

Capacity Enhancement Project *for* Coral Reef Monitoring



Although this project is being implemented by PICRC and JICA, active participation from local, regional and international agencies and organizations is critical to its overall success. Project collaborators include: all state governments; Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism; the Micronesia Challenge Office; and a number of local and international non-government organizations that operate in Palau or within the Micronesia region.



**Capacity Enhancement Project
for Coral Reef Monitoring (CEPCRM)**
PO Box 7086 • Koror, PW 96940 • Republic of Palau
Ph: 680.488.6950 • Fax: 680.488.6951
email: info@cepcrm.org • website: www.cepcrm.org



Palau, considered a mecca by scuba divers and underwater enthusiasts, is home to an abundance of pelagic and reef fish species as well as a diversity of hard and soft corals. As Palau's tourism industry is so closely intertwined with the health of these coral reefs, it is vital to the country's future that conservation efforts succeed.

Conservation in Palau

In 2003, the Protected Areas Network (PAN) was established in Palau, providing a framework for national and state governments to collaborate on protecting the country's biodiversity. On November 5th 2005, Palau President Tommy E. Remengesau Jr. called on his peers to join him in the *Micronesia Challenge* to effectively conserve 30 percent of near shore marine resources and 20 percent of forest resources by 2020. The Challenge countries — Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, the US Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands — represent nearly 5 percent of the marine area of the Pacific Ocean and roughly 7 percent of its coastlines.

Meanwhile, in an effort to strengthen functions of research and education for coral reef conservation, the technical cooperation project, *Palau International Coral Reef Center Strengthening Project*, was launched by Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC) with funding provided by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Project findings

indicated that Marine Protected Areas (MPA)* be established and evaluated and that PICRC should improve its institutional capacity becoming the hub for monitoring coral reefs in the Micronesian region.

**MPAs in Palau are established and managed to support the continued sustainable removal of renewable living resources within or outside the MPA by protecting important habitat and spawning, mating or nursery grounds. If well managed, Palau MPAs will have higher tolerances against environmental and biological changes.*

Capacity Enhancement Project for Coral Reef Monitoring (CEPCRM)

The goal of CEPCRM is for PICRC to share its technical capacity with *Micronesia Challenge* jurisdictions. To achieve this, PICRC's technical capacity for coral reef monitoring will be strengthened and then transferred to communities in the region through training programs and educational seminars.

Project responsibilities for PICRC include: developing a system to support the monitoring of MPAs; making technical recommendations regarding MPA management; establishing monitoring protocols; and enhancing partnership between CEPCRM and *Micronesia Challenge* jurisdictions and relevant agencies.

