

Thematic report on protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity

Please provide the following details on the origin of this report.

Contracting Party:	Republic of Palau
<i>National Focal Point</i>	
Full name of the institution:	Office of Environmental Response and Coordination
Name and title of contact officer:	Ms. Tarita Holm, National Biodiversity Coordinator
Mailing address:	OERC P.O. Box 7086 Koror, Palau 96940
Telephone:	(680)488-6950 ext.250
Fax:	(680)488-8638
E-mail:	ercpalau@hotmail.com or tarita_holm@hotmail.com
<i>Contact officer for national report (if different)</i>	
Full name of the institution:	
Name and title of contact officer:	
Mailing address:	
Telephone:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	
<i>Submission</i>	
Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	
Date of submission:	

Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report.

The format for this detailed report on protected areas and questionnaire was sent via email to NGOs and government agencies involved in the establishment and management of protected areas in Palau. The agencies were asked to provide input on the various questions that they are knowledgeable about.

Protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity

System of protected areas

1. What is the relative priority afforded to development and implementation of a national system of protected areas in the context of other obligations arising from the Convention and COP Decisions?					
a) High	X	b) Medium		c) Low	
2. Is there a systematic planning process for development and implementation of a national system of protected areas?					
a) no					
b) in early stages of development					
c) in advanced stages of development					X (see attached copies of the Protected Areas Network Legislation)
d) yes, please provide copies of relevant documents describing the process					
3. Is there an assessment of the extent to which the existing network of protected areas covers all areas that are identified as being important for the conservation of biological diversity?					
a) no					
b) an assessment is being planned for					
c) an assessment is being undertaken					X (The Nature Conservancy's Ecoregional Planning Process)
d) yes, please provide copies of the assessments made					

Regulatory framework

4. Is there a policy framework and/or enabling legislation in place for the establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) in early stages of development	
c) in advanced stages of development	X (Again, see attached copies of the Protected Areas Network Legislation)
d) yes, please provide copies of relevant documents	

5. Have guidelines, criteria and targets been adopted to support selection, establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) in early stages of development	X - Some criteria and targets have been adopted for the management of the Ngaremeduu Conservation Area (see attached NCA criteria). This will become the responsibility of the Protected Areas Network coordinator once the position is set-up
c) in advanced stages of development	
d) yes, please provide copies of guidelines, criteria and targets	
6. Does the management of protected areas involve the use of incentive measures, for instance, of entrance fees for park visitors, or of benefit-sharing arrangements with adjacent communities and other relevant stakeholders?	
a) no	
b) yes, incentive measures implemented for some protected areas (please provide some examples)	X (see below)
c) yes, incentive measures implemented for all protected areas (please provide some examples)	

Management approach

7. Have the principal threats to protected areas and the biodiversity that they contain been assessed, so that programmes can be put in place to deal with the threats, their effects and to influence the key drivers?	
a) no	
b) an assessment is being planned for	
c) an assessment is in process	X (see below)
d) yes, an assessment has been completed	
e) programmes and policies to deal with threats are in place (please provide basic information on threats and actions taken)	

8. Are protected areas established and managed in the context of the wider region in which they are located, taking account of and contributing to other sectoral strategies?	
a) no	X - The protected areas to date have been established mainly because of an area having unique or special features or as a response to deal with local issues such as resource depletion.
b) yes, in some areas	
c) yes, in all areas (please provide details)	
9. Do protected areas vary in their nature, meeting a range of different management objectives and/or being operated through differing management regimes?	
a) no, most areas are established for similar objectives and are under similar management regimes	
b) many areas have similar objectives/management regimes, but there are also some exceptions	
c) yes, protected areas vary in nature (please provide details)	X (see below)
10. Is there wide stakeholder involvement in the establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) with some, but not all protected areas	X
c) yes, always (please provide details of experience)	
11. Do protected areas established and managed by non-government bodies, citizen groups, private sector and individuals exist in your country, and are they recognized in any formal manner?	
a) no, they do not exist	X
b) yes, they exist, however are not formally recognized	
c) yes, they exist and are formally recognized (please provide further information)	

Available resources

12. Are the human, institutional and financial resources available adequate for full implementation of the protected areas network, including for management of individual protected areas?	
a) no, they are severely limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
b) no, they are limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	X (see below)
c) Available resources are adequate (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
d) yes, good resources are available	

13. Has your country requested/received financial assistance from the Global Environment Facility or other international sources for establishment/management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) funding has been requested, but not received	
c) funding is currently being requested	
d) yes, funding has been received (please provide copies of appropriate documents)	X (see below)

Assessment

14. Have constraints to implementation and management of an adequate system of protected areas been assessed, so that actions can be initiated to deal with these constraints?	
a) no	
b) yes, constraints have been assessed (please provide further information)	X (see below)
c) yes, actions to deal with constraints are in place (please provide further information)	
15. Is a programme in place or in development to regularly assess the effectiveness of protected areas management and to act on this information?	
a) no	X
b) yes, a programme is under development (please provide further information)	
c) yes, a programme is in place (please provide further information)	
16. Has any assessment been made of the value of the material and non-material benefits and services that protected areas provide?	
a) no	
b) an assessment is planned	
c) an assessment is in process	X (With technical assistance from the World Bank)
d) yes, an assessment has been made (please provide further information)	

Regional and international cooperation

17. Is your country collaborating/communicating with neighbouring countries in the establishment and/or management of transboundary protected areas?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please provide details)	
18. Are key protected areas professionals in your country members of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, thereby helping to foster the sharing of information and experience?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
c) information is not available	

19. Has your country provided information on its protected areas to the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre in order to allow for a scientific assessment of the status of the world's protected areas?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
20. If your country has protected areas or other sites recognised or designated under an international convention or programme (including regional conventions and programmes), please provide copies of reports submitted to those programmes or summaries of them. See attached information on Ngardok Nature Reserve, Ngaremeduu Conservation Area and the Rock Islands Conservation Area	
21. Do you think that there are some activities on protected areas that your country has significant experience that will be of direct value to other Contracting Parties?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please provide details)	

Further comments

6 b)

Partly – main incentive measure in place are the user fees for Koror and some other states, which provide incentive for decision-makers, funds for management and some trickle-down benefit to state residents. No direct-benefit-sharing schemes have been designed or implemented. Benefits largely flow from maintaining resources in good condition for local use.

7 c)

Palau currently has 23 legally established protected areas. Threats have been identified and assessed in some but not all of these. Ngaremeduu Conservation Area, Ngardok Nature Reserve, and possibly others. Some areas have done threat assessments, but it is widely variable across protected areas and issues. The Nature Conservancy is currently undergoing the Ecoregional Planning Process which will include threat assessments. Some of the stocktaking and assessment work done as part of developing Palau's NBSAP included analysis of threats in terms of resource use issues. Management planning for Rock Islands – Southern Lagoon Area is currently analyzing threats and designing measures to deal with them (some of which are already in place). Similar for Ngeruangel Reserve management plan.

9 c)

See attached Palau Conservation Society conservation area fact sheet which has the reasons for the establishment of various conservation areas. There are also various types of management, from complete closure under traditional moratoriums to legislative protection requiring the development of formal management plans.

12 b)

Most communities have little money and few human resources available for managing protected areas. Formal training available in country focuses on law enforcement rather than other aspects of conservation management including compatible economic development within designated areas. A national task force will soon be established (with technical support from The Nature Conservancy) to identify sustainable financing requirements for a nation-wide network of protected areas and to identify financing options for use at the national and community levels.

13 d)

See the attached information on SPREP/GEF funding for Ngaremeduu Conservation Area (NCA) under the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Program, also the ASPACO/UNESCO grant for NCA; Ramsar Convention Small Grant Funds for Ngardok Nature Reserve

14 b)

With the exception of the Rock Islands special management area, most protected areas have been created by communities to meet purely local objectives (most often having to do with food security issues). Because resources are owned by communities, there has been very little national government support (financial or technical) to communities for designation and management of protected areas. These constraints are being addressed in pending national legislation that will require the national government to identify areas that are important for protection from a national as well as local perspective. The legislation that will require the national government to build up its technical capacity to assist communities in research, designation and management of their protected areas while simultaneously recognizing the ownership and stewardship rights of communities over their own resources.

Passed!
12/4/02
MS

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To create the Protected Areas Network Act; to repeal Chapter 32 of 24 PNC; and for other related purposes.

THE PEOPLE OF PALAU REPRESENTED IN THE OLBIIL ERA KELULAU DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Legislative Findings. The islands that make up Palau together form one of the most environmentally diverse regions in all of Micronesia. They possess unique natural resources such as geological features and distinctive freshwater, marine and terrestrial ecosystems, including plants, animals and other organisms, many of which occur nowhere else in the world, and all of which are highly vulnerable to loss by the growth of population and development. The Olbiil Era Kelulau finds that Palau is in critical need of a nationwide system which supports the states' efforts in protecting these natural resources and that an important part of this process is the identification of high biodiversity and/or unique marine and terrestrial sites for priority as part of a nationally recognized protected areas network. This legislation, the Protected Areas Network Act, will encourage and support the states in the designation of new protected areas that together will form a nationwide network of protected areas that protect a representative range of biodiversity and unique habitats, particularly the fragile marine ecosystems, in the Republic. Currently, states designate protected areas, but there is no system by which the national government recognizes these areas or assists the states in identifying, designating and maintaining such valuable resources. A nationwide approach is necessary to ensure that examples of the full range of biodiversity is represented in protected areas across Palau and that the unique natural beauty and precious resources for which Palau is internationally recognized will not be lost.

The Act recognizes that the states have exclusive ownership of their land and all of the resources from land to twelve (12) nautical miles seaward from the traditional baseline, and is not intended to supplant the states' autonomy in any way, rather it will provide assistance to the states in several ways. This will include technical assistance to those states who are seeking to designate areas of significant biodiversity and unique habitats, and access to grant monies and programs for which the individual states are not eligible. Thus, the national government will act as a conduit for funding that is destined to aid the states. In addition, the Republic will be able to provide funding support through the normal state budget allocation process. The national system will also

1 provide continuity among the states and ensure that states can work together where areas of high
 2 biodiversity and unique habitats cross state boundaries. The current vehicle for state designation
 3 of natural resource areas, the Natural Heritage Reserve System, Chapter 32 of 24 Palau National
 4 Code, has not been used by states to protect the ecosystems within their boundaries. The Olbiil
 5 Era Kelulau has determined that the Natural Heritage Reserve System legislation does not include
 6 significant incentive or support systems for states to participate in the program. Thus, this section
 7 of the Palau National Code is repealed with the intent that this legislation will be more effective
 8 in meeting our national environmental protection goals and providing national recognition and
 9 support for protected areas, a designation that is significant in the international arena of
 10 environmental protection.

11 Section 2. Repealer. Chapter 32 of 24 PNC is hereby repealed.

12 Section 3. Amendments. 24 PNC is amended to add a new Chapter 33 to read as follows:

13 "§ 3301. Short title. This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Protected Areas
 14 Network Act" of the Republic of Palau.

15 § 3302. Findings and declaration of necessity. The Olbiil Era Kelulau of the Republic of
 16 Palau finds and declares that:

17 (a) the Republic of Palau possesses unique natural resources such as geological features
 18 and distinctive plants, animals and other organisms, many of which occur nowhere else in
 19 the world, that are highly vulnerable to loss by the growth of population and development;

20 (b) Palau's unique plants and animals exist in the context of a full range of ecosystems and
 21 communities found in Palau, thus, these ecosystems themselves must be protected as well;

22 (c) as the exclusive owners of all living and non-living resources from land to twelve (12)
 23 nautical miles seaward from the traditional baseline, state governments bear the principal
 24 responsibility for the management, protection and development of all resources within their
 25 respective boundaries. States, therefore, must be encouraged and supported by the national
 26 government in their efforts to protect biodiversity in the Republic through the creation of
 27 protected areas;

28 (d) state designated terrestrial, freshwater and marine areas that support unique
 29 communities of natural plants, animals and other types of organisms, areas of high
 30 biodiversity, significant geological sites, as well as other important habitats suitable for
 31 preservation must be encouraged, recognized, and supported by the national government
 32 and;

(e) a nationwide Protected Areas Network will allow the national government to assist states in the protection of significant areas of biodiversity, significant habitats and other valuable resources that are important to the future stability and health of Palau.

§ 3303. Definitions.

(a) "Ecosystem" means a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

(b) "Person" means any and all persons, natural or artificial, foreign or domestic, including any individual association, firm, partnership, business, corporation, joint venture, principal, agent, partnership, company, or any other entity recognizable at law or equity, including (without limitation) any foreign governmental entity and all political subdivisions, regions, districts, municipalities and public agencies thereof.

(c) "Protected" means maintained, intact, preserved, conserved or otherwise managed in a sustainable manner.

(d) "Protected area" means an area designated through a state or national process to be protected, and recognized by the National Government through the Ministry of Resources and Development as part of the Protected Areas Network.

