Houk from the University of Guam. The data collected this year will allow researchers to compare current conditions with past events, enhancing their ability to predict and respond to future bleaching events, and ensuring timely and effective management actions.

PICRC uses the data and predictions from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Watch website, which provides real-time updates on thermal stress conditions on coral reefs worldwide. In addition, PICRC relies on observations by both staff during field trips and by community reports.

Once a mass bleaching event occurs, PICRC begins an extensive survey effort to survey 80 sites around Palau at two depths to record the extent of the bleaching event. Based on the current conditions as well as coral bleaching events occurring around the world, PICRC is prepared to begin survey efforts.

"Our goal is to continue our critical work in coral reef conservation," says Geraldine Rengiil, Director of the Research Department at PICRC. "By deploying these sensors, we are not just gathering data; we are reinforcing our commitment to safeguarding our reefs. Understanding the environmental conditions that lead to coral bleaching allows us to take informed actions and preserve the rich biodiversity of our marine ecosystems for future generations."

Governor Stevenson Joseph and First Lady attend dinner reception in honor of New Zealand Deputy Minister Winston Peters

Pohnpei Public Information

August 13, 2024

Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, accompanied by First Lady Dr. Aina Garstang, attended a dinner reception at Cliff Rainbow in honor of the Deputy Minister of New Zealand, Winston Peters, and his delegation. The event marked a continuation of discussions that took place earlier in the day at Nett Elementary School, where Deputy Minister Peters made significant remarks.

During the reception, Governor Joseph welcomed the Deputy Minister and his delegation, expressing his gratitude for New Zealand's ongoing support and assistance. He highlighted the earlier donation through UNICEF to Nett Elementary, which will enhance existing school programs, particularly those aligned with his administration's priority on food security.

Governor Joseph noted that the

contributions from the Government of New Zealand and UNICEF will greatly help build the capacity of our educational programs, ensuring our children have the resources they need to succeed.

The evening was a celebration of the 36 years of diplomatic relations between FSM and New Zealand, reaffirming both parties' commitment to furthering development initiatives that benefit the people of Pohnpei and the FSM.



Governor Joseph and Acting Speaker McGarry Miguel host reception for 13th SNLC principals

Pohnpei Public Information

August 14, 2024

Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Acting Speaker McGarry Miguel hosted a reception yesterday evening for the principals of the 13th State National Leadership Conference (SNLC) at the Pohnpei State Legislature compound. The informal gathering celebrated the ongoing collaboration among the

leaders of the FSM.

In attendance were His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia; Honorable Alexander Narruhn, Governor of Chuuk; Vice Speaker May of the Chuuk House of Representatives; Honorable Tulensa Palik, Governor of Kosrae and Speaker Semeon of the Kosrae State Legislature; and Honorable Charles Chieng, Governor

of Yap and Vice Speaker Rutun of the Yap State Legislature.

The reception followed the third day of the SNLC, which is being held this week at the COM-FSM China Friendship Gym in Palikir. The event provided an opportunity for the state leaders to engage in informal discussions and strengthen the ties that bind the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia.

In brief remarks, Acting Speaker Miguel, Governor Narruhn, Governor Palik and Governor Chieng expressed their gratitude for the collaborative spirit demonstrated by all the leaders present and emphasized the importance of unity and shared goals in ensuring the continued progress of the nation. The 13th SNLC will continue through the week, addressing key issues facing the states and the nation as a whole.

Governor Joseph Swears in Election Commissioner and member of Board of Land Trustees

Pohnpei Public Information

August 20, 2024

Pohnpei—In a ceremony held today at the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) conference room, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph administered the oath of office to Mr. Alpino Kerman as the new Election Commissioner of Pohnpei State and Mr. Dickson Wichep as a member of the Pohnpei State Board of Land Trustees. The event marks a significant step in ensuring strong leadership in both the electoral process and land management in the state.

Lieutenant Governor Francisco L. Ioanis presented the certificates of appointment to both Election Commissioner Kerman and Trustee Wichep following their swearing-in. Governor Joseph expressed his deep gratitude to the Pohnpei State



Legislature, specifically thanking Speaker Marvin Yamaguchi and the members of the Legislature for their support in confirming the Governor's nominations. He also extended his thanks to the appointees for their

commitment to taking on such important roles and responsibilities.

