

# Governor calls for cohesion amid Legislative inaction on Pohnpei DHSS supplemental budget request for medicines

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

February 17, 2025

*(EDITOR'S NOTE: Just before publication the following message appeared on the Pohnpei State Department of Health and Social Services significantly updating the status of the following article:*

*“On behalf of Pohnpei State Hospital and our patients, we extend our deepest gratitude to the Joseph and Ioanis Administration and the Pohnpei State Legislature for their unwavering support in approving our budget request for essential medications. Your commitment to the health and well-being of our people is truly commendable, and this decision ensures that our hospital remains equipped to provide the highest standard of care.*

*“With this support, we are pleased to inform the public that all essential*

*medications are now in stock at Pohnpei State Hospital. This achievement reflects what we can accomplish when we work together with a shared vision for the betterment of our community.*

*“Let us continue to stand united in our efforts to strengthen healthcare for all. Kalahngan lap!”*

**Pohnpei**— On February 7, the Pohnpei Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) issued a post on its Facebook page apologizing for a shortage of medications at the Pohnpei State Hospital. The post stated that DHSS had submitted a supplemental budget request to the Pohnpei State Legislature in December, but no action had been taken. “We kindly ask for your support in urging our leaders to prioritize this urgent matter. Access to necessary medications should not be postponed—it is a critical healthcare need that affects our entire community,” the post said.

While the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs graciously stepped in late

last week to provide \$37,000 worth of medications to the hospital, Pohnpei DHSS Director Penias said that amount would last a little less than two months. Meanwhile, a supplemental budget request of \$250,000 to purchase medicines for the rest of the year, which he submitted to both the Chair of the Pohnpei State Legislature’s (PSL) Committee on Health and to Governor Stevenson Joseph, remained unaddressed by the Legislature.

Though we were able to interview Governor Joseph on the morning of February 16, we were again unable to secure an interview with PSL Speaker Marvin Yamaguchi in time for this publication. Speaker Yamaguchi relayed his comments on the matter through his public information officer (PIO). The Speaker instructed the PIO to inform us that the Legislature had received no official communication from the Governor regarding the supplemental budget request. The PIO said the Speaker only recently heard about a potential

[Click here for continuation on page 4](#)



# FSM media practitioners shore up skills with ABC trainers

[Click here for story on page 5](#)



# Inclusive access to quality education - A priority for the Pacific

UNICEF

February 10, 2025

**Pohnpei**--Inclusive education is top of the agenda this week as representatives from 15 Pacific Island countries' education systems join a four-day Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Paiaudaud\*. The meeting brings the participants together to take stock, share learnings and plan the next steps on their commitment to inclusive learning for all children.

"Inclusive education continues to be a regional priority for our Pacific Ministers of Education who committed at the Conference of Pacific Education Ministers 2023 to ensuring that education is available to all learners irrespective of their challenges," said Coordinator at the Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) Facilitating Unit, Filipe Jitoko.

In 2022, UNICEF, under guidance from the Pacific Inclusive Education Taskforce, produced the first Pacific Regional Review on Inclusive Education, which highlighted critical national efforts of the Pacific Island countries, and the actions needed to make education across the region more inclusive.

Now this week, the countries are coming together as one to support each other to create better quality learning, accessible for all children in the region, including those living with disabilities. This action will be guided by the Pacific Inclusive Education Taskforce, which is led by Ministers of Education from Niue, Federated States of Micronesia, and Solomon Islands.

"Inclusion is not a matter of placing children with disabilities in regular schools;



it is about creating an educational environment where every child feels valued, supported, and able to learn alongside their peers," said Pacific Disability Forum's Chief Executive Officer, Sainimili Tawake. "It is about ensuring that, in a nurturing learning environment, every child, regardless of their abilities, feels empowered to use their assistive devices without fear

of ridicule. It is through acceptance and understanding that we unlock the true potential within each child and individual."

While the region has made progress on inclusive education, there are many gaps that remain posing significant challenges. For example, in Kiribati, Palau and Samoa, censuses indicate that people living with disabilities have lower rates of literacy compared with those living without disabilities. The Solomon Islands Ministry of Education has also estimated that less than two per cent of children living with disabilities are in school.

"It is unacceptable that children living with disabilities may not access the same level of education as others do," said UNICEF Pacific's Representative, Jonathan Veitch. "We are proud of this commitment by the region to work together as one to ensure equal access to quality learning for all children - and UNICEF is here to support the journey to translate this commitment to concrete action on the ground."

The 15 Pacific Island Countries participating in the Paiaudaud include Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

This Paiaudaud is part of the PacREF partnership, which is funded through support from the Global Partnership for Education, Government of New Zealand, and the Asian Development Bank.



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Bill Jaynes  
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF  
THE KASELEHLIE PRESS  
WILL BE RELEASED ON:  
March 5, 2025**

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

**Monday, March 3, 2025**

# President Simina continues community outreach efforts with official visit to U Municipality

*FSM Information Services*

*February 5, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—As part of the administration’s ongoing community outreach efforts, His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Madame First Lady Ancelly Simina, paid an official visit to U Municipality, reaffirming his administration’s commitment to unity, grassroots development, and partnership with local communities.

The visit was marked by the presence of U Municipality’s esteemed traditional leadership, including Wasalapalap Songohro, Nahnmwarki of U, and Iso Nahken of U, as well as other high-ranking traditional and government officials including the Speaker of the FSM Congress Esmond Moses and Pohnpei State Governor Stevenson Joseph. Addressing the gathering, President Simina paid tribute to the traditional leaders and underscored the importance of their role in fostering stability and safeguarding our traditions.

In his remarks, the President emphasized the values of resilience, cooperation, and unity that have long been the foundation of strong communities in the FSM. He noted that

his administration is deeply committed to strengthening partnerships at the grassroots level, ensuring that all citizens have opportunities for a better quality of life.

“My presence here is a testament to my administration’s enduring commitment to supporting and collaborating with the people of our young nation,” President Simina stated. “Our domestic policy is firmly rooted in democracy, and we will continue to strengthen peace, harmony, and unity, especially at the grassroots level.”

As a demonstration of this commitment, President Simina pledged \$1.5 million in funding for infrastructure projects in U Municipality. The allocation will be directed toward priority initiatives identified by the municipal leadership. “Once you have identified your project,” he assured the leadership, “we will stand ready to ensure its swift implementation.”

The President acknowledged the challenges faced by local governments, including limited resources and capacity constraints, but emphasized

that these obstacles should not deter progress. “Through partnership and cooperation, we can overcome these challenges together,” he affirmed.

Chief Minister Rofino Primo, Speaker Mason Albert, and other municipal leaders welcomed the President’s visit and reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with the national government to improve the lives of their constituents.

The visit to U Municipality is part of the Simina-Palik administration’s broader effort to engage directly with communities across the FSM, ensuring that the voices and needs of the people remain central to the government’s development agenda.



# FSM National Government hands over more than \$32,000 in medication and medical supplies to Pohnpei State

*Pohnpei Public Information*

*February 14, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—The Pohnpei State Government today received a significant donation of essential medication and medical supplies valued at over \$32,000 from the FSM National Government.

