



# Marshall Islands

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## National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2011-2013) - interim - Interim

**Name of focal point:** Casten Nemra  
**Organization:** Chief Secretary's Office  
**Title/Position:** Chief Secretary  
**E-mail address:** cnemra1@gmail.com  
**Telephone:**  
**Fax:**

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## Section 2: Strategic goals

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### Strategic Goal Area 1

*The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.*

#### Strategic Goal Statement:

Mainstream disaster risk management into national and local policies, plans, budgetary provisions and decision-making processes, across all sectors and all levels of government and communities, with an emphasis on disaster risk management being the responsibility of the whole country and that it is everyone's business.

The Vision of the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management is: "A safer and more resilient RMI to all hazards through well informed and prepared people today and for generations to come."

### Strategic Goal Area 2

*The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.*

#### Strategic Goal Statement:

Establish enabling environment for improved disaster risk management in the Republic of the Marshall Islands by strengthening DRM organizational arrangements at national and local government levels; adequately resourcing key organizations for DRM at national and local government levels; strengthening human resource capacity of key organizations for DRM at national and local government levels; and by strengthening the capacity of key community groups and NGOs in Marshall Islands.

### Strategic Goal Area 3

*The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.*

#### Strategic Goal Statement:

Improve capacity for emergency preparedness and response at all levels by strengthening the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) infrastructure to better prepare for, and respond to, disaster events; strengthening capacity for coordination during disasters; strengthening response capacity amongst relevant ministries at national and local levels; informing public about emergency communication and procedures; and by assisting communities in the Outer Islands to develop their own mechanisms to supplement the

national and local government plan for emergency preparedness and response.

## Section 3: Priority for action 1

*Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

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### Priority for action 1: Core indicator 1

*National policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists with decentralised responsibilities and capacities at all levels.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

#### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Is disaster risk taken into account in public investment and planning decisions?  
No

<b>National development plan</b>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">RMI Vision 2018</a> (2003) [PDF - 9.67 MB]</li></ul>	
<b>Sector strategies and plans</b>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">RMI Coastal Management Framework</a> (2008) [PDF - 865.67 KB]</li><li>• <a href="#">Ministry of Resources and Development Strategy and Action Plan 2005-2010</a> (2005) [PDF - 449.46 KB]</li><li>• <a href="#">RMI National Energy Policy</a> (2009) [PDF - 1.61 MB]</li></ul>	
<b>Climate change policy and strategy</b>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">RMI Climate Change Policy</a> (2011) [PDF - 1.71 MB]</li></ul>	
<b>Poverty reduction strategy papers</b>	No
<b>CCA/ UNDAF (Common Country Assessment/ UN Development Assistance Framework)</b>	No
<b>Civil defence policy, strategy and contingency planning</b>	Yes

Have legislative and/or regulatory provisions been made for managing disaster risk? No

## Description:

RMI's National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2008-2018 was endorsed in the last HFA Review cycle. Since then, RMI has been proactive in seeking to include climate change in its approach to addressing risk. The Joint National Action Plan for DRM and Climate Change (JNAP) was developed over 2010-2011 through an inclusive multi-stakeholder process, involving members of the National Disaster Committee (NDC) and the National Climate Change Committee (NC3), which was formed in 2010. Several national workshops were also held with input from RMI non-government organisations and civil society organisations – groups which also contributed to JNAP development through individual consultations.

RMI's JNAP includes six goals which have been allocated preliminary estimated costs in readiness for implementation. NC3 has also developed a National Climate Change Policy, which has been endorsed by Cabinet. The JNAP, however, has not yet been finalized and is awaiting completing prior to Cabinet's endorsement.

As noted in the last HFA Review for RMI, inclusion of DRR exists in several sector plans, particularly those with direct links to DRM (e.g. National Weather Service). Progress has been made, however, in the health sector, with the Ministry of Health progressing its Emergency Preparedness measures. This includes a survey of health professionals on levels of disaster preparedness to better understand the needs of the sector.

Local Authority is decentralized to local Mayors in their abilities to develop ordinances and resolutions on certain issues, some of which relate to DRR/DRM and CCA. For example, the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) assisted some atolls in developing ordinances relating to illegal harvesting and trade of sea cucumbers. Previously, the same had been done to address the trade of shark fins. Ordinances assist in limiting or controlling such resources for sustainable use.

## Context & Constraints:

As stated in the last HFA Review for RMI, a major challenge to progress is the national institutional arrangements for DRM. These conditions of under-resourcing remain in 2012. The National Emergency Management Coordination Office (NEMCO) remains severely under-resourced and is in clear need of urgent support. In addition, staffing changes within the Chief Secretary's Office (CSO - the focal point for DRM) has left a key DRR/DRM position vacant. Another change in executive personnel within the Office of Environment, Policy, Planning and Coordination (OEPPC – the joint focal point of the JNAP, along with the CSO) leaves a temporary Executive Officer. These conditions combine to a severe level of under-resourcing and disruption to the significant progress achieved in 2010-2011 regarding the JNAP and Climate Change Policy.

Finalisation of the JNAP and several other DRR/DRM related policy documents (e.g. Draft National DRM Arrangements, Draft RMI Emergency Response Plan) is yet to occur. This is likely due to the above conditions of understaffing and under-resourcing. The limited capacity has led to a stalling of progress on the policy and legislation relating to DRR/DRM and climate change issues. It was also noted that a Implementation Unit needs to be established and adequately resourced to ensure the JNAP activities proceed accordingly.

## Priority for action 1: Core indicator 2

*Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities at all administrative levels*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

What is the ratio of the budget allocation to risk reduction versus disaster relief and reconstruction?

	Risk reduction / prevention (%)	Relief and reconstruction (%)
National budget	0.9	0

Decentralised / sub-national budget

USD allocated to hazard proofing sectoral development investments (e.g transport, agriculture, infrastructure)

### Description:

At the national level, the JNAP provides a comprehensive guide to the needs of the RMI with regards to reducing risk relating to disaster and climate change however the JNAP is currently under resourced and there is a significant shortfall in national expenditure on DRR. While there are numerous sources of external donor funding for DRR and CCA, national funds and capacity are scarce. Externally funded DRR/CCA initiatives include UNDP-GEF funds for the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) project focusing on water resources, funds from the East-West Centre, Australia's Pacific Climate Change Science Program and newly announced EU funds from the EDF10 funding stream. Additional support was identified from Compact Funding and USAID, ROC Taiwan, AusAID and regional partners including SOPAC-SPC, WHO and SPREP.

USAID is funding the position of Senior Technical Advisor for Climate Change, based at OEPPC.

From the government level, there remains limited capacity to undertake DRR/DRM activities both from a human resources and financial perspective.

While Local Governments for Majuro and Ebeye have disaster risk reduction plans in place, outside of the more urbanized areas, disaster risk reduction is given little priority. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) is becoming more proactive and better recognized as a key

link between national and local levels particularly for DRR/DRM issues. The Local Government Act allows Mayors the authority to develop ordinances and resolutions within their jurisdictions, provided they align with the national system. MoIA provide the support to ensure this occurs.

Annual Mayors Conferences allow for the communication of important issues (including DRR/DRM and climate change issues) between the national and local levels. OEPPC and environmental NGOs such as the Marshall Islands Conservation Society (MICS) often present environmental and conservation messages to Mayors at such events.

**Context & Constraints:**

Strengthened capacity, through appropriately resourced focal points in relevant offices, is needed at the national level to ensure the JNAP, as the key policy document for DRR/DRM and climate change, is implemented across all sectors. This will also allow for better coordination of existing and upcoming DRR/DRM and CCA initiatives.

More frequent and regular meetings of key groups such as the NDC and NC3 would also allow for information sharing amongst agencies undertaking similar work.

At the local level, local leaders require a greater level of understanding of the issues relating to climate change and risk reduction, as well as disaster preparedness and response. Clear channels of communication are required from local to national level to ensure roles and responsibilities are fulfilled. MoIA noted the desire to include climate change considerations into local government planning.

It was also noted that donor funding is often accompanied by complicated criteria and reporting requirements which is a challenge in already stretched government agencies.

