

Honoring our heroes: Memorial Day wreath-laying ceremony at sea

Embassy of the United States to the FSM

May 25, 2025

Pohnpei - Today, a solemn wreath-laying ceremony took place at sea near Dekehtik to commemorate Memorial Day, honoring the brave women and men who sacrificed their lives in service to our country.

The ceremony began with an invocation by Reverend Martin Peter, then featured a heartfelt tribute from U.S. Ambassador Jennifer Johnson. Five wreaths were laid at sea representing the United States, FSM National, FSM States, the military, and families. Ambassador Johnson, Deputy of the Office of Veteran's Affairs Maxon Tom, Pohnpei State Chief of Staff Patterson Shed, U.S. Marine Corps Lt Col Jake Grader, and Maryn and Nola Ryan laid the wreaths in

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Audit finds significant financial control weaknesses at Sokehs Municipal Government

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

May 29, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei — A performance audit conducted by the Pohnpei Office of the Public Auditor (POPA) has identified significant weaknesses in the Sokehs Municipal Government's management of cash receipts, disbursements, and payroll processes during fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

The audit, released as Audit Report No. 03-26, examined whether the municipality maintained effective internal controls over the collection and expenditure of public funds. Auditors concluded that Sokehs Municipal

Government (SMG) needs to strengthen its financial controls to ensure public funds are properly accounted for and protected.

The audit found that SMG failed to consistently comply with requirements to deposit collected revenues on a daily basis. Auditors reported that a total of \$475,614 in collections was deposited late during the two-year period, with some funds remaining undeposited for as long as 18 days. During an unannounced cash count in October 2025, auditors found \$5,570.86 in collections that had not yet been deposited, including funds dating back 17 days.

According to the report, delayed

deposits increase the risk of loss, theft, or misuse of public funds and weaken accountability over government collections.

The audit also identified concerns regarding cash disbursements. Auditors found that SMG issued checks totaling \$62,554 directly to officials and employees during fiscal years 2024 and 2025 rather than paying vendors through established procurement procedures. The report noted that some payments lacked sufficient supporting documentation to demonstrate that the expenditures were solely for legitimate government purposes.

Among those receiving payments were

the Speaker, council members, the Chief Magistrate, the Chief Justice, and numerous employees. Auditors said the practice bypassed normal procurement procedures and increased the risk of misuse of public funds.

Further review of disbursement records found unsupported transactions totaling more than \$487,000. In many cases, payments were processed without approved purchase orders, price quotations, pro forma invoices, contracts, or job orders as required by the municipality's Financial Management Regulations.

The audit highlighted two vehicle
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Ricky Cantero sworn in as Secretary of the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs



FSM Information Services

May 20, 2026

PALIKIR, Pohnpei – On May 19, 2026 His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), administered the Oath of Office to newly confirmed Secretary of the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs, Ricky Cantero.

Prior to his appointment as Secretary, Mr. Cantero served as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, where he played an active role in advancing the FSM’s diplomatic priorities and



strengthening engagement with regional and international partners. Secretary Cantero began his career with the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2000 as a Foreign Service Officer. Over the years, he served in several senior roles within the Department, including Deputy Assistant Secretary for Pacific Affairs and Assistant Secretary for American and European Affairs, before being appointed Deputy Secretary

in 2019. Throughout his years of service within the Department, he contributed to ongoing efforts to promote the Nation’s foreign policy interests, regional cooperation, and international partnerships. Secretary Cantero also served on numerous occasions as Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and assumed the role in an acting capacity following the passing of the late Honorable Lorin S. Robert in November 2025.

President Simina, on behalf of the Simina-Palik Administration, extended his congratulations to Secretary Cantero and expressed confidence in his leadership and continued service to the nation in this important capacity.

In his remarks following the oath-taking ceremony, Secretary Cantero thanked the Simina-Palik Administration for the trust and confidence placed in him through his nomination. He reaffirmed his commitment to serving the people of the FSM and continuing efforts to strengthen and expand the nation’s relationships with its international and regional partners.

The Simina-Palik Administration also expressed its appreciation to the 24th FSM Congress for its continued cooperation and support throughout the confirmation process.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE KASELEHLIE PRESS WILL BE RELEASED ON: June 17, 2026
Deadline for submission of articles or advertisements for this issue is the end of working hours on:
Monday, June 15, 2026

Lelu Town Government in Kosrae State unlocks \$596K in climate grant

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

May 20, 2026

Lelu Town Government, Kosrae State

– The Lelu Town Government, in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC), has launched a Lelu Water System Improvement Project, marking a key step toward strengthening climate resilience and sustainable water management in Kosrae.

Honourable Atchuo A. Welly, the Mayor of Lelu Town Government, called this a historical milestone as the Municipality was actively involved in the determination of its climate adaptation priority. He also acknowledged the Lelu Special Consultation Committee (LSCC) for its crucial role in leading the formulation and development of this proposal. The Lelu Special Consultation Committee membership includes representatives from Women, Youth and Senior Citizens within Lelu.

The project is funded through a USD 596,321 grant secured by Lelu Town Government under the Federated State of Micronesia Enhancing Direct Access (EDA) Programme, supported by the

Green Climate Fund (GCF) - highlighting growing capacity to access climate finance. The Project will be implemented until January 2028.

In congratulating the Lelu Town Government, the Governor of Kosrae State, Governor Tulensa Palik, reaffirmed his government’s support towards this initiative. “Access to safe and adequate water supplies is a basic human right”. In addition, this initiative “implements the Kosrae Joint State Action Plan (JSAP) for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change, as it builds resilience and protects the well-being of the Lelu Community.”

A key outcome of this initiative is the development of a Climate Resilient Water Management Plan for Lelu. This also has the potential to contribute to the development of a national water policy in FSM.

“This achievement is exemplary because it sets a benchmark in the Pacific, demonstrating that Municipalities can successfully secure significant climate finances”, Director Kostka said, in acknowledging the Lelu Town Government.



Aligned with the Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2022–2031, the project will promote long-term water security and resilience in Lelu while addressing climate-related challenges, such as droughts and changing weather patterns. Activities will include hydrological assessments of existing water sources, climate risks, assessment of existing infrastructure and a community awareness campaign. About 2,160 residents across 610 households are expected to benefit from this project. This will lead to the development of a Climate Resilient Water Management Plan for Lelu.

Director Kostka further elaborated that “through the EDA Programme, SPC will continue to provide technical support

during the implementation of this project”. He also acknowledged the leadership of the FSM Government through the Green Climate Fund National Designated Authority, the Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration.

While the launch marks important progress, it also signals the start of ongoing collaboration to protect water resources and build resilience for communities across Lelu Municipality.

The FSM Enhancing Direct Access Programme is executed by the SPC Micronesia Regional Office in partnership with National Government of Federated States of Micronesia.

Audit finds Palikir Elementary School improvement project largely successful, notes maintenance concerns

*By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press*

May 29, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei — An inspection conducted by the Office of the Pohnpei Public Auditor (OPPA) found that a Japanese-funded infrastructure project at Palikir Elementary School was implemented in accordance with its objectives and grant requirements, while also identifying maintenance issues that could affect the long-term sustainability of the improvements.

The inspection reviewed the "Project for Improving School Environment for Palikir Elementary School," a \$76,693 grant funded by the Government of Japan through its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) program. The project was administered by the Pohnpei State Department of Education and carried out between December 2020 and February 2022.

According to Inspection Report No.

IE003-25, issued by Public Auditor Erik Paul on March 25, 2026, the project's primary objective was to improve the learning environment at Palikir Elementary School through the construction and renovation of restrooms and drainage systems.

The audit found that the project was properly executed and that expenditures complied with the grant agreement, applicable laws, and established procedures. Records reviewed by auditors showed that \$75,313.60 of the grant funds were disbursed for project activities, leaving an unused balance of \$1,379.40.

Auditors traced the project's implementation from the initial grant application submitted by the school's principal in 2020 through the approval process, contract signing, and multiple disbursements made to contractor J&P Construction Company. The final payment was issued in February 2022 after project completion.

During a site visit conducted from October 1–9, 2025, inspectors observed that the completed facilities remained in operation. However, they also noted several signs of deterioration, including loose sinks, damaged restroom doors, and fixtures beginning to separate from walls. The report said these conditions point to the need for routine maintenance to preserve the useful life of the facilities.

Photographs included in the report show renovated restroom facilities, covered walkways, roofing improvements, and drainage infrastructure completed under the project. Additional photographs document areas where maintenance concerns have emerged since construction was completed.

While concluding that the project met its intended purpose and was managed in accordance with grant requirements, the Public Auditor's Office recommended that the Department of Education ensure that all grant funds are fully utilized for project-related

work whenever possible and that regular maintenance and repairs be conducted to extend the life of school buildings and infrastructure.

In a written response included in the report, Department of Education Director Stanley S. Etse agreed with the audit's findings and recommendations. He said the department would ensure that all donor funds are fully utilized for their intended purposes and that a monitoring plan would be implemented for maintenance crews to regularly inspect and properly maintain renovated facilities to support their long-term use.

The Public Auditor's Office concluded that although improvements are needed to maximize the durability and full utilization of grant funds, the project successfully enhanced the school environment at Palikir Elementary School and delivered the quality and lifespan of facilities anticipated under the grant.

...Memorial Day

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purchases that raised concerns. One involved a \$20,000 payment to an individual for a vehicle that reportedly experienced transmission failure within a month of purchase. Another involved a \$15,000 vehicle purchase for which only \$10,000 had been budgeted, with the remaining \$5,000 reportedly paid personally by the Chief Magistrate through a salary allotment arrangement. Auditors said the transaction raised concerns regarding budget compliance and procurement procedures.

Payroll controls were another area of concern.

Auditors found that employees received payroll advances, referred to as "early releases," totaling \$18,466 during the audit period. Of that amount, \$2,438 remained outstanding. The report also cited instances where employees were paid for more hours than were reflected on their timesheets, leave requests were not properly approved, and all timesheets lacked supporting time cards or other verifiable attendance records.

The audit additionally found that SMG had not withheld income taxes on portions of employee earnings exceeding \$11,000 annually and had not deducted taxes from Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) payments. Auditors estimated that unpaid income taxes totaled approximately \$15,438. The report also noted that actual salary and wage expenditures exceeded approved personnel budgets by \$4,299.



In response, Sokehs Municipal Government generally agreed with the audit findings and said corrective actions have already begun. Chief Magistrate Stanley Ernest told auditors that management had reviewed the findings and was committed to strengthening internal controls and maintaining compliance moving forward. The municipality said it would improve documentation practices, strengthen procurement procedures, address payroll weaknesses, and implement additional internal controls.

The Sokehs Municipal Council also accepted the audit findings and said it would ensure compliance with Financial Management Regulations, strengthen oversight of disbursements, and address payroll and tax issues identified in the report.

Public Auditor Erick Paul said the findings demonstrate the need for immediate improvements in financial management and accountability. The report states that current management practices do not provide sufficient assurance that public resources are properly protected and used for their intended purposes. Auditors urged municipal leaders to implement the recommended corrective actions and submit monthly progress reports until all findings are resolved.

