



Report of the Mariana Archipelago FEP Advisory Panel-Guam and Council Family Meeting

January 28, 2016

Guam Hilton, Tumon, Guam

1. Hafa Adai-Welcome and Introductions

Peter Perez, Guam Advisory Panel (AP) Chair, opened the meeting at 6:42 p.m. In attendance was: From the AP-Judith Guthertz (Overall AP Chair), Tom Camacho, Felix Reyes, Alan Ainbinder, Robbie Cabreza, Ken Borja, James Borja, Jason Miller, Jesse Rosario, Matthew Orot, Cliff Kyota, Stephen Meno, Ray Flores; SSC-Judy Amesbury; Council-Michael Duenas

Also in attendance was the Council's Executive Director, Kitty Simonds, Council Staff-Joshua DeMello, Rebecca Walker, Charles Kaaiai and Mark Mitsuyasu, and Council Guam Island Coordinators Carl Delacruz and John Calvo.

Public members in attendance included: Marie Auyong (University of Guam, Sea Grant)

2. Outstanding Council Action Items

Delacruz presented the status of the AP's recent recommendations that were taken up by the Council at its 146th Meeting in American Samoa in October 2015. He noted that most of the recommendations are being worked on by the AP, including talking with Sea Grant on a potential partnership for fish identification, as well as with the US Coast Guard on the disposal of pyrotechnics.

Reyes noted that there is a hotline for people to call DAWR to report turtle interactions. *The group suggested that there be greater outreach on the hotline number and its uses* since the number is not well known.

Ainbinder talked about the work the AP is doing with USCG for the disposal of pyrotechnics and noted that there needs to be a place to dispose of them. He said that the idea that is being floated is to have an event to collect expired pyrotechnics during the annual safe boating week since it is difficult to dispose of. Rosario noted that the USCG Auxiliary is willing to collect the expired pyrotechnics. Delacruz noted that the AP will continue to work with the USCG to train the fishermen on proper disposal.

Auyong (UOG Sea Grant) provided an update on efforts to assist the AP with developing fish ID applications. She said that it would cost \$10,000 to develop an app and that she is talking with the University of Hawaii Sea Grant to see what types of work they are doing with this. She noted that she is assisting on costs and not committing to funding. She is looking to see what else is the AP is looking for with the app.

Mitsuyasu explained that the AP's recommendation for marine engine repair training is going to be difficult to address because the training needed takes a long time and differs per type/model of engine. So the question is how to recruit more mechanics to come to Guam. Guthertz noted that perhaps if UOG or Guam Community College trades academy may assist to get students trained and retained in Guam. ***Council should encourage discussions with GCC and inform the legislature for assistance and perhaps a scholarship.*** Mitsuyasu noted that this is a regional problem so the Council should take a coordinated approach to the problem.

Amesbury noted that the non-response from Department of Agriculture, in regards to the biosocks recommendation, there needs to be another idea to address the problems of soil erosion. Rosario and Reyes both noted that there are existing groups doing planting, with Reyes recommending Marine Mania to be the group to help with the planting. Camacho noted that erosion is being blamed on off-roading recreation on the jeep trails where runoff occurs. There needs to be protection from soil erosion. He noted that the chief forestry worker, Joe Mafnas, has pledged support in the form of seedlings. DeMello noted that coral reef funding is often appropriated to these type of projects and that the AP should discuss with Bureau of Statistics and Plans on how to provide for this work. ***Guthertz suggested that the AP work on developing a team with the Council and the other partners to hold events to do the planting (AP family and friends, students, agency folks).***

3. Council Issues

A. Council Program Review

Mitsuyasu presented on the Council's work in 2015 with regards to the Council's Program Plan. He explained that the Council receives funding on a five-year cycle and that the Council provides updates on the program that it funds. The programs include: Pelagic Fisheries, Island Fisheries, Ecosystems, Fishing and Indigenous Community, and Education & Outreach. He noted that the biggest work that the Council is doing is amending each of the Fishery Ecosystem Plans and developing a coordinated Annual Report.

