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DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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January 30, 2023



DAWN N. S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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LAND
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Aloha Mai Kakou

My name is Dawn Chang, Governor Green's nominee to chair the Board of Land and Natural Resources. I am extremely humbled and honored to be the first Native Hawaiian woman to chair the Board. My `ohana are Ho`okano from the Ahupua`a of Kahalu`u on Oahu and we are lawai`a or fishers.

Over the last several months the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has led "Holomua Marine 30x30 Initiative." The purpose of the Holomua Initiative was to share with the community progress towards our collective vision for healthy marine ecosystems and abundant nearshore resources that allow the people of Hawai'i to enjoy coastal waters, support livelihoods, and feed our families for generations to come.

Our nearshore areas face many issues from mauka to makai that threaten the sustainability of our resources. These issues are far too great for government to tackle alone and require close coordination and collaboration with communities, particularly fishers, to be successful.

Although there seems to be broad support for the purpose of the Holomua Initiative goal, we've heard a lot of feedback through community meetings, talk story sessions, a Senate briefing, and conversations with fishers on the best approach and management tools necessary to achieve this goal.

DAR heard a lot of good feedback through these meetings with a lot of consistent themes. Fishers want to see better management and want to be involved in developing nearshore management action plans. We also heard good questions about the target to "effectively manage 30% of Hawaii's nearshore waters by the year 2030". Why effectively manage only 30% of Hawaii's nearshore waters, why not 100%? Why limit the goal to the designation of Marine Management Areas only instead of other management tools? Many fishers also highlighted that effective management can not be limited to a few select areas but must be comprehensive and holistic to tackle today's challenges. We also heard calls to ramp-up reef restoration efforts, reduce land-based source pollution, and increase enforcement of existing rules.

DAR has heard this feedback and is adjusting accordingly. DAR has removed the “30 x30” slogan as the stated target and slogan for the Holomua Marine Initiative. We have heard from numerous fishers and experienced first-hand that the “30x30” language adds a lot of confusion about the initiative and is counterproductive in terms of having open dialogue about issues and solutions for reaching our desired goals for nearshore waters.

DAR plans to continue to work with willing fishers (subsistence, recreational, and commercial) and community members to identify actionable solutions to address nearshore threats and work towards our collective goals with the full suite of tools DAR can deploy.

With the Maui community, DAR intends to continue to move forward with the Maui Pilot Process, providing a space for their communities to identify management priorities and select strategic solutions that work best for Maui's nearshore resources and resource users. Although the stated target of establishing a network of marine managed areas comprising 30% of the Island of Maui has changed, the process and our commitment has not. We will continue building the Maui Navigation Team, a select group of Maui community members representing various geographic and resource user groups across the island, to develop island-based nearshore management actions for Maui.

However, in addition to Maui, we will continue to support and work with communities from Hawaii island to Ni`ihau and in between to ensure that our nearshore marine resources are healthy and abundant for not only today but the future generations to come. We appreciate all the fishers and communities' members who shared their mana`o with DAR and commitment to improving our nearshore resources. We also appreciate your patience as we incorporate feedback and make adjustments. We will continue to provide updates as we move forward with the Maui Pilot process and other nearshore planning processes around the islands.

Sincerely,



Dawn N. S. Chang
Chairperson
Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources