



JOINT COMMUNIQUE

The Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and its States, Yap, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Chuuk, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau

Introduction

The Chief Executives of the Governments of the Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and its States, Yap, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Chuuk, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau held their Twelfth Micronesian Chief Executives' Summit (MCES) in Tamuning, Guam, on December 3-4, 2009. This Summit resulted in the adoption of regional programs of action in the focal areas of solid waste management, conservation through the Micronesia Challenge and related environmental programs, renewable energy, invasive species, health, transportation, workforce investment and tourism. The Summit also resulted in actions in miscellaneous areas of concern to the sub-region, including the development of the Micronesia Center for a Sustainable Future.

The Summit reaffirmed the commitment of each of the participants, on behalf of their people and their governments, to establish closer ties, expand future discussions and agree on beneficial initiatives for the benefit of the entire Micronesian Region.

The Honorable Felix P. Camacho of Guam, as Chairman, expressed his appreciation to the five Governors, the two Presidents, and jurisdictional representatives for their attendance and active participation in the Twelfth Micronesian Chief Executives' Summit.

Following the opening ceremonies of the Summit, the Chief Executives heard reports and recommendations from sub-regional committees and presentations on a number of issues of interest in the sub-region and region and jointly directed action in their respective jurisdictions, as reflected in this 12th Communiqué.

Regional Workforce Development Council (RWDC)

The Chief Executives supported the following recommendations by the RWDC to respond to identified issues influencing the region's current and planned workforce development, policy and programs:

- Establishment and adoption of a Master/ Apprenticeship Program for Handicrafts as part of the RWDC manpower development strategy;
- Formal recognition of peer-to-peer training as a “best-practice” and the integration of this effort into a region-wide training plan;
- Review of the merger of the Regional Education Opportunities Committee and development of a final recommendation for consideration by the MCES;
- Establishment of a regional market identity for workforce development;
- Alignment and/or development of a common career assessment tool to determine career strengths and placement assessment, along with development of a workforce classification system to track specific programming areas of interest to the RWDC and the region;
- Development of a unified website for workforce development discussions to enhance the sharing of program information and data;
- Establishment of a Micronesian Veterans Initiative, and
- The exploration of additional funding opportunities.

Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council (RISC)

At the two meetings since the 11th MCES, the Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council (RISC) discussed support for the development of the Micronesia Biosecurity Plan. RISC also is addressing issues including funding needs, creation of an interagency biosecurity task force on Guam, ongoing efforts to prevent the spread of the brown treesnake, and various prevention and control activities in the nine RISC-member jurisdictions.

Based on the recommendations of RISC, the Chief Executives direct the following actions to support efforts to minimize damage due to invasive species and prevent the further spread of potentially harmful invasive species:

- Sign a joint letter thanking the U.S. Department of Defense for its commitment to developing the Micronesia Biosecurity Plan (MBP), and expressing their commitment to cooperate fully in the development and implementation of the MBP;
- Instruct their invasive species coordinators and other appropriate staff to actively participate in the development of the MBP;
- Identify, in writing to the Chair of RISC, two representatives to RISC from each state and national jurisdiction by the end of December 2009;
- Reaffirm their commitment to send RISC representatives to two workshop-style meetings per year, between Summits, to collaborate on invasive species issues and priority actions;
- Reaffirm their commitment to provide a minimum of \$2,500 from each jurisdiction to fund RISC's priority projects ;

- Reaffirm their commitment to provide a full-time permanent Invasive Species Coordinator for each jurisdiction; and
- Sign certificates of appreciation to organizations that have provided exemplary support to the USDA Wildlife Service efforts to prevent the spread of the brown treesnake.

Micronesia Challenge

Since the 11th Micronesian Chief Executive Summit, the Micronesia Challenge has completed a draft of the regional communications strategy, made strides in development of a regional monitoring protocol, worked on a draft MC business plan to ensure sustainable funding for the future, and submitted a \$6 million regional proposal for Global Environment Fund grant money. The Committee provided leaders with a brief overview of benefits associated with the MC. Since its launch in 2006, the MC has accomplished the following actions bringing direct benefit to member jurisdictions:

- The Micronesia Biosecurity Plan. This U.S. Department of Defense funded project was intended initially for Guam alone, but through the framework of the Challenge, the MBP now includes all the MC jurisdictions.
- Micronesia Challenge Young Champions. This internship program, which will build capacity within the region, was a Federated States of Micronesia program but has been expanded through MC to be available to young people from all five jurisdictions.
- New funding sources have become available to the region through the Challenge. These opportunities include:
 - LifeWeb (\$1.9 million received, request in progress for additional \$11 million)
 - GEF \$6 million proposal (pending approval)
 - Packard Foundation \$3 million (already received)
 - TNC/ CI pledge \$6 million (\$1million received; \$5 million pending match)

The MC Committee briefed leaders on challenges that continue to face this initiative as the region works to meet conservation goals. The key areas being worked on by the five jurisdictions include raising awareness of MC goals and needs within each jurisdiction and the region as a whole, access to financial resources, and political commitment to sustainable finance plans. Further, the MC jurisdictions must formalize agreements with the Micronesia Conservation Trust for the endowment, develop systems for using endowment funding and implement communication strategies at all levels.