Acting Secretary of the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs, Mr. Moses Pretrick, formally handed over the much-needed supplies to Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Director Stuard Penias in a brief ceremony. The medication and supplies, procured locally from Genesis and MedPharm, will help strengthen

healthcare services and improve patient care in Pohnpei State.

Governor Joseph expressed his sincere gratitude to the FSM National Government for its continued commitment to supporting the health and well-being of the people of Pohnpei.

The Pohnpei State Government extends its appreciation to all stakeholders involved in facilitating this assistance, underscoring the importance of cooperation between national and state governments in delivering critical healthcare services.



# Children's Health Books: Designed by the Pacific for the Pacific

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

February 10, 2025

Suva, Fiji--The Pacific Community's (SPC) Public Health Division (PHD) has published ten children's books focused on health topics. These books were written by aspiring Pacific authors and illustrators as part of a regional writing competition on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

Using fun and creative methods to teach

young children about the adverse effects of a sedentary lifestyle, poor diet, and the use of tobacco and alcohol will empower them to make informed health choices and adopt healthy habits.

In the Pacific region, 75% of deaths are attributable to NCDs, impacting children and adolescents as well: we notice an increase in childhood obesity across the region, the average age of first cigarette use is dropping, and few children meet

the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendations for physical activity. These factors constitute a significant public health issue.

Dr Ilisapeci Kubuabola, Acting Team Leader for the NCD Programme at SPC, said, "It is no longer news that 75% of deaths in the Pacific Region occur because of NCDs. While it requires a whole-of-society approach, innovative learning techniques can help raise awareness around NCDs.

Introducing children to these health topics through reading will influence healthy-seeking behaviours from a young age and build a healthier future in the Pacific."

These books, illustrated to make learning fun and educational, are aimed at children ages 3 to 10 and are available in French and English. SPC is pleased to announce it will donate physical copies to Pacific schools that request them via their Ministry of Health.



## ...DHSS Budget

Continued from front page

medicine shortage from the Chairman of the Health Committee. The PIO also said that the Speaker wanted a "black and white copy" of the Governor's communication on the supplemental budget request before agreeing to an interview on the matter.

Later in the day, the PIO called the office of The Kaselehlie Press to after all try to organize an interview. Unfortunately, she did not leave a message on the answering machine. At the end of the business day, she called to ask if we could schedule the interview at a time that would have been too late to have incorporated any further comments from the Speaker into this article. We will endeavor to reschedule an interview in order to write an article that includes the Speaker's fuller views in the next issue of The Kaselehlie Press.

Director Penias said that the Governor

had sent an official communication to the Legislature regarding the supplemental budget request last week. However, the Governor did not mention this communication during our interview.

This afternoon, Director Penias pointed out that when there was a budget shortfall for aluminum can redemption, the Legislature acted immediately—despite not receiving an official request from the Governor's office. He noted that lawmakers quickly allocated funds to ensure collectors could redeem their cans, yet his supplemental budget request for medications remained unaddressed. He emphasized that the medication request had been submitted before the recycling request. "It's a smoke screen," he opined.

Penias acknowledged that some may wonder why additional funding for medications was not included in the FY 2025 budget request. He explained that \$70,000 had in fact been requested in that budget, which was prepared during the previous administration. However, for some reason, it was not approved. He speculated that the Legislature may have expected Pohnpei DHSS to use its revolving fund to pay for medications.

We were unable to confirm that speculation. However, several accounts, including the DHSS revolving account, had not been reconciled during the previous administration. According to Penias, the account was actually in deficit by approximately \$300,000. He said he requested an audit, which has now been completed and will soon be released by the Pohnpei Office of the Public Auditor.

A future article will cover the findings of that audit once they are released.

Penias said that he requested the supplemental budget to be funded through the "Health Premium Account," commonly referred to as the "sin tax account" which is levied on cigarettes and alcohol. He noted that the current balance of that account is approximately \$500,000, and the requested \$250,000 would cover medication needs for a full year.

Governor Joseph said he was unsure why the Legislature had not acted on DHSS's supplemental budget request. "We have a difference in priority," he said. "Which is quite unfortunate because, at this point, I don't think this administration is coherently working together. It's not cohesive at all. They (PSL) have their priorities. I have mine."



# FSM media practitioners shore up skills with ABC trainers

By *Bill Jaynes*  
*The Kaselehlie Press*

February 13, 2025

*Pohnpei*—This week, a team of media trainers from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) has been in Pohnpei conducting training sessions and exploring ways to support the FSM in developing a robust media sector. The visit was sponsored by Australia’s Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS), which aims to enhance media skills for radio and social media content production in the FSM.

The trainers—Kate Seymour, Josaia Nanuqa, Lara Lauth, and Fred Hooper—conducted training at the College of Micronesia-FSM, which is in the process of revitalizing its college radio station. They also led sessions for members of the PICS Media Club, who enthusiastically participated in the training. Additionally, a group of radio personnel from each of the four FSM states gathered in the conference room of Yvonne’s Hotel for a two-and-a-half-day seminar.

The trainers also met with media practitioners, including representatives from The Kaselehlie Press, V6AH, and Micronesia Productions, to explore the FSM’s media landscape and identify effective ways to assist with media development.

The seminars covered best practices for interview techniques, content development and structuring, and the effective use of social media. While many participants already use social media, the training provided valuable insights on maximizing its impact.

Australian Ambassador Jenny Grant-Curnow kicked off the training with remarks highlighting her passion for

radio and its role in storytelling. She reflected on her career, emphasizing that media skills can open doors to a wide range of professional opportunities. She also hosted a sunset reception at her residence, overlooking the lagoon and Sokehs Rock.

Kate Seymour explained that they chose to visit the FSM because, despite advertisements inviting Pacific media practitioners to participate in training programs, they had never received an application from anyone in the FSM. The trainers are now exploring ways to provide the most effective support, recognizing that media development strategies that work in one country may not necessarily be suitable everywhere.



# Manaaki New Zealand Tertiary Scholarships Applications Open Now!



The Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme offers outstanding tertiary education opportunities at world-class New Zealand universities and institutes.

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Manaaki scholars form lasting people to people connections, strengthening relationships and enhancing mutual understanding. A Manaaki Scholarship covers the full cost of study, and includes social, medical, accommodation, insurance, travel, and financial support.

The application window for study in 2026 is open now until 12:00pm 28 February 2025 (NZT). To apply for a Manaaki Scholarship or to learn more, please visit <https://www.nzscholarships.govt.nz/category/>.



# Collaborative efforts lead to progress in resolving Pohnpei's power generation crisis

## Pohnpei Public Information

February 5, 2025

**Pohnpei**—Through the decisive and collaborative efforts of Governor Joseph, the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC), dedicated staff, and the FSM National Government, significant progress has been made in addressing the ongoing power generation crisis in Pohnpei. Following the Governor's declaration of a State of Emergency and the issuance of an Executive Order establishing a Task Force, key stakeholders have been working diligently to stabilize power generation and end the current period of load shedding.

