

## **Select United States Assistance Provided to Small Island Developing States and Territories Related to Obligations under CMM 2013-06 & 2013-07**

This paper provides examples of relevant U.S. support for the WCPFC and Small Island Developing States and territories during 2017. Additional support may have been provided for which data and information was not available at the time of preparation and submission of this report.

### **Selected Support for MCS and other Enforcement-Related Activities:**

- A NOAA Office of Law Enforcement VMS Enforcement Tech traveled to and was assigned to the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Center (RFSC) at the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Headquarters in Honiara, Solomon Islands. At the RFSC the OLE VMS Tech participated in and supported FFA's MCS Operation TUI MOANA.
- NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, during FFA MCS Operations TUI MOANA and KURU KURU, conducted boardings and inspections of foreign fishing vessels that came to port in Pago Pago, American Samoa and in Guam. The results of those boardings were reported to the RFSC at FFA HQ in support of the MCS Operations listed above.
- NOAA Office of Law Enforcement conducted enforcement and regulations training for Division of Fish and Wildlife Officers in CNMI. The training covered guidance on environmental laws, fisheries regulations, and vessel boarding related topics regarding IUU fishing.
- NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) and the U.S. Coast Guard participated in the first ever joint South Pacific patrol aboard a U.S. Navy asset in support of an Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI). NOAA OLE and the OMSI team conducted boardings within the Nauru EEZ on nine purse seine vessels, and assisted in the training of a Nauru Fishery Officer in advanced boarding training, including investigative techniques.
- U.S. Coast Guard cutters completed three deployments, totaling approximately 25 days, supporting shipriders from two WCPFC members that have bilateral agreements with the United States, including the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau. During these deployments, twelve fishing vessels were boarded.
- U.S. Navy ships, with embarked U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement detachments, supported shipriders from three WCPFC members that have bilateral agreements with the United States. These countries included Tuvalu, Nauru, and Vanuatu. During these deployments, thirty fishing vessels were boarded.
- U.S. shiprider agreements provide a critical mechanism for cooperation on combating IUU fishing and enhancing maritime law enforcement. The U.S. government had

shiprider agreements with ten PICs in 2017: the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

### **Direct support to PICs for Observer Program and Port Monitoring Capacity Building Activities:**

- NOAA Fisheries participated in and assisted with facilitation of the 2017 Regional Observer Coordinator's Workshop and the joint FFA/SPC Port Monitoring Workshop to identify data needs and national port requirements.
- The United States and stakeholders provided financial and other support for the FFA Observer Program under the Treaty on Fisheries between the Governments of Certain Pacific Island States and the Government of the United States of America.
- NOAA Fisheries provided support and training for observers employed through regional observer programs throughout the Pacific, including training to support ongoing biological tissue sampling throughout the Pacific.
- NOAA Fisheries provided support to the Forum Fisheries Agency & SPC through a review of the American Samoa Field Office Sampling Program to connect port sampling data to data obtained at sea by regional Pacific island observers. The project will provide data to local and regional managers to contribute to more informed fisheries management.

### **Selected Direct Support to PICs on Projects of Interest:**

- The United States awarded a \$99,998 grant to support community-led, ecosystem-based adaptation and to improve sustainable fisheries management through local interactive visual materials and community action planning in Papua New Guinea.
- The United States awarded a \$174,785 grant to support the protection of biodiversity and marine environments in Kimbe Bay, Papua New Guinea through outreach and education programs. The aim of this project is to improve understanding of and build capacity for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of coral reef resources in local communities.
- NOAA Fisheries provided \$69,000 to fund and support community-based monitoring of presence, habitat use, and foraging ecology of the American Samoa-origin stock of green sea turtles at two key foraging grounds in Fiji. This project builds on a previously co-founded project in which studies were conducted on key Fijian foraging grounds during the nesting and non-nesting seasons, with the use of satellite-tracking data and flipper-tagging data, to examine potential links between green sea turtle stocks originating from American Samoa and the foraging grounds of Fiji.

- NOAA Fisheries held trainings in Guam, CNMI, American Samoa and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as part of a Coral Identification Training Program. The purpose of the program is to increase capacity of coral reef monitoring efforts, enhance data on regional coral habitats, and promote effective conservation work across the region.

#### **Selected Development and Transfer of Fisheries Science and Technology:**

- NOAA Fisheries Science Center provided assistance, training and upgrades for various IT and data collection systems for multiple fishery entities in American Samoa, Guam, and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- NOAA Fisheries provided \$15,000 to American Samoa Sea Grant to continue to build capacity of Pacific Islanders in fisheries science, sustainable aquaculture, and marine biology through an internship program with the Center for Sustainable Integrated Agriculture and Aquaculture.
- NOAA Fisheries provided \$25,000 to support funding for science internships at the University of Guam for students of qualified projects from the Guam Island-wide Science Fair. This internship program will develop students' technical skills and knowledge of marine resources, and enhance their academic qualifications to pursue a career in fisheries science or related fields.
- NOAA Fisheries provided multiple workshops and training opportunities in American Samoa for local managers and industry representatives, including Safety Drill Conductor training, coral reef monitoring, and collection of data through the Western Pacific Fisheries Information Network.