Under Pohnpei law, the municipality is required to address the audit deficiencies within one year.



FSM President's office warns public about scam social media accounts and ai-generated content

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

June 1, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei — The Office of the President of the Federated States of Micronesia is warning the public to be cautious of fraudulent social media accounts and misleading online content that falsely claim to be affiliated with the President or the Office of the President.

In a public advisory issued June 1, the Office said it has identified social media pages, accounts, and online posts that are not authorized government platforms despite presenting themselves as official sources of information.

According to the advisory, the Office has also observed the circulation of misleading and potentially artificial intelligence-generated content. This includes altered images, distorted versions of official government seals and logos, fabricated announcements, and scam-related posts containing inaccurate information as well as noticeable grammatical and spelling errors.

The Office urged members of the public to exercise caution when encountering such content online and to verify information before sharing it with others.

Officials emphasized that accurate information concerning the President, the Office of the President, and national government matters obtained on social media platforms should be obtained only through verified government communication channels.

The Office said all official announcements, statements, press releases, and public updates are published through the official Office of the President Facebook page and the national government's official website.

The advisory also encouraged the public to remain vigilant against fraudulent or misleading content that may create confusion or misrepresent the Office of the President.

"The Office of the President remains committed to transparency, responsible public communication, and ensuring that the people of the Federated States of Micronesia continue to receive timely and accurate information through official government platforms," the statement said. FSM Office of the President warns against scam social media posts.

...Memorial Day

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memory of the fallen heroes. Their participation symbolized the deep respect and gratitude we hold for those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Attendees included Gold Star Family Members, U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Vincent Mut-Tracy, Australian Ambassador Jenny Grant, Pohnpei Senator Ricky Carl, members of the U.S. Veterans of Pohnpei Association, U.S. Embassy staff, FSM Maritime Wing,

and FSM government representatives. This gathering highlights the enduring partnership between the United States and the FSM, built on shared values and the ongoing service of FSM citizens in the U.S. military.

Ambassador Johnson emphasized this commitment, stating, "Memorial Day is a time of remembrance, gratitude, and reflection on the sacrifices made to protect freedom, peace, and the values we hold dear. We remember not only their courage on the battlefield, but also the families and loved ones who carry their memory forward each day. Their service and sacrifice will never be forgotten."

FSM Skills Certification Unit earns international accreditation



the new certification initiative. “Giving them the quality, raising their quality and credibility would not only give them the confidence to apply with these big roles, especially under these big projects.”

Until now, FSM did not have an internationally accredited body authorized to certify individual workers. Officials said the new system will provide formal recognition for skills already possessed by many workers in the country.

The accreditation covers multiple occupational categories, including tourism and hospitality, residential electrical work, agriculture, bookkeeping, construction trades, HVAC, consumer electronics servicing, PC repair and telecommunications.

Under the certification schemes, applicants generally must be at least 18 years old and possess work experience in their fields. Most programs require one to two years of experience and include both theoretical and practical examinations. Certifications are valid for three years.

Secretary Akinaga acknowledged that internationally recognized certification could contribute to increased migration by giving workers more opportunities abroad, but said the initiative is also intended to strengthen the local workforce and economy.

“We actually are mindful of that,” she said. “But when we compare the remittances that come into country to other countries in the Pacific, we notice that ours is lower.”

She said many Pacific countries benefit from having more highly skilled workers employed overseas in better-paying jobs, resulting in stronger remittance flows back home.

At the same time, Akinaga said the certification system could help reduce

reliance on imported labor for major infrastructure projects in FSM.

“I think if we build the skill set internally, it will enable for our people to qualify for these imported labor positions that we’re bringing in from outside,” she said.

FSM Secretary for Education Gardenia Aisek said one long-term goal is to prepare more FSM citizens to manage and participate in major development projects currently dominated by foreign labor and outside expertise.

“One of the things that we’ve raised with ADB and the World Bank is the fact that we don’t have our people in these projects,” Aisek said. “Because of the lack of the skills and the confidence to be able to run a project.”

She said education and workforce training systems now have a responsibility to prepare local workers for those opportunities.

“It’s incumbent upon us to really guide them, lead them, and train them so that they are able,” she said. “We want them to succeed.”

Aisek also pointed to low wages within FSM as a major factor contributing to migration, particularly among young graduates.

“I’m hoping that with the certification unit and the quality that it conveys, that the private sector — or maybe not the private sector, but our leaders — will start thinking about creating laws that will support increasing wages,” she said.

Officials said the certification process will be open not only to students at COM-FSM or career and technical education programs, but also to experienced workers already employed in various trades.

SCU Director Xavier W. Yarofmal explained that applicants will submit applications and supporting

documentation to the unit for review before being scheduled for examinations.

“We will be announcing applications for potential people to apply,” Yarofmal said. “It’s not limited to college students.”

He said the unit will partner with COM-FSM’s Career and Technical Education Center for testing and assessments, using trained instructors as assessors for both written and practical exams.

According to program documents, most certification programs include a 25-question written examination lasting approximately 50 minutes and a practical examination lasting one hour. Candidates generally must achieve a passing score of 70 percent.

The SCU plans to begin pilot assessments later this year, focusing initially on selected occupations and applicants, including career and technical education students, graduates and experienced workers seeking formal recognition of their skills.

Officials said they are also seeking qualified professionals to serve on program committees and as assessors in various technical fields.

The SEE Project, which helped establish the certification initiative, is financed through a World Bank grant and implemented by the National Department of Education.

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

May 21, 2026

FSM - The Federated States of Micronesia has achieved a major milestone in workforce development with the international accreditation of the FSM Skills Certification Unit (SCU), allowing the country for the first time to issue internationally recognized professional skills certifications.

The accreditation was granted on May 9, 2026, under ISO/IEC 17024:2012, an international standard for organizations that assess and certify professional competencies. The accreditation was issued by the National Accreditation Center (NAC) under accreditation number NAC-005-PCB. The certification remains valid through May 9, 2030.

The SCU was established through support from the World Bank-funded FSM Skills and Employability Enhancement (SEE) Project under the National Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Resources and Development and the College of Micronesia-FSM.

Officials said the accreditation creates a system through which FSM workers can receive credentials that can be independently verified by employers and institutions internationally.

“This is an opportunity to build our workforce,” FSM Secretary for Resources and Development Elna Akinaga said during an interview on



Shark-bitten fish heads among winners in unusual Pohnpei Fishing Club tournament

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

May 23, 2026

Pohnpei—The Pohnpei Fishing Club held a self-sponsored bottom fishing and jigging tournament today. Though nine boat owners registered for the tournament the night before, only eight checked out on the morning of the tournament.

It was the single strangest tournament The Kaselehlie Press has covered in a decade and a half of covering tournaments, not because it was badly organized; it wasn't, but because of the fish caught that won the top prizes. At least two fish heads were weighed for possible prize contention, the rest of those two fish having been consumed by sharks. One of those fish was the

only red snapper caught among the few fish landed during the day, giving Kehlen Sackyras the prize of \$150 for the third-heaviest fish with a brightly colored fish head weighing 2.2 pounds. John Pengelly caught the other fish head of two pounds, a dogtooth tuna, also the only one caught on the day. He won \$100 for the first biggest of that species.

Two giant trevallies were caught. Because that species is not usually caught by bottom fishing or jigging, the club took the word of anglers James Primo and Kehlen Sackyras that their GTs, weighing 6.6 and 5.8 pounds respectively, were caught using the methods required by the rules. The club awarded them \$100 each as consolation prizes for their catches.

Blackjack tuna were a qualifying

species for the tournament. Dr. Johnny Hedson had the heaviest fish of the tournament at only 6.2 pounds winning him \$250. His was followed by a 6-pound blackjack caught by Nile Panuelo for a prize of \$200 for the second heaviest fish of the tournament.

Several factors stacked up to make the tournament possibly the smallest of the club's history. The fact that many anglers were involved in heavily attended funerals on the day of the tournament was one factor. Another factor was sea conditions. Anglers are a hearty bunch, so to say that most of the anglers complained of rough seas would be inaccurate. However, many said that they couldn't jig because the seas were just too rough.

Before the tournament the organizers

distributed maps of each of Pohnpei's several Marine Protected Areas cautioning anglers not to fish in those areas in order to support conservation in those regions which have been producing good results for fish populations in each of the MPAs.

The club has posted a list of upcoming tournament dates, with the next tournament scheduled for June 27, a Big Fish Trolling tournament sponsored by Pohnpei LP Gas and Seven Stars businesses with registration on the evening of June 26. While the date is set, safety conditions at that time may necessitate a change.

Though the May tournament was unusual and sparsely attended, club members performed admirably in less-than-ideal fishing conditions.



Australia supports child-sensitive policing training in FSM

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

May 28, 2025

Palikir, Pohnpei—In a Facebook post Australian Embassy has congratulated participants who completed Child-Sensitive Policing Training conducted in partnership with UNICEF and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The training brought together representatives from police, justice, and partner agencies and focused on strengthening the way children are supported within the justice system.

Australia's Deputy Head of Mission, Sarah McCarthy, and Second Secretary Josh Critchley Evans attended the completion ceremony and acknowledged the commitment of participants to improving child protection and family violence response efforts across the FSM.



McCarthy said the training would help strengthen both professional skills and institutional systems to ensure children are treated with dignity, care, and professionalism when interacting with the justice system.

She added that the initiative also contributes to a more coordinated response to family violence and child protection concerns.

According to the Australian Embassy, the training represents an important investment in strengthening child protection systems

throughout the FSM. The program was supported through Australia's partnership with UNICEF and forms part of broader family protection initiatives aimed at improving support services for children affected by family violence.

The embassy said the training will help build more coordinated and compassionate responses for vulnerable children in Pohnpei and across the FSM.