Representing Speaker Yamaguchi, Senator Dionisio Saimon delivered remarks of gratitude and congratulations

to the newly appointed officials. He commended their dedication and readiness to serve the people of Pohnpei and conveyed his confidence in their abilities to fulfill the duties of their respective positions.

Closing the ceremony, Lt. Governor Ioanis offered words of encouragement, emphasizing the importance of the roles that the Election Commissioner and Board of Land Trustee hold. He acknowledged the challenging nomination and confirmation process, underscoring the significance of the responsibilities they are entrusted with in serving the state.

Congratulations to Election Commissioner Alpino Kerman and member of the Board of Land Trustees, Dickson Wichep.

Visiting scientist says humanity has been an asset to Earth “Feeding humanity doesn’t have to cost the Earth”

The University of Auckland

August 20, 2024

New Zealand - A renowned scientist says ethical, abundant food systems that lasted successfully for thousands of years can be reintroduced again.

Dr Lyla June Johnston aka Lyla June (Diné/Navajo, Tsétséhéstâhese/Cheyenne, and European) is a human ecologist, public speaker, poet, musician and community organiser, and a keynote speaker at the upcoming World Green Infrastructure Congress 2024, being hosted by Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland.

From her home in Gallup, New Mexico, Johnston says she’s excited to attend the event, being held in collaboration with Design for Nature and the World Green Infrastructure Network. The international event promotes the exchange of knowledge, discussing nature-based solutions in urban environments.

She says history has many examples of successful food systems, and the sharing of this knowledge between various peoples, making her look to the future with optimism.

“My main message will be to share about a dozen examples of humanity creating successful, highly productive and deeply ethical food systems that lasted thousands of years. Each of these examples shows how humanity has not harmed the earth, but has been a great asset to it. And if we’ve done it before, by god, we can do

it again.”

She has spoken about the American chestnut tree, now nearly extinct. Evidence demonstrates they were planted by humans and ‘cared for by Indigenous peoples, like a vast orchard’. Spaced far apart, the trees enjoyed ample access to sunlight, water and nutrients to keep healthy.

Indigenous peoples would burn around chestnuts to wipe out competing vegetation and put ash into the soil for fertiliser. The result produced nutrient-dense meadows that would sprout and attract deer, bison and other undulates - herbivores that were also good for food.

Johnston has presented soil core samples containing almost 10,000 years of fossilised pollen information, demonstrating that Indigenous people managed a biodiverse food forest of black walnut, hickory nut, chestnut and other edible species for 3,000 years.

“We need to fall in love with humanity again. We’re not pests, we’re not a stain on the fabric of creation, we actually belong here, especially when we’re guided by the right practical and ethical compass. We can create beauty for ourselves and other species.”

Johnston’s multi-genre presentations have inspired personal, collective, and ecological healing worldwide. At Stanford, she blends her study of human ecology, graduate work in Indigenous



Pedagogy, and traditional worldview to craft insightful perspectives, solutions, and music.

Her doctoral research showed how pre-colonial Indigenous Nations shaped Turtle Island (the Americas) to create abundant food systems, empowering humanity to connect with the natural world. She also acknowledges the University of Alaska Fairbanks as a crucial pathway to her journey and career.

Johnston says she’s especially looking forward to engaging with tangata whenua when she arrives for the Congress, being held from 3-5 September.

“I’m excited to create more alliances and relationships, to dine with our relatives in Aotearoa. As a person from the settler colonial state of America, I’m excited to visit Aotearoa. Every time, I am deeply moved and inspired by Māori, the land, the way they are working towards a better world.”

Currently writing a book, Johnston says it was important to use an accessible format to communicate the scientific findings of her research to a broader audience.

“I have to communicate scientific knowledge beyond the university, so that it can help the world. I need to move beyond academic jargon and communicate these ideas through the likes of TED Talks and through this book I’m writing now. It shares scientific findings through the medium of story.”

When asked how scientific peers viewed her research, she says a speech she gave on the greatest technology – love – received a standing ovation. She argues that the science community, in wanting to be more rigorous, excluded the concept of love and the emotional world from their analyses.

“Love is as important as gravity. When you try to explain natural phenomena, the only reason the eagle flies back and forth to the nest to feed some ugly birds; is because of love.

“Love is the greatest technology, even with wealth disparity, and all the technology; powerful telescopes that help see out into space - yet we can’t see the person who has no home standing right in front of us. What good is this technology if we are devoid of love? To cut out love, we are denying our own reality.”