**Priority for action 1: Core indicator 3**

*Community Participation and decentralisation is ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to local levels*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

**Key Questions and Means of Verification**

Do local governments have legal responsibility and regular / systematic budget allocations for DRR? No

<b>Legislation (Is there a specific legislation for local governments with a mandate for DRR?)</b>	No
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<b>Regular budget allocations for DRR to local government</b>	No
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**Estimated % of local budget allocation assigned to DRR**

0

## Description:

Local government, NGO and community organisations are the key implementers of DRR/DRM and climate change initiatives outside Majuro and Ebeye – RMI's urban centres. As noted in the last HFA Review for RMI, Local governments (through the mayors) have legal authority in the outer islands while traditional land owners have the legal rights to over-rule local mayors on issues on their own land. Local level disaster plans are still yet to be developed however this was flagged as a priority in 2012 discussions for JNAP implementation. A continuation of limited resources (both human and financial) in outer islands is an issue, and as before, no specific funds for DRR are available for local governments.

Developed over the last HFA Review cycle, but remaining as the predominant community level plan for development issues, Reimaanlok is implemented jointly by stakeholders (both government and non-government) involved in community-level initiatives. The Coastal Management Advisory Committee (CMAC - a government and non-government partnership) and Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) and MICS are particularly active in jointly implementing elements of Reimaanlok, which is a collection of tools for community engagement, particularly for conservation related issues but extending to DRR/DRM and CCA issues. Reimaanlok has assisted the RMI in achieving some progress at the local community level and ensures active community involvement and ownership across all groups at the local level.

Women United Together in the Marshall Islands (WUTMI) is RMI's key women's NGO and is active across all RMI's populated islands and atolls. WUTMI's annual conference sees a male and female attending from each island while youth are also involved in local activities.

## Context & Constraints:

There is no specific legislation requiring local responsibility for DRR, no is there funding to support such activities. This lack of support, both in terms of financial and knowledge, limits the ability of local leaders to fully comprehend the need to address risk reduction at the local level. An inherent challenge related to this Core Indicator is that of isolation of most of the Outer Islands. Reaching these populations remains a challenge with both time and financial costs associated with Outer Island engagement by government and NGO partners.

As noted in the last HFA Review, land issues are highly sensitive in the RMI and it is challenging to offer advice to the land owners how to use or develop their land. There remains a needs for public awareness campaigns relating to why certain legal regulations exist and what sustainable development means, i.e. to maintain a healthy environment and to ensure future generations have access to resources such as water, food and land. As noted before, an ongoing awareness campaign in Marshallese is desperately needed to overcome this challenge. Given the lack of progress since 2010, a collaborative effort is still required between national and local level decision makers on the issue of DRM/DRR to deliver a consistent message.

## Priority for action 1: Core indicator 4

*A national multi sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Are civil society organizations, national finance and planning institutions, key economic and development sector organizations represented in the national platform? No

<b>Civil society members (specify absolute number)</b>	0
<b>National finance and planning institutions (specify absolute number)</b>	1
<b>Sectoral organisations (specify absolute number)</b>	15
<b>Private sector (specify absolute number)</b>	1
<b>Science and academic institutions (specify absolute number)</b>	0
<b>Women's organisations participating in national platform (specify absolute number)</b>	0
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	0

Where is the coordinating lead institution for disaster risk reduction located?

<b>In the Prime Minister's/President's Office</b>	Yes
<b>In a central planning and/or coordinating unit</b>	No
<b>In a civil protection department</b>	No
<b>In an environmental planning ministry</b>	No
<b>In the Ministry of Finance</b>	No
<b>Other (Please specify)</b>	

## Description:

The National Disaster Committee (NDC) and the National Climate Change Committee (NC3) serve as the RMI's platform to manage DRR/DRM and climate change issues. While the NDC comprises heads of all line ministries as well as the semi-privatised Majuro Water and Sewage Corporation (MWSC), the NC3 is a subset of the NDC, comprised of agencies more specifically concerned with the impacts of climate change.

As noted above, the NDC and the NC3 do not meet regularly, with specific issues instigating meetings – usually by the Chief Secretary. Civil society are not regularly represented on either committee, however it was noted that NGOs such as MICS, WUTMI, Billfish Club and other development agencies have in the past been invited and participated in NDC Meetings.

The Coastal Management Advisory Committee (CMAC) provides another platform for DRR and CCA with both government and non-government representation. CMAC has a rotating chair, currently sitting with MIMRA. CMAC member organisations support local risk management efforts with the inclusion of local and traditional knowledge, but without reference to, or knowledge of, the JNAP, given its status and low level of awareness. CMAC activities are generally aligned to the Reimaanlok Policy, and include conservation, awareness raising and educational initiatives, baseline data collection and hazard mapping.

## Context & Constraints:

Given the JNAP's status which is yet to be endorsed and fully distributed amongst key stakeholders, limited coordination of DRR and CCA activities exists across the RMI. As a result, the previously identified disconnection between activities of government, non-government and civil society remains. Until strengthened leadership and adequate capacity within the CSO and OEPPC exists, little progress is likely on the JNAP implementation.

The lack of regular activity of the NDC and NC3 also diminishes opportunities for information sharing amongst relevant groups. Without these opportunities, duplication of efforts and missed opportunities for collaboration and cooperation endures.

Finally, while CMAC represents an important platform which links government and non-government stakeholders, it operates without specific funding and work / meetings are in addition to regular work of members. A suggestion was made as part of the HFA Review to institutionalize CMAC and provide specific funds to ensure ongoing work continues and progress at the local level is conducted in a coordinated manner amongst CMAC members.

## Section 4: Priority for action 2

*Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning*

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### Priority for action 2: Core indicator 1

*National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

#### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Is there a national multi-hazard risk assessment with a common methodology available to inform planning and development decisions? No

<b>Multi-hazard risk assessment</b>	No
<b>% of schools and hospitals assessed</b>	0
<b>Schools not safe from disasters (specify absolute number)</b>	0
<b>Gender disaggregated vulnerability and capacity assessments</b>	No
<b>Agreed national standards for multi hazard risk assessments</b>	No
<b>Risk assessment held by a central repository (lead institution)</b>	No
<b>Common format for risk assessment</b>	No
<b>Risk assessment format customised by user</b>	No
<b>Is future/probable risk assessed?</b>	No
<b>Please list the sectors that have already used disaster risk assessment as a precondition for sectoral development planning and programming.</b>	Environment Protection Authority (EPA)

## Description:

While not completely coordinated, some progress is being made at the national level with regard to risk assessment. The MoH have made moves to better understand their level of risk and have conducted a survey of their health professionals on levels of emergency response. GIS mapping is being conducted by several agencies including MIMRA, EPA, MoIA and MEC, however this information is not shared amongst other relevant government agencies. The National Weather Service, with assistance from US partner NOAA, maintains a degree of awareness of national risk assessments however needs support for monitoring of Outer Island climate and weather conditions.

The College of the Marshall Islands (CMI) has some capacity to undertake rapid risk assessments to understand baseline conditions and work with CMAC members to share information.

As part of much of the work through the Reimaanlok Process at the local level, risk assessments are being conducted albeit in a semi-coordinated manner. The CMAC group continues to provide a forum in which information is shared amongst members from both government and non-government sectors. MIMRA aims to develop atoll profiles which include assessment of risks and available resources. GIS layers form part of this process.

## Context & Constraints:

The previous HFA Review noted a promising joint initiative called Outer Islands Profiles, which gathered information on disaster response capacity and hazard information. These Profiles were to collect gender disaggregated data, and highlight individuals within communities with special needs (e.g. those with disabilities, elderly etc.). A lack of progress and continuation of these Profiles presents a challenge to more fully comprehend the situation on the Outer Islands. Limited funds and capacity, in addition to inherent isolation and transportation/communication issues, once again provide the reason for a lack of progress for this Core Indicator.

MIMRA noted the challenges in developing its atoll profiles to be those associated with costs, especially in terms of travel costs going to the Outer Islands, as well as the time it takes and the staffing requirements. Technical capacity was also highlighted as a challenge and as a result, MIMRA is confined to profiling 3 atolls a year.

The lack of major disaster in this HFA Review Period has led to a somewhat complacent attitude to DRR/DRM. The links to climate change, particularly in terms of understanding the potential impacts to already scarce water resources, are becoming stronger and this remains the area where most efforts are being focused, both in Majuro and in the Outer Islands.

Ministry of Public Works raised concerns over the response to flooding in Kili Atoll. While a risk assessment was conducted, confusion surrounded the submission of reports to the Chief Secretary's Office. This highlights a degree of un-coordination and a lack of communication channels within and between key government offices.

