



GEF6 FSM INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES PROJECT

NEWSLETTER

UPDATE OF THE NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



One of the indicative activities under Output 1.2 – (Biosecurity IAS regulations and policies revised and developed at national and State levels to support the implementation of 2017 Biosecurity Act) – is to support the review and revision of the FSM National Invasive Species Strategic Action Plan (NISSAP) through stakeholder consultations to inform development of the 2022–2027 NISSAP. As of date, the national team was able to obtain information to update all four states' (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap and Kosrae) portions of the document. The team is preparing to update the National's portion, aimed to be completed in the next quarter.

RENOVATION OF BIOSECURITY FACILITIES IN THE FSM

The project is making great progress for the activity under Component 3 (Demonstrating best practices in safeguarding biodiversity and food production systems from IAS) to improve each State's Biosecurity Facility. All four facilities have been fully assessed and bidded out to interested companies for renovation. Outcomes of the bidding conferences will be announced once paperwork has been finalized.



REGIONAL BIOSECURITY TRAINING

In December of last year, Project Director John Wichep and Project Manager Jorg Anson, along with the National Technical Coordinator, Kimsy Kubo and the Yap Technical Coordinator, Elijah Tarofalmal, joined other biosecurity personnel, local government administrators and regional leaders from across four U.S. territories (American Samoa, CNMI, Guam and the US Virgin Islands), Freely Associated States (RMI, Palau, and FSM) and Kiribati, for a Regional Biosecurity Training in Guam. There the participants share lessons learned, challenges as well as participated in hands-on training on tools, techniques and best management practices on terrestrial and marine biosecurity.



ATOSSCOM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The project was fortunate in participating in the 48th ATOSSCOM (Association of Terminal Operators, Stevedoring and Shipping Companies of Micronesia) Annual Conference. The Communications and Knowledge Management Officer, Beverlyn Danis Fred, shared with the group the project goals, challenges and upcoming activities. There was great feedback after her presentation, with some of the participants encouraging all the other shipping companies to take the issue of Invasive Alien Species seriously, to even go as far as "*checking your pockets before you leave port*". GEF6 FSM IAS Project team is grateful to ATOSSCOM for providing the space for the project to showcase the work and sharing the passion of keeping our islands safe from invasive pests and diseases.



NEW PROJECT STAFF

The Project Management Unit (PMU) is pleased to introduce Ms. Julieta Isaac Mix as the new Project Finance and Administration Officer. Ms. Mix brings to the team a wealth of experience in finance and administration related activities as a former Tax Officer for Pohnpei State and Secretary/Admin Officer for Cooperative Research and Extension for the College of Micronesia-FSM. Welcome aboard, Julie!

The project is in the process of hiring new state technical coordinators for Pohnpei and Kosrae State.





MICRONESIA CLEAN UP DAY

Under the supervision of Chuuk State Environmental Protection Agency, the GEF6 FSM IAS Chuuk Coordinator joined other government agencies and local volunteer groups during Micronesia Clean Up Day on September 13, 2023. Each group was assigned areas in the town area and a few villages to do general cleaning. A few invasive weeds were also identified and eradicated during this event. Kinisou, Chuuk partners for great collaboration as always!



YAP ANNUAL AGRICULTURE FAIR

On December 27, 2023, Yap State held its annual Agriculture Fair at the Division of Agriculture compound in Dachngar. Yap State Technical Coordinator, Elijah Tarofalmal used this opportunity to showcase the project, as well as inform the participants about the threats of Invasive Species, most especially the Little Fire Ants and Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle. Promotional items such as t-shirts and mugs were given to participants that visited the GEF6 FSM IAS Project booth.



IMPLEMENTING NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS TO ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROTECT THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The Chuuk State Technical Coordinator shared a presentation on IAS through joined efforts of Micronesia Conservation Trust as host in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and Chuuk Women's Council. Inclusive in the workshop were several stakeholders of the GEF-6 IAS Project; Catholic Relief Services, College of Micronesia - Cooperative Research & Extension, Onei Environmental Conservancy and Management Association, Marine Resources Department, Disaster Risk Reduction (CDEOC), Public Health, and International Office of Migration. Workshop focused on supporting women roles in implementing challenges.



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COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE

The rhinoceros beetle is considered a major pest of coconut palms. It can be also found in betelnut, Pandanus species, banana, pineapple, and sugarcane. Adults damage living palms, either killing the tree due to direct damage, or opening up the tree to fatal damage from other insects or pathogens. On Pacific Islands with no natural enemies of this beetle, the damage can be extreme. In Palau, where the beetle first invaded in 1942, the coconut palm was eradicated entirely on some islands, with overall mortality across the archipelago reaching 50%. This beetle is currently a huge threat to the palm trees in Guam.

In September 2023, the beetle was confirmed to be present in the Marshall Islands! Let's keep this pest out of OUR islands! Help out by doing your part! Declare your items at all entry ports!



For more information on the GEF6 FSM IAS project, contact the Project Management Unit:

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