The 11th World Green Infrastructure Congress will be held at the Sir Owen G Glenn Building, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, 3 - 5 September.

Read more about Lyla June Johnston at www.lylajune.com

Maritime Security Committee Conference Concludes in Suva

UNDP

23 August 2024

Suva, Fiji - The Government of Fiji’s Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration has convened the country’s Maritime Security Committee for a conference focused on safety and security at Fiji’s borders.

The two-day conference - supported by the Government of the United Kingdom - brought together key stakeholders from across the maritime security space, as well as a cohort of academics from King’s College London, to discuss the protection of Fiji’s seaports and borders, and the wider Blue Pacific continent.

The reinvigoration of the country’s Maritime Security Committee comes at a crucial time for Fiji, with geopolitical, transnational crime, and other illegal activity encroaching on the country’s maritime doorstep.

The conference had a distinct focus on recognizing not only the unique challenges and responsibilities that come with protecting Fiji’s vast oceanic domain, but also the rich maritime heritage that has shaped the country’s – and the wider Pacific’s – identity for millennia.

The conference also underscored the critical collaboration between Kings College and the Maritime Security Committee in bolstering interagency maritime policy, legislative authority, and strategic insight to safeguard the Blue Pacific through formalized partnerships. This approach seamlessly blends cutting-edge academic expertise with practical policy applications, ensuring that the legislative measures and strategic initiatives crafted are not only robust and forward-looking but also fully equipped to address the distinct challenges confronting Fiji and the Pacific region.

As a large ocean state, Fiji is inherently vulnerable, with its maritime borders serving as both first line of defence and its most exposed frontier. The country’s Exclusive Economic Zone is 70 percent larger than its landmass and is ranked as the 26th largest sovereign ocean space in the world; this vast expanse of ocean representing not just an economic lifeline, but also the country’s greatest security challenge.

Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration, Hon. Pio Tikoduadua, spoke at the opening of the conference and said that the committee and its work embodied the notion of the Pacific being an ‘Ocean of Peace’: “This notion reinforces our collective strength, integration and inter-connectedness, and advocates for countries like Fiji to assert ownership of their resources, and to take decisive action in their best interests. But we must go further.”

British High Commissioner to Fiji, His Excellency Dr. Brian Jones, added: “Maritime security isn’t just about the surface of the sea, it’s as much about space, or the cables that connect us, or the seabed. We’re in a complex environment, that make all of our jobs complicated, and just like the sub-sea or what lies above, our determination should be as deep, and our ambition should be as high.”

Munkhtuya Altangerel, UN Development Programme Pacific Office in Fiji Resident Representative, said that any investment in maritime security is an investment in economic stability: “Protecting our maritime domain is not just a matter of national security – it is crucial for our economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and regional stability. The Blue Pacific isn’t just a place on a map, it is our sprawling ocean home, a tapestry of islands, and a shared legacy.”

Opinion Editorial

The Power of Regionalism: the vital role of the Pacific Islands Parliaments Group

By Lord Fakafanua and Munkhtuya Altangerel

16 August 2024

The vast Pacific Ocean binds our island nations, shaping our identity and sustaining countless communities. But the challenges we face, from climate change to economic disparity, and the continual erosion of faith and trust in our democratic institutions, transcend borders.

If we cast our mind back exactly a decade to the 2014 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, those in attendance signed the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. While further agreements and strategies have been elaborated on since – eventuating in our regional blueprint, the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent – much of the framework still has relevance to this day.

The framework was intended to support “focused political conversations and settlements that address key strategic issues, including shared sovereignty, pooling resources and delegating decision-making.” But it is the Forum Leaders Statement from 2014 that still has so much relevance, when we think about the inherent value of regionalism for our Pacific brothers and sisters: “We stand together as a Pacific region because there are significant benefits to sharing and combining our resources to leverage our voice, influence and competitiveness, and to overcome geographical and demographic disadvantages.”

To cast back even further than 2014, and to the time of pre-Western contact in our Pacific Island Countries, our

Pacific people appear to have highly valued exchange beyond their local communities. They travelled across the vast ocean space of our Blue Pacific to not only trade goods for economic gain, but it was the exchange of social capital that was also paramount.

The term ‘kumi fonua’ carries a profound significance in Tonga. It translates to ‘in search of a new land’, encapsulating the profound journeys of the Moana people who set out across the vast ocean to discover and settle new territories.