§ 3304. Protected Areas Network. There shall be a nationwide Protected Areas Network of the Republic of Palau which shall consist of areas in the Republic which a state, or states, or the national government has or have designated as reserves, protected areas, or refuges, and which have been designated by the Ministry of Resources and Development in the manner hereinafter provided. Each state, in consultation with the Ministry of Resources and Development, will be responsible for the management of the areas within its borders that are designated as part of the Protected Areas Network. Each state will be eligible for assistance and support under this Act for those protected areas included within the Protected Areas Network. The Protected Areas Network shall be administered and managed by the Ministry of Resources and Development in consultation with state government officials.

§ 3305. Categories of protected areas.

(a) The Ministry of Resources and Development, in consultation with state government officials, shall, for the sole purpose of designation within the Protected Areas Network, choose to designate each protected area under one or more of the following internationally recognized categories from the IUCN World Conservation Union:

1 (1) Strict Nature Reserve: A protected area managed mainly for science
2 or nature protection that possesses some outstanding or representative
3 ecosystems, geological or physiological features and/or species, that retains
4 its natural character and influence without permanent or significant
5 habitation, available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental
6 monitoring.

7 (2) State/National Park: A protected area managed mainly for ecosystem
8 protection and recreation designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity
9 of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude
10 exploitation or occupation contrary to the purposes of designation of the
11 areas and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational,
12 recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally
13 and culturally compatible.

14 (3) Natural Monument: A protected area managed mainly for preservation
15 of specific natural features which are outstanding or of unique value
16 because of its inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities or cultural
17 significance.

18 (4) Habitat/Species Management Area: A protected area managed mainly
19 for conservation through management intervention so as to ensure the
20 maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species.

21 (5) Protected Landscape/Seascape: A protected area managed mainly for
22 landscape/seascape preservation and recreation where the interaction of
23 people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with
24 significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high
25 biological diversity and where safeguarding the integrity of this traditional
26 interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an
27 area.

28 (6) Managed Resource Protected Area: A protected area managed mainly
29 for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems which contains predominantly
30 unmodified natural systems which can be managed to ensure long term
31 protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while providing at the

1 same time a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet
2 community needs.

3 (b) States may redesignate existing protected areas to a § 3305 (a) category or continue to
4 use their previous classification system.

5 § 3306. Powers and duties of the National Government. The Republic, primarily through
6 the Ministry of Resources and Development, shall have, among others, the following powers and
7 duties:

8 (a) to provide for rules and regulations outlining the process for an area's designation as
9 part of the Protected Area Network, and to effect the purposes of this chapter, and to
10 enforce such regulations which shall have the force and effect of law;

11 (b) to establish criteria for the selection of an area to be included in the Protected Area
12 Network that will incorporate the following considerations: biogeographic importance,
13 ecological considerations, naturalness, economic importance, social importance, scientific
14 importance, international or national significance, feasibility of management and
15 protection, duality or replication;

16 (c) to determine reasonable conditions for the ongoing inclusion of an area in the Protected
17 Area Network;

18 (d) to investigate and develop mechanisms for sustainable financing of protected areas in
19 the Protected Area Network;

20 (e) to accept and disburse appropriations, loans and grants from the Republic of Palau,
21 foreign governments, the United Nations, or any agency thereof and other sources, public
22 and private, which appropriations, loans and grants shall not be expended for other than
23 the purposes of this chapter;

24 (f) to collect information and establish record keeping, monitoring and reporting
25 requirements as necessary and appropriate to carry out the purposes of this chapter;

26 (g) to, with the assistance and permission of the states, prosecute and enforce state and
27 national laws applicable to the Protected Areas Network;

28 (h) to provide technical assistance to state governments for management of their protected
29 areas including, but not limited to assistance in surveying, developing site preservation
30 plans, identifying and establishing sustainable use practices, conducting scientific
31 investigations, educating the public about preservation and/or protected areas; and

32 (i) to coordinate with other agencies, both state and national, to meet the goals of this act.

not limited to seeking funding, collecting information, disseminating monies and technical assistance, prosecution and enforcement.

§ 3307. Powers and duties of the states. Each state shall have the following powers and duties, together with and not in lieu of any other powers and duties granted to the states under existing state and national law:

(a) to nominate areas within the state's borders that have been designated refuges, protected areas, or preserves under state or national law for inclusion in the Protected Areas Network;

(b) to nominate, at the request of and with the written consent of a private landowner or title holder, private lands for inclusion in the Protected Areas Network;

(c) to apply for financial aid and technical support in developing, managing, designating, or nominating for inclusion in the Protected Areas Network eligible areas within the state;

(d) to develop management plans for such areas, and if an area is designated as part of the Protected Areas Network, to develop such a plan in conjunction with the Ministry of Resources and Development;

(e) to manage areas within the Protected Areas Network;

(f) to accept funding from appropriate parties and use it for its designated purpose;

(g) to follow such rules and regulations as are promulgated by the Ministry of Resources and Development;

(h) to withdraw from participation in the Protected Areas Network according to the procedures in the promulgated regulations; and

(i) to request and receive enforcement and prosecution assistance from the Republic.

§ 3308. Rules and regulations. The Ministry of Resources and Development shall make, amend and repeal rules and regulations having the force and effect of law, governing the recognition of the areas nominated by states as protected areas and the operation of the Protected Areas Network, provided that no rule or regulation which relates to the permitted use of any area shall be applied to a state protected area unless such rule or regulation shall also have been specifically approved by the appropriate state government officials pursuant to and in accordance with all applicable law. Should a state disagree with the application of a rule or regulation proposed by the national government in relation to a protected area, the provisions of 24 PNC 3309 will apply.

§ 3309. Dispute resolution.

1 (a) Any dispute between two or more states or between one or more states and the national
2 government regarding the designation or management of a protected area or related to the funding
3 of a protected area which is not settled by good faith negotiation, shall, at the request of one of
4 them, be submitted to mediation.

5 (b) The mediator shall be chosen in the following manner: each party shall nominate a
6 person of their choosing to select a mediator, and the two people shall then select a third person
7 to serve as the mediator.

8 § 3310. Enforcement. Any person who violates state or national laws or any rules,
9 regulations, or procedures promulgated pursuant to this Act, may be prosecuted by the Attorney
10 General's Office as well as the applicable state authorities. All laws and regulations with relation
11 to a nationally designated protected area, whether established by state or national authorities, may
12 be enforced by the Ministry of Justice, Bureau of Public Safety, state and national law enforcement
13 officers, or such personnel of the Ministry of Resources and Development as the Minister so
14 designates.

15 § 3311. Criminal penalties. Any person who is convicted of a violation of state or national
16 law or regulations in relation to a nationally designated protected area that have been adopted into
17 national law through regulations pursuant to the terms of this Act, may be sentenced to
18 imprisonment for a term of up to 1 year, or fined not less than \$500, or both. Any person convicted
19 of a second violation may be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of up to 2 years, or fined not
20 less than \$2,500, or both. Subsequent violations shall carry a penalty of up to 5 years
21 imprisonment and a fine of up to \$10,000, or both.

22 § 3312. Civil penalties.

23 (a) Civil penalties are separate from criminal punishment and may be filed independently
24 of or in addition to such criminal charges and sentences.

25 (b) Any person who is found by the Supreme Court in a civil proceeding to have
26 committed an act prohibited by this Chapter, his employer, principal, superior, or
27 supervisor if the violation was committed as part of a commercial operation or enterprise,
28 and any person who aids or abets in such violation, shall be liable to the affected state and
29 national government for a civil penalty for each violation. The Supreme Court may also
30 award such declaratory and equitable relief the Court determines is just and proper.

31 (c) In determining the amount of such penalty, the Supreme Court shall take into account
32 the nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of the prohibited acts committed and, with

1 respect to the violators, the degree of culpability, any history of prior offenses, and such
2 other matters as justice may require.

3 (d) The state in which the violation occurred is authorized to initiate all civil proceedings
4 under this Chapter and to recover the amount assessed, as a civil penalty.

5 (e) If the state declines to bring suit, it shall notify the Attorney General in writing within
6 90 days of the violation. The Attorney General may then initiate all civil proceedings
7 under this Chapter and to recover the amount assessed as a civil penalty.

8 (f) Any person who violates this chapter shall be liable in a civil action brought by a
9 person residing within the Republic or the federal government or any state government or
10 division thereof of the Republic of Palau. If a judgment is entered against the defendant
11 in an action brought by a resident of the Republic, the plaintiff shall receive 50% of the
12 amount recovered, and shall be entitled to recover from the defendant the plaintiff's costs
13 of litigation, plus reasonable attorneys' fees. The remaining 50% of the amount recovered
14 shall be deposited into the National Treasury. Before a resident may bring an action
15 pursuant to this section, the resident must submit a written request to the Attorney General
16 asking that the Attorney General bring a civil action. If the Attorney General fails to bring
17 a civil action within 60 days after receipt of the written request, the resident may thereafter
18 bring a civil action pursuant to this section.

19 Section 4. Effective date. This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the President, or
20 upon becoming law without such approval, except as otherwise provided by law.

Date: 5/17/02

Introduced by: /s/ Noah Idechong
Noah Idechong
Delegate

/s/ Kerai Mariur
Kerai Mariur
Delegate

/s/ Antonio Bells
Antonio Bells
Delegate

PART 3: RATIONALE AND PROJECT DESIGN

3.1 Rationale

The Ngaremeduu Bay area was chosen as an SPBCP project because of a combination of environmental and social factors. Not only does the proposed CA include a particularly large and significant area of mangroves, which, along with the associated terrestrial forests, estuary, lagoon and reef systems contain notably high levels of biodiversity, but the area is also populated by communities with a commitment to conservation, an interest in restoring and further developing their traditional resource management practices and a clear interest in participating in the Ngaremeduu CAP. In addition, it was felt that the area was diverse and large enough to meet SPBCP criteria while being cohesive enough to physically manage, and achievable in terms of landowners and users. The area has also long been identified by the Palauan Government and its agencies as being a priority for conservation, and is both directly and indirectly threatened by development proposals which, it is believed, can be managed for the best overall national and community benefit in the context of community management as envisaged by an SPBCP project.

3.2 Selection of the area

While some form of protection based on community managed conservation has for some time been envisaged for the Ngaremeduu area, it was recognised by the lead agency that the SPBCP offers a particularly appropriate form of project support for the particular characteristics of the area. Figure 4 assesses the Ngaremeduu CA against SPBCP site selection criteria. The assessment finds that the CAP clearly quite comprehensively meets all criteria, both the essential Category 1 criteria as well as all those listed under Category 2.

Figure 4: The Ngaremeduu CA assessed against SPBCP selection criteria

Criteria	CA features
<i>Category 1: Essential</i>	
1. Presence of regionally or nationally significant ecosystems of global conservation concern and large enough to maintain ecological viability.	Presently existing information indicates that the area is both nationally and regionally significant in terms of the range of environments included in it. Scientific assessment has recognised over 25 major ecosystems in the CA. The CA is considered more than large enough to maintain ecological viability
2. Must be achievable and exhibit a high degree of commitment by land owners and other parties.	Customary and State authorities have already proceeded with their own individual efforts at conservation management and ecologically sustainable development. Preliminary consultations with the leading chiefs and relevant State Governors have indicated a high level of interest in, and commitment to, the project.
3. Area to be large and complex enough to include a wide range of interactions between people and natural resources.	The area is large, and being focused on a major area of estuarine mangrove along with associated dryland and marine habitat, includes a complex range of both ecological and human interactions. While final upland boundaries are yet to be finalised by a community consultative process, significant areas of river catchment are likely to be included. It is the largest area of mangroves in Micronesia.

Figure 4 (cont)

<i>Category 2: 1 or more</i>	
<p>4. Area should contain high biodiversity and ecological complexity.</p>	<p>The biological surveys already carried out in the area clearly identify its high biodiversity and ecological complexity. An integrated series of rapid ecological assessments have been carried out for most major ecological components of the CA. Overall the co-ordinators of the assessments found that “clearly the Ngaremeduu region is one of Micronesia’s most diverse areas with respect to (both) species and habitats.” The diversity of marine fishes in the Ngaremeduu area has been assessed as being “high even when compared with other areas in Palau” which is generally considered to exhibit one of the greatest levels of marine biodiversity of all Pacific islands. Several species of corals have not been recorded elsewhere in Micronesia.</p>
<p>5. Important for the survival of endemic species, or those that are rare or threatened, nationally, regionally or globally.</p>	<p>Given its recognised levels of biodiversity, conservation management of the Ngaremeduu CA is likely to be highly important for the survival of a wide range of endemic species. A number of rare or threatened species exist in the CA including the saltwater crocodile, the dugong, the white-breasted wood swallow, the Nicobar Pigeon, the Gray Duck several freshwater species, and the abovementioned species of coral.</p>

NGAREMEDUU
PROJECT PREPARATION DOCUMENT (PPD)

FOR THE

NGAREMEDUU CONSERVATION AREA (CA)

Produced By : Bureau of Natural Resources
And Development (BNRD)

Sponsored By : South Pacific Regional Environment
Programme (SPREP)

1996

Republic of Palau

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Project Preparation Document (PPD) describes the proposed Ngaremeduu Conservation Area project. Its purpose is to demonstrate that all the main components of the project have been considered, and that it meets the philosophy and criteria of the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Program (SPBCP), from which essential project funds are sought.

