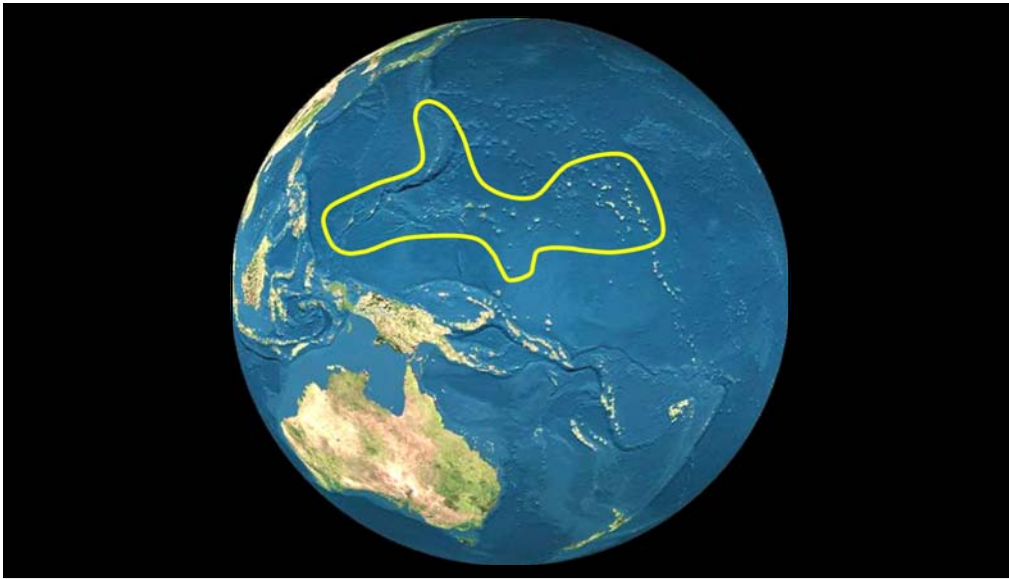


MICRONESIA CHALLENGE



Micronesia

Micronesia is home to some of the most vibrant cultures and diverse variety of plant and animal life on Earth. The unique heritage and traditions, still strongly held by the people of Micronesia, have been shaped by their geographic remoteness and the rich resources of their lands and seas, which contain habitats and species found nowhere else on earth. Yet the features that make these islands unique also make them especially vulnerable to environmental threats such as deforestation, overharvesting, climate change and invasive species.

Without immediate action, the people of Micronesia face continued degradation of the natural resources on which their culture and livelihoods depend. The Micronesia Challenge now provides a framework for action on an unprecedented scale.

Micronesia Challenge: effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

Covering 6.7 million square kilometers of ocean, the Micronesia Challenge represents more than 20% of the Pacific Island region - and 5% of the largest ocean in the world.

The Micronesia Challenge is a commitment by the Chief Executives of the **Federated States of Micronesia**, the **Republic of the Marshall Islands**, the **Republic of Palau**, the **U.S. Territory of Guam** and the **U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** to effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

maintaining

micronesian way of life

Throughout Micronesia, the majority of people living on these small islands depend on natural resources for their food, livelihood, traditional cultures and hopes for future long-term economic prosperity.

- The annual net benefits to the Pacific from coral reefs have been estimated at \$2 billion, and approximately \$800 million worth of benefits annually may be distributed across Micronesia.
- Healthy ecosystems provide important services, such as food, clean drinking water, income from tourism, fishing and diving, and protection from storms.

The Micronesia Challenge will help maintain these ecosystem services and protect:

- at least 66 threatened species recorded on the IUCN Red List;
- 483 coral species – 60% of all known corals, and
- more than 1,300 species of reef fish, 85 species of birds and 1,400 species of plants (200 of which are endemic).

“ In the Federated States of Micronesia, more than half of our citizens’ and residents’ livelihoods depend on a subsistence lifestyle; hence managing our natural resources is a matter we take very seriously. In Micronesia, we do not see conservation and development as opposing forces, but rather as complimentary to each other.

The Honorable Joseph Urusemal, *President of the Federated States of Micronesia (2006)* ”



This ambitious challenge far exceeds current goals set by international conventions and treaties, which call for countries to conserve 10% of terrestrial and marine resources by 2010 and 2012 respectively. The challenge also emphasizes the need for Micronesian leaders to work together at the regional level to confront environmental and sustainable development issues.

Implementation and Sustainability

Each jurisdiction is developing their own strategies for implementation including identifying the most biologically important areas, establishing or strengthening protected areas and ensuring continued effective management and oversight. The other key development in the Micronesia Challenge is to create sustainable and continuous sources of funding to assure that the resulting protected areas and the precious natural resources they sustain are maintained in perpetuity. All five governments have already made some initial impressive strides. For example, the Republic of Palau has developed and started to implement a nationwide comprehensive set of regulations for identifying protected areas sites, and is now developing management and enforcement regimes.

Vital Funding to Demonstrate Proof of Concept

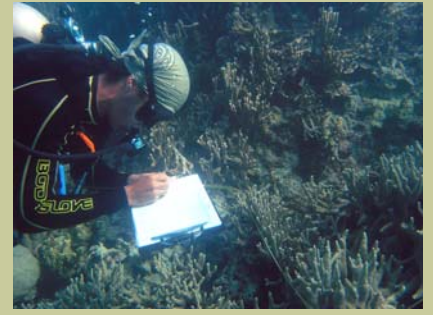
It is currently estimated that an endowment of approximately \$100 million will need to be raised to support the long-term sustainability of the Challenge in all five jurisdictions.

To assist in this effort, The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International have together pledged \$6 million to leverage an additional \$12 million for the first phase of the Challenge. The leaders and their partners are working to secure matching funds for this pledge and the additional funding to support the long-term expansion and effective management of protected area networks for each of the Micronesia Challenge jurisdictions. The Global Environment Facility has pledged \$6 million match as part of a new Pacific Alliance for Sustainability initiative.

The Micronesia Challenge serves as a model for island conservation, initiated by a coalition of regional governments, endorsed at an international level, and implemented on the ground with local communities. With funding in place, accompanied by technical support for the implementation, the natural resources essential to the livelihoods of the Micronesian peoples will be preserved and unique ecosystems saved.

Inspiring Others to Action

- Grenada in the Caribbean pledged to effectively conserve 25 percent of nearshore marine and 25 percent of terrestrial resources by 2020.
- Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono pledged to increase marine protected areas to 24.7 million acres from 18 million acres by 2010 and to “formalize collaboration” with his neighbor countries to protect the “Coral Triangle”, the global center of coral and marine biodiversity.



cornerstone
of a
global
island partnership

The Micronesia Challenge is not a standalone initiative. Rather, it is part of a much larger and growing commitment by island nations throughout the world to take action in protecting nature and preserving livelihoods. This commitment, has been supported through the Global Island Partnership, a partnership that assists islands in addressing one of the world’s greatest challenges—to protect and sustainably manage the invaluable natural resources that support people, cultures, and livelihoods in their island homes around the world. The Global Island Partnership is a platform to champion the interests of 500 million people on 130,000 islands worldwide. In a little less than two years, the Partnership has engaged more than 20 countries and 20 international, national and local organizations in high-level commitments and action for island conservation and sustainable use. These commitments have resulted in more than \$30 million in support for these national environmental programs.



Photos: Island Aerial ©Jez O’Hare,
Diver ©Eugene Joseph,
Reef Scene © Katrina Adams