Prior to the emergency declaration, PUC had submitted a Public Infrastructure grant request for \$1,000,000 through Compact Sector Grants to purchase a generator set. However, there remained uncertainty regarding the timing of the Joint Economic Management Committee's (JEMCO) concurrence with the Sector Grant infrastructure authorization under SL 11L-18-24, as noted in the emergency declaration.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, Governor Joseph engaged with President Wesley W. Simina to secure additional assistance. As a result, financial aid was obtained to help address the crisis. In a letter to President Simina, Governor

Joseph expressed his deep gratitude for the \$250,000 to be provided to PUC and for his support in JEMCO's approval of the \$1 million public infrastructure grant for a generator set. This funding will play a crucial role in stabilizing Pohnpei's power infrastructure and ensuring reliable electricity for residents.

During today's meeting at the Governor's Office, PUC Chief Executive Officer, Nixon Anson and Chief Financial Officer, Daisy Cantero personally briefed Governor Joseph on the latest developments in power restoration efforts. The Governor was pleased to hear that progress is being made and that the ongoing load shedding will soon come to an end, restoring normalcy

to affected communities and businesses.

Governor Joseph and the Pohnpei State Government remain committed to working collaboratively with all relevant authorities, including PUC, the Task Force, and national and international partners, to ensure a sustainable and long-term solution to Pohnpei's power generation challenges. He extends his gratitude to the people of Pohnpei for their patience and resilience during this challenging period.

As the situation continues to improve, the Governor's Office will provide further updates to keep the public informed on ongoing efforts and future developments.

# Pohnpei State Energy Task Force convenes to address power crisis

## Pohnpei Public Information

February 11, 2025

**Pohnpei**—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph presided over the first official meeting of the Pohnpei State Energy Task Force, created under Emergency Declaration 2025-01, to address the ongoing challenges faced by the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC).

The Energy Task Force is co-chaired by Herman Semes and Marcelino Actoucka, with Vice Chairman Churchill Edward, Chief of Staff Benjamin Rodriguez, and

Attorney General Belsipa Mikel-Isom as members. Governor Joseph led the Task Force's initial proceedings before formally turning over Situation Reports to its leadership for immediate action.

The Task Force, operating under an executive directive with a 30-day mandate, discussed its role in assessing PUC's operations and financial condition, as well as formulating alternative policy recommendations to ensure a professionally managed and fiscally sound public utility. A key outcome of the meeting was the agreement to establish

Terms of Reference to guide their work.

Under the Emergency Declaration, significant funding is already being mobilized to support PUC, including \$1,000,000 from public sector infrastructure grants approved by JEMCO for the procurement of a generator set and \$250,000 in financial assistance facilitated by His Excellency Wesley W. Simina at the request of Governor Joseph.

The Energy Task Force will work closely with PUC management, government

agencies, and stakeholders to explore long-term solutions, including public-private partnerships and alternative energy investments. Public consultations and a thorough review of PUC's financial and operational structure will be key components of the assessment.

The Pohnpei State Government remains committed to ensuring uninterrupted power services for all residents and businesses. Further updates on the Task Force's progress will be provided in the coming weeks.

# Governor extends State of Emergency for power generation crisis

## Pohnpei Public Information

February 13, 2025

**Pohnpei**—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph has issued Executive Declaration 2025-02, officially extending the State of Emergency declared on January 13, 2025, in response to the ongoing power generation crisis affecting Pohnpei State and the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC). This extension, made in accordance with Article 13, Section 9, Subsection (I) of the Pohnpei State Constitution, will remain in effect for an additional thirty (30) days as the state government continues its efforts to stabilize the energy supply.

Since the initial declaration, significant efforts have been undertaken to mitigate

the crisis, including maintenance and procurement strategies. However, challenges persist, including continued power shortages, increasing demand for electricity, and delays in implementing the Pohnpei Energy Master Plan. In addition, the lack of a backup generator and the risk of further infrastructure failures necessitate further intervention to prevent system-wide disruptions that affect daily life, essential services, and economic stability.

Under the extended State of Emergency, Governor Joseph has directed the following actions:

- Governor's Energy Task Force will continue working with PUC to expedite the procurement and installation of a backup generator

and advance long-term strategies for energy stability.

- Pohnpei Utilities Corporation will receive financial and technical assistance to improve operational efficiency and address infrastructure challenges.
- The independent Energy Task Force will continue assessing PUC's capabilities and providing recommendations for long-term sustainability.
- State agencies and departments will remain directed to expedite necessary processes and fully cooperate in resolving the energy crisis.
- Applicable laws and regulations will remain waived only to the extent necessary to support the objectives

of this emergency declaration.

Governor Joseph reaffirmed his administration's commitment to finding sustainable solutions to the power crisis, stating, "The people of Pohnpei deserve a reliable and efficient power supply. While progress has been made, we recognize that more work remains, and we are taking all necessary steps to resolve this crisis."

The Pohnpei State Government continues to coordinate with key stakeholders, including national and international partners, to implement solutions that will ensure a stable and sustainable energy future for Pohnpei. Further updates will be provided as efforts continue to address the crisis.



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## College President Presents at the 26th Consultation Meeting of the Pacific Heads of Education Systems

The President of the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM), Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono delivered a compelling presentation at the 26th Consultation Meeting of the Pacific Heads of Education Systems (PHES), on Wednesday February 12, 2025 at the COM-FSM National Campus in Palikir, Pohnpei. Addressing Pacific Island regional education leaders, the President's presentation, titled "The Future of Higher Education: Transforming Higher Education for a Resilient and Empowered Pacific," emphasized the need for access, innovation, resilience and adaptability in higher education to meet the evolving challenges of the Pacific region.

The presentation highlighted the

critical role of higher education necessary to thrive in an uncertain institutions in preparing students future. The President advocated for a rapidly changing world, with for curriculum innovations that a focus on digital transformation, align with national and regional sustainability, and community economic priorities, environmental resilience. The President underscored sustainability, and indigenous the importance of integrating knowledge systems, ensuring that technology into educational higher education in the Pacific is frameworks to enhance accessibility, both globally competitive and deeply successful learning outcomes and rooted in local cultures and values. work-ready graduates. Additionally, The consultation meeting provided the presentation called for greater an invaluable platform for Pacific and intentional collaboration among education leaders to exchange Pacific nations to ensure that higher ideas and discuss strategies for education remains relevant and strengthening education systems responsive to the needs of island across the region. COM-FSM communities. A key theme of the remains committed to fostering presentation was resilience—both academic and student excellence, in terms of institutional adaptability and contributing to the sustainable and preparing students with the skills development of the Pacific.



Dr. Theresa Koroivulaono at the 26th Consultation Meeting of the Pacific Heads of Education Systems (PHES).

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Campus Dean-Kosrae Campus

The College of Micronesia-FSM seeks to fill the position of Campus Dean for the Kosrae Campus. Reporting to the Vice President for Instructional Affairs, the Campus Dean is the administrator providing strategic instructional and student services leadership that supports the College of Micronesia - FSM goals and strategic plan. The Campus Dean plans, implements, coordinates and evaluates Kosrae Campus programs and services to ensure that the educational needs of students and the community are satisfied.