#### **Selected Support for Data Collection, Reporting, Verification, Exchange, and Analysis:**

- NOAA Fisheries provided \$215,000 to support the establishment of a fisheries monitoring network across Micronesia to develop data sets that are needed to assess stocks and guide fisheries policies, and to maximize economic benefits, food security and ecosystem health. This project will consolidate fishery monitoring datasets, improve existing photo-monitoring tools for fish landings, build an online monitoring database that connects with local databases, and conduct monitoring efforts in two jurisdictions with no standardized historical data available.
- NOAA Fisheries provided \$290,000 to support the expansion of the Saipan Bio-sampling Data Collection Program into age, growth, and sexual maturity research for commercially important reef fish species in CNMI. This reproductive life history data on reef fish will support future development of Acceptable Biological Catch and Annual Catch Limits for coral reef fisheries.
- NOAA Fisheries provided over \$160,000 to support funding for an American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources project to assess and monitor fish catch in the U.S. EEZ around American Samoa. This program will provide the fisheries

information needed to develop, implement, and evaluate fishery-management plans for American Samoa.

- NOAA Fisheries provided almost \$15,000 to support funding for a Guam Pacific Fisheries Data Program to develop management and conservation plans for Guam's fisheries by monitoring and documenting transshipped species of fish that are offloaded by foreign longliners within Guam's commercial port.
- NOAA Fisheries provided almost \$15,000 to CNMI's Division of Fish and Wildlife to fund data collection and entry for the management of fishery resources. This funding will assist in an effort to collect, process, and share important data during fishing tournaments for use in federal and local fisheries-management programs. This data will be the principal source of information for the analysis and management options for pelagic species.
- NOAA Fisheries, through the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, provided \$18,000 to support projects identified in the Marine and Conservation Plan of CNMI. The project includes improvements to community-based fisheries management and the fisheries statistics database with the CNMI Department of Land and Natural Resources.

#### **Selected Capacity Building and Development, including Training and Related Efforts:**

- The United States awarded a \$1,881,749 grant to improve economic resiliency and food security in the Republic of the Marshall Islands through aquaculture development. The project will manufacture cost-efficient local fish feed to boost local aquaculture, example fish production through grow-out in open ocean cages, and train the local workforce to establish small aquaculture farms to enhance livelihoods.
- The United States awarded a \$266,255 grant to support women's participation in community decision making and marine resource management in coral reef and nearshore ecosystems in Papua New Guinea.
- The United States provided over \$90,000 to The Nature Conservancy Micronesia to pilot a community-based fisheries management program in Chuuk, FSM to address a decline in fisheries due to overfishing and damage to coral reef habitats.
- NOAA Fisheries provided almost \$250,000 to support the development of sustainable capture-based aquaculture and associated hatchery-based aquaculture as an alternative source of income and food security for rural fishing communities in Pohnpei, FSM.
- NOAA Fisheries provided \$140,000 to support funding nesting surveys, beach monitoring activities, and stranding programs to provide a strong foundation for science-based conservation and management of sea turtle populations throughout American Samoa and CNMI.

- The United States Department of Interior provided \$190,000 to the CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality and the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance to train and develop staff in marine and island eco-systems management and train youth in environmental conservation.
- NOAA Fisheries provided \$15,000 to support the Fish Identification Spawning Surveys Habitat (FISSH) Project in Guam. The purpose of the project is to provide training for local residents in the location and identification of fish spawning aggregations to improve data on aggregation and habitat variations over time.
- NOAA Fisheries, through the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, provided \$25,000 to support improvements and modifications to an important fishing platform in Guam. These improvements will provide enhanced safety for recreational fishing activities and increase accessibility for local fishers.
- The United States provided support for the Enhancing Capacity for Ocean Acidification Monitoring and Mitigation in the Pacific Islands, Latin America and the Caribbean (OAMM) project, a public-private partnership with the Ocean Foundation that seeks to expand ocean acidification monitoring through the delivery of regional training workshops, delivery of kits for ocean chemistry monitoring, and mentoring of new investigators. OAMM has hosted two science training workshops at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji and trained 23 scientists from 10 Pacific Islands countries, created and procured customized kits of equipment for scientists in seven countries, supported the development of monitoring plans for seven countries, solicited proposals to conduct blue carbon restoration projects in the Pacific Islands, created an e-learning space for kit recipients through the Ocean Acidification Information Exchange, and awarded three mentorship scholarships.

#### **Other Forms of Support for Pacific Island Fisheries:**

- The U.S. government provided annual economic support funds to the FFA pursuant to an Economic Assistance Agreement related to the Treaty on Fisheries between the Governments of Certain Pacific Island States and the Government of the United States of America. The funds are used by Pacific Island countries to support fisheries development projects and broader economic development in the region.