An underwater photograph of a coral reef. In the foreground, there is a large, branching coral structure with a greenish-brown hue. Several small, yellowish-orange fish with dark stripes are swimming around the coral. The background is a deep blue, suggesting the open ocean. A dark blue banner with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee **Chair's Report**

33<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Coral Reef Task Force  
Washington DC  
19 February 2015

Fran Castro  
AIC Chair

# Introduction

Welcome Governor Calvo and  
principals

Welcome Cheryl Fossani, new  
USCRTF Executive Secretariat  
from the Department of the  
Interior

New AIC Vice Chair: Jean-Pierre  
Oriol, USVI







# Overarching Priorities

AIC top priorities

D. Burdick

# Overarching Priorities

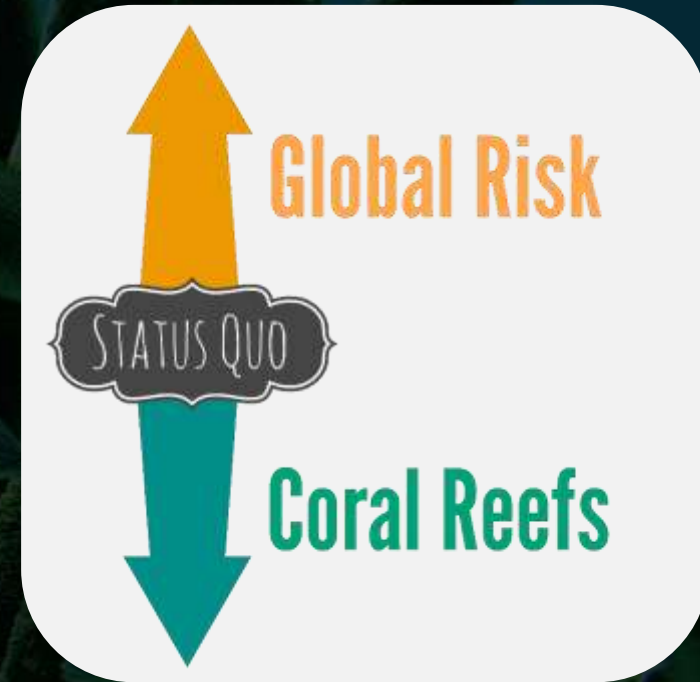
The global risk to coral reefs continues to grow and under the *status quo*, coral reefs continue to decline at alarming rates.

*We must...*

- Establish the most effective way of working together → priority natural resource management outcomes
- Make wise use of limited resources and be more effective with what we have

## AIC PRIORITIES:

- Achievable and shared site-based and resource-focused outcomes; and
- Integrated and strengthened federal-local partnerships.







# Main Issue Areas

Issues of importance for all U.S. coral reef jurisdictions.

D. Burdick

# Global climate events



2015 forecast: Worst coral bleaching since 1998

Continue working together to improve local conditions → increased coral reef survivorship  
**DOES NOT SOLVE THE LARGER PROBLEM**

## **IMPERATIVE NEED:**

- Immediate addressing of climate change and carbon emissions at the national and international levels

**The AIC asks that the Task Force be a voice in pushing for the immediate elevation of the climate change issue within the Federal government.**



# ESA-listed corals

## NOAA collaboration and communication

- Lance Smith and Ann Garrett, NMFS PIRO

**Balance is key and we are here and ready to help.**

- Ideas, suggestions, knowledge, expertise

## Comments submitted (Nov. 2014):

- Activities related to common uses
- Minor accidental impacts (i.e., we don't want to make innocent people guilty) + thresholds
- Detailed plan for streamlining of consultation and permitting processes



**We hope that communications will continue and request briefings and consultations from NOAA on this issue moving forward.**

# Coral Fellowship Program

**Support + Commitment +  
Partnership =  
Revitalized program**

## **FY15 funding:**

- Joint proposal to NOAA CRCP internal grant program
- Financial commitment of DOI OIA

**Integrated program and partnership**

**Long-term, sustainable funding**

- ✓ AIC priority
- ✓ Jurisdiction management priority
- ✓ Fills ID'd capacity gap
- ✓ NOAA CRCP primary objective & "Roadmap" principles
- ✓ USCRTF strategic & targeted priorities

**The AIC requests the Task Force's formal support of the program and engagement, working with the AIC towards a goal of building an institutionalized program with a sustained source of funding.**



# AIC Request



- AIC focus on integrated and strengthened federal-jurisdiction partnerships
- Past practice at the USCRTF Meetings
- Information sharing
  - Jurisdictional management priorities and emerging issues
  - Federal agency updates

**The AIC requests...**

**½ day meeting on jurisdictional management priorities and updates @ DC meetings and ½ day meeting on federal agency updates at jurisdiction meetings.**



# AIC Updates

Top happenings since September 2014.