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Source of Funding

IDA-E371-FM

Contract Reference

FM-NORMA-470330-GO-RFQ

Date

May 27, 2026

This project is financed by the World Bank through a:

- Loan
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Federated States of Micronesia

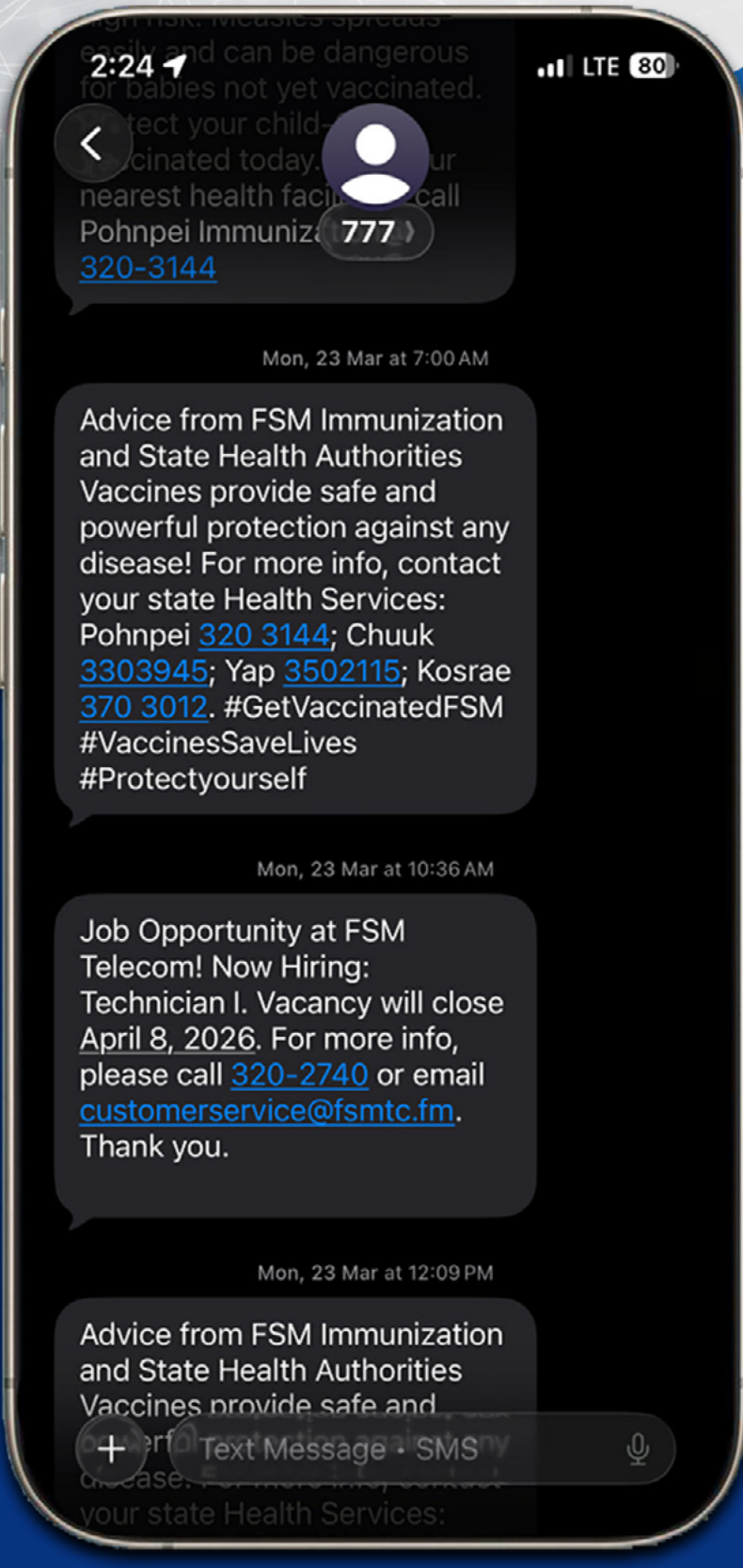
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About The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency

The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is an intergovernmental organisation working to strengthen national capacity and regional solidarity so Pacific nations can manage, control, and develop their tuna fisheries now and in the future.

Based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, our agency comprises 17 member nations, including 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.

Since 1979, we have facilitated regional cooperation so that all Pacific countries benefit from the sustainable use of tuna – worth over USD 3 billion a year and important for many people's livelihoods in the Pacific.

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Please submit the following documents to the recruitment email at recruitment@ffa.int:

1. Cover Letter – Addressed to the Manager of Human Resources and Administration
2. Curriculum Vitae and
3. Completed FFA Application Form

Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted further to proceed to the next stage of selection.



College of Micronesia-FSM

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STUDENTS LEADING THE WAY: ROHI ELEMENTARY WASH CLUB TRAINS FOR SAFE DRINKING WATER TESTING

On May 6, 2026, the Center for Entrepreneurship (CFE) of the College of Micronesia-FSM, through its UNICEF-supported Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Project, continued its commitment to improving access to safe drinking water in schools by conducting a water testing training at Rohi Elementary School in Kitti Municipality.

Five student interns from the COM-FSM Public Health Program visited the school to train members of the school's WASH Club on proper water testing procedures and the importance of monitoring drinking water quality. The activity is part of a larger effort to prepare students and schools for the completion of new drinking stations that will soon provide safer drinking water for students and faculty.

For many years, Rohi Elementary School, like several other schools in Kitti, has struggled with limited access to clean drinking water on campus. To help address this challenge, CFE provided Sawyer water filtration kits along with piping systems and sinks that will allow students to collect clean drinking water directly from the new stations once installation is completed.

Today's training is an important first step in helping students understand how to test and monitor their own water supply. Once the drinking stations are operational, the students themselves will help test whether the filtration systems are effectively making the water safe for drinking. Through this approach, students are not only beneficiaries of the project but also active participants in protecting the health of their school community.



Students from Rohi Elementary School enjoy clean drinking water straight from the faucet.

The activity also provided valuable hands-on learning opportunities for the COM-FSM Public Health student interns, allowing them to apply health and water safety concepts learned in the classroom into real-life community settings while serving local schools.

CFE is currently implementing similar WASH activities in schools throughout Kitti Municipality, with the long-term goal of expanding support to other municipalities and states that face similar challenges, as funding becomes available.

This project is implemented by the Center for Entrepreneurship in partnership with UNICEF as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen water safety, health awareness, and community resilience across the Federated States of Micronesia.

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Portland food cart raises funds for Typhoon Sinlaku relief in Micronesia

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press
From KATU channel 2, Portland, Oregon

May 24, 2026

Portland, Oregon — A food cart in Portland, Oregon, has organized a fundraising effort to support communities in the Northern Mariana Islands and Chuuk that were affected by Typhoon Sinlaku.

According to a report written by Dai Takegami Podziewski for KATU Channel 2 in Portland, Chochu Local, a food cart located at Rose City Food Park, held a Typhoon Sinlaku relief fundraiser on May 16 to assist recovery efforts in Saipan, Tinian, and Chuuk.

The business pledged to donate 20 percent of its regular menu sales during the event, along with 100 percent of direct donations and all profits from the sale of its Marianas-themed merchandise and specialty items.

Funds raised through the event will help support local relief initiatives, including the provision of free meals to families impacted by the storm.

Chochu Local said that during the previous week, members of its team in Saipan partnered with D'Elegance Cafe to distribute 300 free meals to community members. The Portland-based business helped fund half of those meals.

Organizers hope the fundraiser will generate enough support to finance another round of meal distributions, including deliveries to elders, families, and other residents who may be unable to travel to community food distribution sites.

Typhoon Sinlaku caused widespread damage across parts of Micronesia, prompting relief and recovery efforts by local organizations, government agencies, and community groups. Fundraising initiatives such as the one organized by Chochu Local aim to provide immediate assistance to those still recovering from the storm's impacts.



Australia provides new uniforms for FSM maritime officers

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

May 22, 2026

Pohnpei—Officers of the Federated States of Micronesia's Border Control and Maritime Surveillance (BCMS) division have received new uniforms through support from Australia under the Pacific Maritime Security Program (PMSP).

The uniforms were presented by Royal Australian Navy advisors as part of ongoing cooperation between Australia and the FSM in strengthening maritime security capabilities.

According to the Australian Embassy, the new uniforms are intended to support BCMS personnel in carrying out their responsibilities in protecting and monitoring the nation's maritime domain. The uniforms also promote a sense of identity, teamwork, and professionalism within the organization.

BCMS Operations Officer Lieutenant

Fiona Halverson said the uniforms are lightweight and durable, making them well-suited for maritime operations and the demanding conditions officers often encounter at sea.

Australian representatives said they were pleased to support BCMS as a regional maritime partner and emphasized the importance of the division's role in helping maintain a safe, secure, and sustainable Pacific Ocean.

The embassy also expressed appreciation to FSM National Police Maritime Wing Chief, BCMS leadership, and members of the Maritime Wing for their support during the presentation.

Australia and the FSM have worked together on maritime security initiatives through the Pacific Maritime Security Program, which aims to strengthen maritime surveillance, law enforcement, and regional cooperation among Pacific Island nations.

Australia said it remains committed to supporting professionalism and operational effectiveness within the FSM's maritime services through its partnership with BCMS.



PSAKC kicks forward: Canadian Embassy support brings new opportunities to Pohnpei's youth

Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club (PSAKC)

The Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club (PSAKC) is proud and deeply grateful to announce the launch of its new project, Kick Forward: Girls in the Game – Empowering Girls Through Football in the Pacific, made possible through the generous support of the Embassy of Canada in Manila under the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI).

On behalf of the entire PSAKC board, coaching staff, athletes, and families, we wish to extend our most sincere thanks to the Embassy of Canada in Manila for placing their trust in our organization and in the young people of Pohnpei. This support is not simply a financial contribution — it is a statement of belief in what sport can do for a community, and in the capacity of a small grassroots organization like ours to make a real difference in the lives of children in the Federated States of Micronesia.

- What the Project Will Deliver

Running from July 1, 2026 through February 28, 2027, the *Kick Forward* project brings together football, health education, and community engagement across Pohnpei. Through monthly school clinics held at elementary schools around the island, a girls' development exchange trip to Kosrae, dedicated coaching workshops in Pohnpei, and a major community health screening event, PSAKC will deliver structured programming for some of the most vulnerable and underserved youth in our community — including children who currently have no reliable way to access sports activities due to lack of transportation.

Each month, PSAKC coaches will travel to a different elementary school across Pohnpei to deliver football and health-themed clinics, bringing organized sport directly to children who might otherwise never have access to it. These sessions will combine football drills, teamwork activities, and awareness on topics such as nutrition, non-communicable diseases, and healthy lifestyles. No school, no community, and no child should feel left behind — and these clinics are our commitment to that principle.

In addition to the school clinics, PSAKC will organize dedicated coaching and development workshops here in Pohnpei, bringing new skills and certified training methodologies to our local coaches and supporting the long-term growth of football capacity in the state. A community health screening event is also planned for August 16, focused on blood glucose, BMI, blood pressure, and metabolic health awareness for participating youth and their families.

- Free, Safe Transport Starting July 1

One of the most immediate and impactful elements of the project is something many families in our community have been waiting for: free, safe, and organized transportation for children to and from the Track and Field training ground, twice a week, starting July 1, 2026.

We know that many of our most motivated young athletes — and many children who have never had the chance to play organized football at all — live in areas that are simply too far to walk, and where families do not have access to a vehicle. This project changes that. PSAKC will operate a dedicated transport service, two days per week throughout the project period, ensuring that children can participate fully and safely, and that parents can feel confident about their child's movement to and from every training session.

- Registrations Now Open — Ohmine and Chinatown Area

Starting immediately, PSAKC is collecting registrations from interested families in the Ohmine and Chinatown area of Kolonia (contact psa.kidsclub@gmail.com). These neighborhoods have been identified as a priority area for the transport service, and we encourage all interested parents and guardians to come forward. Attendance and punctuality are mandatory, and a great lesson for the future of the children.

To register, families should note the following conditions:

— The child must be of elementary school age (or as otherwise confirmed by PSAKC coaches upon inquiry).

— A parent or legal guardian must be present at registration, as a signed consent and contact form is required.

— The transport service operates on designated days and along designated routes. Specific pickup times and locations will be confirmed to registered families ahead of the July 1 start date. Number of seats are limited.