This concept is more than a historical footnote; it is a living testament to the ingenuity and resilience of the Pacific people, known for their unparalleled seafaring skills. These voyagers navigated the open seas not by satellite or radar, but by the stars, the wind, and the feel of the water — a tradition of exploration that continues to shape the identity and culture of the Pacific people today.

Threaded across the 30,000 islands of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia, the ocean beats as the lifeblood of countless communities. It's more than just a map feature; it's the compass of our identity, the wellspring of our sustenance. We, the people, move in rhythm with the currents of this vast blue heart, the Pacific.

As we move forward to the present day, our discussion now focuses on how we can build a resilient Blue Pacific; a region that fosters peace and harmony, that promotes social inclusion, security and prosperity.

Our respective parliaments and all

those who sit inside as representatives of our Pacific people may pass laws or engage in discourse and debate; acting as the much-needed mechanism of accountability. They are strong on their own. However, we are stronger as one in our search for the collective benefit of all. The search to ensure that we leave no Pacific person behind.

The Pacific Islands Parliaments Group (PIPG) was formed for this exact reason, the group knowing that the concept of regionalism can only work should all members believe in the ethos or ideal of moving as one. Comprising 18 member legislatures and parliaments, the PIPG serves as the premier organization for legislative cooperation in the Pacific Islands. It aims to address common challenges through dialogue and collaboration, focusing on issues such as climate change resilience, sustainable economic development, and cultural preservation.

The PIPG not only promotes interparliamentary relations but also serves as a crucial mechanism for Members of Parliament (MPs) to come together – parliaments housing the representatives of Pacific people – a mechanism beyond the usual fora that bring together national leaders or those solely at the ministerial level.

Through the PIPG we see a deep sense of commitment to cooperate and integrate each member parliament's respective endeavors. We come together to talanoa, to tell stories, to engage in conversation in pursuit of a Blue Pacific that can withstand the wrath of the climate emergency, building back better and ensuring that our social fabric is not torn apart through circumstances that are largely outside of our own control.

The effectiveness of regionalism is dependent on political will and commitment; the political will of the collective only being as strong as its weakest point.

The significance of strong and long-lasting leadership and political determination in addressing the increasingly intricate geopolitical landscape and dealing with emerging challenges is evident in the history of Pacific regionalism.

Effective governance, inclusivity, and ownership will propel the execution of coordinated actions, fostering leadership and diplomatic capability and dedication to regionalism. The success of this hinges on collaborative efforts within the region, with the PIPG complementing national endeavors as well as advancing our shared aspirations and priorities as the Blue Pacific Continent.

We may come from diverse backgrounds, and be the custodians of unique customs and cultures, but it is through our diversity that we align as a unified Pacific voice.

The success of this hinges on collaborative efforts within the region. Let us all, leaders and citizens alike, embrace the spirit of ‘kumi fonua’ – the search for a better future – and work together to build a resilient Blue Pacific and a cohort of strong Pacific parliaments for generations to come.

Lord Fakafanua is Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Kingdom of Tonga. Munkhtuya Altangerel serves as Resident Representative for the United Nations Development Programme Pacific Office in Fiji.

Preserving Tradition in a Democratic World: The Story of the Mechesil Belau

Aquila Van Keuk
Programme Analyst (JPO)
United Nations Development
Programme Pacific Office in the
Federated States of Micronesia

It's 10:30am on 9 July as my colleague and I pull into the carpark of the Ngarachamayong Cultural

Center, a proud-standing building situated in the heart of Koror, Palau.

As we make our way across the parking lot, we are joined by several women who are all wearing brightly coloured dresses. We all file into a large room with red carpet and red curtains. Women line two long tables down each side of the room and two more women sit at a smaller table at the front of the room. This is the Mechesil Belau – the

Women of Palau.

The Mechesil Belau is an influential women's group, composed of traditional leaders from each of Palau's 16 states. It is one reflection of Palau's strong matrilineal society. The group works to preserve, promote and protect Palau's unique culture and traditions in an increasingly democratizing society.

Each year, the Mechesil Belau holds a

conference to discuss important social, cultural and environmental challenges facing Palau. The annual conference is championed by the Government of Palau, who participates in various sessions and supports the group in putting into practice recommendations from the conference. This September will mark the 31st year of the

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Sautu voyage — The Uto Ni Yalo's call for ocean protection and Pacific solidarity

Uto ni Yalo Trust

August 16, 2024

Suva, Fiji—After nearly a decade, the Uto ni Yalo (UNY) is once again embarking on a momentous international voyage on Sunday with its sights set on Tonga — voyaging as an Ambassador of Pacific goodwill to the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting (PIFLM53).