The Ngaremeduu Conservation Area project is to be a community based, sustainable development project seeking to conserve the area's outstanding levels of biodiversity. It is believed to be entirely compatible with the philosophy, aims and objectives of the SPBCP. In fact, both in terms of the area's biodiversity and the commitment of the communities to conservation management of their resources, the project can be said to meet all the SPBCP criteria, even those which are identified by the SPBCP Guidelines as being discretionary.

The ecological resources of the Ngaremeduu Conservation Area have been subject to relatively comprehensive and recent scientific assessment. Rapid Ecological Assessments in the early 1990's found that, particularly in terms of marine ecology, the Conservation Area (CA) demonstrated some of the highest species diversity and abundance in Palau, which was in turn assessed as being one of the most biodiverse areas of marine habitat in the world. In addition, a number of species were found which had not previously been recorded in Micronesia. While the CA's terrestrial biodiversity is less well studied, it plays a critical and integral role in supporting the biodiversity of the marine area, and demonstrates some important ecological characteristics of its own.

The SPBCP also stresses the importance of community participation in, and ownership of projects. The communities of the Ngaremeduu CA fall within three State jurisdictions: Ngaremlengui, Ngatpang, and Aimeliik. Both State and traditional authorities have been consulted by the Bureau of Natural Resources and Development of the National Government of Palau (the lead agency for the proposal) and have given their commitment to the project. The project has attracted their immediate interest primarily because its guiding philosophy is considered to be compatible with traditions still being practised today and which the chiefs wish to see more widely used. Thus all three States have, and continue to, endorse and legislate in support of traditional conservation sanctions placed by the chiefs over areas of their natural resources. The senior chiefs of the CA have all expressed interest in the project's potential to integrate their efforts and extend traditional authority and practices, within the context of State and National law. They are also interested in the potential for the project to assist in further educating the people in better understanding their essential connection to their environment, and their understanding of, and commitment to, the conservation management practices being used.

The communities believe that the timing of the project is critical for the CA. Not only is there a need for greater community awareness of the importance of the environment in the long term sustainable development of the people, but the negative effects of development

and unsustainable modern practices are becoming more noticeable. In addition there are several major development projects proposed which the chiefs fear will bring drastic and unwanted changes to the CA and their way of life. The communities want development but they want to be able to influence development to ensure that it is sustainable and works to their long term benefit in harmony with their own plans.

The Bureau of Natural Resources and Development believes that the SPBCP is an appropriate programme of support for the Ngaremeduu CA. The Bureau has initiated a number of surveys, including the Rapid Ecological Assessments already noted, and in recognition of the extremely high and globally significant levels of biodiversity in the CA, the wishes of the communities for support in their traditional management of their resources, and the Bureau's own conviction that conservation management in Palau can only be achieved by a partnership between National and State governments, and local communities, has brought about national level acceptance of the high need for conservation of this area. All recent national policies from the *Comprehensive Conservation Strategy for the Republic of Palau* (Cassell, Otobed and Adelbai, 1992), and the *National Environmental Management Strategy* (SPREP 1994b) to the *Palau 2020 National Master Development Plan* (Republic of Palau 1995) give priority to conservation of the Ngaremeduu area which involves support for both community development and traditional authority.

The aim for the Conservation Area Project (CAP) at Ngaremeduu is:

To conserve the Ngaremeduu CA in perpetuity in order to maintain and enhance biodiversity while providing for sustainable development by incorporating traditional resource management and active community participation into project planning and management.

To achieve this aim, the specific objectives of the project are:

1. *To provide an on-going process of community awareness-raising, liaison and participation as a basis for community based resource planning and management and long term conservation management of the resources of the CA.*
2. *To establish effective and appropriate institutional arrangements for community based resource planning and management decision-making.*
3. *To formulate and implement a resource management plan for the CA which both conserves biodiversity and meets the needs of landowners.*
4. *To provide a framework for the development of income-generating activities.*
5. *To establish an effective, participatory system of monitoring and review.*

6. *To use the experiences and achievements of the Ngaremeduu CAP as a pilot for the Rock Island SPBCP project.*

The PPD structures the project around these 6 objectives, with each objective giving rise to a series of project activities which are together designed to meet the particular objective. The PPD identifies 22 activities which are each described separately in Section 4.1.

The Ngaremeduu CA project is based on a *process approach* to both planning and management, with SPBCP support sought for funding the initial process and certain key activities. The process is to consist of three basic parts:

1. *A program of awareness raising with all groups of project participants, leading into participatory planning and management which is designed to ensure that all parties with an interest in the CA have a stake in both project design and management.*
2. *The establishment of a structure for project management that is appropriate to the traditional authorities of the area, and both State and National governments. This process will begin with the lead agency (Bureau of Natural Resources and Development) being responsible for progressing and managing the process, but this will change progressively towards greater community management. In the longer term project management will be localised to the maximum extent possible, with the Bureau becoming more of an adviser to local project management. It is envisaged that the participatory planning process will establish some form of a Conservation Area Coordinating Committee (CACC) as the principal decision-making body for the project. This Committee will represent all major parties to the project.*
3. *The preparation of a long term plan for the management of the CA. This will guide all the communities and outside agencies in their respective roles and authorities within the CA. It will state the aims and objectives which are sought by the communities, and direct day to day activities towards these ends. In addition it will provide the framework for the development of sustainable development activities, establish a monitoring regime to ensure that activities do not deplete the biodiversity while improving the socio-economic conditions of the communities, and identify training needs for both project managers and community members.*

The PPD details the key activities that will need to be undertaken in order to develop the project as envisaged, and proposes a workplan for the first five years of the project. The workplan is also costed. While these details are important to demonstrate the degree of planning that has already occurred on the project, in large part they must be acknowledged to be only indicative, particularly for that part of the project workplan that occurs after the establishment of the CACC. The PPD has been prepared at the outset of the project process. The CACC is to be the key decision-making body of the project and it will be via the CACC that detailed project planning will occur. As this is a community based project it is not possible to predicate at the outset what the communities will together decide are

their priorities. The project is thus designed to be as flexible as possible so as to be able to accommodate eventual outputs of the project process.



Temmy L. Shmull
Minister of State

Ministry of State
REPUBLIC OF PALAU

— Ngardok (Ramsar Convention) —

KUSC
P.O. Box 100
Koror, ROP 96940
Tel: (680) 488-2509 / 1189
Fax: (680) 488-2443
E-mail: ministryofstate@palaunet.com

October 21, 2002
MS-341-02

Koichiro Matsuura
Director-General
UN Educational, Scientific & Cultural
Organization (UNESCO)
Paris, France

Dear Director-General:

I have the honor of formally forwarding the attached letter from H.E. Tommy Remengesau, Jr., President of the Republic of Palau in which he is lodging the Instrument of Accession by the Republic of Palau to the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat" also known as the "RAMSAR Convention"

You will note that the said letter from H.E. President Remengesau is dated 22 October 2001, last year, and according to the Office of the President's records it was airtailed on the same date to UNESCO Office in Paris, France. We have just been informed that your office has not received the said letter and the Instrument of Accession by Palau, to date, and therefore, I am taking the liberty of re-transmitting a copy via facsimile, for your advance information, while another original which has been signed again by the President is being sent via airmail.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Temmy L. Shmull
Minister of State

Enclosure



REPUBLIC OF PALAU

Office of the President

TOMMY E. REMENGESAU, JR.
President

*POB 100, Palau, PW 96940
Phone: (680) 488-2403 / 2541 • Fax: (680) 488-1662
E-mail: president.rop@palau.net.com*

October 22, 2001
Serial: 01- 515

Koichiro Matsuura
Director-General
UN Educational, Scientific & Cultural
Organization (UNESCO)
Paris, France

Re: Instrument of Accession

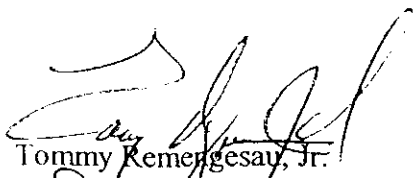
Director-General:

I have the honor to lodge herewith, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Palau, the attached Instrument of Accession by the Republic of Palau to the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat" also known as the "RAMSAR Convention".

It is a distinct honor indeed for my country to join hands with the other parties to the Convention which provides the framework for international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Having acceded to the Convention, the Republic of Palau looks forward to continuing its active participation in furthering the objectives of the Convention for conservation and wise use of the wetland resources for the benefits of mankind.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Tommy Remengesau, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau

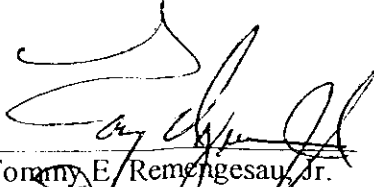
Attachments

INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION

I, Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.,
President of the Government of the Republic of Palau
do hereby certify that
the Republic of Palau accedes, subject to ratification by the Olbiil Era Kelulau, to the
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
Especially on Waterfowl Habitat
of 2 February 1971
as amended by the **Protocol of 3 December 1982**
and by the **Conference of the Parties on 28 May 1987**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have signed and sealed
this Instrument of Accession

DONE at Koror October 22, 2001



Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau



Ministry of State
REPUBLIC OF PALAU

Femmy L. Shmull
Minister of State

P.O. Box 100
Koror, ROP 96940
Tel: (680) 488-2509 / 1189
Fax: (680) 488-2443
E-mail: ministryofstate@palaunet.com

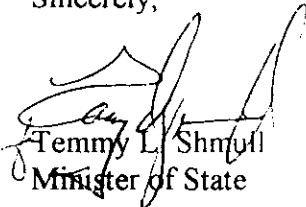
November 04, 2002
MS-358-02

Koichiro Matsuura
Director-General
UN Educational, Scientific & Cultural
Organization (UNESCO)
Paris, France

Dear Director-General:

With reference to my letter of 21 October 2002 (MS-341-02), in which I formally forwarded a letter from H.E. Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, lodging the Instrument of Accession by the Republic of Palau to the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat" also known as the "RAMSAR Convention", I wish to forward herewith, the enclosed documents as attachments to the said Instrument of Accession by Palau. The said documents were, inadvertently, excluded when we sent the original Instrument of Accession. Also attached are copies of my letter of 21 October as well as H.E. President Remengesau's letter and the Instrument of Accession, for your easy reference.

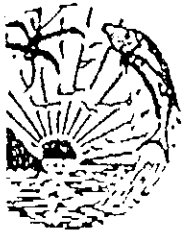
Sincerely,



Femmy L. Shmull
Minister of State

Enclosures

7/12/00



BUREAU OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT
MINISTRY OF RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT
P.O. BOX 117
KOROR, REPUBLIC OF PALAU 96940

Tel.: (680) 483-8171
Fax: (680) 483-1475
E-Mail: BNRD@palau.net

11 April 2000

MEMORANDUM

TO : Minister of State
FROM : Conservation Area Support Officer (CASO)
Bureau of Natural Resources and Development
SUBJECT : SUMMARY OF BENEFITS AND OBLIGATIONS FOR
MEMBERSHIP IN THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON
WETLANDS

Dear Sir

Attached please find the above stated document regarding the Ramsar Convention information that you requested. I requested this information from a colleague from the Wetlands International Oceania in Australia. Hope this is sufficient information for you to process the accession papers for the Ramsar Convention. Please let me know if you need any further information. Hope to hear the good news about the accession to the Ramsar Convention in the near future.

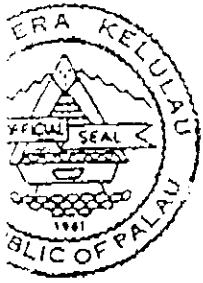
Sincerely Yours,

Alma Pudep-Morris
Bureau of Natural Resources and Development

Attachment

Herman Francisco, Director, BNRD
Ramon Rechoben, Chief Technical Assistant, Division, BOFA

sent to Ministers office
10:39 a.m. 6/4/2002



The Senate

SIXTH OLBIL ERA KELULAU

(Palau National Congress)
P.O. BOX 8
Koror, Republic of Palau 96940

TELEPHONE: (680) 488-2455/2522/
1452/1558
FAX: (680) 488-2635

*Committee on Foreign Affairs
State Relations*

Steven Kanai
Chairman

Shua Koshiba
Vice Chairman

Stand. Com. Report No. 6-90
Re: Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41
Date: 2/13/02

DEFERRED

MEMBERS

Johnny Reklai
Jill Tmeochi
Angel S. Whipps

The Honorable Seit Andres
President of the Senate
Sixth Olbil Era Kelulau
Koror, Republic of Palau 96940

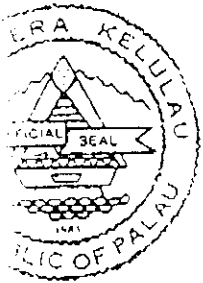
Dear Mr. President:

Your Committee on Foreign Affairs, to which was referred Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41, entitled:

A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION To accede to the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially on Waterfowl Habitat," ("Ramsar Convention") and ratify its amendments, as follows: The "Protocol of 3 December 1982" and the "Conference of the Parties on 28 May 1987".

begs leave to report as follows:

The Ramsar Convention recognizes the great resource of wetlands -- a habitat supporting flora, fauna, and waterfowl, as well providing economic, cultural, and scientific significance. Wetlands are lowland areas, like a marsh, swamp forest, or grassland, that is rich in moisture.