— Participation in the program is entirely free of charge. There is no registration fee of any kind.

— Children are expected to attend regularly. Families who register commit to making their child available on the confirmed training days. The number of seats are limited. Failing to attend training without justification implies the loss of seat

— PSAKC reserves the right to adjust routes, days, or capacity based on the number of registered participants and available transport.

To register or for more information, please contact a PSAKC board member directly or approach any of our coaches at the training ground.

- A Word of Gratitude

Projects like this do not happen without partners who are willing to look beyond their borders and invest in the potential of Pacific communities. The Embassy of Canada in Manila has done exactly that. Their support through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives reflects a genuine commitment to gender equality, youth empowerment, and the well-being of communities across the Pacific region.

We also thank all the PSAKC board members, coaches, volunteers, and parent community for their continued dedication. And to the children of Pohnpei: this project is for you. We look forward to seeing you on the field.

Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club (PSAKC)

Project: Kick Forward — Girls in the Game

CFLI-FSM-2026-PSAKC-001

July 2026 – February 2027

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MUNRO LEYS

History making Nauruan movie now online for the world to see

The government of the Republic of Nauru

his formative years growing up in Nauru.

involved with the production and all Nauruans can rightly feel proud of this significant achievement.”

May 22, 2026

Nauru - Nauru’s first short feature film *Far End of the Sea* that premiered on Friday May 15, has been officially released online, with the producers appealing to the world to join with them to celebrate this historic moment.

“Nauru is a very special place to me and it’s been a long-time dream of mine to create a project that celebrates Nauruan language, culture and history. I wanted to do something for a place that gave me so much growing up.”

He said the response from Nauruans was overwhelming, and he’s looking forward to now showcasing the country’s ingenuity and creativity to the Pacific family and to the wider international community.

View *Far End of the Sea* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=0y02ydhx9U4&t=154s>.

The film, created by Pleasant Island Productions and featuring 58 Nauruan cast and crew, was filmed entirely in the country across seven locations, and tells the fictional story of Scottish sailor Hamish MacKay’s shipwreck and captivity on the island in the 1800s.

Nauru’s President David Ageang said the production was a proud moment for the nation and shows that anything is possible with determination and resilience.

“Many people in the world don’t know much about our country’s culture or history, and while this is a fictional story, the brotherhood, compassion and national pride at the core of the story is an accurate portrayal of our people,” he said.

Melbourne based actor Jamie Coffa, whose previous credits include *The Legend of Ben Hall* and the TV miniseries *Gallipoli*, starred alongside Nauru’s most famous actor Cramer Cain, with supporting roles played by Australia’s Sophie McAsey and local acting debutants Redrose Tamakin and Brav Dowabobo.

The President said he hoped the film would inspire other smaller nations, as “few would expect a film of this quality and depth to be made here.”

Coffa, who produced the film alongside Cain and Nauruan Yannick Detsiogo, said he wrote the script after spending

“Our size and status will not stop us from achieving our goals, and all



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U.S. Coast Guard commissions 62nd Fast Response Cutter honoring 9/11 hero

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

May 21, 2026

New York, New York — The U.S. Coast Guard commissioned its newest Fast Response Cutter, USCGC Vincent Danz (WPC 1162), for official entry into its service fleet during a ceremony held in New York City on Friday.

The Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard, Vice Adm. Thomas Allan, presided over the ceremony. Members of the Danz family were also in attendance, including the cutter's sponsor, Ms. Angela Donohue, widow of the late Vincent Danz.

"Vincent Danz's legacy will live on not only through his family and his brothers and sisters in the NYPD, but through the Coast Guard crew who will breathe life into this cutter today," said Adm. Tom Allan. "The Coast Guard Cutter Vincent Danz will perform the Coast Guard's vital work across Oceania—projecting U.S. presence, countering illicit maritime activity, and strengthening our international partnerships."

The Vincent Danz is the 62nd Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter in the service and the fourth of five FRCs to be homeported in Guam with U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. The crew of the Vincent Danz will primarily serve U.S. and mutual interests in Oceania with an emphasis on the Micronesia and Melanesian sub-regions, conducting maritime security operations, combating illegal activity, supporting search and rescue missions, and strengthening partnerships with Pacific Island nations and Allies. The cutter is a multi-mission platform.

The cutter's namesake, Vincent Danz, was serving in the New York City Police Department, Emergency Services Unit, ESU Truck 3, when he responded to the World Trade Center as part of a massive emergency response and was killed when the World Trade Center collapsed. He was posthumously awarded the New York City Police Department's Medal of Honor for his heroic deeds. He was a veteran of the United States Marine Corps and joined the New York City Police Department in 1987, while

continuing to serve in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve as a Port Security Specialist 2nd Class.

As a U.S. Coast Guard reservist, Danz understood the meaning of service to country and community. His courage in the face of unimaginable danger and his dedication to saving others made him a hero not only to New York City but to the nation. This cutter honors his memory and the legacy of all first responders who gave their lives on Sept. 11, 2001.

The Vincent Danz will join the Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139), Oliver Henry (WPC 1140), and Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143), all of which were commissioned in Guam. Since their 2021 commissioning, Guam's FRC crews have distinguished themselves across the region, most recently responding to the impacts of Super Typhoon Sinlaku on communities in the Marianas. USCGC Myrtle Hazard's crew became the first to operationalize the bilateral maritime law enforcement agreement with Papua New Guinea, conducting joint patrols and boardings in 2023. USCGC Oliver Henry's crew saved around a dozen mariners in the Federated States of Micronesia, delivered humanitarian assistance during the Yap drought, and towed the 500-ton yacht Black Pearl to the Republic of Palau, rescuing 11 people in 2024. USCGC Frederick Hatch became the first FRC to visit several Pacific ports, including Tacloban, Philippines, for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, and the crew operationalized the enhanced bilateral agreement with Palau in 2024.

The U.S. Coast Guard ordered a series of new FRCs to replace the 1980s-era Island-class 110-foot patrol boats. Using the \$25 billion provided by the historic Fiscal Year 2025 budget reconciliation, which includes \$1 billion for additional FRCs, the Coast Guard has already ordered over \$13 billion in new fleet assets and capabilities. This rapid investment demonstrates the Coast Guard's commitment to modernizing acquisition, delivering next-generation technology, and revitalizing American shipbuilding.

The FRCs feature advanced command,

control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment, as well as over-the-horizon cutter boat deployment capability, enhancing the Service's ability to control, secure, and defend U.S. borders and maritime approaches. These new assets and capabilities continue the U.S. Coast Guard's modernization, through which the Service is transforming into a more agile, capable, and responsive fighting force.

The commissioning ceremony is a



traditional milestone in a cutter's life, marking its entry into active service and signifying its readiness to conduct operations.

Public announcement on Ebola and Hantavirus from the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs

FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs

May 28, 2026

FSM - The FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs continues to monitor international public health developments involving Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Uganda and the Andes virus (Hantavirus) outbreak associated with the MV Hondius cruise ship. At this time, there are no confirmed cases of either disease in the Federated States of Micronesia, and the risk to the public remains low.

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

The current Ebola outbreak was first reporting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and then in Uganda, East Africa. Ebola Virus Disease is a severe illness caused by the Ebola virus and spreads through direct contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person who is showing symptoms. It is not spread through casual contact.

FSM health authorities are maintaining close communication with the World Health Organization (WHO) and regional partners to monitor developments and ensure preparedness measures remain current. Surveillance and readiness activities continue as part of FSM's ongoing public health preparedness efforts.

Andes Virus (Hantavirus)

The Department is also monitoring the recent Andes virus outbreak linked to the MV Hondius cruise ship. Andes virus is a rare type of hantavirus found primarily in parts of South America, including Chile and Argentina. According to WHO guidance, the current outbreak involves passengers and crew connected to the cruise ship event.

Unlike most hantaviruses, Andes virus has shown limited person-to-person transmission, usually involving prolonged close contact with an infected individual. WHO recommendations currently focus on monitoring identified passengers, crew, and close contacts associated with the outbreak. There are currently no known cases or exposures linked to FSM.

What it means to the FSM?

The public is encouraged to continue practicing good hygiene and general health precautions, including regular handwashing, staying home when sick, and seeking medical attention if experiencing fever or respiratory symptoms following recent international travel. While no travel restriction is in place, the public is advised to delay unnecessary travel to the affected areas.

FSM health authorities will continue monitoring both situations closely and will provide updates should circumstances change.

Strengthening public health resilience: Integrating dengue response and vector control in Chuuk State



Pacific Islands Health Officers' Association

May 30, 2026

Chuuk, FSM - Cases of dengue fever were confirmed in Chuuk State in December 2025, coinciding with a scheduled Category 8 Public Health Pest Control training, and underscoring the critical importance of Early Warning Systems (EWS) for the timely detection of mosquito-borne disease threats in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The series of cases highlighted the urgency of routine mosquito surveillance, rapid disease screening, and the ability to translate early signals into immediate public health action.

The Category 8 training was delivered by Pacific Island Health Officers' Association (PIHOA) Secretariat in collaboration with the Chuuk State Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Chuuk State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The four-day training program focused on the detection, monitoring, and suppression of pests of public health concern, with an emphasis on controlling mosquitoes and the diseases they transmit.

The emergence of the dengue cases while the training was in progress motivated organizers to adapt in real-time, demonstrating how EWS-informed decision-making can guide

rapid and targeted responses, said Cynthia King, PIHOA Secretariat's Technical Consultant - Tropical Island Training and Evaluation Center Training Coordinator. "We had planned to conduct a spray exercise at the port," King explained. "However, when Director Buliche requested assistance with the response, we redirected our efforts toward inspection and treatment of a property where the first confirmed dengue patient had been staying."

The Chuuk State DHS coordinated additional response efforts through EpiNet, the coordinating body for FSM. According to Curtis Sos, DHS Chief of Environmental Health and Sanitation, a multidisciplinary team composed of the DHS Director, Health Chiefs and doctors, responded to cases across multiple islands within Chuuk State, where a total of nine cases of dengue fever were ultimately confirmed.

The team conducted community outreach, vector surveillance, and mosquito control treatments. Chief Sos expressed gratitude to PIHOA and emphasized that the December Category 8 training provided crucial "support to enlighten our environmental health inspectors and gain more knowledge and skills in vector control."

The Category 8 training included both classroom and field exercises, designed to prepare public health vector

control personnel to respond safely and efficiently in the event of vector-borne disease transmission, such as this. Given the timing, Sos stated, "I encouraged our team to apply what we just learned out of our training."

The PIHOA Secretariat continues to track the outbreak, communicating with FSM National, and providing

ongoing technical support to EHS staff in Chuuk. In addition, two follow-up visits have been conducted by PIHOA Secretariat's Regional Medical Entomologist, Dr. Limb Hapairai. The most recent visit was to support Chuuk DHS Environmental Health team's post-Typhoon Sinlaku response and mosquito control risk mitigation efforts.