## Priority for action 2: Core indicator 2

*Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Are disaster losses and hazards systematically reported, monitored and analyzed? No

<b>Disaster loss databases exist and are regularly updated</b>	No
<b>Reports generated and used in planning by finance, planning and sectoral line ministries (from the disaster databases/ information systems)</b>	No
<b>Hazards are consistently monitored across localities and territorial boundaries</b>	No

### Description:

Limited progress has been made on this Core Indicator in this reporting period, and there remains a lack of any data or general information on past disasters, with no disaster loss database and few reports on previous events. As reported in the previous HFA Review, the inadequate resourcing of NEMCO limits progress of this Core Indicator.

The National Weather Service continues to monitor weather and longer term climate conditions as well as tidal shifts.

The Ministry of Health maintain a disease surveillance system, which was required to respond in 2012 after an outbreak of Dengue Fever.

Through the Reimaanlok Plan, local communities can learn about specific hazards, including the impacts of climate change. It was noted that even in the Outer Islands, communities are aware of the reasons behind the changes they are seeing in terms of sea level rise and coastal erosion. People are aware of the issue of climate change at a basic level at least, in part due to the initiatives associated with Reimaanlok and the partners involved in undertaking community based activities.

### Context & Constraints:

Due to limited capacity in terms of human resources and technical expertise, the National Weather Service is limited in its ability to undertake analytical tasks related to changes in weather and climate.

Another ongoing challenge is the issue of information dissemination, particularly due to the isolation of the Outer Islands. Costs remain high in disseminating information as communication equipment is required.

## Priority for action 2: Core indicator 3

*Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Do risk prone communities receive timely and understandable warnings of impending hazard events? Yes

<b>Early warnings acted on effectively</b>	Yes
<b>Local level preparedness</b>	Yes
<b>Communication systems and protocols used and applied</b>	No
<b>Active involvement of media in early warning dissemination</b>	Yes

### Description:

The Chief Secretary’s Office is responsible for warning the public of disasters, and has radio contact with all Outer Islands. Most schools have radios which can be used for distributing early warnings. Some WUTMI members have radios, and MICS has a VHF radio network of 15 ? 17 radios on outer islands.

There is satellite phone capability in 5 Outer Islands and it is recognised this needs to be scaled up to ensure a strengthened approach to responding to the needs of Outer Island communities.

The National Weather Service (NWS) communicates with US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) counterparts on a regular basis on potential events which may lead to disasters. NWS has trained eight observers from Outer Islands on early warnings for disaster events and cell phones were distributed for this purpose. The NWS main office and the Outer Island second order stations have access to HF radios, early warning devices (9 “chatty beetles”), batteries and solar power equipment. The NWS is equipped with an FM station that gets activated during warning events to provide another source of information during emergency situations. NWS is in the process of developing a broadcast program to conduct regular awareness programs through the FM station.

The media, via the radio station V7AB, is active in distributing disaster warnings. The

National Telecommunications Authority (NTA) has a system in place whereby text messages are sent to distribute warnings of disasters. This system is currently being tested.

MICS have radio contact with Outer Islands and in non-disaster times, make contact several times a week, indicating their ability to maintain frequent and regular contact with communities – an important issue especially given the isolation of many Outer Island communities. Internet is also being expanded in several Outer Islands as an additional form of communication.

**Context & Constraints:**

A lack of disaster events in recent years has meant the early warning system remains largely untested for a real event. The Japan earthquake and tsunami in March 2010 allowed for some level of testing, given the media highlighting RMI as a potential country of risk following the event. Individual consultations revealed that in Majuro, some stakeholders received warnings, those without radios were harder to reach. This highlights the need for a stronger word of mouth communication system for early warnings both in the urban centres as well as in Outer Islands where radio ownership (and maintenance of power / batteries) is more limited.

**Priority for action 2: Core indicator 4**

*National and local risk assessments take account of regional / trans boundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

**Key Questions and Means of Verification**

Does your country participate in regional or sub-regional actions to reduce disaster risk? Yes

<b>Establishing and maintaining regional hazard monitoring</b>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">National Capacity Assessments: Tsunami Warning and Mitigation</a> (2010) [PDF - 920.44 KB]</li> <li>• <a href="#">Sea level rise and climate change in the Marshall Islands</a> (2008) [PDF - 1.85 MB]</li> </ul>	
<b>Regional or sub-regional risk assessment</b>	No
<b>Regional or sub-regional early warning</b>	Yes
<b>Establishing and implementing protocols for transboundary information sharing</b>	Yes
<b>Establishing and resourcing regional and</b>	Yes

- [Review of the priorities of the Mauritius Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States](#) (2009) [PDF - 60.73 KB]

## Description:

The dominant trans-boundary risk faced by RMI now is that of climate change, with impacts already manifesting through sea level rise, coastal erosion, impacts on plants and animals and altered rainfall patterns.

In addition and as noted in the previous HFA Review, regional and trans-boundary risks include tropical storms and typhoons; earthquakes and tsunamis; pollution including exposure hazardous waste and commercial transport accidents; health pandemics; and external market influences.

RMI continues to be an active participant in numerous regional strategies and frameworks, including:

- Micronesia Challenge
- Party to the Nauru Agreements
- Convention on the Conservation of and Management of High Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean
- Pacific DRM and DM Regional Framework for Action 2005-2015
- Pacific Regional Framework for Action on Climate Change
- Pacific Plan
- Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management
- Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC)
- Mauritius Strategy for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States 2005
- Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 ? 2015
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Global Adaptation to Climate Change project (GACC - SPC)

Climate change continues to be addressed via several regional initiatives such as the PACC Project (GEF-UNDP and SPREP partnership). The Action for the Development of Marshall Islands Renewable Energy (ADMIRE) project continues to contribute to climate change mitigation through renewable energy initiatives. RMI's Second National Communication (SNC) to the UNFCCC is in its final stages of completion.

The Ministry of Health states it has proven regional cooperation and collaboration with partners such as SPC and WHO.

The Micronesia Challenge is a sub-regional initiative, aiming to achieve effective conservation across

Micronesia. The Reimaanlok National Conservation Area Plan aims to fulfill the RMI's obligations under the Micronesia Challenge, addressing conservation issues such as marine and terrestrial pollution.

Traditionally, conservation has been very much part of Marshallese culture, however, over time, this has been weakened.

RMI's National Energy Policy (2009) continues to promote indigenous renewable energy sources and a focus on promoting local food crops and increasing domestic water reservoirs addresses the high reliance on imported products and lessens the impact of external global

market influences on RMI.

## Context & Constraints:

RMI has little defense mechanism available to trans-boundary challenges such as climate change. Support from regional partners is therefore highly valued. Some RMI stakeholders noted the need for translating regional initiatives into locally relevant risk assessments.

Limited information sharing was also identified as a challenge relating to this Core Indicator, as was limited collaboration at the national level in addressing some regional risks. This is exemplified by the lack of activity within NC3 as a mechanism to share climate change related activities amongst relevant stakeholders. Such proactivity within NC3 would allow for a collaborative and cooperative approach to addressing climate change adaptation at the national and local levels.

## Section 5: Priority for action 3

*Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels*

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### Priority for action 3: Core indicator 1

*Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels, to all stakeholders (through networks, development of information sharing systems etc)*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

#### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Is there a national disaster information system publicly available? No

<b>Information is proactively disseminated</b>	Yes
<b>Established mechanisms for access / dissemination (internet, public information broadcasts - radio, TV, )</b>	Yes
<b>Information is provided with proactive guidance to manage disaster risk</b>	Yes

#### Description:

No progress has been made since the last HFA Review in developing or maintaining a national database for disasters, nor are have efforts been made to establish mechanisms for accessing DRR information.

Geographic information systems (GIS) continues to progress as a tool to better understand risk, however a lack of data sharing amongst ministries hampers efforts for a national system. The College of the Marshall Islands (CMI) continues to assist MICS with GIS mapping tasks.

Progress is being made in DRR public awareness, particularly in the health sector. The MoH have developed a Climate Change and Health Strategic Plan while additional initiatives exist within the MoH and the EPA, both drawing upon various forms of media and targeted educational products in Marshallese.

NTA provide a text message service from the Chief Secretary's Office warning of disasters via the cell phone network. Radio is heavily relied upon as a tool to disseminate information to the public on DRR issues. Media outlets MIJ and V7AB are proactively and regularly reporting and publishing available information including on the Dengue Fever outbreak in 2012.

WUTMI continues to be highly active in public awareness on a range of issues, and is able to reach outer islands via their vast network of members.