NOAA



# AIC Updates



## AIC Strategic Plan

- Final draft review
- Partner input/feedback (DOI & NOAA)
- Roll out at Fall 2015 USCRTF meeting
- Updates:

<http://allislandscommittee.org/whatwedo/publications/strategicplan/>

## New AIC News & Updates E-newsletter

- Includes updates from the AIC, new AIC blog posts, grant information, upcoming events and opportunities, media hits, resources, new publications, and NOAA CoRIS updates

- Sign-up at:

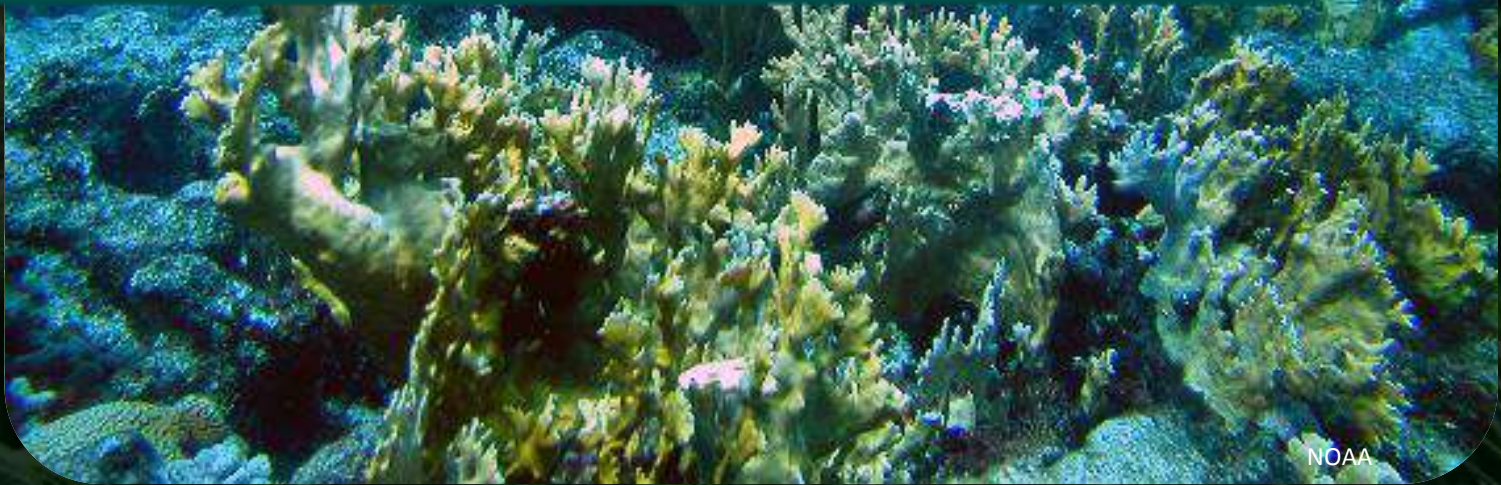
<http://allislandscommittee.org/whatwedo/news-updates/>





# Jurisdiction & FAS Updates

Top happenings since September 2014.