Governor of Chuuk: we want to look up to and learn from Guangdong

Guangdong News

May 21, 2026

Guangdong - On May 21, a delegation from Chuuk State of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) began its visit to South China's Guangdong Province, marking the 15th anniversary of the sister-state relationship between Guangdong and Chuuk State.

T.H. Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of Chuuk State, highlighted Guangdong's tangible support, noting that several years ago, Guangdong provided five boats for Chuuk's Nomoneas region to address critical ocean transportation needs.

"It helps the municipal governments

in their operations, especially in health services," he said, calling the aid "pretty tremendous and really helpful."

Impressed by Guangdong's technical expertise and fast-paced development, the governor expressed a strong desire to learn from the region. "I hope that we can look up to that and learn from it," he stated.

While tourism is Chuuk's main resource, limited airline access poses challenges. Narruhn voiced openness to investment in tourism and aquaculture.

"Really, we are open for business—a partnership," he affirmed, adding that maintaining such cooperation benefits both sides.

President Simina administers Oaths of Office to newly confirmed officials

FSM Information Services

May 21, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei – His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), administered the Oaths of Office to newly confirmed officials following their confirmation during the current session of the FSM Congress.

The officials sworn into office were:

- Mr. Florian J. Yatilman, Secretary of the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management (DECEM);
- Mr. Johnny Silbanuz, Consul General for the FSM Consulate Office in Guam; and
- Mr. Samson Pretrick, Member of FSM Insurance Board

Joining the ceremony were the Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia, key staff from the respective departments and offices, as well as family members and friends of the newly sworn officials.

President Simina congratulated the newly sworn officials and expressed confidence in their ability to carry out their respective responsibilities in service to the nation and the people of the Federated States of Micronesia. He also reaffirmed his Administration’s commitment to strengthening public institutions, advancing effective governance, and promoting the interests of the FSM both at home and abroad.

President Simina further extended his appreciation to the FSM Congress for its continued partnership and timely consideration of the nominations, emphasizing the importance of cooperation between the Executive and Legislative branches in advancing the nation’s priorities and maintaining effective government operations.



President Simina and Vice President Palik welcome Close Up students to Palikir

FSM Information Services

May 23, 2026

PALIKIR, Pohnpei – His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, joined by the Honorable Aren B. Palik, welcomed students participating in the Close-Up Program from across the Federated States of Micronesia during their visit to the nation’s Capital.

As part of the program’s annual activities, the students visited the Office of the President to learn about the role and functions of the national government, leadership, and civic engagement. During the visit, President Simina encouraged the students to continue striving toward their goals to become future leaders of the nation, emphasizing the important role young people play in shaping the future of the Federated States of Micronesia.

President Simina also wished the students a meaningful and enjoyable stay in Pohnpei and extended his best wishes for success in their educational pursuits.

The Office of the President continues to welcome opportunities to engage with students and youth programs that promote learning, leadership, and a deeper understanding of the functions of government throughout the Federated States of Micronesia.



President Simina receives Letter of Credence from Ambassador of the Republic of Ireland

FSM Information Services

May 26, 2026

Palikir, Pohnpei – His Excellency Wesley W. Simina officially received the Letter of Credence from Ambassador Emma Hickey of Ireland during a formal Presentation of Credentials ceremony held in Palikir.

The presentation formally accredits Ambassador Hickey as the representative of the Republic of

Ireland to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and reflects the continued diplomatic relations between the two nations. The FSM and Ireland established diplomatic relations on October 27, 2004, and have since continued engagement through areas of shared interest and cooperation in regional and international forums.

During the ceremony, President Simina welcomed Ambassador Hickey

and reaffirmed the FSM Government’s commitment to strengthening cooperation and friendly relations with Ireland. Ambassador Hickey conveyed greetings on behalf of the Government of Ireland and expressed her commitment to further enhancing bilateral engagement between the two

countries.

The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia looks forward to continued cooperation and partnership with Ireland during Ambassador Hickey’s tenure.



Ambassador of Belgium visits Ambassador Kagomiya

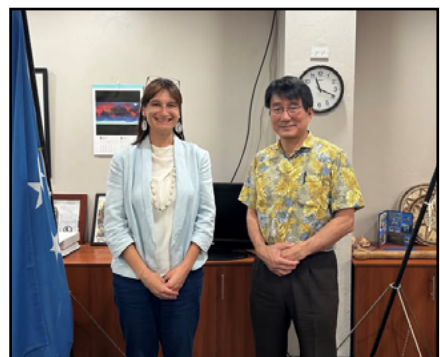
Embassy of Japan to the FSM

May 20, 2026

Pohnpei - On May 19, Ambassador Kagomiya received a courtesy call from Her Excellency Vladislava IORDANOVA, Ambassador of Belgium, newly accredited to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Ambassador IORDANOVA is a non-resident Ambassador with residence in Manila, Philippines.

The Ambassadors discussed the friendly relations between their own countries and the FSM. They also discussed the economy and development cooperation, and how Japan and Belgium can cooperate with each other and with the FSM.

Furthermore, on May 15, Ambassador Kagomiya and the diplomatic corps attended the Presentation of Credential Ceremony for H.E. Vladislava IORDANOVA, who presented her Credentials to His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the FSM.



Ambassador of Ireland visits Ambassador Kagomiya

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

May 29, 2026

Pohnpei - On May 27, Ambassador Kagomiya received a courtesy call from Her Excellency Emma HICKEY, Ambassador of Ireland, newly accredited to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Ambassador HICKEY is a non-resident Ambassador with residence in Manila, Philippines.

The Ambassadors discussed the friendly bilateral relations between Japan and Ireland, and the friendly relations between their own countries and the FSM. They also discussed the economy and development cooperation, and how Japan and Ireland can cooperate with each other and with the FSM.

Furthermore, on May 26, Ambassador Kagomiya and the diplomatic corps attended the Presentation of Credential Ceremony for H.E. Emma HICKEY, who presented her Credentials to His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the FSM.



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Korea–Pacific islands senior officials meet to advance regional priorities

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

May 25, 2026

Nadi, Fiji - The 8th Korea–Pacific Islands Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held in Nadi, Fiji, on 21 May 2026, bringing together senior officials from the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Members to advance regional cooperation and shared priorities.

The SOM was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister for Political Affairs of the Republic of Korea, Ms Eui-hae Chung and the Solomon Islands High Commissioner to the Republic of Fiji, His Excellency Joseph Ma'ahanua representing the PIF Chair.

Discussions focused on strengthening strategic dialogue and development cooperation aligned with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, particularly across climate action, maritime affairs and fisheries, and economic resilience, while advancing the ROK – Pacific Partnership.

In his opening remarks, H. E Ma'ahanua highlighted the timeliness of the meeting as the region looks ahead to the 2027 Korea – Pacific Islands Foreign Ministers' Meeting,

noting the importance of sustaining momentum built since the 2023 Leaders' Summit and the 2025 Korea – Pacific Islands Foreign Ministers Meeting discussions.

“It is essential that our cooperation remains aligned with Pacific priorities, including those articulated in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. Equally important is ensuring Pacific ownership and visibility; our region is not only a Leader in shaping and implementing initiatives that affect our future,” said H.E Ma'ahanua.

Deputy Minister Chung emphasized in her opening statement that, as a globally responsible country, the Republic of Korea will continue to support the sustainable development of the Pacific Island countries in accordance with the priorities set out in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, an initiative led by the Pacific Island countries to promote peace, security, and prosperity in the Pacific region.

She further noted that, in light of the recent energy crisis and future cooperation in related sectors, she hopes that cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the Pacific



Island countries will continue in a mutually beneficial and sustainable manner.

The meeting also acknowledged the Republic of Korea's continued support through the ROK–PIF Cooperation Fund and reaffirmed collaboration on ongoing initiatives aligned with the regional priorities of PIF Leaders.

Senior Officials received briefings from agencies of the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) and Korean agencies on the 2025 ROK–Pacific Islands Forum Cooperation Fund.

Presentations were also delivered on emerging business opportunities in the Pacific, including contributions from Nabou Green Energy and the Korea Overseas Fisheries Association. The presentations highlighted the growing role of sustainable investment and private sector engagement in advancing regional development priorities.

These discussions between the senior officials will inform the agenda for the next ROK –Pacific Islands Foreign Ministers' Meeting which will be held in 2027.

The Republic of Korea has been a Dialogue Partner of the Pacific Islands Forum since 1995.

PICRC leads regional coral monitoring workshop in Kosrae

Palau International Coral Reef Center

June 1, 2026

Kosrae - The Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) recently expanded its role as a regional leader in marine science by facilitating a specialized introduction and training workshop on ReefCloud in Kosrae, FSM. The workshop that was held from April 20 to April 24, 2026, marked the first time this training was delivered to Micronesian participants by regional trainers.

PICRC team members Daniel Cassidy and Victor Nestor who led the sessions, were amongst the first cohort of the ReefCloud Training-of-Trainers Program, sharing expertise they gained during their own intensive training over the last 18 months. They were supported online by Dr. Samuel Chan, from the Australian Institute of Marine

Science (AIMS). Four key environmental officers from the region participated in the workshop:

- Mr. Robert George, Kosrae Division of Fisheries and Marine Resources.
- Mr. Bruno Ned, Kosrae Division of Fisheries and Marine Resources.
- Mr. John Alokoa, Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organisation (KCSO).
- Mr. Jeremiah Talimeche, Yap Marine Resources Management Division.

The training focused on ReefCloud, an advanced image annotation tool developed by the AIMS. By utilizing Artificial Intelligence (AI), the software assists researchers in analyzing coral reef data more efficiently.



During the workshop, participants engaged in:

- **Benthic Monitoring Foundations:** A review of monitoring methods and the rationale on selecting different scientific approaches for different monitoring needs.
- **Technical Exercises:** Hands-on training for setting up ReefCloud projects, using ReefCloud and interpreting data from the public

dashboards.

- **Model Validation:** In-depth presentations on validating the accuracy and results of the machine learning model for reporting.
- **Regional Reporting:** A discussion around increasing participation of the region in collaborating on monitoring efforts and reporting.

All participants successfully completed the curriculum and were awarded certificates of participation. The success of this workshop highlights the growing demand for advanced monitoring tools in Micronesia and highlights PICRC's commitment to supporting neighbouring islands through shared knowledge and technical expertise.

Sokehs Municipal Government secures a USD375,020 Grant from the Green Climate Fund to strengthen coastal protection and climate resilience



Secretariat of the Pacific Community

May 22, 2026

Sokehs, Pohnpei – The Sokehs Municipal Government, in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC), has launched a Sokehs National Park Coastal Monitoring and Baseline Survey Project, marking a key step toward strengthening climate resilience.

Honorable Stanley Ernest, the Mayor of Sokehs Municipality, called this the beginning of a transformation whereby “the Municipal Government is able to directly access climate funding to

implement an adaptation priority”. Through this initiative, the Municipality will “develop a model for coastal circulation and address vulnerability in Sokehs Bay. This knowledge will guide “climate-resilient planning and also support our vision for a Sokehs National Park”.