The US Land Grant, implemented through CMI, continues to provide funds for public outreach and involves capacity building for agriculture, aquaculture, fishing, cooking and nutrition. As noted in the previous HFA Review, most information relating to DRM and climate change is distributed in the outer islands by initiatives run by NGOs such as MICS and WUTMI, which provide effective information and educational materials (usually in Marshallese).

CMAC members continue to effectively share information, and given their wide membership, they are able to share relevant lessons learned in an effective manner.

**Context & Constraints:**

Heavy reliance on radios highlights the need to maintain a power supply and to have batteries ready in case of power outages. It is unlikely that many households would currently do this as batteries are expensive and do not last indefinitely.

Additional challenges relating to this Core Indicator include limited dissemination of information for fast-onset emergencies (e.g. tsunami). Greater public awareness was highlighted as an overall challenge relating to DRM.

**Priority for action 3: Core indicator 2**

*School curricula , education material and relevant trainings include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

**Key Questions and Means of Verification**

Is DRR included in the national educational curriculum? No

<b>Primary school curriculum</b>	Yes
<b>Secondary school curriculum</b>	No
<b>University curriculum</b>	No
<b>Professional DRR education programmes</b>	Yes

## Description:

While this indicator shows a low level of progress to date, significant efforts are currently being made to address the need to include DRR and CCA within the national curriculum.

Separate initiatives funded by AusAID and Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL, and funded by US National Science Foundation) are currently underway to ensure a greater emphasis is placed on children learning the importance of DRR and CCA. The AusAID project (Climate Adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Education (CADRE) Program) is including disaster awareness in primary schools while the PREL project aims to integrate climate change and disaster issues into the existing science curriculum. CMI offers the Cooperative Extension Program (funded by USDA) which promotes water quality, awareness at community level. This campaign is ongoing and based on availability of funds, participants in the program travel to the Outer Islands to give out brochures etc. (all in Marshallese).

CMI also offer Summer Internships for high school students. This entails a 6 week science related course where students are placed with extension agencies of the Land Grant program. Issues covered include agriculture, water, nutrition and aquaculture. In addition, CMI also has a science related summer camp which was recently run for the second time, and also after school activities for elementary, high school and college level students. CMI is also supportive of students learning hands-on issues relating to food security and nutrition and encourages a "Gardening Club" for on-campus students.

RMI-USP also has a summer camp which was recently run on Arno Atoll for elementary school students. RMI-USP is also supportive of encouraging more focus on science and climate/disaster related studies to make up for the shortfall in expertise in this area. As a result, Geography was moved to sit within the Science Faculty to allow for students to more easily combine geography with biology and other sciences.

Given the high importance of keeping the water resources of a high quality in Laura, the local school in Laura incorporate climate change issues in teaching about water resources and its precious water lens.

MICS and CMI also run an annual 3-week long Coastal Management Course which is developed with Outer Island participants in mind. The course is also attended by government stakeholders (e.g. from Ministry of Resources and Development and MIMRA) who assist with facilitation. The course from 2011 focused on Food Security issues while 2012 focused on climate change. Outer Island participants are brought in to attend the course.

MICS staff attended USAID funded training on disaster assessment in 2011.

The Republic of China (Taiwan) is soon to be providing the Ministry of Education with Solar Laptop Learning Systems, through a US\$200,000 project providing 63 solar-powered laptops, 21 printers, and teaching materials to schools in the Outer Islands.

## Context & Constraints:

It is encouraging that progress on this Core Indicator is highly likely to be reported on in the next HFA Review cycle, given the current activities relating to including DRR/CCA in the school curriculum.

Ongoing challenges (such as lack of Marshallese science teachers and specialists) will remain for some time, however in sourcing Marshallese science teachers. It will take time for students to go through the updated and improved school system with a heavier emphasis on science and disaster / climate issues and then train and become teachers. Until this happens there will be a heavy reliance on externally sourced teachers with less specific skills in science.

### Priority for action 3: Core indicator 3

*Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.*

Level of Progress achieved: 1

Minor progress with few signs of forward action in plans or policy

#### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Is DRR included in the national scientific applied-research agenda/budget? No

<b>Research programmes and projects</b>	No
<b>Research outputs, products or studies are applied / used by public and private institutions</b>	No
<b>Studies on the economic costs and benefits of DRR</b>	No

#### Description:

As per the last HFA Review for RMI, little progress can be reported against this Core Indicator. No dedicated budget exists for research, and as noted previously, any research would be externally funded by donors or academic institutions who sometimes fail to provide appropriate or useful findings in-country.

An example of externally funded research is the nationally focussed climate change science research which has been conducted as part of the Pacific Climate Change Science Program (PCCSP). For RMI, this included temperature, rainfall, sea level rise and extreme weather projections at time periods 2030 and 2070. It also included significant capacity building between Australian and RMI scientists.

Consultations revealed the IWRM Project associated with the Laura Water Lens could be classified as a research project, as could the Majuro Water and Sewage Corporation (MWSC)'s attempts to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of drought mitigation options.

## Context & Constraints:

As for the last HFA Review, limited priority is given to research, given the need to extend basic services to much of the population. It is likely that any research in the near future will continue to be associated with externally funded projects by donors or academic institutions.

## Priority for action 3: Core indicator 4

*Countrywide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities.*

Level of Progress achieved: 1

Minor progress with few signs of forward action in plans or policy

## Key Questions and Means of Verification

Do public education campaigns for risk-prone communities and local authorities include disaster risk? Yes

<b>Public education campaigns for enhanced awareness of risk.</b>	No
<b>Training of local government</b>	No
<b>Disaster management (preparedness and emergency response)</b>	No
<b>Preventative risk management (risk and vulnerability)</b>	No
<b>Guidance for risk reduction</b>	No
<b>Availability of information on DRR practices at the community level</b>	Yes

## Description:

While given a rating of 3 in the last HFA Review, RMI was self-assessed with a rating of 1 for this Core Indicator in 2012. It appears momentum has been somewhat lost over recent years relating to public awareness on issues relating to DRR and CCA.

DRM and CCA plans are said to be presented to local youth groups as part of the Reimaanlok Plan implemented by a range of partners including CMAC, MICS, WUTMI and others. Radio programs are also in place to raise awareness of issues relating to water quality, hygiene, health and nutrition issues.

The NWS continues with its annual Hazards Workshops which provide relevant information to government stakeholders (including Mayors) on climate and weather issues. As mentioned

previously, the MoIA's Annual Mayors Conference also provides a forum at which DRR/DRM and CCA issues are discussed. NWS has trained a staff Climate Officer who began in early 2011 to locally archive climate data (using AusAid funded CLiDE) and to disseminate a climate projection reports on demand (PCCSP funded). NWS, through PACCSAP/PCCSP, has developed a climate report for the RMI which includes climate projections for RMI in 2030, 2055, and 2090 based on three IPCC's emissions scenarios

The EPA continue with efforts to bring environmental issues to schools, and also hold workshops highlighting the links between development practices and the environmental outcomes.

CMI's Cooperative Extension Program (mentioned under PFA 3, Core Indicator 2) has also developed a DVD on DRR and CCA which is played on cable TV, in addition to brochures and educational materials (in Marshallese) which are distributed to Outer Islands communities.

MIMRA are also active in providing education and awareness on climate change issues in the Outer Islands. The challenge is often translating scientific or technical phrases or concepts into language that means something to Marshallese communities.

The Rita Festival in October 2011 was successful in sharing information about climate change within the Rita Community. Information was supplied by OEPPC, MICS, ADB and organized by Rita Reimaanlok Planning Committee. WUTMI is also key in organizing annual "Bob" (pandanus) Festivals which highlight the important qualities of the pandanus plant e.g. nutrition, coastal protection and production of local handicrafts.

## Context & Constraints:

The above examples highlight that while some progress is being made, it is currently somewhat disjointed and uncoordinated. This issue is addressed in the JNAP, which has a goal dedicated to public awareness issues. Endorsement and wide distribution of the JNAP would allow for a collaborative and cooperative approach to addressing these challenges.

