



## SUMMARY

# Community-based Management Plan for Coastal and Marine Resources of the Village of Malesso

March 5, 2014

In February 2012, Mayor Ernest Chargualaf hosted a community meeting to discuss fishery management issues, identify community needs and develop potential projects that could benefit the village of Merizo (currently called Malesso). Partnering in this meeting was the Guam Department of Agriculture, NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center and Western Pacific Fishery Management (Council). Numerous longstanding coastal and marine resource issues were identified by community participants, including the Achang Reef Marine Preserve, Cocos Island PCB contamination, increasing competing uses in the lagoon, continued fishing practices for seasonal run fisheries, and overall lack of agency engagement and follow up on community issues. A primary outcome from this engagement was the community's interest and desire to engage in community-based fishery and resource management planning. With commitments from the Department of Agriculture and the Council, Malesso community participants discussed and agreed for the village of Malesso to be a pilot project for a community-based planning initiative.

Since the 2012 agreement, the Malesso Mayor, Department of Agriculture, Council and the Merizo community coordinated efforts to host a strategic planning initiative to develop a community-based management plan for Malesso coastal and marine resources. A series of strategic planning workshops were held in Malesso from August to November 2013 with 107 community participants, partnering agencies and public to discuss village resources, ongoing activities and community issues in an effort to develop village vision for the future, objectives and priorities for the future management of village coastal and marine resources. A timeline of engagement activities is attached for reference.

Workshop participants worked through the planning process to clearly: 1) define their management area of interest; 2) map, inventory and prioritize targeted community resources; 3) develop conservation, socio-economic, cultural and governance objectives; and 4) identify, map, characterize and describe current uses and activities; and 5) identify and assess conflicting activities.



Three overarching plan objectives were developed and adopted by the community participants to address the conservation of resources, sustain social and economic opportunities for the community and ensure a community voice in the governance of Malesso resources.

*Regarding conservation:*

*To ensure Malesso's living marine resources, along with their ecosystems and habitats, are restored, maintained and protected. In addition, resources shall be monitored, as prescribed by the community, to assess and mitigate environmental impacts from external effects to ensure the sustainability of the resources for the benefit, health and well-being of the Malesso Community today and in future generations.*

*Regarding social/economic:*

*"Protehe I Li'na'la'ta! To protect the local (indigenous) rights of the Malesso community to access and conserve its resources to support their sustainable livelihood, health, well-being and to educate and promote traditional and cultural practices for present and future generations.*

*Regarding governance:*

*To ensure compatibility between and to use federal, territorial and local management regimes to their full benefit to provide for and support the Malesso community's local rights for a healthy and sustainable livelihood.*

By clearly understanding, characterizing and prioritizing key coastal and marine resource issues, community participants were better positioned to discuss and develop potential strategies to take positive steps toward meeting their stated plan objectives. Some of the broad strategies and declarations put forth by the community include:

- Engaging *Sainas* or elders during planning process in any community undertaking. Consulting *sainas* to incorporate traditional practitioner's knowledge in the planning and development of policy for the monitoring and management of Malesso resources to ensure such policies afford special privileges to traditional leaders/elders/practitioners;
- Recognizing that fishery resources, especially the seasonal run fisheries, are of critical importance to the Malesso community;
- Engaging those who fish commercially to respect their fishing grounds to ensure sustainability and a reduce need for enforcement;
- Ensuring community engagement in future processes that could result in more marine area closures being established;
- Establishing a process and schedule for non-Malesso resident resource users to obtain a permit prior to fishing or using other village resources through the Mayor's Office;
- Developing and establishing a zoning regime for the Malesso lagoon area to separate thrill craft activities from other marine activities, including fishing, to mitigate serious community safety concerns for all resource users;

The Plan also identifies actions and activities at the village, local agency and federal government levels that work toward the community's conservation, socio-economic and governance objectives, in addition to meeting their education and outreach needs. To support the conservation objective of this plan, the following actions have been identified by the community:

- Provide for localized fishing access to traditionally harvested seasonal run fisheries by streamlining a process that allows for such harvest;
- Increase monitoring of marine resources harvested along the shoreline and at the Malesso pier;
- Call for and engage in collaborative monitoring efforts of the fishery resources in the Malesso management area;
- Engage the local agencies to reconsider reducing the health advisory for marine fisheries in the Malesso lagoon based on the 2008 PCB Contamination report recommendations;
- Call for regular monitoring and reporting of PCBs levels around Cocos Island and Cocos Lagoon; and
- Support projects that will monitor and provide regular information on oceanographic patterns that can be used to inform PCB health advisories to the community.

To support the socio-economic objective, the following actions have been identified by the community:

- Engage and work with local authorities and vendors to address conflicting water-use activities occurring in the Malesso lagoon area; and
- Consider options to manage commercial and non-commercial lagoon-based activities through the Mayor's authority of the Malesso pier and boat-ramp area.

To support the governance objective, the following actions have been identified by the community:

- Explore designation of the Village of Malesso as a historic fishing village along with the traditional fishing practices used by the Chamorro community;
- Recommend to the Guam Mayor's Council the establishment of a Mayor's Office Committee of Elders to formalize input from the sainas on actions being considered by the Mayor's Council; and
- Establish a *Peskadot* (fishermen) Advisory body under the Mayor's Office to provide guidance and support on issues and initiatives related to Malesso coastal and marine resources.

To support the actions above and further meet the community's objectives included in this plan, two education and outreach projects are included:

- Work with the Malesso high school instructors and students to support establishment of a Malesso Integrated Coastal Observing Network (ICON) which will provide real-time monitoring of local weather and oceanographic conditions; and
- Work through the Mayor's office, *Peskadot* Advisory body, local community and regulatory agencies to establish a Malesso Code of Conduct for coastal and marine resource users and a strategy for broad public engagement.

For a copy of the plan or more information, contact Mayor Ernest Chargualaf at the Village of Malesso Mayor's Office:

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