



FSM Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project Newsletter

FSM R2R Project Hosts its Steering Committee Meeting in Yap



Colonia, Yap – On October 14-15, 2019, the FSM Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project, in collaboration with the Yap State EPA, convened its Steering Committee (SC) meeting in Yap. Participants include UNDP, National Government, State Governments and NGO representatives. The R2R SC is the core group responsible for making decisions for the project. Steered at the national level, the SC plays a critical role in monitoring and evaluation to ensure the project delivers on its expected results. This year's SC meeting marks a significant event with 5 additional members added to represent the interest of the four FSM States and the R2R International Waters (IW) Project.

The newly expanded Steering Committee, led by the recently appointed Chairwoman, Ms. Cynthia Ehmes and supported by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), facilitated the meeting proceedings which included the review and endorsement of key documents including the project's Mid-Term Review (MTR) management responses and revised log frame. One of the SC's key roles is to evaluate and approve the project's annual work plans. As such, work plans for each of the respective States including the PIU were presented to the SC for its consideration and approval.

Highlights of the second day included visits to three of the project's sites. The first visit was to the Nimpal Channel Marine Conservation Area (MCA), which R2R supported in previous years through revision of its MCA management plan and boundary demarcation. The participants also visited Yap's Division of Agriculture & Forestry compound where a small ribbon cutting ceremony was held to officially open the recently completed Compost Facility funded by the R2R project. The final stop was to Tamil community project sites with Tamil Resources Conservation Trust (TRCT), Tamil's community-based NGO.

TRCT was one of the recipients recently awarded the 2019 UN Equator Prize; a prize organized by the Equator Initiative within the United Nations Development Programme to recognize community efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and is currently being supported by the R2R project with their watershed management. Ms. Chiara Franco of The Nature Conservancy assisted Tamil Community and TRCT with their nomination to the Equator Prize which helped support TRCT's eventual selection and one of recipients awarded the Prize for 2019. Previous R2R support to TRCT includes funding of a water tank to support the community's water campaign efforts.

R2R Project Holds Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Division of Agriculture and Forestry Compound



On October 15, 2019, the R2R project held its ribbon cutting ceremony at the Division of Agriculture and Forestry Compound in Yap State. Delighted to be cutting the ribbon to celebrate the opening of Yap's Compost Shed Facility were, from left to right: Mr. Tamdad Sulog, Chief of the Division of Agriculture and Forestry (DAF), Yap State Department of Resources and Development (R&D), Mr. William Kostka, Director of the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), Mr. Henry Susaia, Director of the Pohnpei State EPA, Mr. Kevin Petrini, Team Leader for UNDP's Resilience and Sustainable Development (RSD) Unit, Ms. Cynthia H. Ehmes, Assistant Secretary of the Division of Environment, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECHEM), Ms. Debra Laan, Yap State R2R Coordinator and Ms. Rosalinda Yatilman, R2R Project Manager.

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Mr. Sulog welcomed guests including UNDP, members of the R2R Steering Committee and the R2R project staff by acknowledging UNDP and DECEM for their continued support and partnership through the R2R project.

"Constructing this compost shed facility is a big step for us towards our goal of improving our soil quality here in Yap using composts," Mr. Tamdad said. Today you will see that we have already started operating the facility — our goal is to produce 1,000-2,000lbs of compost each month to help rehabilitate the soil qualities of our savannah lands here in Yap.

Yap's Compost Shed Facility is funded by the R2R project and operated by DAF to supply communities with compost materials to help improve biological, chemical, and physical characteristics of soil, particularly in degraded savannah land areas and other highly degraded sites targeted by the project for rehabilitation.

Community-based Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (CEAFM) Consultation in Walung



Photo Courtesy of Kosrae R2R

Walung, Kosrae – On November 19, 2019, the 8th Community-based Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (CEAFM) follow-up consultation with Walung was held to finalize the community's monitoring sites. These sites are home to six (6) targeted resources identified by the community for conservation and protection. Of the 6, sea cucumbers and trochus were eliminated as they are currently managed under existing laws and regulations of the State of Kosrae. Clams, mangrove crabs, mangrove trees and fish remained on the list. Finally, on December 3-6, 2019 the same team coordinated 3 trips to begin the mapping and delineation process with assistance from community members of Walung. Next steps to include identification and delineation of Awane MPA's monitoring sites.

Did You Know???

The hump head wrasse is very important to the coral reef health. They eat crown-of-thorn starfish, therefore, keeping populations of this damaging coral reef predator in check.

Sanitary Pigpen Regulation Awareness Activities in Kosrae

Kosrae, FSM - From November 25 to December 04, 2019, the Education and Awareness Unit of the Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority (KIRMA) collaborated



Photo Courtesy of Kosrae R2R

with partners to conduct a series of awareness and outreach activities on the 1997 Sanitary Pigpen Regulation with all of Kosrae's Senior Citizen Organizations and five (5) public schools. The priority focus of the outreach events was to educate the public on the general provisions of the regulation including recommended types of pigpen structures, penalty components of the regulation for any violations and to solicit feedback for strengthening the pigpen regulation.