## Section 6: Priority for action 4

*Reduce the underlying risk factors*

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### Priority for action 4: Core indicator 1

*Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment related policies and plans, including for land use natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.*

Level of Progress achieved: 3

Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Is there a mechanism in place to protect and restore regulatory ecosystem services? (associated with wet lands, mangroves, forests etc) Yes

<b>Protected areas legislation</b>	No
<b>Payment for ecosystem services (PES)</b>	No
<b>Integrated planning (for example coastal zone management)</b>	Yes
<b>Environmental impacts assessments (EIAs)</b>	Yes
<b>Climate change adaptation projects and programmes</b>	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Global Climate Change Alliance</a> (2012)</li><li>• <a href="#">PACC Communications Plan</a> (2011) [PDF - 431.72 KB]</li><li>• <a href="#">RMI Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change</a> (2009) [PDF - 171.22 KB]</li></ul>	

### Description:

The Reimaanlok Conservation Strategy takes an ecosystem approach in addressing community based DRR issues through conservation efforts. Coastal management continues to be a priority of CMAC, and the group is achieving ongoing progress in their integrated approach which works effectively with local groups in the outer islands.

There are a growing number of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) across RMI including in Arno and Likiep, and NGOs such as MICS are working with local land owners and CMAC member organisation to assist in their understanding the benefits of conserving their natural resources. These efforts often fall under the banner of the Reimaanlok Strategy and the Micronesia Challenge.

Namorik Atoll has been successful in being awarded the Equator Prize, which was awarded at the Rio +20 Summit in mid-2012. As well as securing \$20,000 in prize money, the award recognises excellence in sustainability in community initiatives. Namorik Atoll plans to invest the prize money into further work which supports local income generation in environmentally sustainable approaches. Namorik Atoll is also working with EPA on applying for Ramsar Status for their wetlands/mangroves of international significance. This would be the second Ramsar site in RMI, after Jaluit Atoll has already been recognised.

While some capacity building initiatives highlight the importance of incorporating DRR into environmental policies and plans, and land use and resource management (e.g. EPA’s workshops, TAF / OFDA, and the NWS Annual Workshops), much more is needed to highlight the importance of DRR particularly in local development issues across RMI.

As noted in the previous HFA Review, Environmental Impact Statements (EIAs) are required for developments in RMI; however, enforcement is a capacity challenge for the EPA. The EPA operates under two main pieces of legislation: the Environmental Protection Act and the Coast Conservation Act, and carries out both Act’s duties with nine regulations.

There are an ever increasing number of initiatives relating to climate change adaptation. Better coordination is needed from NC3 and /or OEPPC to facilitate information sharing and collaborative approaches to reduce duplication and encourage sharing of lessons learned.

**Context & Constraints:**

Given the limited progress against this Core Indicator since 2010, more is still needed to be done to raise the awareness of DRR at all levels, and what it means in practice. Activities in some government ministries are occurring that address DRR in an incidental manner however if DRR is given a higher priority, these activities and initiatives may be scaled up and broadened so as to address DRM and DRR in a more robust and meaningful way.

**Priority for action 4: Core indicator 2**

*Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

**Key Questions and Means of Verification**

Do social safety nets exist to increase the resilience of risk prone households and communities? Yes

<b>Crop and property insurance</b>	No
<b>Temporary employment guarantee schemes</b>	No
<b>Conditional and unconditional cash</b>	No

<b>transfers</b>	
<b>Micro finance (savings, loans, etc.)</b>	No
<b>Micro insurance</b>	No

## Description:

Social safety nets in the Marshall Islands are predominantly comprised of cultural norms associated with family and community support, as in many Pacific Island Countries. In the Outer Islands, mechanisms such as “handicrafts for fuel” are maintained as a means to draw on cultural practices to pay for goods where cash is limited.

In Majuro and Ebeye where internal migration from Outer Islands is common, traditional cultural social support is limited, and some groups within the community are therefore more vulnerable, e.g. women and children. WUTMI, the women's NGO, remains active in addressing this issue.

The Compact of Free Association (COFA) between the USA and the RMI provides economic assistance to the RMI, with the US assistance accounting for 45% of GDP. The current COFA arrangement covers the period up to 2023. Additional compensation is paid to populations affected by the US nuclear testing which occurred in the 1940s and 1950s, as the health impacts continue to be visible in the population.

The government has subsidized copra and costs associated with transportation, and this has been a steady income earner for many people, particularly in the outer islands. However, with copra prices falling, it is uncertain how long the subsidy will continue for, given the high costs incurred by the government. On Namorik Atoll, there is RMI's only existing copra co-operative which has drawn on the microloan system to assist in ongoing operations.

The NGO Youth-to-Youth in Health undertake programs relating to sexual and reproductive health issues, well-being and disease for youth.

Microfinance schemes exist in the RMI, with small loans taken out by fishermen, farmers and handicraft makers. Most loans are for consumables and are usually for between US\$2000-3000 with a maximum of US\$10,000. The main microfinance scheme is funded by Republic of China (Taiwan) and operates in partnership between the Bank of the Marshall Islands (BOMI) and Marshall Islands Development Bank.

Since the last HFA Review, the Bank of the Marshall Islands has introduced two new policies addressing disaster preparedness and response both internally and for its customers. The first is Board Approved and was established to provide finance to fund repairs to structures damaged after a disaster event. Given the lack of severe weather events since its introduction, it is yet to be tested. The second policy is awaiting Board Approval and is for internal operations. The policy outlines strategies to put in place should a disaster occur, and develops a plan on how the bank would respond and aim to return to normal operations. Both policies were developed as a result of SOPAC consultations, highlighting BOMI's flexibility and openness to recognising the need to include disaster risk considerations in operations.

Insurance remains a relatively foreign concept in the RMI, with life insurance only offered by the Bank of the Marshall Islands.

**Context & Constraints:**

As noted in the last HFA Review, there is limited / no inclusion of DRR or CCA criteria mainstreamed into microfinance loan policies. This being said, BOMI has proven to be flexible to the need to include disaster risk considerations into its policies, thus may be open to such additional considerations in the future.

The erosion of traditional social support, as the urban population continues to rise, is likely to continue to decline as community structures erode. This presents a challenge to organizations such as WUTMI, who may find an escalation in the level of support they are required to provide. Additional non-traditional forms of social support will therefore be required in urban areas to supplement the traditional forms that no longer exist to the degree they once did.

**Priority for action 4: Core indicator 3**

*Economic and productive sectorial policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

**Key Questions and Means of Verification**

Are the costs and benefits of DRR incorporated into the planning of public investment? No

<b>National and sectoral public investment systems incorporating DRR.</b>	No
<b>Please provide specific examples: e.g. public infrastructure, transport and communication, economic and productive assets</b>	
<b>Investments in retrofitting infrastructures including schools and hospitals</b>	No

**Description:**

Some legislation is in place to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities. RMI stakeholders noted the Foreign Investment Act, the Procurement Act and the Tobacco and Prohibited Substance Act as relevant. Housing codes and building standards from Marshall Islands Development Bank and Ministry of Public Works also provide some safeguard to reduce vulnerability of infrastructure.

The RMI's vulnerability to external markets can lead to high fluctuations in imported goods including food and fuel. The National Energy Policy (2009) provides guidance on increasing the proportion of renewable energy to reduce RMI's reliance on imported fuel.

CMI is currently implementing a program to reduce energy consumption due to rising costs of fuel. Air conditioners are being set at slightly higher temperature and attention is being focused on reducing energy consumption wherever possible. A trial is being conducted whereby CMI's energy is sourced from its own generators to assess the difference in cost compared to energy from Marshalls Energy Company (MEC).

Reliance on imported food is also being tackled through various programs focused on food security. Ministry of Resources and Development (MoRD) has various active programs particularly in the Outer Islands, some of which are in partnership with FAO. As noted in the previous HFA Review, MoRD has a Strategy and Action Plan which is being followed to reduce vulnerability relating to food security.

MIMRA assist Outer Islands local governments and communities in developing policies and ordinances relating to the sustainable use / harvesting of certain species, e.g. sea cucumbers and shark fins (see PFA 1, Core Indicator 1 for details). MIMRA also assist Outer Island communities with establishing economic activities such as pearl farming and maraculture. These efforts are continuing and resources are being managed sustainably to provide local communities with a diversified income base.

## Context & Constraints:

Challenges identified by national stakeholders include the lack of enforcement and transparency of many of these legislative instruments and policies and plans. Many feel there is a degree of lack of accountability relating to these instruments and as such, there is limited implementation of the policies and plans.

As mentioned in the previous HFA Review, a ongoing challenge is the cost of imported versus local food. Local food must be both affordable to consumers, and also it must fetch a price where farmers are willing to accept for their efforts. Consumers must also view local foods as an attractive alternative, both economically and from the health and nutritional benefits. Greater educational awareness on the health outcomes of food is required, especially given the high rates of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular diseases.

