



185th Meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council March 23-25, 2021

Arongol Faluw: CNMI Island Report

COVID- 19 update:

As of 18 February 2021, the CNMI has recorded a total of 135 cases; 110 cases were identified by incoming air travelers. We haven't had a community transmission case for 6 months. The CNMI has recorded two deaths in March and April 2020.

The CNMI is presently at Community Vulnerability Level BLUE, one step above a GREEN level.

The CDC has downgraded the risk level of the CNMI from 2 to 1 (low).

The CNMI has vaccinated 9,032 with the first dose and 5,713 with a second dose. First responders and manamko are the first to receive the vaccine. According to the Guam PDN, the CNMI had the best community vaccination rate nationally.

The CNMI was added as a Trusted Testing Partner for the state of Hawaii Pre-Travel Testing Program last Jan. 4, 2021. Under this program, travelers who are able to provide a state-approved COVID-19 negative test within 72 hours from the final destination, or departure, will be able to bypass Hawaii's mandatory 14-day quarantine order.

COVID-19 effects on fishing activities:

Even with a shortened curfew (2 – 4 am), fishing activities are minimally impacted by existing COVID-19 related restrictions.

However, overall fresh fish sales are depressed due to the non-existent tourist industry and capacity restrictions being imposed on those restaurants that are still open.

Marianas Trench Marine National Monument:

The CNMI have nominated the following individuals for the MTMAC: Anthony T. Benavente (DLNR Secretary), Michael Tenorio (DFW Fishery Supervisor), and Robert Hunter (Office Governor, Senior Policy Advisor).

Completed applications were finally submitted and was informed that they are being processed.

The CNMI wishes to reiterate that the MTMAC needs to be fully operational prior to the public release of the Monument Management Plan for public review.

Economy

The CNMI tourist industry has not made any progress since my last report. However, Federal disaster relief funds are starting to flow which is supporting certain segments of the economy.

NOAA Coral Critical Habitat Proposed Rule

The CNMI is coordinating comments and critical map developments with Guam and American Samoa.