Sen. Com. Report No. 6-90
Re. Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41
Date: 2/13/02
Page 2

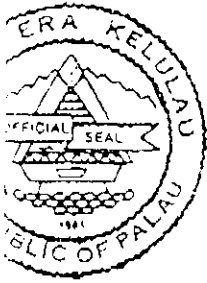
By joining the Ramsar Convention, Palau is offered an opportunity to designate certain sites ("Ramsar sites") as Wetlands of International Importance and gain global support for the maintenance of such sites. Not only will Palau be in a position to draw international attention to its Ramsar sites, as a member of the Ramsar Convention, these Ramsar sites will be eligible to receive grants, training, and expertise from a global network. If Palau becomes a member of the Ramsar Convention, it would join its neighbors, Papua New Guinea, Australia, and New Zealand as members of the Oceania region.

Palau is already a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity, a convention that works closely, along with other environmental conservation efforts, with the Ramsar Convention.

The Palau Conservation Society has expressed its "strong support" and endorsement of this resolution citing a potential "inflow of substantial new international funding" for Palau wetland sites. (See attached letter dated February 7, 2002).

The first proposed wetland designation will be Lake Ngardok Nature Reserve in the State of Melekeok. The Palau Conservation Society points out that this site is an important "source of sustainable economic development for the [S]tate" and is the "source of water for the new capital site." Funding is "particularly needed to . . . monitor" this site.

Palau must designate at least one Ramsar site when signing the Convention (hereafter, Palau can designate an unlimited number of sites at their choosing). While there has been some concern that the Ramsar Convention may impose onerous restrictions on Palau, nothing in the language leads your Committee to that conclusion. The Minister of State reported that as an "obligation" of the convention Palau would need to cooperate internationally on its policy toward shared wetland species, namely sea turtles. Your Committee notes that Palau does not have land turtles and the wetlands would not include oceans and other bodies of salt water.



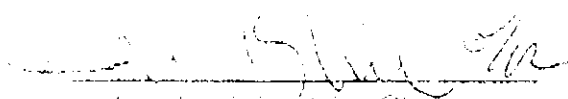
Stand. Cons. Report No. 6-90
Re: Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41
Date: 2/13/02
Page 3


On the basis of the foregoing, your Committee recommends adoption by the full Senate of Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41.


Respectfully submitted,

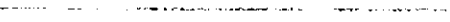
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS


Steven Kanai, Chairman


Joshua Koshiba, Vice Chairman


Mlib Tmetuchi, Member


Johnny Reklai, Member


Surangel S. Whipps, Member

Attachment

Fourth Special Session, November 2001

Senate Joint Resolution No. 21

rec'd
3/6/02 [Signature]

A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

To accede to the 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially on Waterfowl Habitat.' ('Ramsar Convention') and ratify its amendments, as follows: The 'Protocol of 3 December 1982' and the 'Conference of the Parties on 28 May 1987'.

1 *WHEREAS*, the Republic of Palau wishes to become a Party to Ramsar
2 Convention, concluded on February 2, 1971; and

3 *WHEREAS*, the Republic of Palau further wishes to ratify The 'Protocol of 3
4 December 1982' and the 'Conference of the Parties on 28 May 1987'; and

5 *WHEREAS*, Articles 9 and 10 of the aforementioned Convention calls for the
6 accession to the Convention and subsequent protocols, and

7 *WHEREAS*, the President of the Republic of Palau signed the Ramsar Convention
8 on the behalf of the Republic of Palau on October 22, 2001, and

9 *WHEREAS*, wetlands constitute a resource of great economic, cultural, scientific
10 and recreational value, the loss of which would be irreparable; and

11 *WHEREAS*, through the accession to the Ramsar Convention Palau will reinforce
12 its commitment to conserving and managing its own wetlands and the wetlands of the
13 world; and

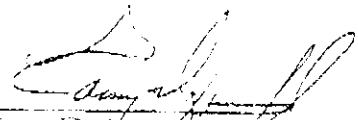
14 *WHEREAS*, accession to the Ramsar Convention will gain the Republic
15 international recognition and will result in significant future financial and technical
16 assistance, now therefore

17 *BE IT RESOLVED* by the Senate of the Sixth OEK of the Republic of Palau,
18 Fourth Regular Session, October 2001, the House concurring, that pursuant to Section
19 5(7) of Article IX of the Constitution of the Republic of Palau, that the Republic of
20 Palau's accession to the 'Ramsar Convention' along with its amendments, The 'Protocol
21 of 3 December 1982' and the 'Conference of the Parties on 28 May' are hereby ratified
22 and approved by the Ombudsman and the President.

House Joint Res. No. 6-41

1 *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that certified copies of this Resolution be
 2 transmitted to the President of the Republic of Palau, the Minister of Resources and
 3 Develop, and the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and
 4 Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Date: 10/3/01

Introduced by: 
 Tommy D. Remengesau, Jr.
 President, Republic of Palau

MEMBERSHIP IN THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

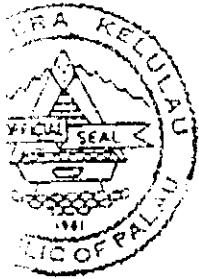
SUMMARY OF BENEFITS AND OBLIGATIONS

BENEFITS:

1. **International recognition of important wetlands.** The Convention has a tangible focus: the designated wetlands of international importance ("Ramsar Sites"). Palau plans to designate Ngardok Lake as its first Ramsar Site. Additional Sites may be designated at any time. Private landowners, planners and agencies can refer to the global recognition of their Ramsar Sites when attempting to increase the security and attention given to these wetlands within the country.
2. **Framework for wetland conservation.** Membership in Ramsar would provide Palau with a framework for conservation of its marine and freshwater wetlands. Ramsar's *Strategic Plan* outlines actions at the international and local levels, which can be used as the basis for a national wetlands program.
3. **Greater access to expertise and resources.** The Convention has developed many tools to assist countries conserve and manage their wetlands. These include the Small Grants Fund and Ewin Training Initiative, which are available to member countries. Ramsar 'Partners' such as Wetlands International can provide expertise from their global networks of specialists. Development assistance agencies increasingly prefer to direct funds to wetlands that are designated as Ramsar Sites.
4. **A voice on the international stage.** Membership will ensure the issues and concerns for wetlands in Palau to be made known in the international arena. This can lead to the particular needs of countries such as Palau being incorporated in global planning for wetland conservation and management.
5. **Regional cooperation.** Ramsar operates with a system of regions. Palau would join the Oceania region and thus benefit from the outcomes of meetings and dialogue that recognises the issues and needs in Oceania. Current members are PNG, Australia and New Zealand and others such as Fiji are considering membership.
6. **Harmonisation with other conventions.** Ramsar is at the forefront of developing harmonisation with other environmental conventions. It has a joint work plan with the Convention on Biological Diversity, is in liaison with the Climate Change Convention and is working towards streamlining of reporting for the various conventions.
7. **Convention support officer based in the region.** Through funding provided by the Australian Government, a Ramsar Liaison Officer, employed by Wetlands International, is based within the Oceania region. This officer tries to keep in close touch with member countries - visit where possible and assist with specific Ramsar initiatives.

OBLIGATIONS

- 1 **Designation of Ramsar Sites.** Members must designate at least one Ramsar Site and promote the conservation of their Ramsar Sites. Sites may be of any size and any form of tenure but must meet at least one of the Ramsar criteria. Documentation is straightforward and proposed Ramsar Sites are not subject to on-site inspection before 'acceptance'.
- 2 **Plan for wise use of wetlands.** Palau would need to establish or actively work towards planning for the wise (= sustainable) use of all its wetlands. An existing National Environment Management Strategy or Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan may already cover this obligation or provide a preliminary step towards achieving it.
- 3 **Establish conservation areas and promote training.** Palau would need to establish or actively work towards planning for conservation areas at wetlands and support capacity building for wetland owners/managers. (Conservation areas may be of any status and may include resident local people.) Palau is already involved in these activities through several sites and initiatives.
- 4 **Cooperate internationally on shared wetland species.** Species relevant to Palau would include migratory wetland birds and sea turtles. Palau is already involved in these efforts to some extent and could seek to become more involved through contact with SPREP, Wetlands International and others.
- 5 **Contribute to the Convention budget.** At the May 1999 Conference of Parties to the Convention it was resolved that the minimum dues to be contributed each year (for 1999-2001) by a member country will be Swiss Francs 1000 (about US Dollars 600). Actual dues will be based on the UN Scale of Assessments; Palau probably is at or near the minimum level.



The Senate

SIXTH OLBIL ERA KELULAU

(Palau National Congress)
P.O. BOX 8
Koror, Republic of Palau 96940

TELEPHONE: (680) 488-2455/2522/
1452/1358
FAX: (680) 488-2633

*Foreign Affairs
State Relations*

Steven Kanai
Chairman

Joia Koshiha
Vice Chairman

MEMBERS

Sammy Kekial
He Ymetuchl
Ang S. Whiggs

Stand. Com. Report No. 6-90
Re: Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41
Date: 2/12/02

DEFERRED

The Honorable Seit Andres
President of the Senate
Sixth Olbil Era Kelulau
Koror, Republic of Palau 96940

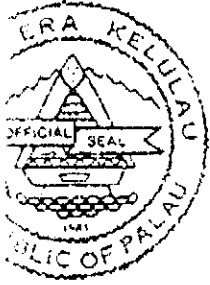
Dear Mr. President:

Your Committee on Foreign Affairs, to which was referred Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41, entitled:

A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION To accede to the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially on Waterfowl Habitat," ("Ramsar Convention") and ratify its amendments, as follows: The "Protocol of 3 December 1982" and the "Conference of the Parties on 28 May 1987".

begs leave to report as follows:

The Ramsar Convention recognizes the great resource of wetlands -- a habitat supporting flora, fauna, and waterfowl, as well providing economic, cultural, and scientific significance. Wetlands are lowland areas, like a marsh, swamp forest, or grassland, that is rich in moisture.



Senate Comm. Report No. 6-90
 Re: Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41
 Date: 2/3/02
 Page 2

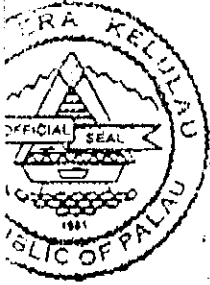
By joining the Ramsar Convention, Palau is offered an opportunity to designate certain sites ("Ramsar sites") as Wetlands of International Importance and gain global support for the maintenance of such sites. Not only will Palau be in a position to draw international attention to its Ramsar sites, as a member of the Ramsar Convention, these Ramsar sites will be eligible to receive grants, training, and expertise from a global network. If Palau becomes a member of the Ramsar Convention, it would join its neighbors, Papua New Guinea, Australia, and New Zealand as members of the Oceania region.

Palau is already a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity, a convention that works closely, along with other environmental conservation efforts, with the Ramsar Convention.

The Palau Conservation Society has expressed its "strong support" and endorsement of this resolution citing a potential "inflow of substantial new international funding" for Palau wetland sites. (See attached letter dated February 1, 2002).

The first proposed wetland designation will be Lake Ngardok Nature Reserve in the State of Melekeok. The Palau Conservation Society points out that this site is an important "source of sustainable economic development for the [S]tate" and is the "source of water for the new capital site." Funding is "particularly needed to [monitor]" this site.

Palau must designate at least one Ramsar site when signing the Convention (thereafter, Palau can designate an unlimited number of sites at their choosing). While there has been some concern that the Ramsar Convention may impose onerous restrictions on Palau, nothing in the language leads your Committee to that conclusion. The Minister of State reported that as an "obligation" of the convention, Palau would need to cooperate internationally on its policy toward shared wetland species, namely sea turtles. Your Committee notes that Palau does not have land turtles and the wetlands would not include oceans and other bodies of salt water.



Stand. Comm. Report No. 6-93
Re: Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41
Date: 3/13/02
Page 3

On the basis of the foregoing, your Committee recommends adoption by the full Senate of Senate Joint Resolution No. 6-41.

Respectfully submitted,

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Steven Kanai, Chairman

Joshua Kosmoa, Vice Chairman

Mlib Tmetucht, Member

Joanny Reklai, Member

Surangel S. Yap, Member

Attachment

... on, November 2001

Senate Joint Resolution

rec'd
3/6/02 [Signature]

use in 10
[Signature]

A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

To accede to the 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially on Waterfowl Habitat.' ('Ramsar Convention') and ratify its amendments, as follows. The 'Protocol of 3 December 1982' and the 'Conference of the Parties on 28 May 1987'.

1 WHEREAS, the Republic of Palau wishes to become a Party to Ramsar
2 Convention, concluded on February 2, 1971; and

3 WHEREAS, the Republic of Palau further wishes to ratify The 'Protocol of 3
4 December 1982' and the 'Conference of the Parties on 28 May 1987'; and

5 WHEREAS, Articles 9 and 10 of the aforementioned Convention calls for the
6 accession to the Convention and subsequent protocols; and

7 WHEREAS, the President of the Republic of Palau signed the Ramsar Convention
8 on the behalf of the Republic of Palau on October 22, 2001; and

9 WHEREAS, wetlands constitute a resource of great economic, cultural, scientific
10 and recreational value, the loss of which would be irreparable; and

11 WHEREAS, through the accession to the Ramsar Convention Palau will reinforce
12 it's commitment to conserving and managing its own wetlands and the wetlands of the
13 world; and

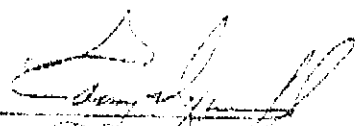
14 WHEREAS, accession to the Ramsar Convention will gain the Republic
15 international recognition and will result in significant future financial and technical
16 assistance, now therefore:

17 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Spia OEK of the Republic of Palau,
18 Fourth Regular Session, October 2001, the House concurring, that pursuant to Section
19 5(7) of Article IX of the Constitution of the Republic of Palau, that the Republic of
20 Palau's accession to the 'Ramsar Convention' along with its amendments, The 'Protocol
21 of 3 December 1982' and the 'Conference of the Parties on 28 May' are hereby ratified
22 and approved by the Oibul Eel Kwalau; and

House Joint Res. No. 6-41

1 *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that certified copies of this Resolution be
 2 transmitted to the President of the Republic of Palau, the Minister of Resources and
 3 Develop, and the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and
 4 Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Date: 10/27/01

introduced by: 
 Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
 President, Republic of Palau

MEMBERSHIP IN THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS AND OBLIGATIONS

BENEFITS:

1. **International recognition of important wetlands.** The Convention has a tangible focus: the designated Wetlands of International Importance ("Ramsar Sites"). Palau plans to designate Ngardok Lake as its first Ramsar Site. Additional Sites may be designated at any time. Palauan landowners, planners and agencies can refer to the global recognition of their Ramsar Sites when attempting to increase the security and attention given to these wetlands within the country.
2. **Framework for wetland conservation.** Membership in Ramsar would provide Palau with a framework for conservation of its marine and freshwater wetlands. Ramsar's *Strategic Plan* outlines actions at the international and local levels, which can be used as the basis for a national wetlands program.
3. **Greater access to expertise and resources.** The Convention has developed many tools to assist countries conserve and manage their wetlands. These include the Small Grants Fund and Elich Training Initiative, which are available to member countries. Ramsar 'Partners' such as Wetlands International can provide expertise from their global networks of specialists. Development assistance agencies increasingly prefer to direct funds to wetlands that are designated as Ramsar Sites.
4. **A voice on the international stage.** Membership will ensure the issues and concerns for wetlands in Palau to be made known in the international arena. This can lead to the particular needs of countries such as Palau being incorporated in global planning for wetland conservation and management.
5. **Regional cooperation.** Ramsar operates with a system of regions. Palau would join the Oceania region and thus benefit from the outcomes of meetings and dialogue that recognises the issues and needs in Oceania. Current members are PNG, Australia and New Zealand and others such as Fiji are considering membership.
6. **Harmonisation with other conventions.** Ramsar is at the forefront of developing harmonisation with other environmental conventions. It has a joint work plan with the Convention on Biological Diversity, is in liaison with the Climate Change Convention and is working towards streamlining of reporting for the various conventions.
7. **Convention support officer based in the region.** Through funding provided by the Australian Government, a "Ramsar Liaison Officer", employed by Wetlands International, is based within the Oceania region. This officer tries to keep in close touch with member countries, visit where possible and assist with specific Ramsar initiatives.

Rock Islands Conservation Area, Republic of Palau

Awareness and Consensus-Building Project

A Concept Proposal Submitted to the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme

**by
Palau Conservation Society**

Revised October, 1997

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND	2
2. CONSERVATION AREA DESCRIPTION	5
3. PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE CONSERVATION AREA	6
4. COMMUNITY STRUCTURE AND SERVICES	9
5. CONSERVATION AREA VALUES AND OTHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	10
6. PROJECT RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES	11
7. PROJECT DESIGN	13
8. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE	14
9. CONSTRAINTS AND RISKS	16
10. REFERENCES	18
ANNEX. MAPS OF PALAU AND ROCK ISLANDS CONSERVATION AREA	20

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Rock Islands of Palau are world renowned by diving enthusiasts, natural science researchers, and the international conservation community. For Palauans, the Rock Islands are a center for recreation, a source of subsistence and commercial fisheries, and the foundation for economic development—marine-based tourism.

The Rock Islands have received increasing attention from resource managers since 1956, when a cluster of islands within the area was established as the Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve. Since then, a variety of national, state, and traditional laws have been enacted that affect the way the resources of the Rock Islands may be utilized. The Rock Islands area as a whole is not a formal conservation area, and it is not proposed here to establish or manage such an area. Instead, it is proposed that certain activities be undertaken to lend momentum to the progress that has been made during the last few years in effectively managing the Rock Islands area. The Rock Islands have been the focus of a variety of management-driven research projects during the last decade, and there is now a wealth of information available to guide management of the area. The next step in management of the Rock Islands, and the primary expected outcome of this project, is to *gain a consensus among major stakeholders of the most effective management structure and strategies needed for the long-term preservation and sustainable use of the Rock Islands area*. Tasks to be undertaken towards that objective are: 1) disseminate information on the values and uses of the Rock Islands area to resource managers and the public, 2) facilitate communication among resource managers and stakeholders, and 3) help coordinate the variety of research, management, and education initiatives being undertaken in the area.

Since its inception in 1994, the Palau Conservation Society (PCS) has made the Rock Islands a priority of its program, conducting research on key resources and issues, advising the states of Koror and Peleliu (the resource owners) on a variety of management problems, and incorporating Rock Island-related issues in its education campaigns. As proponent of this SPBCP-funded project, PCS proposes to hire a Rock Islands Coordinator (RIC) that would be attached to the state governments of Koror and Peleliu. For one year, the RIC would be responsible for achieving the three objectives listed above. An additional product would be the further development of long-term management objectives and strategies for the Rock Islands area.

Following is an overview of existing and pending laws and policies that apply to the Rock Islands area. Following that is a description of recent research and management activities that have contributed and will contribute to formulating law and policy for the Rock Islands. Together, these two lists illustrate that the Rock Islands are in fact being actively managed on a variety of levels. They also demonstrate the commitment of the primary stakeholders in managing the area towards both the protection of biodiversity and rare and endangered species and the sustainable utilization of the natural resources of the area.

Regulatory environment of the Rock Islands:

International laws:

- CITES prohibits import to party countries of dugong, crocodile, sea turtles, and fruit bats, and regulates import to party countries of hard corals and giant clams

Constitutional provisions:

- Marine resources are owned by the states out to 12 miles from island baselines
- OEK (national congress) has the power to regulate the ownership, exploration and exploitation of natural resources
- The roles and authority of traditional leaders are recognized and upheld (in Koror and Peleliu, most edicts of traditional leaders would be funneled through the executive and/or legislative branches, in which the traditional leaders are represented)

National laws:

- No removal of WWII wrecks (Palau Lagoon Monument)
- No fishing, hunting, or disturbance in Ngerukewid Islands
- Four-month fishing closure at Ngerumekaol (grouper spawning site)
- Four-month nationwide ban on fishing of grouper and rabbitfish (spawning season)
- Export ban on hard corals, coconut crabs, lobsters, mangrove crabs, giant clams, sea cucumbers, napoleon wrasse, and humphead parrotfish
- Trochus harvesting limited to one-month seasons declared by OEK
- Prohibited fishing methods (scuba, poisons, certain net types and mesh sizes)
- Nationwide restrictions on harvest and export of ornamental fishes and invertebrates
- Endangered Species Act restricts take of listed species (none currently listed)
- Take of dugong prohibited, take of sea turtle eggs prohibited and turtles restricted
- Hunting of most birds prohibited nationwide

State laws:

Koror State:

- Permits required for fishing and diving (\$15/tourist-month)
- Prohibited fishing methods (scuba, hookah, poisons)
- No fishing near Ngemelis island, location of Palau's most popular dive sites
- Trochus sanctuary (required by national law)
- Policy of no diving at Ngerumekaol during grouper spawning months
- Permits required for Rock Island users (\$15/tourist-month) (pending)
- RI zoning system, with certain areas designated for local use only (pending)

Peleliu State:

- Trochus sanctuary (required by national law)
- Restrictions on certain net fishing methods (only in areas outside CA)

Research and management activities in the Rock Islands:

- 1956: 12 km² complex of 37 islands established by the Trust Territory government as the Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve, with the purpose of retaining the area in its “present primitive condition where the natural plant and animal life shall be permitted to develop undisturbed” (24 Palau National Code 3001).
- 1980-97: Ecology of marine lakes of Rock Islands researched (e.g., Hamner *et al.*, 1982; Hamner, 1991).
- 1981-92: Palau-wide dugong surveys included Rock Islands (e.g., Brownell *et al.*, 1981; Rathbun *et al.*, 1988).
- 1989: In support of the Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve, Palau national government commissions a marine and terrestrial resource survey of Ngerukewid (Birkeland and Manner, 1989) and prepares a management plan for the Reserve (Thomas *et al.*, 1989).
- 1991: Palau-wide crocodile survey included Rock Islands (Messel and King, 1991).
- 1992: Palau national government prepares a comprehensive national conservation strategy that emphasizes management actions needed for the Rock Islands (Cassel *et al.*, 1992).
- 1992: Rapid ecological assessment of Palau’s marine and terrestrial resources includes many stations in the Rock Islands and results in a recommendation to establish and manage the entire Rock Islands as a National Park (Maragos *et al.*, 1994).
- 1992-97: Rock Islands is one focus area of efforts by Coral Reef Research Foundation to collect marine samples for cancer and AIDS-screening by U.S. National Cancer Institute. Similar efforts ongoing by government and private sector of Japan.
- 1994: Palau Division of Marine Resources (DMR) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) commissioned by Koror State to formulate management plan for three locales in the Rock Islands: Ngemelis/Ngerukewid, Ngerumekaol, and Ngkisaol (DMR/TNC, 1994).
- 1993-94: Palau Division of Marine Resources and Koror State, with assistance from local dive companies and The Nature Conservancy, initiate mooring buoy program, installing buoys at key dive sites.
- 1994: National Environmental Strategy prepared by national government and South Pacific Regional Environment Programme proposes program to prepare management plans and support bioserve planning for priority areas, including the Rock Islands (Maiava and BNRD, 1994).
- 1996: National Master Development Plan proposes establishment of “Rock Islands Natural Heritage Area,” largely following recommendations of Maragos, *et al.* (1994), with objective to “bring an area of outstanding national or international significance under specific management controls to protect that significance for posterity” (SAGRIC, 1996).
- 1994-96: R.E. Johannes Pty Ltd, DMR, and PCS conduct 3-year research project aimed at developing long-term monitoring and management program for Ngerumekaol grouper aggregation monitoring site (Johannes *et al.*, 1994 and 1996).
- 1995: Palau Bureau of Natural Resources and Development proposes to SPBCP to include the Rock Islands as one of two areas for Conservation Area funding (project was ultimately narrowed to just Ngeremeduu Bay).
- 1995-96: Palau Conservation Society commissioned by Koror State to assist with management of Ngerumekaol (especially applying results of grouper aggregation monitoring

program), including drafting of state legislation to establish a conservation area around the site (PCS, 1996).

- 1995-97: Rock Island issues are a central feature of the regular school presentations made by the PCS education program (Butler, *et al.*, 1996).
- 1996: In part for the research and conservation values of the Rock Islands, the Japanese government proposes to construct a Coral Reef Research Center in Palau under the U.S.-Japan Common Agenda.
- 1996-97: Palau Conservation Society commissioned by Koror and Peleliu States to undertake Ngemelis Tourism Management Project, focusing on management needs (use restrictions, dive site monitoring, tourist and dive guide education) for the Ngemelis complex, location of Palau's most popular dive sites (PCS, 1997).
- 1997: Palau Conservation Society commissioned by Peleliu State to develop long-term conservation strategy for the state, including the Rock Islands (in progress).
- 1997: Koror State and Palau Conservation Society initiate development of Jellyfish Lake tourist site, including dock and trail improvements, interpretative program, biological monitoring, and permit system (in progress).
- Ongoing enforcement of conservation laws by 10 officers of the Koror State Law Enforcement and Conservation Department (KSLECD).
- Ongoing maintenance of tourist sites (facilities maintenance, trash removal, mooring buoy maintenance) by staff of the KSLECD.
- Ongoing enforcement by Palau Bureau of Natural Resources and Development of Ngerukewid, Ngerumekaol, and other national fishing laws.
- Ongoing monitoring by KSLECD of grouper spawning aggregations at Ngerumekaol.