The UNY and its sister vessels from across the region have long stood as symbols of the Pacific's resilience, promoting traditional voyaging and sustainable sea transport and advocating for the health of our oceans. The voyage, aptly named "Sautu Voyage – Moana 'o e Melino," is a celebration of the shared heritage and ancestral ties between Fiji and Tonga, offering a powerful reminder of the unity and collaboration that defines the Blue Pacific Continent in the face of contemporary challenges, aligning with the Forum's theme, "Transformative Resilient Pasifiki: Build Better Now."

At this critical juncture for the Pacific, the Sautu Voyage embodies the ancient wisdom of an "Ocean of Peace," moving away from its usual security framing to a more cultural understanding, where all depend on the ocean, treat it with respect, and see it as a unifying element that connects our islands rather than divides them—a true source of prosperity for our region.

While in Tonga, the UNY stands ready



during the PIFLM53 as a safe space for Talanoa on critical issues that are important to Pacific people and places, advocating for the protection of 30% of the Pacific Ocean by 2030 and representing an affirmation of Pacific leaders' vision of a fossil fuel free Pacific. Our hope is that the image of the UNY, a traditional double-hulled canoe, will inspire our regions' leaders to embrace the different ways we work together in the Pacific, with State and non-state actors working together for a stable Pacific.

Rev. James Bhagwan, Trustee of the Uto ni Yalo Trust, emphasised the significance of this voyage: "The Sautu Voyage is more than just a journey; it's a call to action for the Pacific. As we sail to Tonga, we are reminded of our shared responsibility to protect

our oceans and uphold the values that bind us together as one Blue Pacific Continent. This voyage also provides a unique opportunity for young seafarers, some of whom are experiencing blue ocean voyaging for the first time. Building and strengthening our voyaging community—both within the Uto ni Yalo and alongside our sister voyaging societies—will feature prominently on this sail, alongside our calls for strengthened collaboration between civil society organisations and governments to achieve the vision of the 2050 Strategy."

The voyage is also a celebration of Tonga's recent acquisition of its own traditional voyaging canoe, the Hinemoana II. As in our Pacific culture communities and families come together to celebrate the birth of

a child, we come together to celebrate this significant milestone for Tonga's traditional voyaging community.

Dr. Kathryn Mengerink, Executive Director of the Waitt Institute, a key partner in this voyage, highlighted the importance of this collaboration: "Supporting the Sautu Voyage is part of our commitment to the Pacific's future. It is an honour to work with the Uto Ni Yalo team, Pacific Leaders, and local partners to progress the vision of protecting 30% of the Pacific Ocean by 2030, to ensure its health for the prosperity of the communities that depend on it and for the generations to come."

This historic voyage has been made possible through the generous support of the Waitt Institute, Blue Prosperity Coalition, Oceans 5, Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, the Office of the Pacific Oceans Commissioner, with in-kind contributions from National Geographic Pristine Seas, Tradewinds Marine, Value City and Niranjans.

As the UNY sets sail on Sunday, those inspired by this journey also have a unique opportunity to participate. A few paid spots are still available for the return sail, departing Tonga for Fiji on 5 September 2024, offering a once-in-a-lifetime chance to experience the rich tradition of Pacific voyaging firsthand.

Get in touch at team@utnoniyalo.org.

...Belau

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conference, with the theme for the 2024 iteration being 'Healthy Lifestyles'. Through these conferences and their ongoing advocacy, the Mechesil Belau has successfully influenced significant policy changes. They have been instrumental in the passage of 44 national laws, including the noteworthy Family Protection Act (2012), and three national constitutional amendments. These achievements demonstrate the group's effectiveness in translating traditional wisdom into modern governance structures.

I learned a lot from the Mechesil Belau

during the visit. The group holds an important role of appointing Palau's council of traditional male chiefs, who in turn play an advisory role to Palau's national congress. According to Bilung, the leader of the Mechesil Belau, the greatest social outcomes are achieved when democracy and tradition work together. This has been a common sentiment throughout our gender scoping mission to Palau. We were told that traditional customs are like a dock and the democratic system is the boat – if the boat leaves the dock, then the citizens will fall into the gap and end up the water. The Mechesil Belau is both an example of the bridge between tradition and democracy as well as an advocate for strengthening the connection between the two.