MoH also raised the point that health issues are increasing due to climate changes. A higher degree of awareness is needed that in drought conditions, water borne diseases usually increase and RMI's communities need to respond adequately to ensure health impacts are minimised.

Once again the geographical challenges are present regarding this Core Indicator, with enforcement of such policies and plans requiring certain levels of understanding within the local communities themselves.

## Priority for action 4: Core indicator 4

*Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction elements, including enforcement of building codes.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Is there investment to reduce the risk of vulnerable urban settlements? No

<b>Investment in drainage infrastructure in flood prone areas</b>	No
<b>Slope stabilisation in landslide prone areas</b>	No
<b>Training of masons on safe construction technology</b>	No
<b>Provision of safe land and housing for low income households and communities</b>	No
<b>Risk sensitive regulation in land zoning and private real estate development</b>	No
<b>Regulated provision of land titling</b>	No

### Description:

Some limited progress has been made against this Core Indicator. Stakeholders noted new initiatives in mason training and a retiree housing program is available. The Ministry of Public Works is currently undertaking activities on the drainage system which is prone to clogging and blockages in times of heavy rainfall.

Land titling occurs at the Land Registry Office, however it was noted that this practice is contrary to the traditional system.

Several stakeholders mentioned the existence of regulations for building codes, however understanding and awareness of these regulations remains limited (as noted in the last HFA Review).

### Context & Constraints:

There remains a lack of a managed approach to development of human settlements, and lack of awareness of the links between zoning, development and vulnerability to disasters. The continuation of limited understanding of the needs for building codes, or at least a managed approach to development leads to high levels of vulnerability both in urban areas and Outer Islands.

Stakeholders also noted the lack of government will to enforce building code regulations. However better understanding of developmental impacts on the environment at all levels is a priority.

## Priority for action 4: Core indicator 5

*Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Do post-disaster programmes explicitly incorporate and budget for DRR for resilient recovery? No

<b>% of recovery and reconstruction funds assigned to DRR</b>	0
<b>DRR capacities of local authorities for response and recovery strengthened</b>	No
<b>Risk assessment undertaken in pre- and post-disaster recovery and reconstruction planning</b>	No
<b>Measures taken to address gender based issues in recovery</b>	No

#### Description:

The Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund (DAEF) provides funds for relief efforts and rehabilitation, and is made up of annual contributions of \$200,000 each from US and RMI governments. As of 2012, the DAEF stands at US\$1.2M.

It is unclear how much post disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation incorporates DRR as detailed data on such events is lacking.

#### Context & Constraints:

The limited acknowledgment and/or commitment to DRR as a priority at all levels remains a challenge in RMI. Challenges relating to this Core Indicator were also highlighted as being that RMI has inadequate stockpiles for times of disaster, and limited national funding to respond immediately.

## Priority for action 4: Core indicator 6

*Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure.*

Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Are the impacts of disaster risk that are created by major development projects assessed? Yes

Are cost/benefits of disaster risk taken into account in the design and operation of major development projects? No

<b>Impacts of disaster risk taken account in Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>	Yes
<b>By national and sub-national authorities and institutions</b>	Yes
<b>By international development actors</b>	No

### Description:

As noted in the previous HFA Review, the EPA's Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) take DRR into consideration to some degree. What is lacking is the capacity of the EPA to enforce EIA regulations. EIA's continue to focus attention on environmental impacts rather than disaster risk vulnerability.

Few developments have been disallowed by the EPA in the past due to EIA criteria not being met. Most developments still go ahead, mainly due to the limited capacity of the EPA to enforce regulations. It could therefore be argued that the procedure is in place to assess disaster risk impacts of developments (through the EIA process), but the capacity to enforce the procedure in practice is limited.

MoPW and PMU have carried out assessments relating to the construction of new schools and dispensaries. It was also noted that the airport runway takes into account a safety area.

### Context & Constraints:

The traditional land tenure system allows land owners to use their land as they wish, with the EPA and local governments having limited power to direct activities at the local level. Land issues remain highly sensitive in the RMI and it is difficult to advise land owners how to use or develop their own land. A challenge among others is therefore public awareness of why the regulations exist and what sustainable development means, i.e. to maintain a healthy and

safe environment and to ensure future generations have access to resources such as water, food and land.

# Section 7: Priority for action 5

*Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels*

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## Priority for action 5: Core indicator 1

*Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management, with a disaster risk reduction perspective are in place.*

Level of Progress achieved: 3

Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Are there national programmes or policies for disaster preparedness, contingency planning and response? Yes

**DRR incorporated in these programmes and policies**

No

**The institutional mechanisms exist for the rapid mobilisation of resources in a disaster, utilising civil society and the private sector; in addition to public sector support.**

No

Are there national programmes or policies to make schools and health facilities safe in emergencies? Yes

**Policies and programmes for school and hospital safety**

Yes

**Training and mock drills in school and hospitals for emergency preparedness**

No

Are future disaster risks anticipated through scenario development and aligned preparedness planning? Yes

**Potential risk scenarios are developed taking into account climate change projections**

Yes

**Preparedness plans are regularly updated based on future risk scenarios**

No

## Description:

The Ministry of Health (MoH), Airport and Public Safety have recently developed policies for disaster preparedness. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) have recently been developed which has resulted in a more coordinated approach to response.

RMI's University of the South Pacific (USP) recently developed a Disaster Risk Management Plan for its Library facilities in 2010. However, following the Japan earthquake and tsunami in March 2011, management recognized the need to expand this to the entire campus. An Integrated Disaster Risk Management, Security and Occupational Health and Safety Plan was therefore developed and is in the final stages of completion. As part of the development of the plan, a one-day training exercise was conducted on emergency response. Marshall Islands Police Department was also of assistance in the development of the plan.

## Context & Constraints:

Ministry of Education lacks a plan for disaster response. It is hoped that the current initiatives focused on DRR/DRM and CCA issues within the education sector will extend to the development of disaster response plans for schools.

## Priority for action 5: Core indicator 2

*Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are held to test and develop disaster response programmes.*

### Level of Progress achieved: 2

Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

## Key Questions and Means of Verification

Are the contingency plans, procedures and resources in place to deal with a major disaster? Yes

<b>Plans and programmes are developed with gender sensitivities</b>	No
<b>Risk management/contingency plans for continued basic service delivery</b>	No
<b>Operations and communications centre</b>	No
<b>Search and rescue teams</b>	No
<b>Stockpiles of relief supplies</b>	No
<b>Shelters</b>	Yes

<b>Secure medical facilities</b>	No
<b>Dedicated provision for disabled and elderly in relief, shelter and emergency medical facilities</b>	No
<b>Businesses are a proactive partner in planning and delivery of response</b>	No

### Description:

The Chief Secretary's Office is the designated focal point in times of disaster. This is outlined in the EMI Emergency Response Plan, which also specifies roles and responsibilities of lead and support agencies. SOPs have recently been developed under this Plan to further the levels of preparedness and coordination in times of disaster.

It is generally recognized in both urban centres and Outer Islands that schools and churches are the designated emergency shelters.

US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) conducted airport crash drill in early 2012. The main government disaster response organizations involved were MoH, Airport and Ports Authority.

Tabletop disaster response exercises are also held every 2 years in RMI, led by the US to further inform how the US would offer assistance in times of response, and how the cooperative arrangements would play out. The last exercise was held in 2010 and described the change in arrangements of US support following a disaster. The next exercise is due in Oct-Nov 2012.

Majuro Water and Sewage Company (MWSC) is the focal point for water and fire related disaster response. The fire service have one fire engine with 580 gallon capacity and MWSC has two trucks with 2500 gallon capacity each.

### Context & Constraints:

The lack of major disaster events in RMI has led to a certain degree of complacency and conducting drills appears not to be a priority in most sectors. The lack of periodic training exercises also reflects ongoing capacity challenges that are prevalent in small PICs.

Stakeholders also noted challenges relating to the lack of Outer Island involvement in contingency planning (the focus is usually Majuro) and also the lack of involvement from civil society organisations.

Another issue was raised regarding sewage. Although there has been no historical sewage disaster, the current system pumps sewage into the ocean by seven lift systems and MWSC is concerned no contingency plan exists in the case of a malfunction, e.g. backup generators to prevent flow back of sewage.