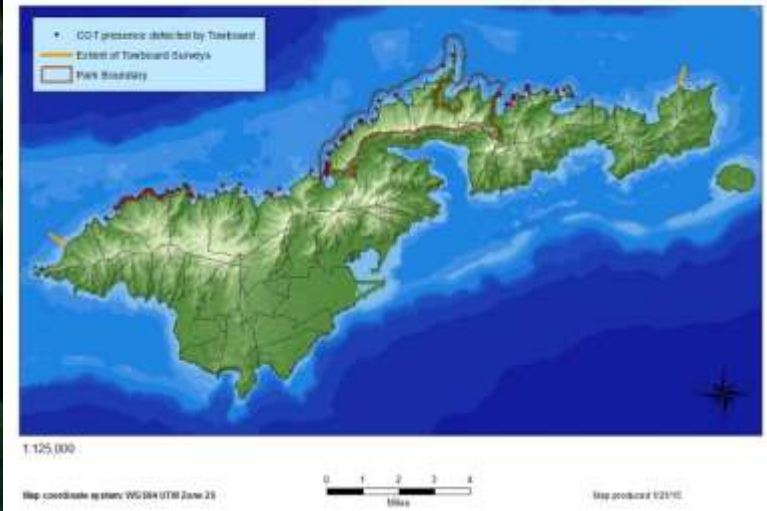
## American Samoa

### Crown of Thorns Starfish Eradication

- Interagency Cooperation continues
- COTS still present in outbreak numbers

National Park of American Samoa  
Crown of Thorns Outbreaks, January 2015

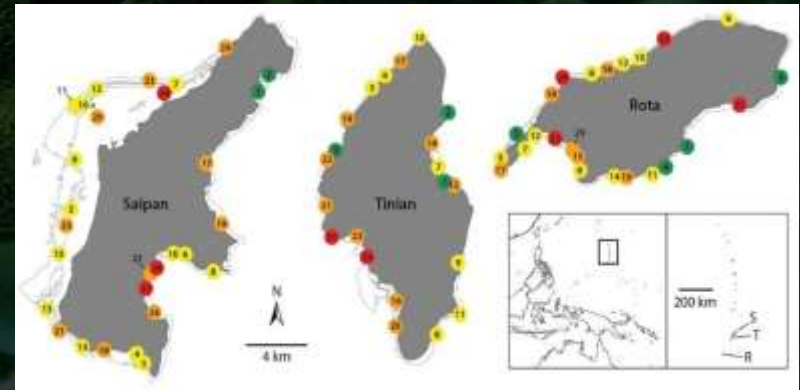
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## CNMI

### 2014 expansion of the 2012 Saipan Reef Resilience Study

- Rota, Tinian and Aguijan
- Improved approach and methodology
- Broadened understanding of relative reef resilience
- Funded by NOAA CRCP & USGS
- Final report: Spring 2015



Relative scores for 78 forereef locations around Saipan, Tinian, Aguijan and Rota. Map developed by Jeffrey Maynard.

## Florida

### Our Florida Reefs Working Groups

- Drafted ~200 Recommended Management Actions
- Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative will review and provide feedback



Steps of the Our Florida Reefs Community Planning Process. Credit: FL Coral Program

## Guam

### Humatak Community Foundation

- Recruits youths as Coral Reef Ambassadors
- Coordinate heritage activities
- Example: ridge exploration, coral monitoring, and tree planting



Umatac Coral Reef Ambassadors planting tree in September 2014, Umatac Bay.



## Hawai'i

### Severe Coral Bleaching Event

- Most severe event on record
- Main Hawaiian Islands
- SST reached 86°F
- DAR is monitoring recovery

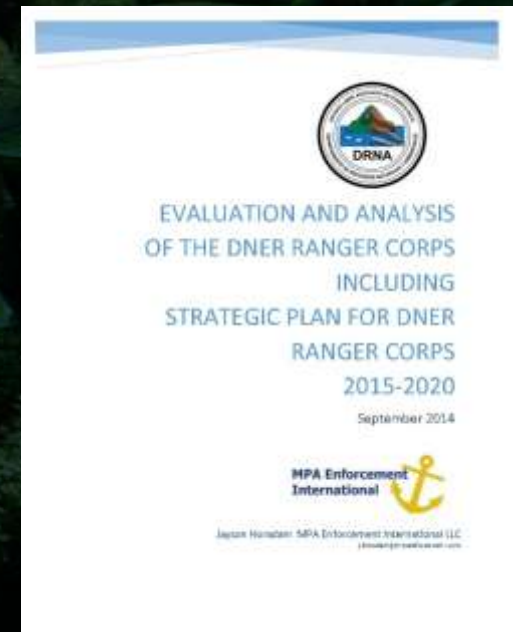


DAR Rapid Response Team monitoring coral bleaching on Oahu. Credit: Catlin Seaview Survey