2. CONSERVATION AREA DESCRIPTION

Although this is not a proposal to legally establish a conservation area around the Rock Islands, the area of interest is discrete and well-defined, and will be referred to in this proposal as a "Conservation Area" (CA). The Rock Islands are located in the southern lagoon of Palau's main archipelago, south of the heavily populated main islands of Koror and north of the moderately populated island of Peleliu (see maps in Annex). The size of the CA is about 1,000 km². The basis for definition of the CA is primarily geographical: it is nearly the entirety of the area of the southern lagoon of Palau that features steep limestone islands rising from the lagoon bottom of 10 to 50 meter depths and bounded by a barrier reef system dropping steeply and very deeply. To the north of the complex there are additional limestone islands, but they are part of or adjacent to the urban center of Koror. These limestone formations increasingly give way to volcanic formations to the north. Aesthetically, the complex comprises one of the natural wonders of the world, both below and above water. Economically, the complex supports Palau's most important sector, marine-based tourism, with the steep walls on the south side supporting some of the most exciting scuba diving in the world, and the islands, reefs, and lagoons in the interior providing snorkeling, fishing, picnic, and camping areas for both tourists and residents. The geological make-up of the Rock Islands make the CA ecologically distinct from surrounding areas. With the exception of the particularly steep walls on the south side, the barrier reef surrounding the CA is not substantially different than the rest of Palau's barrier reef.

3. PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

(from Maragos *et al.*, 1994, except where noted otherwise)

The climate of Palau is typical of low tropical latitudes, being generally hot (24-31°C), wet (3,750 mm per year), and humid. Winds are seasonal, with moderate but consistent northeasterly trades dominating from December through April and more variable southwest monsoon winds dominating from May through October. Palau is south of the major typhoon belt. The last major typhoon hit Palau in 1990 (Typhoon Mike).

The Rock Islands CA includes 424 limestone islands: 397 steep “rock” islands and 27 low islands on the barrier reef, all of which are part of a formation of coral reef thrust up above sea level. Two islands are quite large: Ngeruktabel (19 km²) and Mecherchar (8.8 km²). These two islands support 16 and 13 marine lakes, respectively. These lakes are connected to the lagoon via fissures and tunnels in the limestone rock, and have tidal regimes of various amplitudes and lags. The open lagoon varies in depth from 10 to 40 m. The area includes about 150 patch reefs in the lagoon, about 500 patch reefs fringing the barrier reef, and about 20 reef holes. A barrier reef encloses the CA to the south, east, and west. The lagoon extends well to the north of the CA on the west side of Koror and Babeldaob, and substantial openings to the Pacific Ocean are present on the northeast side.

The barrier and patch reefs support high abundance and diversity of hard and soft corals, other invertebrates, and fishes. Hard coral diversity at many sites within the CA is high (40 to 90 species at specific sites), and abundance is moderate (25-50% cover on the reefs among the Rock Islands) to high (up to 60% cover on the barrier reefs and reef passes). A survey of the Ngerukewid Islands reported more than 80 species of hard corals, 41 species of benthic algae, 169 species of fish, and 260 species of macro-invertebrates other than corals (Birkeland and Manner, 1989). During the 1992 rapid ecological assessment of the southern lagoon, a total of 181 species of hard corals, 343 species of fish, and 47 species of other macro-invertebrates were reported. More than 400 species of hard corals, 300 species of soft corals, and 1,300 species of marine fish have been recorded in Palau, placing it near the Indo-Pacific center of marine biodiversity. Most of these species can probably be found within the CA.

The area is bounded by open ocean along most of its perimeter. Pelagic fisheries resources are rich, supporting recreational, subsistence, and commercial fisheries. Deep reef habitat supports precious corals and the chambered nautilus.

Mangroves are present in the CA only in small patches in some protected coves and marine lakes. Important populations of baitfish, including the gold-spotted herring, are associated with these mangrove stands (e.g., at Ngkisaol).

Seagrass beds are present in several areas of the CA, particularly near Ngemelis, and provide feeding grounds for the endangered green sea turtle and the dugong.

Palau has the only hawksbill sea turtle nesting sites in Micronesia, and the Rock Islands provide Palau's most important nesting sites. Nesting activity is known to have declined over the last two decades, probably largely a result of poaching of eggs and the harvest of nesting females. Development of camping "shacks" on many of the Rock Island beaches and increasing recreational use by tourists and residents is probably also an important factor.

The endangered estuarine crocodile has been reported in several of the Rock Islands' marine lakes, but the lakes are not believed to provide breeding habitat (Messel and King, 1991).

A variety of the Marianas fruit bat, *Pteropus mariannus pelewensis*, is endemic to Palau and is common in the Rock Islands. The island of Ngeruktabel is suspected of having a roost of about 500 bats. Bats have been found in substantial numbers on other islands, as well, including the protected Ngerukewid islands.

The endangered Micronesian megapode nests on beaches in the Rock Islands. The total Rock Island population has been estimated at 104 birds. Poaching of eggs is believed to be contributing to a decline in its numbers. Many other birds are found in the Rock Islands, and some appear to be limited to the Rock Islands. Two, the Nicobar pigeon and the blue-faced parrotfinch, have been recommended for listing as endangered, and were found to have their highest population densities in the Rock Islands (the latter was found only in the Rock Islands). The Palau greater white-eye appears to be restricted to Ngeruktabel and the Palau ground dove largely restricted to the Rock Islands. Several seabirds, including the Audubon shearwater, the bridled tern, and the black-naped tern, appear to be restricted to the Rock Islands. Twenty three species of birds were recorded in the Ngerukewid islands in one study (Birkeland and Manner, 1989).

Although covered with only thin layers of soil, the Rock Islands are densely vegetated with a great variety of vascular plants. Manner and Raulerson (1989) reported 123 species of plants in the Ngerukewid islands, most of them indigenous or endemic. The endemic palm, *Gulubia palauensis*, is considered to be endangered and has disappeared from many of the Rock Islands. It is a preferred food of the introduced sulfur-crested cockatoo.

The marine lakes of the Rock Islands provide habitats and support communities and organisms found nowhere else in the world. Their value as "natural marine laboratories" for basic ecological research is world-renowned.

In summary, the outstanding habitats and communities of the Rock Islands include:

- exposed and protected beach/strand communities supporting seabirds, sea turtles, and megapodes
- cliffs and caves supporting seabird and bat rookeries
- limestone forests supporting coconut crabs, land crabs, fruit bats, a diversity of bird species, and the endemic Palauan palm

- barrier, patch, and island fringing reefs, supporting diverse coral communities, reef fish populations, reef fish spawning aggregation sites, and invertebrate populations, including giant clams and trochus
- reef passes and points supporting rich coral communities and key fish spawning sites
- seagrass communities supporting dugong and sea turtles nesting sites, sea cucumbers, and shellfish
- evolutionarily-isolated marine lake habitats
- open ocean, supporting pelagic resources and providing high quality water to CA
- deep benthos (nautilus and non-hermatypic coral habitat)
- sand flats supporting fishes and prized mollusks such as the helmet shell
- mud lagoon bottoms supporting particular fish and invertebrate communities

Some of the Rock Islands have been inhabited in the past, but current human use is limited to camping in shelters and on beaches, fishing, hunting for birds, bats, coconut and land crabs, taking turtles and turtle and megapode eggs, diving and snorkeling, picnicking, boating, research, and educational visits. Given the topography and lack of developed soils, the potential for agricultural development is practically nil.

While any permanent settlement in the Rock Islands in the near future is unlikely, human use is increasing, especially from the growing number of tourists visiting the Rock Islands to dive, snorkel, and picnic. Associated impacts include degradation of coral reef communities from boat anchors and directly from divers and snorkelers. Both tourists and residents are converging in increasing numbers on the relatively few accessible beaches in the Rock Islands, primarily picnicking and camping. Both solid and human waste problems are apparent in some areas. Fishing (mostly by residents but with some development of tourist-based sportfishing) pressure is significant, and is undoubtedly the cause for what are believed to be severely depleted populations of many species of reef fish in the Rock Islands area.

Additionally, degradation of marine communities has and/or may occur from crown-of-thorn outbreaks, water pollution, and thermal stress. A major crown-of-thorns outbreak occurred in much of Palau and the Pacific in the late 1970s, and some areas have not fully recovered. The Rock Islands do not have any outstanding damage from this event, but the rapid ecological assessment of 1992 saw large numbers of crown-of-thorns at several sites in the Rock Islands area, with noticeable predation on corals.

Sources of water pollution in Palau include the solid waste dump next to the water in Koror, the sewage outfall site off Malakal in the main harbor, erosion from land-based development activities in Koror and Babeldaob, spills of petroleum products from boats in the harbor and at sea, and exhaust products from motorboats and jetskiis. The sources of the first three are located at least five km from the CA. They are unlikely to contribute to significant problems under current discharge rates but may become a concern as population increases and physical development proceeds. The level of threat from the latter two is difficult to assess.

4. COMMUNITY STRUCTURE AND SERVICES

4.1 Population/target group:

There are no permanent inhabitants in the Rock Islands. Some Palauans claim certain rights to particular islands and beaches and reinforce those rights by constructing small camping shelters. The Peleliu and Koror State governments, which include traditional leaders, are the primary authorities with regard to the Rock Islands and their terrestrial and marine resources. The population affected by management of the CA and by this project would be essentially the entire population of Palau, but especially residents of Koror and Peleliu. Most Palauans make recreational use of the Rock Islands, and many fish, glean, and hunt there for subsistence and commercial purposes. Palau's tourism industry—Palau's fastest growing economic sector-- would be affected by the project, as tourism is centered around diving and touring in the Rock Islands area. There are about 30 local tour companies, most based in Koror, all active in the CA, and virtually all with some degree of local ownership, management, and/or employment.

The level of commitment to more actively and conservatively managing the Rock Islands is reflected in the management initiatives recently implemented by the Koror State government and the recent initiatives of the Peleliu State government (described in Section 1). The national government has also shown increasing commitment to the conservation and optimal use of the Rock Islands, reflected in the National Master Development Plan, increased enforcement of national conservation laws that affect the Rock Islands, and consideration by the last OEK (congress) of a bill to establish a Rock Islands Conservation Area. While the commitment of the public at large to CA management is more difficult to gauge, it is presumed that the actions of the governments of Koror and Peleliu reflect the desires of their constituencies to a high degree. The tourism industry is strongly committed to improved CA management, reflected in the results of interviews conducted by Palau Conservation Society in 1996 and 1997 (PCS, 1997). Although the industry does not have a clear or consistent view of who should be responsible for management of the Rock Islands, there is a clear consensus that there is a need for more restrictive laws on fishing, better maintenance of beaches and picnic sites, better training of guides, stricter safety standards, and better maintenance of mooring buoys.

4.2 Social services and infrastructure:

The Rock Islands CA is accessible only by boat. Eighteen to 25 foot open fiberglass boats with outboards are the norm for private boaters. Twenty five to 35 foot open and cabined fiberglass boats with twin outboards or in-outboards are the norm for tourist operators. All relevant social services are available in Koror, 10 to 40 minutes away by boat. There is no power in the Rock Islands, with the exception of a few solar powered lights at camping shelters. Land-to-vessel communication is typically done through VHF radio, and there is one relay station within the Rock Islands. Fresh water supplies are limited to small catchments from camping shelters. Human wastes are typically disposed of in pit privies on the beaches. Koror State has plans to construct some composting toilets at several tourist beaches. Solid waste is regularly collected from trash receptacles on the beaches by the Koror State Law Enforcement and Conservation Department.

5. CONSERVATION AREA VALUES AND OTHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The tourism industry of Palau relies at present almost totally on the natural resources of the Rock Islands. About 60 percent of Palau's tourists come to Palau primarily to scuba dive. About 90 percent of all scuba dives take place in the Rock Islands, mostly along the steep walls outside Ngemelis and neighboring islands. Most remaining tourists tour the Rock Islands and participate in snorkeling, picnicking, and fishing. In 1985, 13,300 visitors to Palau spent a total of about \$6 million, generated about \$3 million in wages, salaries, and profits, and generated about \$2 million in government revenues (SAGRIC, 1996). Tourism is growing rapidly, with the number of visitors increasing about 10 percent annually between 1990 and 1995 (there was an increase of 30% between 1996 and 1997). While this growth bodes well for the economy of Palau in the short term, it will put increasing stress on the natural resources of the CA, particularly fisheries resources, the coral reef communities that form Palau's popular dive and snorkel sites, and endangered species such as the hawksbill sea turtle and Micronesian megapode.