The project is funded through a USD357,020 grant secured by Sokehs Municipality under the Federated States of Micronesia Enhancing Direct Access (EDA) Programme, supported by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) - highlighting the growing capacity of the Municipal Government to play leading roles in accessing climate finance. The Project will be implemented until January 2028.

Honourable Stanley Ernest emphasized that “Resilience building and the ability of our people to make wise decisions should be based on scientific data and monitoring”. In addition, this initiative supports implementation of the Pohnpei Joint State Action Plan (JSAP) for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change as it protects livelihoods and builds resilience”.

The Pacific Community’s Micronesian Regional Office Director, William Kostka, in congratulating the Sokehs Municipality, explained that “the coastal environment plays a significant role in people’s culture and identity. Therefore, one cannot overemphasize the importance of this project as it will assist the community of Sokehs to make sound decisions based on scientific evidence”.

As a fundamental objective of the EDA Programme is to build the capacities of municipalities, he called on Sokehs Municipality to “leverage this project as an opportunity to strengthen its project management and financial capacities for the implementation of future initiatives”.

Aligned with the Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2022 – 2031, the

project will promote resilience by providing scientific information that empowers Sokehs Municipality to make informed decisions on coastal management and resilience. Through a community outreach program, this project will engage men, women and youth of Sokehs. Partners, including the College of Micronesia FSM and the University of Hawaii, will provide technical support for the project.

SPC will continue to provide technical support during the implementation of this project. Director Kostka acknowledged the leadership of the FSM Government through the Green Climate Fund National Designated Authority, the Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration.

The FSM Enhancing Direct Access Programme is implemented by the SPC Micronesian Regional Office in partnership with National Government of Federated States of Micronesia.



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Governor Joseph receives courtesy visit from UNFPA and Department of Health Services on maternal and newborn healthcare initiative

Pohnpei Public Information

May 28, 2026

Pohnpei – On May 22, 2026 Governor Stevenson A. Joseph welcomed Dr. Titilola Duro-Aina and Evelyn Adolph of the United Nations Population Fund, and Director Stuard Penias of the Pohnpei State Department of Health Services during a courtesy visit held at the Office of the Governor, Pei Lapalap, on May 22, 2026.

During the meeting, Dr. Duro-Aina and Director Penias updated Governor Joseph on a collaborative maternal and newborn healthcare project currently being undertaken in Pohnpei. The initiative focuses on strengthening maternal healthcare services while addressing critical delays that contribute to complications and poor health outcomes for mothers and newborns.

The project specifically seeks to reduce delays at home, delays in reaching healthcare facilities, and delays in receiving treatment at healthcare facilities. As part of the initiative, support is being provided through medical supplies, equipment, capacity building for healthcare workers, and the establishment of a maternity waiting room to better support expecting mothers who require closer access to

medical care prior to delivery.

Dr. Duro-Aina indicated that, based on the collected data, the Federated States of Micronesia continues to experience one of the highest infant mortality rates in the Pacific region, highlighting the urgent need to strengthen maternal and newborn healthcare services.

Governor Joseph expressed his appreciation for the partnership and reaffirmed his administration’s support for the initiative.

“I’m in total support,” Governor Joseph stated during the meeting.

The Governor further acknowledged the importance of collaboration between government, healthcare professionals, and development partners in improving maternal and newborn healthcare services and ensuring better health outcomes for families across Pohnpei State.

The courtesy visit reflects the shared commitment of the Pohnpei State Government, UNFPA, and the Department of Health Services to improving healthcare delivery and strengthening support systems for mothers and newborns throughout Pohnpei.



Governor Joseph discusses Nan Madol And regional kava initiative with Ambassador Susaia

Pohnpei Public Information

May 22, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei — The Honorable Stevenson A. Joseph, Governor of Pohnpei State, and Chief of Staff Patterson K. Shed recently welcomed His Excellency Akillino Harris Susaia, the Permanent Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia to the United Nations Office at Geneva, alongside FSM Foreign Service Officer Iven Yaropiy, for a courtesy visit at the Governor’s Office. The meeting served as an opportunity for state and diplomatic leaders to exchange perspectives on key cultural and economic priorities linking Pohnpei State to broader regional and international frameworks.

During their dialogue, the leaders engaged in broad conversations regarding the management, preservation, and global visibility of Nan Madol. Nan Madol holds profound historical, cultural, spiritual, and political significance for the people of Pohnpei. Often referred to as the “Venice of the Pacific,” it is regarded as one of the greatest achievements of ancient Micronesian civilization and remains a powerful symbol of Pohnpeian identity and heritage.

As a designated UNESCO World Heritage site, the ancient ruin represents a vital piece of global human history. Given Ambassador Susaia's diplomatic role, the discussion touched upon

international pathways forward for balancing infrastructure development, tourism management, and traditional conservation methods to ensure the site is protected for future generations.

The conversation also turned to the economic landscape of the Pacific, specifically focusing on the ongoing initiative at the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) regarding kava. The leaders shared general dialogue on the steps required to transition kava into a formalized commercial product on the international market, noting the importance of developing robust trade standards and protecting the cultural identity of local traditional production. Moving forward with this initiative, Pohnpei State is looking at conducting thorough consultations with appropriate local authorities at the state level as the next crucial step.

The Office of the Governor appreciates Ambassador Susaia and Mr. Yaropiy’s visit and looks forward to ongoing cooperation on these shared regional interests.



Pohnpei State Government and Rutgers University advance sustainable food security partnership

Pohnpei Public Information

May 27, 2026

Kolonia, Pohnpei — Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, Chief of Staff Patterson K. Shed, and Director Mark E. Kostka of the Pohnpei State Department of Resources and Development welcomed the Rutgers University Food Systems Science Team this month for a series of high-level meetings focused on strengthening Pohnpei’s food security future. The visit centered on aligning the Pohnpei State Food Security Policy with the developing FSM National Agriculture and Food Security Policy and Food Production Master Plan, a milestone that reflects years of partnership between the Pohnpei State Government and Rutgers University in support of the state’s sustainable development goals.

A Partnership Rooted in Community

The Pohnpei State Food Security Policy, developed collaboratively by the Pohnpei State Department of Resources and Development and the Rutgers Food Systems Science Team, has served as the model framework for food security policy development across all four FSM states. Grounded in data gathered from hundreds of community surveys and participatory research with Pohnpei’s farming families, fishers, and community organizations, the policy reflects the knowledge, aspirations, and priorities of the people it serves.

“Our partnership with Rutgers has helped us develop policy grounded in the voices of our own communities. We are proud that Pohnpei’s work is helping to shape a national vision for sustainable food systems that will benefit all FSM states,” said Governor Joseph.

Linking State and National Food Security Goals

A central focus of the May 2026 meetings was ensuring that Pohnpei’s state-level Food Security Policy action items are fully integrated into the FSM National Agriculture and Food Security Policy and Food Production Master Plan currently under development by the Rutgers team in close collaboration with the FSM National Department of Resources and Development and all four state governments.

The national plan targets a 50 percent increase in locally produced food available to FSM households within five years, a 50 percent reduction in food import categories that can be produced within the FSM, and the creation of hundreds of new food system jobs across all four states. Its operational centerpiece, the FSM Food Innovation Infrastructure Network, is a nationally standardized three-tiered system of Food Innovation Centers designed to provide every FSM community with a structured entry point into the local food economy.

“The strength of the national plan rests on the strength of each state’s policies,” said Dr. Jim Simon, Distinguished Professor of Plant Biology and lead scientist for the Rutgers Food Systems Science Team working in the FSM. “Pohnpei has led the way by launching the first FSM state food security policy in 2025.”

Rutgers’ food security policy work is funded through the Green Climate Fund’s SAP020 project, “Climate-Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the Federated States of Micronesia,” administered by the Micronesia Conservation Trust.

Supporting Pohnpei State’s Food System Development

During their visit, the Rutgers team accompanied Director Kostka on a series of site visits throughout Pohnpei to locations identified for agricultural development and greenhouse construction. Pohnpei State’s strategy to increase local food production includes the cultivation of traditional staple crops, vegetables, and leafy greens that are currently imported.



The development of seed banks and germplasm collections has also been identified as a critical component of strengthening the state’s agricultural resilience. To support these efforts, Pohnpei State has contracted the Rutgers Food Systems Science Team to provide technical assistance during the implementation and development phases of the initiative.

“Our farmers are eager to begin growing more food for the market. They just need support and training as we continue building the production and supply chains that will provide our people with long-term food security,” said Director Mark E. Kostka. “We are grateful to have Rutgers scientists as partners throughout this process.”



Governor Joseph highlights medical education and internship partnerships with Ambassador Sigrah

Pohnpei Public Information

May 22, 2026



Kolonia, Pohnpei — The Honorable Governor of Pohnpei State, Stevenson A. Joseph, received a courtesy visit from His Excellency Carson Sigrah, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji, at the Executive Building. Chief of Staff Patterson K. Shed was also present at the meeting, which focused on strategic regional partnerships to address Pohnpei’s critical physician shortage.

A primary focus of the discussion was Governor Joseph’s proposal to establish pathways allowing local medical students trained at the medical school in Fiji to return home to Pohnpei to complete their clinical internships. This initiative aims to streamline the transition from academic training to local practice, keeping home-grown talent within the state healthcare system.

In light of the ongoing healthcare workforce shortage, Governor Joseph noted the importance and value of the former Medical Officer (MO) program, which was previously located in Pohnpei, and acknowledged recent efforts to revive it. The Governor expressed strong support for the program’s revitalization as a viable means of building local medical capacity.

The leaders also discussed collaborating with the College of Micronesia (COM) education programs to ensure preparatory tracks align effectively with regional medical school requirements, maximizing opportunities for Pohnpei’s students.

Opinion Editorial

Building a constructive China-U.S. relationship of strategic stability



Ambassador Wu Wei

At the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, U.S. President Donald J. Trump paid a state visit to China from May 13 to 15. The two heads of state had long discussions on major issues concerning China-U.S. relations and world peace and development in a way that was open, thorough, constructive, and strategic. They actively sought the right way for two major countries to get along with each other, and reached a number of common understandings in this respect. This is a historic meeting which draws attention from the world including the Federated States of Micronesia. I would like to introduce the summit to friends from the Federated States of Micronesia.

A new vision of China-U.S. relations

China and the United States have both entered a crucial stage in their development. This year marks the start of China's 15th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, and we are advancing Chinese modernization on all fronts through high-quality development. This year is also the 250th anniversary of American independence. In this special year, the two presidents met in Beijing for an extensive discussion on national governance, bilateral relations, and international and regional hot spots. The two heads of state also agreed on a new vision of building a constructive China-U.S. relationship of strategic stability, which will provide strategic guidance for China-U.S. relations over the next three years and beyond. This is how China understands it:

It should be positive stability where cooperation is the mainstay. As the world's top two economies, the two countries both gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation. The relationship should get more resilient through exchange and cooperation. While a confrontational relationship will be disastrous for both countries and the world, China-U.S. cooperation will get many great things done to the benefit of both and all. It should be healthy stability where competition

is kept within proper limits. Major-country competition is nothing new, but China-U.S. relations should not be defined by competition. When competition does happen, it must be a healthy one where we learn from each other, pursue excellence together, and compete fairly in compliance with rules. It should not be turned into a zero-sum game. It should be constant stability where differences are manageable and the relationship should not be like a roller coaster. Both sides should maintain policy continuity and stability. It is very important for both sides to honor their words and move in the same direction. A positive outlook of China-U.S. cooperation will provide more certainty for both countries' development and for the international situation. It should be lasting stability where peace is expectable. Both sides must abide by the three China-U.S. joint communiqués, respect each other's social systems and development paths, respect each other's core interests and major concerns, and respect each other's right to development. Conflicts and wars are not acceptable.