The Campus Dean is a key contributor to policy formulation, strategic planning, and budget development, and a member of the College of Micronesia - FSM administrative team responsible for implementing the shared vision and direction of professional programs and instructional delivery. These responsibilities include accreditation and serving as the Campus Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), strategic planning, assessment, program development, instructional technologies, budget management, recruitment and enrollment management, development, support and evaluation of faculty, in conjunction and collaboration with college wide offices and respective Vice Presidents.

### Manager Human Resources

The Manager is an expert advisor to the President and the Senior Leadership Team on managing HR risks, promoting an organisational culture of respect and collegiality and ensuring that fairness and equity are embedded in all aspects of the College's activities and practices. Furthermore, the Manager will also provide visioning scenarios for both new and revised positions in alignment with continuous improvement and best practices. Required positions for the achievement of the college's strategic goals should also be included in visioning activities.

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

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# Australia Awards Scholarships recognize 2025 awardees from the FSM

*Embassy of Australia to the FSM*

*February 14, 2025*

**Pohnpei**--The Embassy of Australia to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has announced the recipients of the prestigious 2025 Australia Awards scholarships, recognizing individuals who have shown exceptional dedication and commitment to positively impacting their community and the nation.

These remarkable scholars will embark on an exciting educational journey at leading institutions in Fiji, gaining world-class knowledge and skills to bring back and contribute to the ongoing development of FSM. The 2025 Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships (AAPS) will take these awardees to The Fiji National University in Suva, where they will begin their studies in Semester 1, 2025.

The undergraduate scholars in this cohort include:

Prinet Richard – Bachelor of Dental Surgery  
May Perman – Bachelor of Dental Surgery  
Payge Perman – Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery  
Emily Ruth Joseph – Bachelor of Nursing  
In addition to the undergraduate awardees,

the following postgraduate scholars will begin their studies later this year or in 2026:

Danally Daniel – Master of Public and International Law, University of Melbourne (commencing Semester 2, 2025)

Anjannet Fredrick – Postgraduate Diploma in Commerce (Economics), leading to a Master's degree at The University of the South Pacific (commencing Semester 1, 2026)

Dr. Nick Santiago – Master of Internal Medicine, The Fiji National University (commencing Semester 2, 2025)

The Australia Awards are an initiative designed to foster professional and academic growth in the Pacific region, ensuring that future leaders are equipped with the knowledge and expertise needed to address the unique challenges faced by their communities.

The Embassy of Australia congratulates all the recipients and wishes them the best of luck as they embark on their studies. The awardees' success will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on FSM's development, as they return with skills to drive positive change and make meaningful contributions to the country's future.

The Embassy extends its heartfelt congratulations and looks forward to following the inspiring paths these scholars will take.





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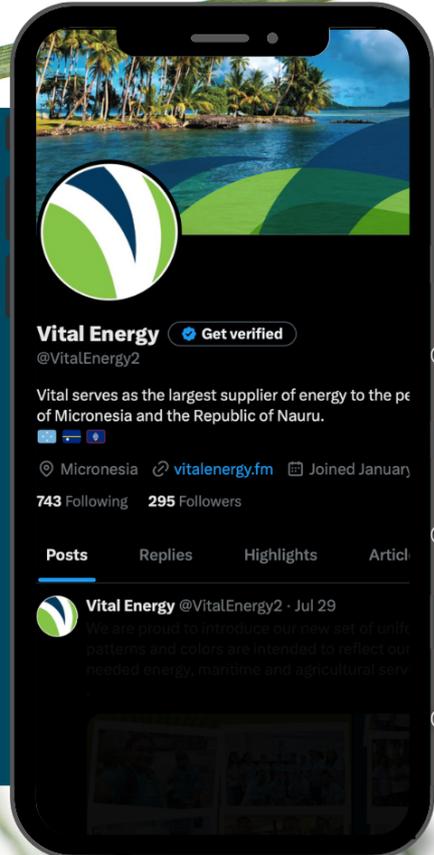
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# President Simina receives credentials of Lithuanian Ambassador

*FSM Information Services*

*February 18, 2025*

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), recently received the credentials of His Excellency Aurelijus Zykas, Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to FSM, during a ceremony held at the Office of the President in Palikir on February 5th, 2025.

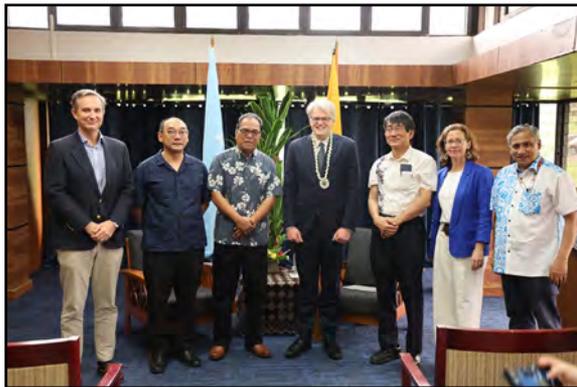
In his remarks, President Simina welcomed Ambassador Zykas and emphasized the importance of diplomacy during times of global uncertainty. “We gather today at a moment in history when the world is

increasingly defined by uncertainty. International cooperation and multilateralism are being tested. And it is exactly in these moments, when the strength of our relationships matter most. And that begins in rooms like this one.” the President stated.

President Simina underscored FSM’s unwavering commitment to being a reliable partner to all nations and highlighted the shared values between FSM and Lithuania, including respect for sovereignty, democracy, and the rule of law.

“The Federated States of Micronesia may be a small island nation, but we have never wavered in our commitment to being a reliable and steadfast partner to all of our friends. And despite the uncertainty that spreads in our global landscape, in that, I can assure you can be certain.” President Simina stated.

Ambassador Zykas conveyed Lithuania’s appreciation for the warm reception and reiterated his commitment to deepening bilateral relations.



# Ambassador Kagomiya visits Ms. Komatsu, a JICA volunteer at PCS

*Embassy of Japan to the FSM*

*February 10, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—On February 6, 2025, Ambassador Kagomiya visited the Pohnpei Catholic School, where Ms. Ayuka Komatsu, a JICA volunteer, is working.

After meeting with the principal, the ambassador observed a fourth-grade music class taught by Ms. Komatsu.

The ambassador was impressed by Ms. Komatsu’s heartfelt teaching and the

earnest and enthusiastic attitude of the students.

After the class, the ambassador praised the students for their excellent singing and expressed his expectations for Ms. Komatsu’s continued success.



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## Australian Ambassador meets with Acting FSM Supreme Court Chief Justice

*Embassy of Australia to the FSM*

*February 5, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—Australia and the Federated States of Micronesia are close partners in justice and law cooperation.

Ambassador Jenny Grant-Curnow met with FSM Acting Chief Justice Bauleen Carl-Worswick on 4 February to confirm Australia’s good relations with FSM and support for the judicial sector.

The Ambassador said Australian scholarships for law students in the Pacific were helping to create a pipeline of legal practitioners in FSM that will support the human resources needs of the sector.

Australia is also supporting the important work of Pacific judges in delivering justice through the Pacific Judicial Integrity Program and other regional law sector programs.

