

The United States' Response to Annual Report Part II, Questions 0020-0025

The United States' response to Annual Report Part II questions 0020-0025, relating to requirements to assist Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Territories (CMM 2013-6 and CMM 2013-07) is generally described in this document, which provides selected examples of U.S. support for the region related to these WCPFC obligations. As requested by the Secretariat, the United States has provided additional detail in the Further Information box for each question.

Assisting and Partnering Across the Pacific Islands

The United States has a long history of assisting and partnering with the Pacific Islands to address local and global challenges. From capacity development to fisheries conservation to economic development, education and more, the United States contributes resources and expertise to small island developing states and territories across the Pacific Islands region. As a Pacific nation, the United States assists its regional partners both directly and by working through various multilateral organizations. The assistance provided through grants or scholarships can easily be documented by dollars spent, and highlighted by specific programs and campaigns. A significant amount of the U.S support for SIDS on fisheries also relies on in-kind material, logistical, and technical support that is more difficult to quantify.

Capacity development of personnel in SIDS and territories is a priority for the United States that encompasses a wide range of programming, from education grants to search and rescue workshops and training. The United States provided nearly \$4 million in grants to SIDS for scholarships for higher education preparation, participation, and training, as well as funding for marine and environmental science education at SIDS colleges. Nearly half a million dollars was provided to SIDS to support community efforts to monitor and protect leatherback turtle nesting sites and bolster multi-disciplinary green sea turtle monitoring. In addition to youth outreach and education, the United States also focused on strengthening maritime safety capabilities and awareness in 2019 by jointly hosting and organizing the Eighth Pacific Regional Search and Rescue workshop (PACSAR-8). The multilateral PACSAR-8 was complemented by local-level SAR workshops and on the water training in several SIDS.

Cross-cutting programs such as USAID's Pacific-American Fund (PACAM) spent more than \$1.6 million over several years, including in 2019, to improve economic resiliency and food security in the region. Examples of projects supported by PACAM include grants for 1) women's participation in community decision making and marine resource management, 2) protection of biodiversity and marine environments through outreach and education programs, and 3) the manufacture of cost-efficient local fish feed for local aquaculture to enhance livelihoods. Another multi-year program funded by the United States provided \$300,000 in 2019 to the

Micronesian Conservation Trust to build capacity and transfer technology for coral reef monitoring to guide resource management policy and meet objectives of the Micronesia Challenge across Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Projects such as the Micronesian Conservation Trust are administered under the Compacts of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Palau Compact Extension. In 2019, these agreements provided more than \$300 million in sector-specific assistance for education, health care, public infrastructure, environment, public sector capacity building, and private sector development.

The United States also partnered with SIDS in the areas of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance. The United States provided in-kind support of aircraft, vessels, and technical expertise to FFA operations Kuru Kuru, Island Chief, Rai Balang, and Tui Moana. Together, the United States and SIDS leveraged our monitoring and law enforcement partnerships to carry out more than 67 fishing vessel inspections or boardings in 2019, including through Shiprider agreements with several Pacific Island partners.

In 2019 NOAA's Marine Debris Program awarded funds under four grants to entities for marine debris removal, prevention, and research projects in the Northern Marianas, Guam, and American Samoa. NOAA would also welcome the opportunity for future collaboration with SIDS to establish marine debris action plans and emergency response guides where needed.

In addition, the United States provides \$21 million annually to support economic development in SIDS under an Economic Assistance Agreement with FFA related to the 1987 Treaty on Fisheries. The funds are managed by FFA and Pacific Island parties to support a range of fisheries development, economic development, and capacity building activities.