Except for fisheries, the Rock Islands have little resource extraction value. Some limestone islands are being investigated for their potential as quarries, but these investigations are limited to islands close to Koror. Sand and coral are dredged as construction material, but dredging has been limited to sites close to Koror, Babeldaob, and Peleliu, where most physical development has occurred. No cutting of timber has occurred in the Rock Islands, in part because of the difficulty of access. Given the high marine biodiversity of the area, its unique habitats (e.g., marine lakes), and probably very high number of endemic species, the Rock Islands may have potential as a source of marine natural products—pharmaceutical and other products directly collected or synthesized from organisms present in the area. Hunting of sea turtles, turtle eggs, megapode eggs, coconut crabs, land crabs, fruit bats, and some birds does occur on the Rock Islands. Most is for subsistence purposes, but some is also sold—mostly to restaurants in Palau (especially coconut crabs and fruit bats, neither of which may be exported).

Fishing and reef gleaning are the most important extractive activities in the Rock Islands. Fishing is primarily done by Palauans and is done for a combination of commercial, subsistence, and recreational purposes. While most fishermen are part-time or “weekend” fishermen fishing for food, fun, and a little cash, there are a few “highliner” commercial fishing operations, some employing foreigners, that fish virtually every day. Target species are mostly reef fishes associated with the patch reefs, lagoon bottoms, and barrier reef slopes. Fishing for pelagic species is also done just outside the reef, targeting spanish mackerel, wahoo, tunas, and mahi-mahi. Men do most of the fishing for finfish. Important marine invertebrates include the giant clams, a variety of sea cucumbers, and trochus. Both women and men are involved in the harvest of all three. The harvest of trochus is limited to one-month seasons in which a large proportion of Palau's population participates.

It is widely accepted that the fisheries resources near Koror, including in and around the Rock Islands, have declined markedly in the last few decades, and both national and state laws have aimed to limit fishing effort. Thus there is virtually no potential for further development of extractive fisheries within the reef system. Sportfishing, however, may offer some potential for

growth (DMR, 1996), and there are efforts underway to develop a local tourist-based catch-and-release sportfishery. Although not containing as densely populated with game fish as more remote parts of the country, the CA will receive much of the growth in sportfishing effort because of its proximity to Koror.

The Rock Islands have long been a favorite destination for local and international film-makers, researchers, and educators. The Rock Islands' unique habitats, such as the marine lakes, are an attraction for all three groups. School trips to the Rock Islands are common.

The Rock Islands clearly have exceptional conservation value, contributing substantial biodiversity at the global, regional, and local levels. The same resources that contribute to this biodiversity also offer great direct economic benefits, and fortunately, many of those benefits can be gained through largely non-extractive and non-destructive activities. With tourism as the base of economic activity in the Rock Islands, most of the economic rent derived from the resources will come from outside of Palau. Three major challenges in managing the Rock Island CA will be to: 1) control and limit resource use such that the flow of both economic and conservation benefits remains stable and high (i.e., don't overuse or degrade the resource), 2) ensure that an adequate portion of the derived rent is funneled back into management and into maintaining the conservation value of the CA, and 3) ensure that an adequate portion of the derived rent is collected by the resource owners (local communities).

6. PROJECT RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

6.1 Rationale:

The Rock Islands of Palau were selected as a site for SPBCP funding because of their extraordinary biodiversity, their aesthetic, recreational, and economic values, and because of the increasing threats to sustaining the benefits derived from those values. The area meets all six SPBCP selection criteria:

Category I:

- a) The ecosystems contained within the Rock Islands are clearly of significant national, regional, and global conservation concern, as described in Section 3, and the size of the CA is large enough to maintain the viability of those ecosystems, as described in Sections 2 and 3.
- b) The progress over the last few years in improving management of the Rock Islands, as described in Section 1, demonstrates both the high level of commitment of stakeholders (e.g., Koror and Peleliu state governments and constituencies, national government, tourism industry, local and international NGOs, international scientific and conservation communities), and the achievability of project objectives.
- c) The CA is large; its geographical and ecological complexity is extraordinary. Within the CA there is ample space and resources to support a large variety of interactions with people—ranging from strict protection (e.g., Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve and Ngerumekaol channel spawning area) to heavy use (e.g., tourist-based diving along the Ngemelis wall and heavy visitation of Jellyfish Lake). The area also has the capacity to support small scale

commercial and subsistence fishing and gleaning, recreational activities, scientific research, and educational activities.

Category II:

- a) As described in Section 3, the CA contains very high levels of biological diversity and ecological complexity.
- b) The CA is critical to the survival of endemic (e.g., the Palauan palm, Palau ground dove) and rare and endangered species (e.g., hawksbill sea turtle, fruit bat, Micronesian megapode, Nicobar pigeon, blue-faced parrotfinch).
- c) The CA is threatened by degradation, primarily from increasing tourism (e.g., destruction of coral communities by boats and divers), increased beach development (e.g., degradation of sea turtle and megapode nesting sites by the proliferation of semi-permanent camping sites), and overfishing (stemming from increasing demand for fish—both locally and from abroad).

The rationale for undertaking the specific activities proposed here (focusing on education and outreach) is grounded in the findings of a study currently being conducted by PCS (PCS, 1997). Interviews with dive company owners, managers, guides and visiting divers revealed a clear consensus that more protective management of the Rock Islands was necessary to cope with the rapid growth in visitation to Palau. But there was a notable lack of knowledge among these parties as to who owned the Rock Islands, which authorities exercised jurisdiction over them, what were the rationales for various use restrictions, and especially, how diver permit fees were being spent by government. At the same time, the relevant government agencies appeared to be unaware of many of the concerns of the dive industry and therefore unresponsive to its needs. The study revealed an urgent need for improved communication and coordination between government, the tourism industry, and the public.

6.2 Conservation Area objectives:

This project will not undertake to propose or to put in place any specific management objectives for the CA. This one-year project will be limited to *facilitating the process* of developing management objectives and strategies. However, for the purpose of guiding this project, the following informal CA objectives will be used:

1. preserve for posterity the ecological integrity and biodiversity of all biological communities and habitats within the CA;
2. provide for the long-term use of certain resources within the CA in order to meet the economic, subsistence, and recreational needs and desires of the people of Koror and Peleliu, primarily, the people of Palau, secondarily, and the people of the world, thirdly.

7. PROJECT DESIGN

7.1 Project components and objectives:

PCS recognizes three general elements that are needed for the effective long-term management of the Rock Islands CA: 1) awareness and consensus-building among stakeholders, 2) strengthening the institutions responsible for management, primarily certain arms of the state governments of Koror and Peleliu, and 3) implementation of the initiatives needed to effectively manage the CA, including everything from setting management objectives to enacting needed laws to enforcing use restrictions to biological monitoring. This one-year project will be mostly limited to the first element, awareness and consensus-building. The primary objective of the project is to:

- *gain a consensus among major stakeholders of the most effective management structure and strategies needed for the long-term preservation and sustainable use of the Rock Islands area.*

Primary project tasks are to:

- 1) **gather and disseminate information:** identify stakeholders, management issues, and information gaps; package and disseminate relevant information on the CA's natural resources, including their uses, values and important issues;
- 2) **facilitate communication:** improve communication among all stakeholders, including local communities, fishermen, divers, the tourism industry, the national government, and non-governmental organizations, and ensure their participation in consultations regarding the CA;
- 3) **build consensus:** through tasks 1 and 2, gain a consensus among stakeholders as to the best strategies for long-term protection and sustainable use of the CA;
- 4) **recommend follow-up action:** at the end of one year, make recommendations for next steps in management of the CA.

A second project component will be project management, with the objective of overseeing project implementation, including evaluation, reporting, and management of personnel, funds, and other needed resources.

7.2 Work plan by project component:

A. Awareness and consensus-building

- Hire full-time Rock Islands Coordinator (RIC) to work closely with the Koror and Peleliu State governments. Working under the direction of project manager PCS, RIC will liaise within and between state governments, national government, tourism industry, and NGOs, and affected communities and groups. Activities include:
 - compile and disseminate information necessary to complete task 1 above
 - conduct community visits and participate in associations and organizations (e.g., Belau Tourism Association, Palau Sport Fishing Association, Federation of Fishing Associations, women's groups, etc.) to present and discuss Rock Island conservation values and issues
 - monitor and share concerns of all interested parties
 - develop written recommendations for follow-up work

B. Project management

- PCS Executive Director manage project funds
- RIC accomplish regular project evaluation and reporting

7.3 Project budget by quarter:

Year 1 of 1

Item	1	2	3	4	Total
Personnel	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	20,000
Rock Islands Coordinator (100%*\$19,000/yr)					
Travel	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	4,000
domestic travel (air, boat, car, per diem)					
Equipment	8,000	0	0	0	8,000
computer and printer					
2 VHF handheld radios					
camera					
interview recording and transcription equip.					
Services and supplies	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	6,000
film and processing					
production and printing (educational materials)					
office supplies (paper, diskettes, toner, etc...)					
Administrative support	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	4,000
office facilities, communications, etc...					
Total	16,500	8,500	8,500	8,500	42,000

Palau Conservation Society will also contribute personnel to the project, including staff time of the Executive Director, Education Officer, Scientific Officer, and Office Manager.

8. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The governments of Koror and Peleliu States are the primary authorities with regard to the management of the Rock Islands CA. Their authority is well-supported by the Palau Constitution. For Koror, the Department of Law Enforcement and Conservation is the lead agency (Adalbert Eledui, Director). The Department currently maintains a staff of about 10 enforcement personnel and 10 beach and facilities maintenance personnel. For Peleliu, the office of the Governor handles Rock Island management matters (Jackson Ngiraingas, Governor). The RIC will facilitate coordination between the two governments. These two governments may create their own committees or technical groups to assist in CA management issues, but no new extra-governmental committees or groups dedicated to management of the CA or oversight of this project are planned here.

While traditional authorities may exert considerable influence over management of the CA, it is done primarily through the state governments, as the governments already have in place the mechanisms needed for representation of the chiefs, consultation with the chiefs, and implementation of chiefly edicts. Thus no special provisions for extra-governmental traditional authority are foreseen.

The national government retains certain powers and responsibilities over the CA. It enforces applicable national laws in the CA, including the Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve, the Ngerumekaol channel fishing closure, the National Lagoon Monument, and prohibitions on destructive fishing methods. Key agencies in the national government include the Bureau of Natural Resources and Development (enforcement), the Bureau of Public Safety (enforcement), the Division of Marine Resources (fisheries research and data collection), the Palau Visitors Authority (tourism promotion), and the Environmental Quality Protection Board (enactment and enforcement of environmental quality standards, including water quality).

It is assumed that the two states, being fairly small, represent the will of their constituencies to a reasonably high degree, and already have in place the mechanisms needed to consult with the public. Thus no special provisions for extra-governmental public participation are foreseen, except for the following: The RIC, as liaison with affected groups, will gain input from these groups and pass it on to the management authorities. Through its general community outreach program, the Palau Conservation Society, as project manager, will also gain input from the public.

In this project, PCS (Noah Idechong, Executive Director) will continue its role as technical advisor to Koror and Peleliu. The Nature Conservancy (Andrew Smith, Coastal and Marine Officer), through its partnership with PCS, will also advise in the management of the CA.

Other organizations indirectly involved in management of the CA include the Palau Chamber of Commerce, the Belau Tourism Association (a new industry group), the Palau Sport Fishing Association (representing the budding sportfishing industry), and the Palau Federation of Fishing Associations (representing several village-based fish marketing cooperatives).

9. CONSTRAINTS AND RISKS

No significant constraints in implementing this one-year project are foreseen. Some of the most challenging issues in the long-term management of the Rock Island CA include:

- Coordination among management authorities: Coordination between the two states and between the states and the national government is critical to effective management. Koror and Peleliu have had a history of dispute over territory in the Rock Islands (now resolved by the courts). They do, however, share common goals and both have expressed the desire to work together on common problems. The national government has been reluctant to support the constitutionally-mandated powers of the states with regard to natural resources. The situation may be changing, however, as the OEK is currently considering a bill that would provide financial or enforcement support to any state that establishes a conservation area. Finally, coordination among national agencies and between national and state agencies is typically poor. One task of the RIC will be to improve these relationships.
- Cost-effective enforcement: Law enforcement is often the most expensive component of any conservation initiative. Because of the economies of scale, the challenge of putting in place cost-effective enforcement methods is especially difficult for small political units such as Palau's states. The potential for extraction of resource rent from the Rock Islands (e.g., through user permits), however, is so great that this will probably not be an insurmountable challenge. The more difficult challenge will be directing enough of the resource rent to the state of Peleliu to support its management program.
- Political will needed to limit tourism development: The potential for tourism development in Palau is tremendous. The number of visitors to Palau is growing exponentially. The momentum for growth is so great that it will be politically very difficult to put in place the laws and policies needed to control and ultimately stop growth of the tourism sector. Yet some sites in the Rock Islands already appear to have reached their carrying capacities for divers and snorkelers. Overfishing is clearly taking a toll on the many fish stocks in and around the Rock Islands. The National Master Development Plan, if implemented, would do much to curtail uncontrolled growth of the tourism industry. One task associated with this project will be to see implementation of some of the critical tourism-related components of that plan.
- User group conflicts: Management of the CA will call for difficult decisions to be made about who can use what resources. Although management, if effective, will ultimately be for the public good (primarily the residents of Koror and Peleliu, secondarily the residents of Palau, and thirdly the residents of the world), some individuals and groups will stand to benefit while others will lose. Again, considerable political will will be necessary to make the decisions needed to benefit society as a whole. One task in this project will be provide the policymakers and all affected groups with the information needed to make good decisions.