Australia partners with the University of the South Pacific’s Emalus Campus in

Port Vila, Vanuatu, and Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji, which offer Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and Professional Diplomas in Legal Practice (PDLP) programs, further supporting legal education and professional development in the FSM.



## Australian Ambassador meets with Pohnpei State Governor

*Embassy of Australia to the FSM*

*February 5, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—Ambassador Grant-Curnow met with Governor Joseph to provide updates on the East Micronesia Cable project, maritime security cooperation and media training opportunities, highlighting Australia’s ongoing support for local development.

Their discussion also covered shared interests in education, governance, food security, energy, and cultural

values, reinforcing the importance of collaboration in these key areas.

The Ambassador also shared her appreciation for the breathtaking scenery and natural environment she has experienced during her first year in Pohnpei and the warm hospitality of its people.

Australia remains committed to working hand in hand with our partners to create meaningful opportunities and drive positive change.



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# Dr. Myjolyne Kim makes history as first FSM Graduate to earn Doctorate under Australia Awards

Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

February 10, 2025

**Australia**—A historic milestone has been achieved by Dr. Myjolyne Kim, who has become the first graduate from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) to earn a doctorate degree through the Australia Awards Scholarship. Dr. Kim received her Doctor of Philosophy in Culture, History, and Language from the prestigious Australian National University (ANU), marking a significant achievement for both her and her nation.

Her dedication and perseverance in completing this advanced degree have not only earned her a place in FSM's academic history but also set an inspiring example

for future generations of scholars from the region. Dr. Kim's journey is a testament to the power of education and the tireless effort required to achieve excellence.

Dr. Kim's connection to the Australia Awards began in 2015, when she was part of that year's scholarship intake. Her ongoing commitment to education and professional development has driven her to succeed in a field that blends culture, history, and language. This achievement is a reflection of her unwavering focus and determination.

In addition to her academic accomplishments, Dr. Kim currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the FSM Embassy in Australia, working under the leadership of His Excellency Ambassador Jane Chigiyal to strengthen the relationship between FSM and Australia.

In a Facebook post, the Embassy of Australia to FSM extended heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Kim on her exceptional achievement and celebrated her as a role model for current and future students.



# New Zealand Consulate Policy Advisor pays courtesy visit to Governor Joseph

Pohnpei Public Information

February 4, 2025

**Pohnpei**—On January 24, 2025 Governor Stevenson A. Joseph warmly welcomed Mr. Sam O'Brien, Policy Advisor from the New Zealand Consulate in Honolulu, Hawaii, during a courtesy visit to the Governor's Office. The meeting served as an opportunity to strengthen ties between Pohnpei State and the Government of New Zealand, with discussions focusing on potential areas of cooperation and support.

Mr. O'Brien expressed his interest in understanding the needs and priorities of Pohnpei State to explore ways in which the New Zealand Government can assist. In the meeting, he shared information on available scholarship and grant opportunities, emphasizing New Zealand's commitment to fostering development and capacity-building in the Pacific region.

Governor Joseph expressed his appreciation for Mr. O'Brien's visit and outlined his administration's priorities, including food security, water and energy security, and the overall health and welfare of the people of Pohnpei. He emphasized the importance of international partnerships in achieving

sustainable development goals for the state.

Mr. O'Brien reaffirmed New Zealand's commitment to working closely with Pohnpei State and expressed optimism for future engagements that will enhance cooperation in key development areas.

The Government of Pohnpei State appreciates the ongoing partnership with the Government of New Zealand and looks forward to further discussions on initiatives that will contribute to the well-being and prosperity of the people of Pohnpei.

Scholarship opportunities can be found here: <https://www.nzscholarships.govt.nz/apply-online/>  
Grants assistance can be found here: <https://bit.ly/40XIimC>



# Ambassador Kagomiya attends credentials ceremony of Lithuanian Ambassador



Embassy of Japan to the FSM

February 12, 2025

**Pohnpei**—On February 5, 2025, Ambassador Kagomiya participated in the Ceremony for Lithuanian Ambassador, Dr. Aurelijus Zykas, presenting his Credential to President Simina.

Dr. Zykas, resident Lithuanian Ambassador in Tokyo, is a professional on Japanese study at a Lithuanian University.



He can speak Japanese very fluently, and once wrote a book 'Ambassador's Talk about Lithuania' in Japanese, which he gave to Ambassador Kagomiya.

Both Ambassadors enjoyed their discussion on economic, social, and political situation of the FSM, possible collaboration from Lithuania to the FSM, and the bilateral relation between Japan and Lithuania.

# Ambassador Kagomiya visits Japanese fisheries training vessel

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

February 17, 2025

On February 3, 2025, Ambassador Kagomiya made a courtesy call on 'Keifumaru', a research vessel of the Japan Meteorological Agency, which

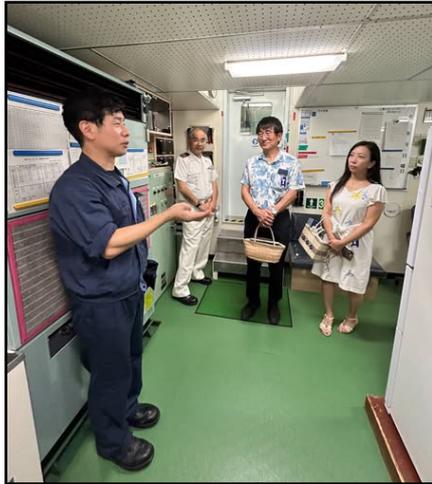
visited the Pohnpei port.

Ambassador received an explanation of the ship from the captain, of the engine room from the chief engineer, and of the observations and research activities from the chief observer.

The vessel is conducting an international survey focusing on the current situation of climate change, water temperature and salinity in the North-West Pacific Ocean.

Ambassador warmly welcomed them to the FSM and watched their ship with interest.

Ambassador hopes their activity will contribute to the research on the climate change, too.



## UN Resident Coordinator pays courtesy call on Japanese Ambassador

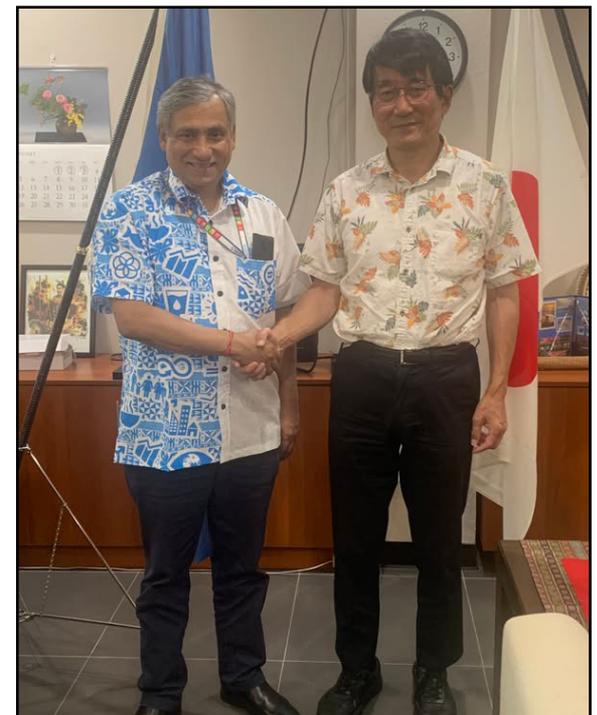
Embassy of Japan to the FSM

February 7, 2025

**Pohnpei**—On January 31, 2025, Ambassador Kagomiya received a courtesy call by Mr. Tapan Mishra, the new UN Resident Coordinator for five Micronesian countries.