Guthertz noted that DNA work was done on Chamorros to see their origins. ***Guthertz recommended working with the National Geographic Society regarding the Native American DNA connection to Chamorros to see if they can take advantage.***

B. Pelagics Quota Transfer Information

Simonds provided an update on the Bigeye Tuna quota transfer between the Territory of Guam and the Hawaii Longline Association. She provided a review of the mechanism for funding projects through the Sustainable Fisheries Fund provided by foreign fishing violations and gave a quick history on projects funded. She then explained the status of the Bigeye Tuna and the measures put in place by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to reduce overfishing. The WCPFC provides Small Island Developing States (SIDS) an exemption to the quotas, but the US limited its territories to 2000 metric tons. Through an amendment to the Pelagics FEP, Simonds said that the territories are able to share/sell a part of its quota with other parts of the US fleet. Due to a banner year in catch by the Hawaii longline fleet, their quota ran out and they negotiated to purchase quota from CNMI and Guam. She explained the agreement and the terms and noted that the funds will be used to address projects in Guam's

Marine Conservation Plan (MCP). The MCP projects include fishery development such as the fishing platform in Hagatna and the *manahak* restocking project. Simonds noted that HLA is looking to negotiate a three-year plan for potential purchase of quota and that the AP may be called on to assist with developing projects to be funded under this plan and the MCP.

C. Grant Opportunities

DeMello noted that the Marine Education and Training Program grant proposals are due February 3, 2013 and that the NOAA Environmental Literacy Grant opportunity is due February 8, 2016. Both of these announcements were provided to the Guam AP.

Kyota noted that the Guam 4H program intends to submit MET proposals by the deadline to promote high school kids fishing training as well as demonstrations on traditional fishing.

4. Council Projects in the Marianas

A. Coral Reef Projects

i. Stock Assessment Projects

DeMello gave a quick recap of the type of stock assessment work being done by the Council through its Coral Reef Conservation Program funding. The Council has contractors working on developing stock assessment framework models for coral reef ecosystem fisheries and will be compared across the different models to determine which model should be used to determine the best available science. These models will be reviewed through the Western Pacific Stock Assessment Review Process to determine the appropriateness of the model for eventual use in determining the Annual Catch Limits for the coral reef fisheries of the Mariana Archipelago.

ii. Resource Mapping Project

Walker presented on a mapping project that the Council is working on in Guam. The purpose of the project is to hold participatory mapping workshops to develop a spatial understanding of coral reef fisheries in Guam and the CNMI. She noted the importance of mapping the coral reef fishery uses to avoid conflicts through future planning efforts. She also said that the recording of traditional information can also provide a glimpse into how the fisheries have changed over time.

Rosario asked if lunar phases could be incorporated. Walker responded that if the data can be recorded in that fashion, it could also be presented in that way.

The AP was in consensus to provide support for this project.

B. Data Collection Projects

Delacruz noted that the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) projects that were conducted last year has been completed and a final report is forthcoming, but the Council will be receiving MRIP funding to develop a recreational spearfishing data collection project this year. He also noted that the Territorial Science Initiative (TSI) projects to assist data collection efforts for improving receipt book data collection improvement.

C. Community-based Projects

Kaaiai presented on the Council's assistance with developing community management plans in Malesso and Yigo, as well as work with the CNMI Northern Islands community. He noted that recent meetings have provided enough information to assist in developing draft plans for finishing and announcing the completion of the plans in June during the Council Meeting. Kaaiai explained the history behind the plans and process and how the community requested the assistance, and how much of the information discovered has led to ongoing discussions in Malesso.

5. Mariana Archipelago FEP Guam Community Activities

A. Guam FEP Community Calendar

Perez noted that the calendar included the Dr. Julian Pepperell presentation on marlin tagging as well as the Council Meetings. He said that future plans included the lunar calendar festival on February 6, from 9 am to 6 pm at the Chamorro Cultural Center, and Calvo explained more regarding the festival and the calendar. Perez noted upcoming deadlines, fishing events, and the upcoming Council Meeting in March.