As President Xi Jinping stated, building a constructive China-U.S. relationship of strategic stability is not a slogan. It means actions in the same direction. Achieving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and making America great again can go hand in hand. We can help each other succeed and advance the well-being of the whole world.

New common understandings on exchange and cooperation

Throughout the nearly nine hours the two presidents spent with each other, they showed mutual respect, a commitment to peace, and a shared interest in pursuing cooperation. The two presidents agreed to keep in close touch through meetings, calls, and letters. President Xi will pay a state visit to the United States this fall at the invitation of President Trump.

With the authorization of the two presidents, the political and diplomatic channel has stayed active. The two countries' foreign policy officials and diplomats have properly handled differences, solved practical problems and increased mutual understanding, contributing to stronger bilateral ties. The two sides have also agreed to support each other in hosting this year's APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting and G20 Summit. The two economic and trade teams produced generally balanced and positive outcomes, including continuing to implement all the consensus reached in prior consultations, establishing a board of trade and a board of investment, addressing each other's concerns regarding market access for agricultural products, and expanding two-way trade within the framework of reciprocal tariff reduction.

The summit will reenergize exchanges between the two sides' legislative bodies, subnational entities and business, academic and media communities. President Xi welcomes more young Americans to visit and study in China. President Trump has also said multiple times that he welcomes Chinese students to the United States. Many U.S. business leaders accompanied President Trump to China on this trip, and they all said that they have a deep commitment to the Chinese market, and want to grow their business here and strengthen cooperation with Chinese partners. All levels in both countries must hit the ground running to follow through on what the two presidents have agreed to and secure more tangible outcomes.

On the Taiwan question

The Taiwan question was an important topic taken up at the summit. China's position is very clear:

First, the Taiwan question is China's internal affair. Realizing complete reunification is an aspiration shared by all sons and daughters of the Chinese nation. It is also the unwavering, historic mission of the Communist Party of China. The mainland and Taiwan belong to one and the same China. This is a fact established since antiquity, the real status quo of the Taiwan Strait, and an important part of the postwar international order. The Chinese side hopes that the U.S. side will strictly abide by the one-China principle and the three China-U.S. joint communiqués, and honor its international obligation.

Second, the Taiwan question is the most important issue between China and the U.S., one that affects the entire relationship. If it is handled properly, the overall relationship will be stable, and the two sides will be able to devote more energy to advancing mutually beneficial cooperation. Otherwise, the two countries will have clashes and even conflicts, and the entire relationship will be in great jeopardy. China hopes that the U.S. side will take concrete actions to keep the relationship on an even keel and contribute to peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Third, China and the U.S. both agree on the vital importance of safeguarding cross-strait peace and stability. To ensure this is the case, one must never indulge or support "Taiwan independence," because "Taiwan independence" and cross-strait peace are irreconcilable as fire and water.

After his state visit to China, President Trump said in an interview regarding the Taiwan question that he is not looking to have somebody go independent. The impression coming out of the summit is that the U.S. side understands China's position, takes China's concerns seriously, and, like the rest of the international community, does not agree with or accept Taiwan's moving toward independence.

In-depth exchanges on international and regional issues

On the Middle East situation, President Xi emphasized that the use of force cannot solve problems, and dialogue is the only right choice. Negotiation may not produce immediate results, but now that the door of dialogue has been opened, it should not be closed again. China encourages the U.S. and Iran to continue settling their differences and disputes through negotiation, including on the nuclear issue. China calls for reopening the Strait of Hormuz as soon as possible on the basis of continued ceasefire, and believes that the fundamental solution to the stalemate in the Strait lies in achieving a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire. China has been working to promote peace talks, and will continue to play its role for an early end to the conflict and restoration of peace in the Middle East.

On the Ukraine crisis, both China and the U.S. want to see an early end to the conflict, and both have done a great deal to promote peace talks in their own ways. As there is no simple solution to a complex issue, peace talks cannot be expected to achieve success overnight. China and the U.S. will maintain communication and play a constructive role in the political settlement of the crisis.

President Xi pointed out, the China-U.S. relations concern the well-being of the over 1.7 billion people of both countries, and affect the interests of the over eight billion people of the world. As transformation not seen in a century accelerates across the globe, the world has once again reached a crossroads. The two presidents agreed on a new vision of building a constructive China-U.S. relationship of strategic stability, which has been well received by the people of both countries and the broader international community. China is prepared to work with the United States to follow through on the important common understandings reached by the two presidents in Beijing, and steadily advance China-U.S. relations on the right track following the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation.

The FSM has maintained close and friendly relations with both China and the U.S.. A sound, stable, and promising China-U.S. relationship meets the demand of the times and reflects the shared aspiration of the people, which will bring more benefits to both peoples, inject stability and positive energy into the changing and turbulent world, and make greater contributions to world peace and development. China is ready to work with the FSM to fully seize the new opportunity brought by the China-U.S. summit, jointly implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of China and the FSM in 2024, deepen practical and friendly cooperation in various fields, and push forward China-FSM Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, bringing more benefits to the two peoples.

Pacific leaders urged to strengthen climate justice efforts as sea-level rise threatens region

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

May 25, 2026

SUVA, Fiji — Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General Baron Divavesi Waqa has called for stronger regional and international action on climate change, describing it as the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of Pacific peoples.

Speaking at the opening of the Pacific Climate Justice and Sea-Level Rise Week on May 25, Waqa said the gathering comes at a significant time following the recent adoption by an overwhelming majority of a United Nations General Assembly resolution responding to the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion on the obligations of states regarding climate change.

Waqa praised the leadership of the Government of Vanuatu in advancing climate justice issues internationally and acknowledged the support of Pacific nations and regional partners in securing the UN resolution.

"The Blue Pacific Continent is our home,

our ocean, our lands and our common heritage," Waqa said, emphasizing that climate change remains the region's most pressing challenge.

HereiteratedPacificleaders'longstanding calls for urgent global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. He also stressed the need for greater international support to help Pacific nations adapt to climate impacts and build resilience.

Waqa noted that the current fossil fuel-driven energy crisis is increasing living costs and placing additional pressure on energy security across the region. However, he said the situation also presents an opportunity for Pacific nations to accelerate their transition to renewable energy and reduce their dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Looking ahead to the upcoming Pre-COP and COP31 climate meetings, Waqa said the Pacific has a unique opportunity to advance its priorities on the global stage, including calls for increased and more accessible climate finance and stronger support for adaptation efforts,

particularly for smaller island states.

The Secretary General also highlighted the recent entry into force of the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), which took effect on May 6, 2026. He described the facility as a regional response to shortcomings in the global climate finance system and said it is designed to ensure funding reaches communities, villages, islands and households most vulnerable to climate impacts.

Addressing the issue of sea-level rise, Waqa reaffirmed the Pacific Islands Forum's position that maritime zones established by member countries should remain intact despite physical changes caused by climate change.

He pointed to the Forum's 2021 Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise and the 2023 Declaration on the Continuity of Statehood and the Protection of Persons in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise. Together, the declarations affirm that Pacific nations will maintain their maritime rights,



sovereignty and statehood despite the impacts of rising seas.

Waqa said climate change and sea-level rise are defining issues that threaten the lives, livelihoods and wellbeing of Pacific peoples and called for coordinated regional action grounded in climate justice and environmental rights.

He also recognized the leadership of Pacific youth and students who continue to advocate for climate justice on behalf of current and future generations.

Concluding his remarks, Waqa encouraged participants to engage constructively throughout the week in a spirit of trust, mutual respect and regional solidarity as they work to strengthen the Pacific's response to climate change and sea-level rise.

Joseph-Movick Administration welcomes Irish Ambassador Emma Hickey in a courtesy call to Pohnpei State

Pohnpei Public Information

June 1, 2026

Pohnpei – On May 27, 2026 Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, accompanied by Chief of Staff Patterson K. Shed, received Her Excellency Emma Hickey, Ambassador of Ireland to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), for an official courtesy call at the Governor's Office. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral relations, aligning development strategies, and addressing critical infrastructure and public health goals.

During the exchange, Ambassador Hickey highlighted structural similarities between the two nations, noting that Ireland's traditional framework of four provinces mirrors the FSM's four-state composition. In discussing regional historical ties, Ambassador Hickey mentioned David

O'Keefe, a well-known Irish figure in the broader Micronesian history. While she was not initially aware of Ireland's specific historical connection to Pohnpei, this shared interest prompted Governor Joseph to introduce the story of James F. O'Connell—the famous "tattooed Irishman" of Pohnpeian history. O'Connell arrived in Pohnpei in the 1820s, integrated into the local culture, and remains an enduring historical link between the state and Ireland.

Governor Joseph briefed Ambassador Hickey on Pohnpei State's Strategic Development Plan (SDP), outlining the administration's urgent priorities to improve regional resilience and the quality of life for residents. The discussions centered on several key areas of mutual

interest:

- **Food Security and Health:** Governor Joseph emphasized the administration's focus on decreasing dependence on imported, processed foods. By revitalizing local agriculture and fisheries, Pohnpei aims to enhance nutritional independence and combat chronic health challenges.
- **Water and Utilities:** The leaders discussed critical infrastructure demands, specifically the preservation and expansion of reliable, clean water access across the state.
- **Energy Infrastructure:** The Governor shared progress on strengthening the local power grid, highlighting the installation of three new generators at the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC) to ensure reliable energy delivery.



Both leaders expressed a strong commitment to continued dialogue and partnership to advance these sustainable development goals.

General Assembly backs historic World Court climate crisis ruling

United Nations

21 May 2026

Suva, Fiji – The United Nations Resident Coordinator for Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, Dirk Wagener, welcomes the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of a resolution affirming the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the obligations of States in respect of climate change.

The ICJ earlier ruled that if States breach these obligations, they are legally responsible and may be legally required to stop the wrongful conduct, offer guarantees that it won't happen again, and make full reparation, depending on the circumstances.

The resolution was adopted today by an overwhelming majority of 141 Member States voting in favour. This outcome reflects broad cross-regional engagement with the Court's legal guidance and recognition of the role of international law in addressing climate change.

In response to the General Assembly's resolution, the UN Resident Coordinator, Dirk Wagener, said: "For the Pacific, this resolution carries a particular meaning. It reflects a journey that began with Pacific youth and governments, seeking legal clarity through multilateral institutions. The General Assembly's adoption reaffirms the relevance of international law in addressing climate change and reinforces a global framework that Pacific countries have long engaged in through cooperation, equity and shared responsibility."