Based on the recommendations of the MC steering committee, the Chief Executives directed the following actions to ensure that the Micronesia Challenge continues its momentum to provide significant benefits to the people of our region:

- Continue planning efforts for the Fall 2010 U.S. Coral Reef Task Force meeting, to be hosted in the Pacific, as a way to showcase the MC's role in effective conservation;

- Coordinate participation in the UN Convention on Biodiversity COP-10 meeting in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010, to raise the profile of the region and work to secure additional funding to meet conservation targets by 2020;
- Promote closer collaboration between the MC and other key regional initiatives, including Green Energy Micronesia, the Micronesian Center for a Sustainable Future, and other environmental programs;
- Commit to ensuring MOUs between jurisdictions and MCT are signed, and further commit to developing mechanisms to disburse and manage MC endowment funds within each respective jurisdiction; and
- Continue to promote the MC at regional and international levels to sustain interest in the initiative and help fundraising efforts for both the endowment and ongoing regional work.

Renewable Energy Committee

The Regional Energy Committee reviewed highlights and successes since the previous Summit, including:

- The development of a National Energy Policy and Strategic Action Plan;
- The residential distribution of 20,000 CFL bulbs in Palau;
- The creation of an Energy Efficiency Subsidy Program;
- The development of an Energy Policy and Strategic Action Plan in the FSM, as well as major solar projects in all four States, including an assessment for mini hydro for Pohnpei State and a wind mapping study in Yap;
- The completion in the RMI of a 10,000-CFL bulb distribution project in Majuro and a streetlight retrofit project for Majuro and Ebeve to commence in January 2010;
- The receipt of federal funds in Guam through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) that included the weatherization of low income housing, retrofitting public buildings, parks, and highways for energy efficiency, and a consumer rebate program to dispose of old inefficient appliances as they are replaced with new Energy Star-rated appliances;
- The receipt of ARRA funding by the CNMI, with plans to use \$18 million to decrease the burden on the electric grid by upgrading utilities, implementing cooling and lighting retrofits and installing alternate energy in public schools;
- The change of the Committee name to the Micronesian Energy Association (MEA) with MEA serving as the central hub to implement energy policy and energy related matters.

The Chief Executives directed support of the recommendations of the Committee as follows:

- Guam will serve as the interim Secretariat for one year, with the permanent Secretariat to be established in the second year in FSM, RMI or Palau;
- The Renewable Energy Committee will rename itself as the Micronesian Energy Association; and
- The Committed should use existing funding sources and programmatic monies to further its activities and initiatives.

At the 11th Summit in the RMI the Chief Executives acknowledged State Energy Grant, OMB Control No. 1910-5126 (DOE F 540.1#, 03/09), provided to the Governor of Guam from the United States Department of Energy via the Guam Energy Office. The grant was provided from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Grant was awarded directly to the Micronesian Center for a Sustainable Future. The Chief Executives directed the Administrator of the Guam Environmental Protection Agency to coordinate with the Secretary General on the use of the \$200,000 grant by the Center, and, if legally allowable, to transfer the funds to the newly developed 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

Pacific Island Regional Recycling Initiative Committee

The Pacific Islands Regional Recycling Initiative Committee reported the following accomplishments in line with the recommendations of the Chief Executives at the 11th Micronesia Chief Executives Summit:

- RMI and FSM have become official members of PIRRIC;
- During July 2009, PIRRIC representatives met and participated in the SPREP Sub-Regional Caucus in Guam to review the *Strategy for Solid Waste Management Pacific Island Countries and Territories*.
- PIRRIC Chairman John Ngiraked was selected during the Sub-regional Caucus to represent Micronesia during the meeting of the regional chairs in Apia, Samoa.
- The Solid Waste Management Plan in Pacific Island Countries and Territories was endorsed in November 2009 by the ministers to the SPREP Council.
- JICA has committed to support funding for the activities listed in the Solid Waste Management Plan.

The Committee further reported that by the next MCES, PIRRIC will develop an annual fee structure for member countries for consideration by the leaders. At a minimum, the structure will include the proposed fee, projected use and financing mechanisms.

Based on the recommendations of PIRRIC, the Chief Executives committed to the following in support of regional recycling initiatives:

- Endorsement of the *Strategy for Solid Waste Management Pacific Island Countries and Territories*;
- Extension of an invitation to Dr. Bob Barber, of the University of Guam's College of Agriculture, to speak at the next Summit and provide information on composting piggery waste and paper; and
- Extension of an invitation to the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) to attend future Summits.