Mr. Mishra, the successor of Mr Jaap van Hierden, made a self-introduction and revealed his interest in the development strategies of the Micronesian countries while Ambassador explained Japanese ODAs.

Ambassador and Mr. Mishra would like to cooperate with each other in future.



# Governor Stevenson A. Joseph issues Executive Directive to prioritize essential services amid potential federal funding freeze

Pohnpei Public Information

February 13, 2025

**Pohnpei**—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph has issued Executive Directive No. 01-25, prioritizing essential government services and authorizing the Director of the Department of Treasury and Administration to determine essential and non-essential payments. This directive is in response to a memorandum from the Department of Treasury and Administration, dated January 30, 2025, warning of the possibility of a temporary freeze in federal funding from the United States.

The memorandum is based on communications from the Office

of Management and Budget of the U.S. Government, which is closely monitoring the status of grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs provided to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). These funding sources play a critical role in the operation of government services within FSM, including those of Pohnpei State.

Recognizing the potential serious impact of a funding freeze, Governor Joseph has directed all Departments, Offices, and Agencies to take immediate measures to:

- Prioritize essential services that directly impact the health, safety,

and well-being of the people of Pohnpei.

- Minimize non-essential expenditures to preserve financial resources.
- Exercise fiscal prudence in all operational expenditures until further notice.

Under this directive, the Director of the Department of Treasury and Administration is granted full authority to determine which payments are deemed essential or non-essential. This will ensure that available funds are allocated effectively and that critical government functions remain operational despite the funding uncertainty.

Governor Joseph emphasizes that this measure is precautionary and intended to safeguard the financial stability of Pohnpei State. The directive will remain in effect until official notification is received that the funding freeze has been permanently lifted. At that time, the Governor's Office will issue a formal notice announcing the resumption of normal government operations.

The Pohnpei State Government remains committed to maintaining essential services and ensuring transparency as this situation develops. Further updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

# U.S. Sports Diplomacy delegation visits Pohnpei to strengthen sports development and cultural exchange

## Pohnpei Public Information

February 5, 2025

**Pohnpei**—A delegation of Sports Diplomacy personnel, facilitated by the U.S. Embassy Kolonia through the PH International program, recently paid a courtesy visit to Governor Stevenson A. Joseph. The visit is part of an ongoing exchange initiative aimed at fostering international friendships and sharing best practices in sports administration, recreation, and youth engagement.

Led by James Rider, the delegation includes experts in various sports disciplines, sports administration, and media relations. Their visit follows a reciprocal exchange, where a cohort from Micronesia traveled to Portland, Oregon, last year to engage in sports diplomacy initiatives. The delegation emphasized the power of sports as a universal language, capable of building lifelong friendships and cultural understanding without the need for a common spoken language.

Governor Joseph welcomed the delegation and shared his commitment to improving sports facilities across Pohnpei. He expressed gratitude for the knowledge-sharing opportunity and emphasized that collaboration in sports can contribute to the betterment of athletes and communities alike. He also noted that sports in Pohnpei should be inclusive, with no cultural hindrances preventing young girls from participating.

During their 10-day visit, the delegation will conduct workshops and discussions on sports administration, delegation management, and resource sharing. Their mission aligns with Pohnpei's goals of integrating sports into school curricula, expanding recreational opportunities, and preparing for the upcoming Micronesian Games.

One area of interest is the development of adaptive sports programs, including initiatives for visually impaired athletes.

The delegation also highlighted the importance of finding the right sport for each individual at an early age and fostering intentional leadership in sports development.

Notable members of the delegation include Ann von Offenheim, a former college soccer player who competed on a men's team; Robin Hamilton, a generalist with expertise in media relations and logistics; Heather Marshall, a basketball specialist; Emily Kent, a recreation expert with a long-term strategic lens; and Sam Sorcha, an adaptive sports advocate.

Governor Joseph encouraged the delegation to share all insights and best practices, reaffirming that sports diplomacy initiatives like this serve as an invaluable resource for Pohnpei's athletes, administrators, and aspiring sports leaders.



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[www.munroleyslaw.com](http://www.munroleyslaw.com)

**MUNRO LEYS**

# UNFPA Director Anjeli Sen pays courtesy visit to Governor Joseph and First Lady Dr. Aina Garstang



### Pohnpei Public Information

February 4, 2025

**Pohnpei**—On January 28, 2025 Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and First Lady Dr. Aina Garstang welcomed Anjeli Sen, Director and Representative (ad interim) of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Pacific Sub-Regional Office, during a courtesy visit to the Governor’s Office. Ms. Sen was accompanied by Ms. Evelyn Adolph, UN Coordination Specialist based in Pohnpei.

Also joining the meeting were Director of the Department of Education, Stanley Etse, and Chief of Primary Care, Semenson Ehpel. Discussions centered on UNFPA’s ongoing efforts to support youth and young girls in Micronesia, with a focus on reproductive health, education, and empowerment.

Governor Joseph expressed his deep appreciation for UNFPA’s contributions to the region, recognizing the organization’s vital role in promoting the well-being of young people. “We are grateful for the continued partnership and the positive impact UNFPA has made in our communities,” said Governor Joseph.

Ms. Sen reaffirmed UNFPA’s commitment to working closely with local stakeholders to further strengthen programs that benefit the people of Pohnpei and the broader Micronesian region.



## POHNPEI PORT AUTHORITY

P.O. Box 1150 Kolonia, Pohnpei FM 96941  
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Website: [www.ppa.fm](http://www.ppa.fm)

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#### GENERAL PURPOSE:

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#### PRODUCT DESCRIPTION AND SPECIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. **1160 Series, Waterborne Acrylic Traffic Paint (TT-P-1952F TYPE II)**
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  - b) Yellow – 30 buckets
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  - a) 25 bags

#### BID SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

February 28, 2025, at 5:00 PM Pohnpei Time

#### BIDDER’S RESPONSIBILITY:

The bidder is responsible for submitting their proposal in the form of a proforma invoice, including all required charges. The proposal must include all necessary documentation related to the products.

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

All price quotations will serve as the basis for the purchase order or procurement contract, if awarded, between the successful bidder and the Pohnpei Port Authority. The Pohnpei Port Authority is not obligated to accept any proposal, award a contract, or cover any costs associated with the preparation and submission of bids.

#### REVIEW RIGHTS:

The Pohnpei Port Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses to this ITB, based on the best interests of the Authority.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

All interested bidders are required to submit their proposals via email to [grilly.jack@ppa.fm](mailto:grilly.jack@ppa.fm). For any inquiries regarding this Invitation to Bid (ITB), please contact [bronson.sam@ppa.fm](mailto:bronson.sam@ppa.fm) or call (691) 320-2793 Ext. 122.

