

Dear Pacific Island Academic Institution Affiliates,

As members of the Pacific Island Marine Protected Area Community (PIMPAC) we are writing to express our interest in developing partnerships with regional academic institutions that will foster improved marine resource management, specifically for marine protected areas (MPAs). PIMPAC is a regional effort to promote information sharing, capacity building for local students and resource management staff, and peer-to-peer learning around MPA management. PIMPAC supports local MPA initiatives (e.g. community engagement in resource management, monitoring of MPA effectiveness, management planning) and regional efforts (e.g.- the Micronesia Challenge: an effort to conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.)

PIMPAC is made up of representatives from American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, The Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawaii, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. It is the aim of PIMPAC to build partnerships of Pacific Islands MPA practitioners and strengthen MPA planning, management and evaluation efforts for the conservation of the marine resources of the Pacific Islands.

As a regional community of MPA managers we have identified the major challenges we face and our needs to overcome these challenges. Among our major challenges is an opportunity for local students (i.e. future managers) to gain adequate training and experience on marine resource management (including MPA management), through both coursework and applied experience. Another related challenge is the opportunity for existing natural resource management staff to access training and coursework on marine resource management that will eventually lead to degrees which are offered locally and do not require significant time off of work and or travel expense.

In response to these challenges, we see building partnerships with local academic institutions like yours, as critical to successful development and implementation of applied marine resource management and MPA management coursework. Together, as part of a long-term collaborative approach we can all begin to address the information and training needs of Pacific Island MPA managers.

As part of the PIMPAC year one work plan, we are identifying academic institutions that are interested in implementing curriculum and educational programs to support MPA management. There are several PIMPAC initiatives that your institution may be interested in to move forward this collaborative agenda:

- 1) Conduct a regional meeting in partnership with University of the South Pacific and the Locally Managed Marine Area Network to share existing materials and marine management program ideas. Also to identify gaps in material and some action items to begin to fill gaps.

2) Conduct an MPA management planning training for academic institution representatives, similar to a recent PIMPAC workshop in Chuuk for regional MPA managers. The goal would be to provide the information to the academic community to foster development of curriculum and/or short courses that can be offered periodically on their islands on MPA management planning.

3) Partner with the University of Guam Marine Lab coral management program happening in the summer of 2007. Contract the development and implementation of a one week “Intro to MPA Management” course to be implemented during the six week program.

These initiatives are still in the preliminary stage of development as we are seeking input from your institution to both refine them and offer other ideas on how your community’s needs for MPA management might best be served. Although PIMPAC can offer some limited financial resources to support these efforts, it has access to a wide variety of technical expertise and can support coordination services to assist gathering information from various MPA experts, and facilitating coursework development.

We hope this letter is received with interest from your program. Please respond to PIMPAC Coordinators, Meghan Gombos (Meghan.Gombos@noaa.gov), and Willy Kostka (mctdirector@mail.fm), by **February 28, 2007**, as to your institution’s interest in further developing this initiative. We will then contact you to discuss how our partnership might be developed.

We sincerely thank you for your time and attention to partnering with us to foster improved marine resource management in the Pacific Islands

Sincerely,

PIMPAC members:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliated Organization</i>	<i>Location</i>
Wayne Andrew	Helen Reef Project	Republic of Palau
Mary Rose Nakayama	Chuuk Conservation Society	Chuuk, FSM
Vanessa Konno-Anisin	Chuuk Conservation Society	Chuuk, FSM
Julita Albert	Chuuk Environmental Protection Agency	Chuuk, FSM
Kerat Rikim	Chuuk State Department of Marine Resources	Chuuk, FSM
Innocente Penno	College of Micronesia, Land Grant	Chuuk, FSM

Romio Osiena	Chuuk State Department of Marine Resources	Chuuk, FSM
Risa Grace Oram	Department of Marine And Wildlife Resources	American Samoa
Trina Leberer	The Nature Conservancy	Guam
Jay Gutierrez	Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources	Guam
Debbie Gowensmith	The Community Conservation Network	Hawaii
Scott Atkinson	The Community Conservation Network	Hawaii
Michael Guilbeaux	The Community Conservation Network	Hawaii
John Parks	The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Ocean Service	Hawaii
Damien Kenison	KUPA Community Organization	Hawaii
Aulani Wilhelm	NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Monument	Hawaii
Charles Chieng	YAP Community Action Program	Yap, FSM
Vanessa Fread	YAP Community Action Program	Yap, FSM
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Reedson P. Abraham	Department of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries	Kosrae, FSM
Andy George	Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization	Kosrae, FSM

Mr. Youser Anson	Department of Land & Natural Resources	Pohnpei, FSM
Dave Mathias	Department of Land & Natural Resources	Pohnpei, FSM
Lisa Ranahan Andon	Micronesia Conservation Trust	Pohnpei, FSM
Donald David	Marine Development Office of Economic Affairs	Pohnpei, FSM
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Jason Philibotte	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	Hawaii
Selaina Vaitautolu	Department of Marine And Wildlife Resources	American Samoa
Steve Why	Marshall Islands Conservation Society	Marshall Islands
Don Hess	College of Marshall Islands	Marshall Islands
Gerry Davis	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	Hawaii
Greg Moretti	CNMI Department of Fish and Wildlife	CNMI
Athline Clark	Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources	Hawaii
Mathew Ramsey	Hawaii Department of Fish and Wildlife	Hawaii