- Lack of data is not a problem. It should be noted that in the case of the Rock Islands, it cannot be said that there is a lack of the information needed to make effective management decisions. The resources and values of the area have been well-documented and are well-recognized. Naturally, there remains much to be discovered with regard to the biodiversity and ecological functions of the area (and there will always be more questions). But there remains no major gap in understanding that would prevent effective management mechanisms from being put in place now. It should also be noted that where such information is needed for management, the appeal of the Rock Islands to both local and international researchers is so high that the information can be obtained at very little cost to Palau.

10. REFERENCES

- Birkeland, C. and H. Manner (eds) (1989), Resource Survey of the Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve, Republic of Palau. South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Noumea, 193pp.
- Butler, P., N. Idechong, and N. Yalap (1996). A Vote for National Pride; the Story of Palau's Conservation Education Campaign. RARE Center for Tropical Conservation, The Nature Conservancy, and Palau Conservation Society.
- Cassel, J., D.O. Otobed, and H. Adelbai (1992). Comprehensive Conservation Strategy for the Republic of Palau. Division of Conservation/Entomology, Bureau of Natural Resources and Development, Republic of Palau.
- DRM (1996). Small-Scale Sustainable Sport Fishery Development for Palau: Assessment, Strategy, and Consensus-Building. Project final report prepared for U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service. Division of Marine Resources, Republic of Palau, 153pp.
- DMR/TNC (1994). Proposed Management Plans for Three Southern Lagoon Areas: Ngemelis/Ngerukewid Complex, Ngerumekaol, Ngkisaol. A report prepared for Koror State by Palau Division of Marine Resources with assistance from The Nature Conservancy and Georgia Sea Turtle Cooperative, Koror, Palau, 22pp.
- Hamner, W.M., R.W. Gilmer, and P.P. Hamner (1982). The physical, chemical and biological characteristics of a stratified, saline, sulfide lake in Palau. *Limnol. Oceanogr.* 27(5):896-909.
- Hamner, W.M. (1991). Unpublished notes on the marine lakes of Palau. University of California at Los Angeles, 12pp.
- Johannes, R.E., L. Squire, and T. Graham (1994). Development a Protocol for Monitoring Spawning Aggregations of Palauan Serranids to Facilitate the Formulation and Evaluation of Strategies for their Management. FFA Report #94/28. Forum Fisheries Agency, Honiara, Solomon Islands, 25pp.
- Johannes, R.E., L. Squire, T. Graham, H. Renguul, and A. Bukurrou (1996). Palau Grouper Spawning Aggregation Research Project, 1995 Progress Report.
- Maiava, I. and BNRD (1994). Republic of Palau National Environmental Management Strategy. Prepared by Iosefa Maiava and the Palau Bureau of Natural Resources and Development in association with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, SPREP, Apia, Western Samoa, 108pp.

- Manner, H.I. and L. Raulerson (1989). Flora and Vegetation of the Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve. In: C. Birkeland and H. Manner (eds), Resource Survey of the Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve, Republic of Palau. South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Noumea, pp9-56.
- Maragos, J.E., C. Birkeland, C. Cook, K. Des Rochers, R. Di Rosa, T.J. Donaldson, S.H. Geermans, M. Guilbeaux, H. Hirsh, L. Honigman, N. Idechong, P.S. Lobel, E. Matthews, K.J. McDermid, K.Z. Meier, R. Myers, D. Otobed, R.H. Richmond, B. Smith, R. Smith (1994). Marine and Coastal Areas Survey of the Main Palauan Islands: Part 2 Rapid Ecological Assessment Synthesis Report. CORIAL, Honolulu, and The Nature Conservancy, Pacific Region.
- Marsh, H., G. Rathbun, T. O'Shea, and T. Preen (1992). An Assessment of the Status of Dugongs in Palau including Comments on Sea Turtles. Report to the Ministry of Natural Resources, Republic of Palau, 21pp.
- Messel, H. and F.W. King (1991). Survey of the Crocodile Populations of the Republic of Palau, Caroline Islands, Pacific Ocean, 8-24 June 1991. A report to the government of the Republic of Palau, Koror, Palau, 49pp.
- Rathbun, G.B., R.L. Brownell Jr., K. Ralls, and J. Engbring (1988). Status of dugongs in waters around Palau. *Marine Mammal Science*, 4:265-270.
- PCS (1996). Proposed Management of Ngerumekaol. Report prepared for Koror State by Palau Conservation Society, Koror, Palau, 20pp.
- PCS (1997). Ngemelis Tourism Management Project; Final Report, March 1997. Report prepared for Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund. Palau Conservation Society, Koror, Palau, 8pp.
- SAGRIC (1996). Palau 2020 National Master Development Plan; The Foundation for Development (revised draft final report). A report prepared for the Republic of Palau by SAGRIC International Pty Ltd, Adelaide, Australia.
- Thomas, P.E.J., P.F. Holthus, and N. Idechong (1989). Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve: Proposed Management Plan. South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Noumea, 43pp.

FACT SHEET: Palau Conservation Areas

Protecting our Natural Wealth

Palau is blessed with abundant and beautiful natural resources which today are still in healthy condition. However, increasing pressure from human use and exploitation are taking its toll.

Tourism, erosion, over-fishing, pollution, invasive species and other environmentally-destructive practices currently threaten the natural resources on which we base our livelihoods. The Babeldaob road is expected to bring new business developments, population shifts and other changes that will affect all of Palau.

Local communities take action

Recognizing the value and the vulnerability of our natural resources, communities throughout Palau have designated certain areas of land and water as specially managed "conservation areas."

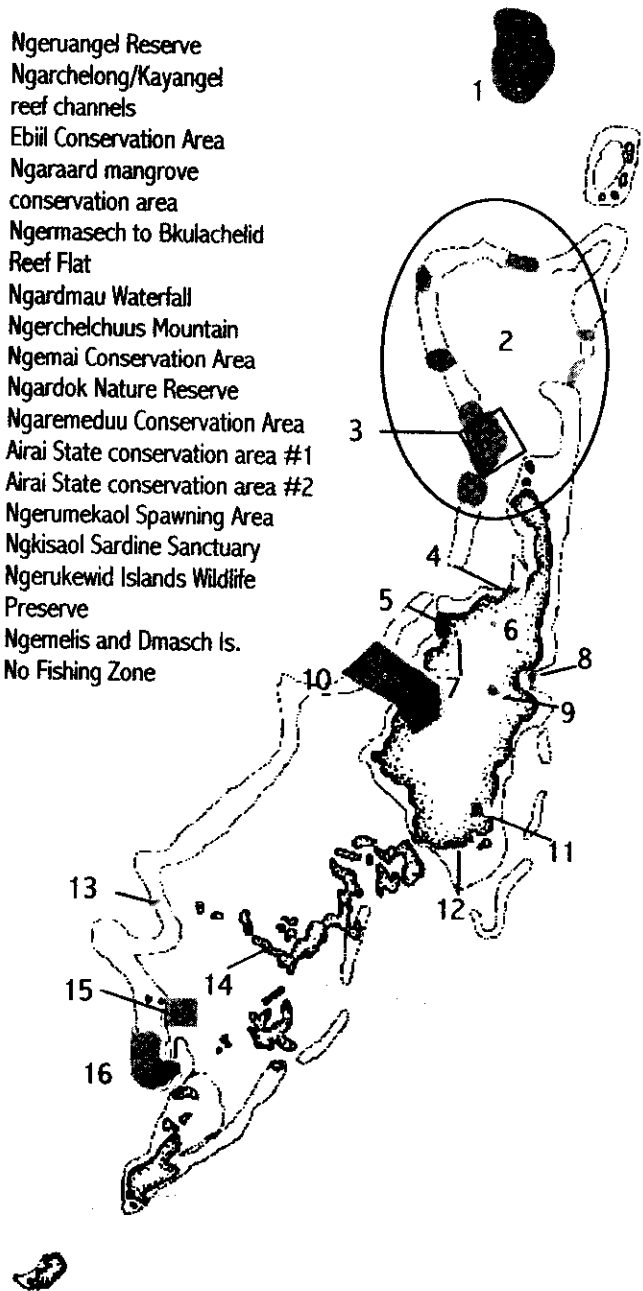
Local communities and traditional leaders have always played an important role in resource conservation in Palau. Traditional prohibitions, or *bul*, against certain harvesting practices are still being used to protect important natural resources. The merging of traditional and modern laws has been adopted by several states to strengthen their conservation efforts. Since 1994, 12 new formal conservation areas have been created by state law.

Though most conservation areas are for the protection of marine resources, Melekeok has set aside the inland Ngardok Lake for protection. Ngardmau has designated a mountain and a waterfall for protection, ensuring that our tallest peak and our largest waterfall are protected.

Through the enactment of these and other laws for the protection of specially designated areas, and through the traditional restrictions on resource consumption, our local community leaders continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to maintaining the productivity of Palau's natural resources for future generations.

PALAU CONSERVATION AREAS

- 1 Ngeruangel Reserve
- 2 Ngarchelong/Kayangel reef channels
- 3 Ebiil Conservation Area
- 4 Ngaraard mangrove conservation area
- 5 Ngermasech to Bkulachelid Reef Flat
- 6 Ngardmau Waterfall
- 7 Ngerchelchuus Mountain
- 8 Ngemai Conservation Area
- 9 Ngardok Nature Reserve
- 10 Ngaremeduu Conservation Area
- 11 Airai State conservation area #1
- 12 Airai State conservation area #2
- 13 Ngerumekaol Spawning Area
- 14 Ngkisaol Sardine Sanctuary
- 15 Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve
- 16 Ngemelis and Dmasch Is. No Fishing Zone



CONSERVATION AREAS OF PALAU

Area	Law & Authority	Effective Year	Approx. size	Regulations
Ngerukewid Islands Wildlife Preserve	Republic of Palau PDC 201 (24 PNCA 30)	1956	12 km ²	No fishing, hunting or disturbance
	State of Koror K6-101-99	1999	12 km ²	No fishing hunting or disturbance
Ngerumekaol Spawning Area	Republic of Palau PL 6-2-4 (24 PNCA 31)	1976	N/A	No fishing April 1 - July 31
	State of Koror K6-101-99	1998	0.3 km ²	No fishing year round
Airai State Conservation Area (Mangroves from Ngermecheraki to Bkul Omdelchiil)	State of Airai A-2-04-94	1994	1 km ²	Only traditional, subsistence, and educational uses allowed
Ngaraard mangrove conservation area	State of Ngaraard NSPL 4-4	1994	1.8 km ²	Only traditional, subsistence, and educational uses allowed
Ngarchelong / Kayangel reef channels	Ngarchelong & Kayangel Chiefs Traditional <i>bul</i>	1994	90 km ²	No fishing in 8 channels April 1 - July 31
Ngemelis and Dmasch Islands No Fishing Zones	State of Koror K4-68-95	1995	30 km ²	No fishing within one mile of islands
Ngeruangel Reserve	State of Kayangel KYPL 7-02-96	1996	35 km ²	Governed according to management plan
Airai State Conservation Area (Mangroves from Kekedeb el Taoch to Ongelungel)	State of Airai A-2-25-97	1997	1 km ²	Only traditional, subsistence, and educational uses allowed
Ngemai Conservation Area	State of Ngiwal NSPL 7-0004	1997	1 km ²	No entry, no fishing (5 years)
Ngardman Conservation Area System (Reef flat; Taki; Ngerchelchuus)	State of Ngardmau NSL 4-20	1998	7 km ²	No entry, no fishing, no hunting (5 years)
Ngkisaol Sardine Sanctuary	State of Koror K6-95-99	1999	0.01 km ²	No fishing, no selling of sardines/herring
Ebiil Channel Conservation Area	Ngarchelong NSGPL 87	2000	15 km ²	No entry, no fishing (3 years)
Ngardok Nature Reserve	State of Melekeok MSPL 4-21	2000	4 km ²	Governed according to management plan
Ngaremeduu Conservation Area	Aimeliik, Ngatpang, Ngeremlengui	2000	98 km ²	Governed according to management plan

In addition to the above conservation areas, Koror State has zoned the Rock Islands for conservation and has passed special use restrictions for them. Another recently passed Koror State law preserves all remaining mangroves within the state.