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## PICRC-JICA Coastal Project officially hands over Mangrove Guidebook to PCC

*Palau International Coral Reef Center* significant resource for both ecological and cultural education.

**February 13, 2025**

**Palau**—On February 5, the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) officially handed over the comprehensive "Mangrove Guidebook, Okeburs er a Belau" to Palau Community College (PCC). This guidebook, developed over the past three years as part of the PICRC-JICA technical cooperation project, "Project for Enhancement of Integrated Management of Coastal Ecosystems in Palau for Strengthening Their Resilience to Climate Change" (PICRC-JICA Coastal Project), is a

The guidebook provides an in-depth look at the mangrove species in Palau, highlighting their ecological benefits and their deep-rooted significance in Palau's cultural history. It explores the unique characteristics and traditional uses of mangroves, placing them in a global context and addressing the challenges they face in an evolving world. The scientific information included has been gathered from local experts to ensure it is both current and accurate. Additionally, the guidebook is aligned with PCC's science curriculum, making it a valuable educational resource.

PCC's Acting Dean of Academic Affairs, Mr. Jay Olegeriil, expressed his gratitude to the PICRC-JICA Coastal Project for its efforts to support tertiary education and provide PCC with 1,000 copies to complement environmental science studies. Project Coordinator for the PICRC-JICA Coastal Project, Ms. Kanako Itagaki, stated, "We hope the introduction of this guidebook into tertiary education will expose young scientists to Palau's unique mangrove ecosystems and inspire them to advocate for their sustainable management."



## Pacific Nations unite to strengthen parliamentary oversight

*United Nations Development Program*

**February 12, 2025**

**Pohnpei**—Three Pacific Island Countries – the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of Marshall Islands, Palau, with facilitators from Fiji, Tonga, and United States. – have joined forces to strengthen parliamentary budget oversight at a UNDP-hosted workshop in Pohnpei.

The workshop is part of the Government of Japan-funded Strengthening Legislatures in Pacific Island Countries (SLIP II) project, which enhances Pacific parliaments' effectiveness through capacity building and improved oversight.

Legislatures play a critical role in ensuring that public funds are allocated efficiently and transparently. However,

those within the North Pacific often lack the required resources and technical expertise to perform their duties accordingly. A preliminary assessment revealed a strong interest among legislative staff for capacity building in budget analysis and fiscal oversight, with the workshop tailored to address budget processes, cycles, and promote budget transparency and accountability.

Japan's Ambassador to the FSM, HE Nobuo Kagomiya, said, "Your expertise, efforts, and contributions are crucial to the prosperity of your nations. We look forward to strengthening our friendship through this process."

As part of the workshop's broader objectives, participants also worked towards establishing a collaborative network for legislative budget staff across the North Pacific. This network will foster ongoing knowledge sharing

and provide a platform for addressing region-specific challenges.

Deputy Legislative Counsel of the Chuuk Legislature, Ken Uehara, stressed the importance of understanding different budgeting processes and how they reflect each state's unique priorities.

"Throughout this workshop, I learned more about the similarities and differences between state budgeting processes and our own in Chuuk. It was particularly interesting to see how each approach aligns with the priorities of its respective state," he stated.

Participants demonstrated strengthened capabilities in assessing budget proposals, identifying cost-savings, and aligning funds with legislative priorities and development goals. The workshop also laid the groundwork

for further collaboration at a Fiscal Oversight Conference planned for May 2025.

UNDP Deputy Resident Representative for the North Pacific, Kevin Petri, underscored the role of strong governance and transparent budgeting in achieving sustainable development.

"Government budgets are more than numbers—they reflect society's priorities. Ensuring transparency and accountability in public spending is essential for real impact," he said.

This initiative is part of UNDP's broader commitment to strengthening governance in the Pacific. Future collaborations, including the upcoming Fiscal Oversight Conference in May 2025, will continue to advance legislative capacity and accountability across the region.



## JICA hands over project equipment to PICRC

*Palau International Coral Reef Center*

*February 14, 2025*

**Palau**—As the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) technical project, ‘Enhancement of Integrated Management of Coastal Ecosystem in Palau for Strengthening Their Resilience to Climate Change,’ (PICRC-JICA Coastal Project) reached its successful conclusion on February 7, PICRC and JICA commemorated this event with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for the handover of the JICA Coastal Project

equipment to PICRC. This included items such as scientific surveying tools, analyzers, water quality meters, administrative equipment, electronics, books, cameras, and boat accessories.

"We hope PICRC will continue the vital work of monitoring mangrove ecosystems, sedimentation, and promoting coastal ecosystem awareness using the tools and equipment provided by JICA," said Ms. Kanako Itagaki, JICA Project Coordinator.

PICRC’s Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Roxanne Sual Blesam, emphasized the

importance of these tools in the context of climate change: “We are witnessing the impacts of climate change more intensely than ever before. We sincerely thank JICA for providing these tools, which will enable PICRC to continue monitoring Palau’s coastal ecosystems for the benefit of our community and to build resilience in the face of these changes.”

PICRC extends their heartfelt gratitude to JICA for their support and dedication over the past three years in conducting essential work of monitoring mangrove ecosystems, developing guidelines

on managing soil run-off and sedimentation impacts, and raising awareness about coastal ecosystem conservation. The expertise shared by JICA has been invaluable in enhancing PICRC’s capabilities.



## Ngiwal State and PICRC-JICA Coastal Project celebrate the official launch of Ngiwal Mangrove Ecotour

*Palau International Coral Reef Center*

*January 14, 2025*

**Ngiwal, Palau**—On January 14, 2025, Ngiwal State officially opened their Mangrove Ecotour in the Orsouklesol Waterfall Conservation Area. This ecotour project has been developed over the last two years in collaboration with the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency’s (JICA) technical cooperation project, ‘Project for Enhancement of Integrated Management of Coastal Ecosystem in Palau for Strengthening Their Resilience to Climate Change’ (PICRC-JICA Coastal Project).

To commemorate this, Ngiwal State and PICRC-JICA Coastal Project held a ceremony to celebrate the official launch of the Ngiwal Mangrove Ecotour. The ceremony commenced with an opening

prayer by Deacon McWeldon August, followed by a welcoming speech by High Chief Uongruis Elliot Udui. High Chief Udui thanked PICRC and JICA for their collaboration with Ngiwal State over the past few years, a sentiment echoed by Ngiwal State’s Governor Francisco Melaitau in his opening remarks. Governor Melaitau also highlighted the need for continued support and guidance from PICRC to improve the ecotour.

In her remarks, Ms. Roxanne Sual Blesam, PICRC’s CEO and Project Director of the PICRC- JICA Coastal Project, emphasized PICRC’s commitment to supporting and empowering local communities and expressed willingness to continue supporting these projects. She also highlighted an educational activity held by PICRC-JICA Coastal Project in Ngiwal for World Mangrove Day on July 26, 2024. According to pre- and

post-survey results, 20% of students had never visited mangroves before, but after the mangrove ecotour, 86% of students had a better understanding of mangrove ecosystems, and 93% expressed a desire to learn more about mangroves. These results underscore the importance of connecting students with nature, and PICRC aims to continue providing educational activities for students.