Photo Courtesy of Kosrae R2R

Each of the visits concluded with an interactive Q & A session where participants were invited to provide feedback for improving the regulation. One of the key recommendations noted included the need for the Kosrae State Government to revisit and revise the regulation. The participants were excited to learn about the Sanitary Pigpen Regulation, while highlighting the need to raise more awareness to create better understanding among the general public.

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Pohnpei State's Strategic Environmental Assessment Efforts being recognized throughout Pacific Island Countries (PICs)



PC: New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment

Auckland, NZ – The FSM Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project received another invitation from the New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment to attend its annual impact assessment conference at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. The 2-day conference was held on November 27-28, 2019. The Pohnpei State R2R Coordinator, Mr. Jorg Anson, representing the R2R project shared with the participants the knowledge and experiences of conducting Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) on small island states, namely Pohnpei State.

In Auckland, the FSM R2R team also attended an event hosted by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) in reviewing an SEA Guideline that is currently being finalized to assist PICs with an interest in conducting SEAs in the future.

SEA is an umbrella term for analytical and participatory approaches applied to policies, plans and programs (PPP) at the very earliest stages of decision-making to integrate environmental considerations and evaluate the inter linkages with economic and social considerations.

The FSM Ridge to Reef Project, with its new skills and knowledge in the area of impact assessment, is open to assisting parties interested in conducting SEAs throughout the Micronesia Region, most especially in the FSM. The participants not only were able to share their lessons learned but also gain valuable knowledge and information in the area of impact assessments in the Pacific and abroad.

Chuuk R2R Team Shares Results of Recently Completed Coral Reef Monitoring with Key Stakeholders



Photo Courtesy of Chuuk R2R

Weno, Chuuk – Upon finalizing the preliminary report of the Chuuk State Coral Reef Monitoring (CRM) conducted between July and August 2019, the R2R team reconvened on November 25, 2019 to share its results with Chuuk State key stakeholders. Participating to the workshop include traditional and municipal leaders, policy makers and community members. The workshop, facilitated by representatives of the University of Guam's (UOG) Marine Lab, MCT and the R2R project, aimed to provide an update to the status of Chuuk State's coral reefs, fisheries, and spawning aggregation of groupers — presented by UOGML researchers and the regional fisheries scientific advisor from The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

Post presentation of the CRM results, participants were divided into separate groups to discuss their understanding and views of management policies based the findings of the CRM. The outcome of the exercise was a summary of prioritized management policies drafted and shared with the participating policymakers.

The main highlight of the event, however, was an invitation from members of the Chuuk State Legislature for the CRM results to be presented at the beginning of its session on April 15 – 16, 2020. This will serve as an opportunity to further discuss the State's priority management policies including the regulations for Chuuk's Coastal Fisheries and PAN laws.

Mangrove Assessment and Establishment of Nurseries on Onei and Fefan

Onei & Fefan, Chuuk – From November 27 to December 22, 2019, a team consisting of the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), the Cooperative Research Extension (CRE) of the College of Micronesia – Chuuk Campus and the Chuuk Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) facilitated the state's mangrove forest assessment effort comprising the following activities: 1) the assessment, which included the identification of mangrove species, population and densities; 2) a training on how to plant

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mangroves and when to be transplanted and 3) awareness and education on the life cycle of mangroves. The overall goal of the assessment is to identify mangrove areas currently under threat for rehabilitation through the R2R project.



Two mangrove nurseries were established with newly planted mangrove seedlings to be transplanted once ready. Prior to establishing the nurseries, the team facilitated hands-on trainings with the goal of building local capacities in planting and maintaining mangrove nurseries.

Next steps will include a monitoring of the nurseries in March 2020, followed by the transplanting of the mangrove plants to the R2R sites.

Tamil Marine Managed Area Management Plan Updated with Support from R2R



Photo Courtesy of Yap R2R

Tamil, Yap – On December 17, 2019, the Tamil Resources Conservation Trust (TRCT) and its Board of Trustees convened to finalize the revision of its Tamil Marine Managed Area (MMA) management plan. The need to update Tamil's management plan came as a result of the community's desire to integrate a holistic approach (R2R approach) to the management of its natural resources. Furthermore, on December 19, 2019 the same group reconvened to adopt the management

plan. The R2R project, through its partnership with TRCT, provided the resources and tools to revise and update the management plan.

UNDP Approves Low Value Grants for Tamil and Weloy Municipalities

In December 2019, UNDP, through the R2R project, approved two Low Value Grants (LVGs) for small projects in Yap to be kicked off in FY2020. These grants will support restoration of a stream banks, upland watersheds and wetlands in the municipalities of Weloy and Tamil, covering 189ft of stream banks, 5.75 ha of watersheds and 0.6 ha of wetlands. The implementing entities for these grants are the following community-based organizations: the Tamil Resources Conservation Trust (TRCT) and the Kaday Community & Cultural Development Organization (KC&CDO).

These low value grants will aim to restore critically degraded watersheds to reduce soil erosion, sedimentation runoff and minimize the spread of wild fire into watersheds, rehabilitate coastal areas to help safeguard water and food resources, and strengthen retaining walls of streams to prevent sedimentation.

Did You Know?

If you love a sandy beach, thank a parrotfish, which can turn 1 ton of coral into sand in a year!

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