B. Guam AP Outreach Plans

The AP plans to participate in the Festival of Pacific Arts (FESTPAC) as delegates as well as through the Council participation in the fisheries section. Calvo explained the need for AP assistance in setup and operation of these booths.

The AP will also discuss the needs for the soil erosion prevention event.

6. Marianas FEP AP-Guam Issues

A. Report of the Subpanels

i. Island Fisheries Subpanel

Camacho said he was concerned with the harvesting of sea cucumbers in Guam. He said that there has been too much harvest and there are major commercial activities for this harvest.

Simonds asked about regulations. Borja said that commercial sale is prohibited, but enforcement isn't very good as people are being warned but it continues to happen. Guthertz said that there needs to be an increased penalty, and suggested the Council ask DAWR to look at this.

DeMello explained Hawaii's example for sea cucumber regulations and noted the stock assessment work being done in Hawaii. *DeMello to send Hawaii's regulations to Guam AP.*

AP recommended Council request NMFS PIFSC assist Guam in developing a sea cucumber stock assessment.

ii. Pelagic Fisheries Subpanel

Ken Borja noted that the main issues in pelagic fisheries are the lack of FADs in Guam, which is mainly a problem that sits with the agency in getting the FADs out. Ainbinder noted the locations of the FADs and which ones are missing and said that the lack of FADs nearer to shore is a problem. Borja noted that the funding should be provided through the sportfish restoration

funding and that the excuse is procurement procedures. James Borja noted that there are five FADs sitting in the yard waiting to be deployed.

Simonds agreed to discuss the issue with the Department of Agriculture to determine the problem with deploying the FADs.

AP request the Council assist Guam in the deployment of FADs and include the fishing community in the development of sportsfish fund grant proposals.

Ainbinder noted that shark depredation has increased in certain areas and those places where there were no sharks, now cannot be fished without losing fish. Species include bronze and silky sharks. It was noted that buoys 1, 2 and 3 were areas where there have been an increase in shark abundance.

Duenas noted that project proposals should be tailored to study ways to avoid sharks and release them safely.

iii. Ecosystems and Habitat Subpanel

AP plans to work with Stephanie on the participatory mapping project, as well as the soil erosion prevention events.

Camacho was concerned with the effects of undocumented fishing being done by immigrants. He noted that there needs to be a way to track and quantify what is being taken out and the disposition of the fish. The problem is to find a way that reporting and enforcing is mandatory in both jurisdictions.

iv. Indigenous Fishing Rights Subpanel

Guthertz noted that the Attorney General has the proposed rules for indigenous fishing, but there doesn't seem to be any further progress. She noted that there needs to be a follow up with the AG. Simonds noted that they may want to look at preferential treatment rather than only allowing the indigenous community, and it has been done through the Council's Community Development Program process.

Delacruz noted that the Department of Agriculture is assisting in the review of comments for the AG. Borja noted that he was concerned that they are not addressing the community's comments on the bill.

Charley to provide Kitty with a copy of the Indigenous Bill package that Carl sent him.

B. Other Issues

Perez introduced Myrtle the Turtle.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Discussion and Recommendations

The Guam AP recommended the Council:

- 1. Request NMFS PIFSC assist Guam in developing a sea cucumber stock assessment.*
- 2. Assist Guam in the deployment of FADs and include the fishing community in the development of sportsfish fund grant proposals.*
- 3. Work with the fishing community to develop a regional approach to developing marine mechanics training.*
- 4. Request a creel survey review workshop be conducted for Guam.*

9. “At the end of the day” (Other Business)

Recap of the Guam AP action items for its next meetings:

- Guam AP to work with the appropriate agencies on coastal fishery protection through soil erosion and runoff prevention through planting events and develop a plan and needs.*
- Guam AP to discuss outreach on the DAWR turtle hotline number and its uses with the DAWR outreach division;*
- Guam AP to work with Council staff on marine engine mechanic training opportunities to coordinate a region-wide effort.*
- Guam AP to request update on GFCA rebuilding status at future meetings*