

Fran Castro Houk Chair, U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee (AIC)

36<sup>th</sup> U.S. Coral Reef Task Force September 22, 2016 | Saipan, CNMI



# **AIC Updates**

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Finalized our AIC Action Plan, 2016-2020

- Internal working doc and spreadsheet of actions
- Supplemental to AIC Strategic
   Plan

AIC Chair position held by Fran Castro extended 1 more year.

# **Federal-Jurisdiction Integration**

- Critical to the effective management and conservation of our coral reefs.
- Task Force = OPPORTUNITY
- Increased communication & outreach → increased collaboration
- SUGGESTIONS? What can we do to increase our outreach to and engagement of federal agencies and the greater Task Force?



# Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program

- Main coral reef management needs in the jurisdictions
- USCRTF target issue (Strategy, Resolution 34.1)
- Benefits for all Task Force members
- Benefits to coral reef resources
- Updates in AIC Chair's Report
- In and out of the box ways to sustain this program long term
- Look forward to working with Task Force + appreciate co-chair commitment to moving forward



#### **Coral Reef Conservation Act Reauthorization**

- 114th Congress: H.R. 5771 and 5821
- Communications with Congressional offices
- Continue work with the USCRTF on the reauthorization of CRCA (e.g., finding areas of common ground).

# CORAL REEF CONSERVATION ACT

16 U.S.C. 6401 et seq December 23, 2000

# USCRTF Strategy, Mitigation Handbook, & Watershed Partnership Initiative Strategy

- Appreciate USCRTF collaboration, time, and work
- Informative and impressive documents
- Great example of collaborative nature of USCRTF

U.S. Coral Reef
Task Force
Strategy,
FY2016-2021

USCRTF Handbook
on Coral Reef
Impacts: Avoidance,
Minimization,
Compensatory
Mitigation, and
Restoration

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
Watershed Partnership
Initiative Strategy

# **Jurisdictional Updates**



#### American Samoa

- COTS outbreak managed
- Faga'alu Community MPA
- Marine Debris Action Plan & trash collection
   + campaigns a success
- <u>Needed</u>: Funding and technical support for derelict vessel removal



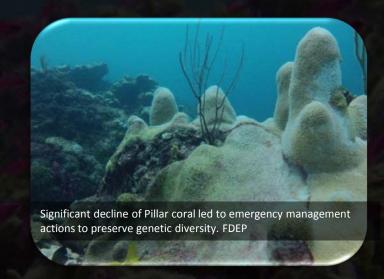


#### **CNMI**

- Resilience assessments
- Community reporting via new website & mobile app
- Shoreline development, bleaching, vessel groundings
- <u>Needed</u>: Funding and support for bleaching and disturbance response plan

#### Florida

- Pillar coral emergency efforts
- Our Florida Reefs completed
- Needed: Emergency funding and response capacity for coral reef events





#### Guam

- Interagency Reef Response team
- Invasive bamboo removal success, resilience assessment
- <u>Needed</u>: Water quality and enforcement assistance

#### Hawai'i

- Coral Bleaching Management Plan
- Senate Bill 2453
- Kaupulehu Marine Reserve established
- Needed: Federal support for beach renourishment and support for management strategies in South Kohala, Big Island





#### Puerto Rico

- Review of coral reef priorities
- NOAA Habitat Blueprint Implementation Framework
- <u>Needed</u>: Funding and surveillance support of coral reefs in protected areas

#### U.S. Virgin Islands

- Vessel grounding response team
- Derelict vessel survey in St. Croix
- Baseline data @ 2 monitoring sites
- <u>Needed</u>: Research support on invasive seagrass management





#### Federated States of Micronesia

- Commercial sea cucumber harvest
- Micronesia Regional Collaboration and Enforcement Workshop
- <u>Needed:</u> Enforcement resources, outreach and communications support

#### Republic of the Marshall Islands

- Resource management plans for 2 new proposed MPAs
- CMAC Strategic Action Plan and Terms of Reference
- Baseline assessments for fish, coral and inverts (Reimaanlok for Ebon, Ujae, Lae, & Wotho)





#### Republic of Palau

- Underwater and landings fisheries surveys in northern reef
- Ecological monitoring of all MPAs with coral and seagrass conducted
- 1st coral recruitment assessment completed

# Acknowledgements



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- Task Force co-chairs
- Task Force members & member agencies
- CNMI BECQ and Guam BSP Jihan Buniag, Lola Leon Guerrero, and their teams
- Austin Shelton and Raymond Jualin
- AIC Secretariat