## Priority for action 5: Core indicator 3

*Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required.*

Level of Progress achieved: 3

Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

### Key Questions and Means of Verification

Are financial arrangements in place to deal with major disaster? Yes

<b>National contingency and calamity funds</b>	Yes
<b>The reduction of future risk is considered in the use of calamity funds</b>	No
<b>Insurance and reinsurance facilities</b>	No
<b>Catastrophe bonds and other capital market mechanisms</b>	No

#### Description:

As noted in PFA 4, Core Indicator 5, the Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund (DAEF) is a joint initiative between RMI and US, with each party contributing US\$200,000 p.a. towards the fund to be used in times of disaster. The amount is currently US\$1.2M. This fund can only be used for disaster response and rehabilitation.

The Chief Secretary also has Emergency Funds which can be drawn upon in times of disaster. Support may also be available through EDF 9 and 10 packages from the European Union.

Should a disaster take place and RMI need external assistance, it first needs to declare a State of Emergency / Disaster. It then needs to apply to the United Nations for support. The next step to obtain support from the US is to write a letter to the US Ambassador to request support, which, if approved, is channeled through USAID (rather than FEMA, which was the case prior to 2010). Rapid response can then be deployed.

The US also supports RMI through recovery efforts if needed. USAID would rebuild structures and has processes in place to manage reconstruction should this be required.

The Pacific Catastrophic Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative (PCRAFI) is currently being developed and will be trialed in the RMI. The PCRAFI assists the PICs in shifting from post-disaster donor assistance to ex ante budget planning. The Pacific Disaster Reserve Fund is being established as a prototype of risk pooling mechanism. This joint reserve mechanism would allow the PICs to build up regional reserves against major natural disasters, supported by initial donor contributions and, if necessary, protected by global

reinsurance. The Fund would provide incremental resources to restore life-preserving services to countries affected by natural disaster and would help them start their recovery and reconstruction activities.

**Context & Constraints:**

The limited amount of funds in the DAEF presents a challenge, given that should an event occur it is likely to cost far more than the content of the DAEF fund. For example, as mentioned in the previous HFA Review, Typhoon Paka cost US\$80M in 1997, indicating that further external assistance in times of disaster is a high likelihood.

Despite the move of assistance from the US from FEMA to USAID, there appears to be a high level of reliance on the US should a disaster occur. As noted previously, there appears little sense in needing to further commit funds towards disaster response, given the US have always stepped in to support RMI financially when needed.

**Priority for action 5: Core indicator 4**

*Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters, and to undertake post-event reviews*

**Level of Progress achieved: 3**

Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

**Key Questions and Means of Verification**

Has an agreed method and procedure been adopted to assess damage, loss and needs when disasters occur? Yes

<b>Damage and loss assessment methodologies and capacities available</b>	Yes
<b>Post-disaster need assessment methodologies</b>	Yes
<b>Post-disaster needs assessment methodologies include guidance on gender aspects</b>	No
<b>Identified and trained human resources</b>	No

**Description:**

The Chief Secretary’s Office is the designated focal point for disaster response and coordination. Communication of disaster warnings and response to the public is generally through the radio network with V7AB the 24 hour station responsible for broadcasting relevant information.

The National Weather Service (NWS) is a key stakeholder in times of disaster response and has 5 early warning systems (“chatty beetles”) to assist with communication of information.

The RMI Emergency Response Plan further describes details of communication channels and roles and responsibilities.

The Central Control Group, as detailed in the Emergency Response Plan, has responsibility for conducting Initial Damage and Needs Assessments and it is assumed that USAID would assist in this task. MICS and CMI also have capacity to undertake disaster needs assessments.

The Ministry of Health have recently improved communications between Majuro and the Outer Islands by purchasing and distributing radios and written communication which covers all 54 dispensaries – 30 for Outer Islands. MoH have also distributed papers on emergency preparedness which ties in with training on health assistants and medics.

The Asia Foundation / Office of the US Foreign Disaster Assistance (TAF/OFDA) has completed several training sessions in RMI since 2010. In July 2011, 22 participants (19 male, 3 female) undertook Initial Damage Assessment Training and 15 (13 male and 2 female) attended an Initial Damage Assessment Workshop.

Additionally, a Disaster Officer in the Chief Secretary’s Office attended “Introduction to Disaster Management” training and “Emergency Operations Centres” training in Pohnpei. 30 Nov – 9 Dec 2011.

## Context & Constraints:

There remains a lack of a specific and designated building for a National Emergency Operations Centre. At present it is assumed that disaster coordination would occur in the Chief Secretary’s Office / Conference Room, given limited space elsewhere.

It was also highlighted that technical experts and funds are needed to fill a shortfall in post disaster needs assessments. MoH also noted distance, technical experts and finance provided challenges in their attempts to improve communications with Outer Islands.

## Section 8: Drivers of Progress

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### **a) Multi-hazard integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and development**

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Do studies/ reports/ atlases on multi-hazard analyses exist in the country/ for the sub region?: Yes

If yes, are these being applied to development planning/ informing policy?: No

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

Once finalised and endorsed, the Joint NAP for CCA and DRM will allow for the strengthening of the integration of CCA and DRM activities, and support the implementation of risk reduction activities in a more holistic manner. It will also facilitate the implementation of the Climate Change Policy and on-going DRM efforts.

SOPAC's involvement in the PCRAFI initiative has involved publishing extensive information risks and hazards relating to RMI. This information is available on the website: [www.pacris.sopac.org](http://www.pacris.sopac.org).

Further studies and reports on multi-hazard analyses are available through a risk exposure database under development by SOPAC/SPC and other partners such as GNS New Zealand, AIR Worldwide and the Pacific Disaster Center with funding support from the World Bank and ADB.

### **b) Gender perspectives on risk reduction and recovery adopted and institutionalized**

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Is gender disaggregated data available and being applied to decision-making for risk reduction and recovery activities?: No

Do gender concerns inform policy and programme conceptualisation and implementation in a meaningful and appropriate way?: No

Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

Gender disaggregated data is not collected nor are gender issues high on the priority list of most DRR/DRM/CCA initiatives. It was noted, however, that women are likely to be disproportionately affected especially in the Outer Islands. For example, handicrafts are a source of income (e.g. "handicrafts for fuel", trade for other goods). Vegetation is likely to be adversely affected by altered climate conditions, thus women's abilities to make handicrafts may be limited.

At the national level, the Nitijela (parliament) has one woman member who was especially allocated as a representative.

At Local Government and community level, out of 24 mayors, 3 are female. WUTMI noted that far more women are involved in dialogue in Majuro than on Outer Islands. WUTMI also note that some improvements to the situation of women have been made with the domestic violence campaign. WUTMI also run annual conferences and bring in one woman and one man from each atoll to discuss a range of issues in Majuro.

## **c) Capacities for risk reduction and recovery identified and strengthened**

Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Do responsible designated agencies, institutions and offices at the local level have capacities for the enforcement of risk reduction regulations?: -- not complete --

Are local institutions, village committees, communities, volunteers or urban resident welfare associations properly trained for response?: -- not complete --

## Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

The low level of reliance for this Driver of Progress indicates this is an area needing attention for RMI. RMI's JNAP, which will soon be finalized and endorsed, identifies priorities which will address capacity for risk reduction. The JNAP Goals include:

- Establish and support an enabling environment for improved coordination of disaster risk management /climate change adaptation in the Marshall Islands
- Public education and awareness of effective DRM/CCA responses from local to national level
- Enhanced emergency preparedness and response at all levels
- Improved energy security, working towards a low carbon future
- Enhanced local livelihoods and community resilience

As is the case in several PICs, the EPA is responsible for conducting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and it is also the regulatory body, highlighting a conflict of interest as it conducts both roles. As noted earlier, these issues are further complicated when EPA is faced with enforcement issues with regard to close family / community. Cultural limitations often lead to land owners disregarding EPA advice.

Another challenge at the local level is the responsibility allocated to local government for disaster risk reduction, but the limited resources and training to carry out such a role. A lack of any local plans or guidance exists for communities to base ongoing development planning on. Some NGOs work with local communities but this is often on an ad-hoc basis. The need was identified to develop capacity at the village level for risk reduction. Plans are in place to expedite DRM/CCA activities (e.g. hazards mapping, training and development of local disaster plans) at the local level through recently announced funding allocations.