The resolution marks a new phase in the international response to the ICJ's 2025 Advisory Opinion. By adopting this resolution, Member States have taken a collective institutional step to acknowledge the Court's guidance with implications on their national responses to climate change.

This development follows a process initiated by Pacific Island countries and young people who sought clarity on how existing international law applies to climate change. That initiative led the General Assembly, in March 2023, to unanimously request an Advisory Opinion from the ICJ. Following extensive written submissions and oral hearings, the Court clarified States' obligations to act with due diligence, cooperation and urgency to prevent significant harm to the global

climate system.

The resolution carries significant political and moral authority. It strengthens the global framework within which States pursue climate action and underscores the importance of good-faith cooperation and sustained international engagement.

The adoption of this resolution underscores the continuing role of the United Nations as a forum for collective action at a time of an accelerating climate crisis. The United Nations remains committed to working with governments and communities across the region to support nationally led priorities for climate resilience, sustainable development and a just transition, translating this global step forward into practical outcomes for the planet, people, and livelihoods.

Pacific Youth invited to shape climate action vision ahead of COP31

United Nations Development Programme

25 May 2026

Suva, Fiji - Pacific youth are being invited to help shape the region's climate agenda ahead of COP31 in Türkiye, through a series of talanoa dialogues commencing in Suva on 2 June.

With nearly 60 percent of the Pacific population under 35, young people are disproportionately affected by climate change yet remain underrepresented in decision-making spaces. This initiative aims to bridge that gap by strengthening youth voices, building advocacy

skills, and creating clear pathways for engagement in national, regional and global climate processes.

The three-part dialogue series is designed to unite Pacific youth priorities ahead of COP31 and beyond, bringing together young people from across the region in an interactive and collaborative setting.

The event is open to Pacific Island youth, including diaspora, aged between 18 and 35 years who have a passion for climate action, community leadership and advocacy. Participants from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to register,

ensuring a wide range of perspectives and experiences are represented.

Participants will have the opportunity to co-create a shared vision for a just and resilient Pacific, contributing to a collective youth advocacy agenda to be taken to COP31.

The series also serves as a pathway to the Pre-COP Australian Pacific Youth Climate Dialogue, where selected participants will directly engage with decision-makers on the global stage, here in Fiji and in Tuvalu.

Interested youth can register by completing the online application form here.

The Pacific Youth Talanoa series is co-designed and co-delivered by the Pacific Youth Council and the United Nations, in partnership with Pasifika Communities University and Pacific regional organizations.

Participants residing outside of Fiji can join the dialogues online, with those in Fiji encouraged to join in-person at the Pasifika Communities University on 2 June.

Special FFMM session endorses regional response mechanism under the Biketawa Declaration

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

May 23, 2026

Honiara, Solomon Islands - Forum Foreign Ministers convened virtually on Friday, 22 May 2026, for a Special Session of the Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting (FFMM), where they endorsed the regional response mechanism to the emerging energy crisis affecting Pacific economies, communities, and essential services.

The meeting was chaired from Honiara by the Solomon Islands Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Honourable Rick Houenipwela, with the support of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General, Baron Divavesi Waqa.

The Special Session followed the decision of Forum Leaders last month to invoke the Biketawa Declaration to establish a

collective regional mechanism to guide the Forum's response to the evolving crisis.

Ministers shared national experiences and highlighted the growing pressures facing Pacific communities as a result of rising energy costs, fuel supply uncertainty, and wider disruptions linked to the prolonged Middle East conflict. They noted that these pressures are being felt across key sectors, including transport, shipping, aviation, public services, and household livelihoods.

"The decision by Leaders to invoke the Biketawa Declaration, and to convene this Special Session of the FFMM, reflects the seriousness with which the Forum is approaching this evolving situation," said the Chair of the FFMM, Honourable Houenipwela. "It also reinforces the importance of regional solidarity, effective

coordination, and timely collective action as developments continue to unfold."

Secretary General Waqa said the discussions underscored the vulnerability of the Blue Pacific to external shocks and the importance of working together as one region.

"As highlighted through the regional assessments undertaken by our regional agencies, our Blue Pacific remains highly exposed to external shocks transmitted through global fuel markets, maritime supply chains, and international aviation systems," Secretary General Waqa said.

"These pressures are now beginning to intersect across Pacific economies, with direct implications on essential services, connectivity, economic resilience and the livelihoods of our people."

Ministers acknowledged the work undertaken by the agencies of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) through the establishment of a dedicated CROP Taskforce in recent weeks to compile regional data, analysis, and advice to support informed decision-making by Leaders under the Biketawa Declaration.

The meeting also reaffirmed the Forum's commitment to collective action in times of regional challenges. It also underscored the continuing relevance of the Biketawa Declaration as a mechanism for Pacific-led coordination, solidarity, and practical response.

As the situation continues to evolve, Forum Members will remain closely engaged to ensure that the region's response is timely and firmly grounded in the shared priorities and interests of Pacific peoples.

COSPPac3 Annual Session ends in Palau, setting direction for next steps

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

May 25, 2026

Palau - The Republic of Palau hosted the Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific Phase 3 (COSPPac3) Annual Session from 18–22 May 2026, bringing together Pacific Island countries, regional organisations and technical partners to strengthen climate and ocean services across the region.

The session gathered representatives from National Meteorological Services



and Land Survey Departments from 15 Pacific Island countries, funding partners including Australia and New Zealand, and technical partners such as the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, Geoscience Australia and Earth Sciences New Zealand.

Opening the session, Mrs Maria Ngemaes, Meteorologist-In-Charge at the Palau Weather Service Office, highlighted the importance of regional collaboration in addressing climate and ocean risks.

Australia’s Ambassador to Palau, His Excellency Toby Sharpe, reaffirmed Australia’s long-standing support for Pacific Island countries through COSPPac, noting the programme’s role in providing trusted and actionable information for decision-making.

The annual session reviewed the progress of COSPPac3 activities, including the delivery of climate outlooks, the Early Action Rainfall Watch Bulletin, climate and ocean data services, and tide calendars that support maritime safety and planning.

These services are helping countries better anticipate risks, inform infrastructure planning, and support key sectors such as fisheries, agriculture and disaster management.

The COSPPac3 Steering Committee convened over the final two days to cover the technical partners’ work plans, tools, and products, and to endorse the recommendations of the Program’s mid-term evaluation. Committee members also examined cross-cutting areas, including Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL), Gender Equality, Disability

and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), and communications, agreeing to strengthen investment in building capacity to ensure accessibility, two-way communication with stakeholders, and evidence-based decision-making.

As an implementing partner, SPC supports coordination, technical delivery and regional collaboration under COSPPac3, working closely with countries and partners to ensure services are relevant, inclusive and reach those most in need.

Outcomes from the session will inform further planning for COSPPac3, reinforcing regional cooperation and assisting Pacific Island countries in accessing and using climate and ocean information to remain resilient to the impacts of climate change and disasters.

PICRC publishes study on status of reef fish in Palau

PICRC

May 20, 2026

Palau - The Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) recently published a new scientific study on the status of reef fish populations in Palau in the journal *Reviews in Fish Biology and Fisheries*. The study analysed reef fish sold at the JR5 fish market in Koror between 2014 and 2024 and found that many important reef fish species may be overfished or vulnerable to overfishing.

The study used fish market data collected over the past decade by PICRC, together with data previously collected by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the University of Guam (UOG), and the Bureau of Fisheries (BOF). Scientists examined the sizes of fish from 45 of the most commonly landed reef fish species.

The study used a method called a “length-based stock assessment,” which looks at the size of fish being caught to estimate the health of fish populations. This approach is especially useful in places like Palau where detailed fisheries information is limited. Scientists also compared fish sizes collected today with historical records collected between 1976 and 1992.

The results showed that most of the top reef fish species in Palau are either depleted or at risk of being depleted, while only a few species appear to be sustainably fished. Researchers also found major changes in the types of fish being caught over time. Larger reef fish that were once common are now being replaced by smaller species, which may indicate long-term fishing pressure on reef ecosystems as well as changes in management over time.

These findings highlight the need for stronger reef fish management in Palau, especially around Koror where fishing pressure is highest. The study recommends management measures such as:

- Establishing size limits for important reef fish species
- Protecting fish spawning aggregation sites
- Maintaining the current export ban on reef fish

The study also highlights the importance of continuing fisheries research and monitoring in Palau. PICRC, TNC, and the Coral Reef Research Foundation (CRRF) are currently collecting biological samples to better understand how reef fish grow and reproduce in Palau’s waters. Additional fish monitoring is also being conducted by TNC, BOF at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment, and the Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM). According to Christina Muller Karanassos, lead author, “Building on the findings of this study, these ongoing efforts will help provide an even more comprehensive nationwide assessment of Palau’s reef fisheries and support future fisheries management and conservation efforts.”

The full study is available here: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11160-026-10054-3>.



Farmer Focus Conference comes to Chuuk on July 1



University of Guam

May 28, 2026

Guam - On July 1, 2026, the University of Guam Land Grant Extension Service will host its fifth Farmer Focus Conference in the Micronesia region. Following prior conferences in Guam, Pohnpei, Yap, and Palau, the conference this year will be coming to the island of Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia.

The event will bring together farmers, fishermen, community leaders, researchers, and regional partners in agriculture from Chuuk and across the Pacific. Guided by the theme “Matawach, Fonuwach, ina Manawach” (Our Ocean, Our Land, Our Lives), the conference will underscore the vital connections between the ocean, land, and people while addressing the pressing issues of food security, sustainable livelihoods, and mental wellness for farmers and fishermen.

The Farmer Focus program at UOG takes a holistic approach to supporting agriculture, recognizing that sustainable and reliable food production depends not only on environmental health, but also on the well-being of the people who steward these resources. In addition to technical sessions on climate-resilient agriculture and sustainable fishing, the conference will include dedicated discussions and workshops focused on mental health, stress management, and community support systems for those working

in agriculture and fisheries.

“Farmers and fishermen are the backbone of our island communities, yet they face increasing pressures from climate impacts and economic uncertainty,” said Kuan-Ju Chen, an agricultural economist with the UOG Land Grant Extension Service and program director of UOG Farmer Focus. “The conference reflects ongoing regional collaboration among Guam, the FSM, the Northern Marianas Islands, and Pacific partners to strengthen resilient island food systems and community well-being.”

“This conference is about strengthening the relationship among our people, our environment, and the future of our islands,” said Steven Young-Uhk, vice president for innovation and sustainability at the College of Micronesia-FSM. “For generations, Micronesian communities have depended on the land and ocean to sustain our way of life. We hope to strengthen resilient food systems that respect traditional knowledge while preparing for the challenges ahead.”

Community members, farmers, fishermen, and educators throughout Micronesia are encouraged to attend, as well as agricultural stakeholders and partners from abroad whose work may relate to agriculture in Micronesia and the Pacific islands.

The conference will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, July 1, at Chuuk High School in Weno, Chuuk. Registration is free of charge. To register, contact Bredalyn Atan at (691) 330-1911 or atanbred@comfsm.edu.fm. The registration deadline is Monday, June 15.