The Mechesil Belau has a strong focus on youth engagement. The group uses cultural practices such as farming and food preparation as an avenue to transmit traditional knowledge to Palau's young people while fostering honest conversation about the challenges and opportunities facing Palauan citizens. Strengthening social cohesion through inclusive dialogue builds understanding and trust among generations and creates a safe space for individuals and groups to practice culture while expressing modern ideas.

The Mechesil Bealau's ongoing efforts to preserve Palau's rich cultural heritage while advocating for progressive policies demonstrate the vital role

traditional female leaders play in shaping the nation's future. As Palau continues to navigate the complexities of the 21st century, supporting and amplifying the voices of groups like the Mechesil Belau becomes increasingly crucial.

As global citizens, we all have a stake in supporting initiatives that blend cultural preservation with social change. Whether through increased awareness, cultural exchange, or collaborative projects, there are numerous ways to engage with and support the important work of groups like the Mechesil Belau. Their efforts provide valuable lessons for societies worldwide faced with similar challenges and opportunities to bridge the gap between traditional customs and the democratic system.

Addressing unplanned adolescent pregnancy in Vanuatu

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

August 15, 2024

Vanuatu—For the first time, stories and experiences of adolescent girls and young women in Vanuatu who face unplanned pregnancy and motherhood are being shared from the ‘Adolescent Unplanned Pregnancy in the Pacific – Vanuatu’ report.

The ‘Adolescent Unplanned Pregnancy in the Pacific – Vanuatu’ report contains research about the experiences of adolescent girls and young women in Vanuatu who face unplanned pregnancy and motherhood. The final report was developed by the University of NSW (UNSW) supported by the Australian Government.

The report has been launched in Port Vila, at a high-level workshop

convened by the Pacific Community (SPC) through the Pacific Women Lead at SPC (PWL at SPC) programme in partnership with implementing partner CARE in Vanuatu, held from 5-6 August.

For the research, data was collected in Sanma, Tafea and Shefa, with logistical support provided by CARE in Vanuatu, in Tafea Province.

Similar research was also carried out in Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and in Tonga, showing that adolescent girls often face significant gaps in sexual and reproductive knowledge. This is often due to inadequate reproductive health education, negative attitudes from healthcare workers, and family restrictions on accessing community education programs, resulting in



delayed maternity care and potential adverse health outcomes.

The research investigated traditional and current knowledge and practices of fertility limitation from the viewpoints of older women and the experiences of adolescent girls and young women. The research further explains how adolescent girls and young women often have trouble managing relationships, this includes pregnant girls’ fear of parental anger and social exclusion.

A key recommendation from the research is the need to expand programmes for adolescent girls that offer reproductive health rights information, service referrals, and opportunities to empower girls and young women to make informed decisions.

It also highlights the need to introduce comprehensive reproductive health education for adolescents in schools; develop policies and processes to ensure girls can remain in education; conduct workshops for health workers and other key stakeholders to remove access barriers and disincentives caused by discriminatory attitudes.

Recommendations were discussed in the workshop followed by a series of one-on-one consultations led by the Pacific Women Lead at SPC (PWL at SPC) programme team with the support of CARE in Vanuatu.

According to Wilmaraia Sinumila, CARE in Vanuatu’s Country Director, the research will help participants to better understand the context of unplanned adolescent pregnancy from the point of view of young women or girls.

“On behalf of the CARE in Vanuatu team, we look forward to strengthening, supporting and working with you, as our key partners and stakeholders towards the recommendations,” Ms Sinumila said.

“Change may not happen overnight, but it is the first step, and it is always important to take that first step. We have a collective responsibility. The research findings will be disseminated, we will know what the results are and so we can no longer be ignorant.”

Speaking at the opening of the workshop, Sarah Mecartney, Director of the SPC Melanesia Regional Office, says, ‘it is one thing to do research but if there is no action, it will stay as it is. We want to make sure that work is lifted and reaches where it needs to be. Young girls’ and boys’ matter, they are our future.”

“This research is invaluable to strengthening our collective responses and services by paying attention to the experiences and the needs of those affected. We can develop more effective responses and create a supportive environment where every young person has the opportunity to grow; Yumi Tugeta Yumi Strong,” Ms Mecartney said.