## **d) Human security and social equity approaches integrated into disaster risk reduction and recovery activities**

### Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Do programmes take account of socio-environmental risks to the most vulnerable and marginalised groups?: -- not complete --

Are appropriate social protection measures / safety nets that safeguard against their specific socioeconomic and political vulnerabilities being adequately implemented?: -- not complete --

## Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

Marshallese outside of the urban centres of Majuro and Ebeye live mostly subsistence livelihoods and somewhat self-reliant to some degree. This addresses some of the challenges associated with food security measures, given the ability of a large portion of the population to grow and eat their own food. Climate change and environmental degradation pose challenges to these livelihoods. The Ministry of Resources and Development is therefore working with partners such as FAO and others to work towards overcoming challenges associated with food and energy security.

Other social protection measures exist in Outer Islands, more traditional villages in the form of cultural support offered through strong kinship ties. Unfortunately these are being eroded somewhat as growing numbers of Outer Islands communities drift towards urban centres for health, education, work and family reasons. With this urban drift comes a decrease in cultural mechanisms that serve to protect vulnerable groups in communities.

## **e) Engagement and partnerships with non-governmental actors; civil society, private sector, amongst others, have been fostered at all levels**

### Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

Are there identified means and sources to convey local and community experience or traditional knowledge in disaster risk reduction?: -- not complete --

## Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

NGOs such as MICS and WUTMI are active at the local and community level, with networks and communications reaching the Outer Islands. Civil society organizations were identified in the last HFA Review as one of the key sectors for DRM in RMI in the situation analysis conducted for the development of the NAP DRM, which preceded the JNAP. The Government of RMI recognizes the potential of civil society organisations in the JNAP and aims to engage more effectively with non-government counterparts for example by strengthening the capacity of key community groups and NGOs in Marshall Islands. Assisting communities in the Outer Islands to develop their own mechanisms to supplement the national and local government plan for emergency preparedness and response is another priority which is articulated in the JNAP.

As noted in the last HFA Review, the most prominent and active Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the Marshall Islands are local community organizations, including parents-teachers associations, sports clubs, women's clubs, and churches (many of which also provide school services).

The private sector is represented by the Chamber of Commerce, with headquarters located in Majuro. The business sector has a history of significant influence over public policy. The Republic of the Marshall Islands has a relatively open and active media community with radio as the primary media source. For most Marshallese, the government-controlled AM station is a key source of information. There is also an independent newspaper in Majuro that has a weekly readership of roughly 20,000 (print and electronic versions) and several privately-run FM radio stations.

## Contextual Drivers of Progress

### Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

### Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

As noted in the last HFA Review, the key drivers of RMI's vulnerability include:

- Rapid population growth and over-population in urban centres
- Environmental degradation and unsustainable development
- Localised pollution and waste management
- Climate change impacts including accelerated sea level rise
- Limited resources (particularly food, water and fuel)
- Limited economic potential due to small size and remoteness
- High exposure to external market shocks
- Sparse and scattered nature of islands and atolls across a vast ocean, making communication and transportation to outer islands more difficult, with infrequent and at times unreliable transport links

As noted throughout the RMI HFA Progress Review, human resource capacity is an ongoing challenge in RMI. Vacant positions remain unfilled for extended periods and key personnel are required to juggle multiple roles. It is difficult for external assistance from donors to fill this gap in the long term, and assistance often comes in the form of short term capacity building (e.g. workshops and training) or technical assistance. These issues are a crucial factor in many of the scores against the Core Indicators.

# Section 9: Future Outlook

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## Future Outlook Area 1

*The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.*

### Overall Challenges:

Ad-hoc and uncoordinated approaches to DRM and CCA have been identified through the HFA Review Process. This is in part due to overburdened staff in key ministries, having to take on numerous roles and manage multiple projects and programs concurrently. It is also due to the irregular meetings of groups such as the National Disaster Council (NDC) and the National Climate Change Committee (NC3). Without strong leadership from these key groups, it is unlikely that integration and mainstreaming of DRR and CCA will occur within line ministries.

An additional challenge is the level of dependency external assistance, particularly the US, for issues pertaining to DRR/DRM and CCA. With highly limited human resource capacity, RMI leans heavily on donor partners to address risk reduction issues.

### Future Outlook Statement:

Finalization, endorsement and wide distribution of the JNAP to national stakeholders will allow for some level of coordination and strategic approach to the addressing of DRR issues in RMI.

## Future Outlook Area 2

*The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.*

### Overall Challenges:

The change in key personnel in OEPPC and Chief Secretary's Office has delayed progress on strengthening institutional structures for DRR/DRM and CCA.

### Future Outlook Statement:

Identifying appropriate replacements for key staff within OEPPC and CSO, and supporting them in working together, should be the aim over the short to medium term. This will allow much needed progress in DRR/DRM and CCA including finalization and endorsement of the JNAP.

## Future Outlook Area 3

*The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.*

### Overall Challenges:

Mainstreaming of risk reduction is occurring across many projects and initiatives in ad-hoc approaches, given the recognition that climate change is likely to have significant consequences on issues such as water and food security. The overall challenge in RMI is to ensure a strategic, systematic and coordinated approach to ensure DRR is always a high priority.

A further challenge is that of funds, and the limitations imposed by the Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund (DAEF). Currently the DAEF is reserved only for disaster response, and not to be used for any risk reduction activity. If these limitations were loosened it may be possible to reduce the impact of some disasters by addressing underlying risk factors before the event occurs.

### Future Outlook Statement:

The JNAP, once finalized and endorsed, will provide a national overarching document that can guide attempts across all sectors to mainstream DRR into emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

## Future Outlook Area 4

*The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 66/199, requested the development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. A first outline will be developed for the next Global Platform in 2013, and a draft should be finalized towards the end of 2014 to be ready for consideration and adoption at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2015*

Please identify what you would consider to be the single most important element of the post-2015 Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2025).:

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## Section 10: Stakeholders

Organizations, departments, and institutions that have contributed to the report

Organization	Type	Focal Point
Abaca	Gov	Ministry of Internal Affairs
Allison J. Nasion	Gov	NTC
Anjanette Kattil	Gov	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Bernard Adinwin	Gov	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Casten Nemra	Gov	Chief Secretary's Office Government
Catalino Kijiner	Gov	Ministry of Finance
Christina deBrum	Gov	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Daisy Alik-Momotaro	Gov	Ministry of Internal Affairs
Francis Silk	Gov	Ministry of Health
Francyne Wase-Jacklick	Gov	Ministry of Health
Gary Waynam	Gov	Ministry of Education
Glen Joseph	Gov	MIMRA
Hannah Lafita	Gov	Ministry of Education
Imang Chung Gum	Gov	Ministry of Public Works
Isabella	Gov	Ministry of Health
Jefferson Bobo	Gov	Ministry of Public Works
Jennifer deBrum	Gov	Office of the Environment, Policy, Planning and Coordination

Jim Phillippo	Gov	MIPD – Police Commission
Jorelik Tibon	Gov	MAWC
Julian Alik	Gov	Environment Protection Authority
Justina Langidrik	Gov	Ministry of Health
Kanchi Hosia	Gov	Ministry of Education
Karness Kusto	Gov	Ministry of Resources and Development
Kenny Glanry	Gov	Chief Secretary's Office
Lowell Alik	Gov	Environment Protection Authority
Molly Helkena	Gov	Ministry of Internal Affairs
Reggie White	Gov	National Weather Service
Richard Bruce	Gov	Ministry of Education
Rosalie Konan	Gov	Attorney General's Office
Simpson	Gov	Ministry of Health
Smith Ysawa	Gov	Ministry of Public Works
Steve Why	Gov	Office of the Environment, Policy, Planning and Coordination
Warrick Harris	Gov	Office of the Environment, Policy, Planning and Coordination
Alington Robert	Private	Majuro Water and Sewage Corporation
Halsten W. deBrum	Private	Majuro Water and Sewage Corporation

Patrick Chen	Private	Bank of the Marshall Islands (BOMI)
Sultan Korean	Private	Bank of the Marshall Islands (BOMI)
Diane Myazoe-Debrum	Acad & Research	College of the Marshall Islands
Dr Irene Jane Taafaki	Acad & Research	RMI-USP
Carlton Abon	NGO	Marshall Islands Conservation Society (MICS)
Glen Althor	NGO	Marshall Islands Conservation Society (MICS)
Mary Treanor	NGO	WUTMI
Douglas Carey	Networks & Others	US Embassy
Mark Stege	Networks & Others	Office of the Environment, Policy, Planning and Coordination