## Puerto Rico

### DNER Corps of Rangers

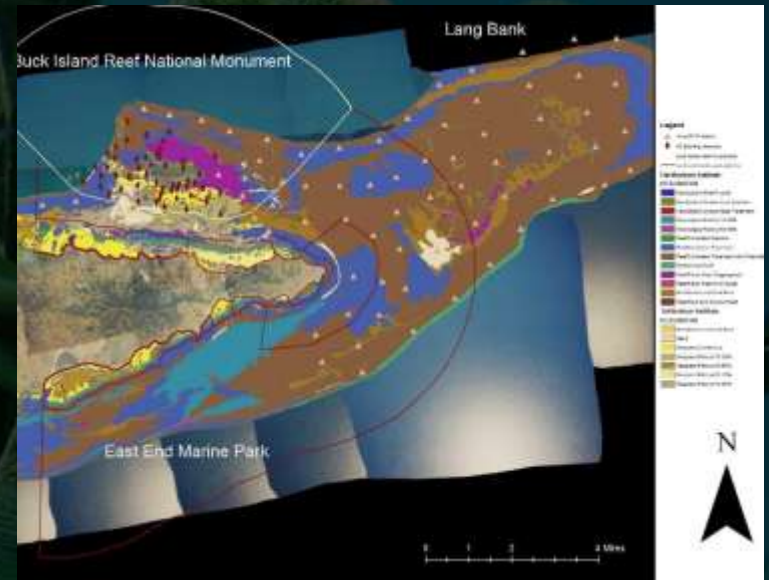
- External evaluation conducted
- Recommended by Puerto Rico Jurisdictional Capacity Assessment Report



## USVI

### Acoustic Monitoring System Expansion

- DPNR-CZM partnered with UVI
- East end of St. Croix
- Partner: National Park Service
- Movement patterns of key species are monitored as they pass between the territorial and federal boundaries



Location map for NPS – STXEEMP acoustic monitoring array. Credit: Ian Lundgren, Buck Island National Monument, National Park Service

## Federated States of Micronesia (Affiliate)

### Geospatial Training

- FSM Geospatial Information Development and Application for Data and Decision Making; October 21-22, 2014; College of Micronesia-FSM
- Applied disaster risk reduction
- In collaboration with Pacific Disaster Center, UH Sea Grant, Island Research and Education Initiative, and COM-FSM Partners



Training participants from FSM National and (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap) State Agencies with GIS practitioners/users and training facilitators. Credit: A. Takesy



## Republic of the Marshall Islands (Affiliate)

### Woja Conservation Area

- Signs put up
- Buoys deployed



Billboard for Woja Conservation Area. Credit: Rob Taylor



Members of Joint Coordinating Committee. Credit: PICRC

## Republic of Palau (Affiliate)

### P-CoRIE Project 2<sup>nd</sup> JCC Meeting

- Palau Coral Reef and Island Ecosystem (P-CoRIE)
- November 25, 2014
- PICRC, Palau Community College, and the University of the Ryukyus
- Topics: 1+ year progress & future activities
- Goal: Project results used to form policy and inform management

The background of the slide is a vibrant underwater photograph of a coral reef. In the upper half, several small, bright blue fish swim against a clear blue sky. Below them, a dark teal arrow points from left to right, serving as a backdrop for the title. The lower half of the image shows a close-up of a coral reef with various types of coral, including branching and brain corals, in shades of brown and tan. The overall scene is rich in marine life and color.

# Acknowledgements

NOAA



# Acknowledgements

- Governor Calvo and principals
- Task Force Member Agencies
  - NOAA, DOI, EPA, NRCS
- Liza Johnson, Shannon Simpson, and Cheryl Fossani
- Watershed Working Group & Watershed Partnership Initiative Strategy Team
- AIC Secretariat

A close-up photograph of a coral reef, showing numerous small, yellowish-white coral polyps on a reddish-brown substrate. A dark teal arrow with a white outline points from the left towards the right, partially obscuring the coral. The word "Questions?" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font inside the arrow.

# Questions?

D. Burdick