Mr. Tadashi Kimura, the Chief Advisor of the PICRC-JICA Coastal Project, congratulated the community on the official launch of the ecotour and explained how the PICRC-JICA Coastal Project has supported its implementation. This support included providing equipment such as kayaks, developing an implementation plan, and conducting ecotour guide training. He encouraged the community to continue protecting

mangroves for their long-term use and mentioned that this community-based ecotour could serve as a model for other states in Babeldaob.

Mr. Kimura introduced Ms. Alicia Oderai Eledui, the Protected Area Network (PAN) Conservation Officer of Ngiwal State, who will lead the Ngiwal Mangrove Ecotour in the future. She provided an overview of the project and reflected on her journey as a PAN Conservation Officer, expressing her goal to help the community for future generations. Although she is still learning, she is eager to educate others about the importance of mangroves, not only for the environment but also for the community.

Finally, Mr. Tsunenori Aoki, Chief Representative of the JICA Palau Office, concluded the ceremony with expressions of appreciation to the partners. He reiterated the importance of collaboration and investment for future generations. Mr. Aoki emphasized that Palau is committed to maintaining its natural environment and hopes that ecotourism will be successful in providing both environmental and economic benefits.

Approximately 30 people attended the ceremony to officially open the ecotour. Although the PICRC-JICA Coastal Project will conclude this month, collaboration will continue.

For more information about the Ngiwal Mangrove Ecotour, please contact the Ngiwal State Protected Areas Network office at [79ksca@gmail.com](mailto:79ksca@gmail.com) or [ngiwalstate79@gmail.com](mailto:ngiwalstate79@gmail.com), or call +680 679-2967.



## JICA and PICRC celebrate the conclusion of their coastal ecosystem management project

*Palau International Coral Reef Center*

*February 12, 2025*

**Palau**—On January 9, 2025, the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) hosted the final Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) meeting for their ‘Project for Enhancement of Integrated Management of Coastal Ecosystem in Palau for Strengthening Their Resilience to Climate Change’. As the project wrapped up this month, the event celebrated the project’s achievements and brought together key stakeholders and partners to discuss future directions for coastal ecosystem management in Palau. Attendees included representatives from the JICA Palau Office, JICA Headquarters (HQ), the Embassy of Japan, the Ministry

of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment (MAFE), Environmental Quality Protection Board (EQPB), PALARIS, the Ministry of Finance (MOF), and the states of Ngaiwal and Airai.

The meeting was guided by Project Director and PICRC CEO Roxanne Sual Blesam, with opening remarks emphasizing the project’s critical role in strengthening Palau’s coastal resilience. JICA Palau’s Chief Representative Aoki Tsunenori also reflected on the value of collaboration in his opening speech.

Geraldine Rengiil, Project Manager and Director of PICRC’s Research Department, provided an overview of the project’s objective of sustainably enhancing coastal ecosystem resilience to climate

change through policy, research, and communication, education, and public awareness (CEPA).

Presentations included results from mangrove and sediment monitoring in Airai and Ngaiwal, led by mangrove ecosystem expert Yoichi Harada, and updates on CEPA activities such as the recent opening of the mangrove ecotour in Ngaiwal and the creation of a mangrove guidebook for Palau Community College students. Tadashi Kimura, Chief Advisor for the project, presented recommendations for the continued management of coastal ecosystems, suggesting a three-year plan for the “Dmakeiukl” states (Aimeliik, Ngardmau, Ngaremlengui, and Ngatpang) and expanding the mangrove management network to include the east coast of Babeldaob and outer island states in the future.

The presentations reflected contributions from PICRC researchers Greta Sartori, Elsei Tellei, and Victor Nestor, as well as project members Nolan Reblud and Yuki Okada, and JICA HQ members Noriaki Sakaguchi and Hiroaki Asaoka. Discussions highlighted the importance of continued national and state-level collaboration, further community outreach, and incorporating traditional Palauan knowledge into broader climate resilience efforts. Participants also stressed the project’s value as a foundation for

addressing climate change with tangible, community-centered results. JICA Palau’s Aoki Tsunenori emphasized the importance of unified efforts: “While we may have different mandates, we are all working toward the same objectives: protecting Palau’s precious ecosystems together.”

Closing remarks from Ambassador Hiroyuki Orikasa echoed Aoki’s sentiment, describing this final meeting as a “kick-off” for future initiatives. He highlighted Palau’s opportunity to lead by example in climate resilience and conservation, urging state governments to engage actively, communities to champion conservation strategies, and students to inspire future generations. He called for maintaining momentum and using the project’s successes to inspire further actions locally and nationally.

“We would like to express our gratitude to JICA for their invaluable work and expertise in ensuring the success of this project. We also extend our appreciation to the Embassy of Japan for their ongoing support of the Center. More importantly, we thank the implementing agencies, partners, and State agencies for their active participation and commitment to conservation efforts, which greatly benefit the Palauan communities.” said Roxanne Sual Blesam, Project Director and PICRC CEO.



## European Union to support the development of a new multipurpose seaport on Kiritimati Island

*European Investment Bank*

*February 12, 2025*

**Kiribati**—The European Investment Bank (EIB Global) and the Delegation of the European Union to the Pacific have signed a €2.5 million (AUD 4.1 million) contribution agreement to provide technical assistance for a feasibility assessment of the construction and operation of a multipurpose seaport and wave breaker on Kiritimati (Christmas) Island, Kiribati, in the Pacific Ocean.

Managed by EIB Global, this EU-funded technical assistance will finance feasibility, environmental and social studies to assess the port’s viability and potential impact, while identifying

solutions to enhance maritime infrastructure to support fishing vessel transshipment, commercial container shipping, and tourism. The initiative aims to strengthen trade connectivity, drive sustainable economic growth and improve climate resilience in the region.

This initiative aligns with the European Union’s Global Gateway strategy, which aims to enhance connectivity between Europe and key global regions. The new port will strengthen Kiribati’s role as a strategic trade hub and support the development of essential logistics and transportation infrastructure, driving economic growth and regional integration.

EIB Vice-President Ambroise Fayolle, who is in charge of EIB operations in the Pacific, said: “The European Investment Bank is proud to support Kiribati in exploring the potential of a new multipurpose seaport on Kiritimati Island. This project reflects our strong commitment to combating climate change and enhancing sustainable infrastructure and connectivity in the Pacific region under the European Union’s Global Gateway strategy. By assessing the technical, environmental and social feasibility of the port, we aim to lay the groundwork for improved trade opportunities, economic growth and climate resilience. We look forward to working closely with our partners to bring this initiative to fruition.”

The Ambassador of the European Union to the Pacific, Her Excellency Barbara Plinkert said: “The European Union is committed to fostering sustainable development and regional connectivity, and the Kiritimati Island seaport project is a significant step towards achieving these goals. Through the European Union’s Global Gateway initiative, we support infrastructure that strengthens trade and enhances climate resilience in the Pacific. This feasibility study, supported by EIB Global, exemplifies our collaborative approach with partners to support the advancement of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and build a more interconnected, resilient and prosperous Pacific region.”