Representing the Australian High Commission in Vanuatu, Programme Manager, Jodie Kapalu, said “the Australian Government strongly believes in supporting everyone in society to fully reach their full potential and that goes for young women whether people with or without disabilities, young and old.”

The research report is available from CARE in Vanuatu, Port Vila.



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY

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MERLA Specialist	High Level Advice	Band 10
MCS Advisor – Strategic Analysis	Fisheries Operations	Band 12
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Finance Manager	Corporate Services	Band 12

*Subject to SDR/USD exchange rates

These positions will be based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, but may be expected to travel extensively in the region.

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Closing Date – 6 Sept 2024

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- Band 10 - Base Salary starts at US\$66,447 (with basic allowances) plus benefits
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Previous Applicants need not re-apply as all applications will be considered.

FFA Members Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

...SNLC

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The Leaders also discussed and agreed to seek congressional support for considering the decentralization of compact infrastructure project implementation. An adopted resolution highlights the concerns raised by state leaders regarding the centralization of infrastructure management and its potential impact on states' ability to effectively oversee and execute projects within their jurisdictions. Leaders affirmed their commitment to advocating for amendments to Title 55 of the FSM Code to enable a decentralized approach to compact infrastructure implementation in the states.

Leaders also discussed the matter of fuel prices and utility tariffs and expressed appreciation for the National Petroleum Corporation and State Utilities while calling for a review and increased transparency into how fuel prices and utility tariffs are determined. To this end, it was agreed that a Power Tariff & Fuel Surcharge Task Force would be established through a Presidential Executive Order. This task force, comprising CEOs of the state utilities and experts, will meet regularly to assess fuel surcharges and power tariffs. Their objective is to guarantee that these rates are transparent, affordable for consumers, and based on various relevant factors, ultimately striving for the lowest possible rates.

The Leaders also discussed and agreed to seek approval from JEMCO for an extension of the obligation period for FY2024 Compact Sector grants. Due to the delayed JEMCO approval of FY2024 Compact allocations, the Leaders emphasized the need for an extension to facilitate the obligation and expenditure of the grants towards the implementation of crucial programs and activities outlined in the FY2024 Annual Implementation Plan.

On August 15th, the FSM also convened the 2nd FSM Development Partners Roundtable, a significant gathering that brought together high-level representatives from various Development and Implementing Partners. The Roundtable, held concurrently with the SNLC, served as a platform for in-depth discussions on critical State and National priorities across key sectors.

FSM leaders and stakeholders engaged



in productive dialogue with representatives from countries and organizations such as Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, Japan, the United States, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Micronesia Conservation Trust and several United Nations agencies.

Key discussions during the Roundtable focused on achieving a unified understanding of both State and National priorities, enhancing collaboration among stakeholders, and exploring ways to improve best practices for a more robust development framework. Presentations were made on State and National

priorities, development frameworks, and project overviews, highlighting the importance of aligning investments with FSM's development needs.

The Roundtable discussions emphasized the critical need for improved infrastructure, data-driven decision-making, and alignment with broader development objectives to drive economic growth and environmental sustainability in FSM.

The SNLC and Roundtable exercise came to a close on Friday August 16th, following a Leaders Retreat held at Para Nuii. The retreat provided a more informal setting, enabling the leaders to engage in deeper discussions on matters requiring careful consideration and attention. This format encouraged open exchanges of ideas and perspectives, further solidifying the collective commitment to addressing the challenges facing the nation.

During the closing ceremony, Leaders signed the 13th SNLC Communiqué, four resolutions and the National Oceanic Fisheries Investment Policy.

In his closing remarks, T.H. Vice President Palik emphasized the importance of carrying forward the momentum generated during the conference into the broader landscape of governance. He highlighted the critical need to prioritize inclusivity in social development, address the pressing challenges of climate change, and pursue sustainable economic growth. Vice President Palik called on the leaders to maintain the spirit of collaboration that defined the conference, urging Leaders to remain accountable to the commitments made and the partnerships forged. "Together, we can build a prosperous and resilient future for our nation, one that honors the aspirations of our citizens and preserves our cultural heritage" he stated.

On behalf of the Simina-Palik Administration, sincere gratitude is extended to all state governments, development partners, and participants who contributed to the success of the 13th State and National Leadership Conference and 2nd FSM Development Partners Roundtable. The productive discussions and collaborative spirit demonstrated throughout the conference reflect the shared commitment to advancing the FSM's development goals.