PALAU

Disaster Management Reference Handbook

2016

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Disclaimer

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Welcome - Note from the Director

Dear Reader,

Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) provides education, training and research about disaster management and humanitarian assistance, particularly in international settings that require coordination between the Department of Defense (DOD) and civilian agencies. In line with its charter, CFE-DM has created reference books on disaster management roles, processes, capabilities and vulnerabilities. This Disaster Management Reference Handbook Series is designed to provide decision makers, planners and responders a baseline of understanding of national disaster management plans and structures, including information on key domestic disaster response entities, basic regional background, and local and international humanitarian organizations present in the region. The Indo Asian Pacific region is the nexus of naturally occurring weather phenomena and tectonics resulting in powerful cyclones, volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis that can be very destructive.[1] The seismically and volcanically active littoral area stretching from New Zealand up the eastern edge of Asia to Alaska and down the western coastal areas of North and South America is known as the Ring of Fire; 75 percent of earth's volcanoes and 90 percent of earthquakes occur in this region.[2] During the period 2001-2010 on average, more than 200 million people were affected and more than 70,000 people were killed by natural disasters annually.[3] These handbooks provide a context for country and regional-specific factors that influence disaster management.

Sincerely,

Joseph D. Martin
Director

Information about the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance

Overview

The CFE-DM is a U.S. DOD organization that was established by U.S. Congress in 1994. The Center is a direct reporting unit to U.S. Pacific Command and is located on Ford Island, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

CFE-DM was founded as part of the late Senator Daniel K. Inouye's vision. The Senator had witnessed the effects of Hurricane Iniki that struck the Hawaiian Islands in 1992, and felt the civil-military coordination in the response could have been more effective. He set about to establish the CFE-DM to help bridge understanding between civil and military responders, and to provide a DOD platform for building DMHA awareness and expertise in U.S. forces, and with Partner Nations (PN) in the Asia-Pacific. While maintaining a global mandate, the Asia-Pacific region is our priority of effort and collaboration is the cornerstone of our operational practice.

Mission

The Center's mission is to advise U.S. Pacific Command leaders; enable focused engagements, education and training; and increase knowledge of best practices and information to enhance U.S. and international civil-military preparedness for disaster management and humanitarian assistance.

Vision

CFE-DM exists to save lives and alleviate human suffering by connecting people, improving coordination and building capacity.

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Disaster Management Reference Handbook Series Overview

The Disaster Management Reference Handbook Series is intended to provide decision makers, planners, responders and disaster management practitioners with an overview of the disaster management structure, policies, laws, and plans for each country covered in the series. Natural and man-made threats most likely to affect the country are discussed. The handbooks also provide basic country background information, including cultural, demographic, geographic, infrastructure and other relevant data.

Conditions such as poverty, water and sanitation, vulnerable groups and other humanitarian issues are included. A basic overview of the health situation in the country and disease surveillance is also covered. The handbooks include information on key national entities involved in disaster management, disaster response and preparation, and the military's role in disaster relief. Information on United Nation agencies, international NGOs, major local NGOs, and key U.S. agencies and programs in the country, are also provided.

The overall aim is to offer a guide that brings together important information about disaster management and response for each country in an effort to provide a basic understanding for the reader. Information in the handbooks are compiled and based primarily on trusted, reliable, publicly available sources. Much of the information used is from U.S. or other government sources, United Nation sources, NGO websites, scholarly references, foreign government websites, and various media sources. When available, a link to the original internet source is provided.

Each handbook is a working document and will be updated periodically as new, significant information becomes available. We hope that you find these handbooks informative, relevant, reliable, and useful in understanding disaster management and response for this country. We welcome and appreciate your feedback to improve this document and help fill any gaps to enhance its future utility. Feedback, comments, or questions can be emailed to cfe-dmha.fct@pacom.mil. You may also contact the Center for Excellence at: (808) 472-0518. Please visit our website (https://www.cfe-dmha.org) to view the latest electronic versions available or to request a hard copy of a disaster management reference handbook.

Executive Summary

The Republic of Palau consists of the western-most group of the Caroline Islands in Micronesia and lies an almost equal distance from the Philippines to the west, Papua New Guinea to the south, and Guam to the Northeast. It consists of over 340 islands.[4] Palau is vulnerable to a variety of man-made and natural disasters with the potential to have a large impact on the economy and population. Historically, this has included typhoons, tropical storms, droughts, and a bridge collapse. Additionally, the country is vulnerable to the effects of climate change.[5] Palau is currently undergoing a severe drought brought on by El Nino impacts.[6]

The Compact of Free Association (COFA) is a political, strategic and economic treaty between the Republic of Palau and the U.S. Under the agreement, Palau conducts its own domestic and foreign affairs while the U.S. provides defense and security as well as maintaining exclusive strategic access to Palau's waterways, land and airspace. Under the COFA, Palau contributed U.S. military land use options and the U.S. contributed about $630 million dollars (over a 15 year period ending in 2009) for national development projects. In 2010, the U.S. and Palau signed a comprehensive review of the Compact, with a broad range of federal programs to continue for the subsequent 15 years.[7] Although this review has been agreed upon by both countries, it has yet to be ratified by the U.S, Congress. Therefore, Palau currently receives funding from the U.S. on a year to year basis.[8] Palau's close association with the U.S. provides it both economic and military security.[9] It remains crucial for Palau to continue to leverage the COFA agreement, as well as take advantage of positive relations with its island neighbors, for its continued positive development.

Palau's form of government is largely patterned after the U.S. The executive branch is headed by a popularly elected President assisted by a Vice-President and seven Cabinet Ministers. The legislative branch of government is known as the Olbiil Era Kelulau (OEK) and has two houses. The judiciary is the third branch of government and consists of the Supreme Court, the National Court, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Land Court.

Palau's economy is primarily driven by tourism, trade, subsistence agriculture, and fishing. Since Palau is a small island state, they are very vulnerable to external natural and man-made disasters. The government is a major employer of the work force. As a member of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), they have received numerous loans and technical assistance. Tourism and public administration are the primary economic sectors, mainly supported by fisheries and agriculture. Palau's reliance on external aid makes it extremely vulnerable to global events and shocks. This was demonstrated by uneven economic growth as the economy fended off crises such as 9/11, the Asian economic downturn, the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), and the 2008 global financial crisis.[10]

Palau has developed various publications to address hazard preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response and recovery. This includes a National Disaster Risk Management Framework (NDRMF) as well as policies to address climate change. Additionally, a long term national development plan (Palau Vision 2020) has been produced. Currently, the NDRMF and long-term development plans are being revised and updated.

The government's multi-hazard approach to Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is reflected in the NDRMF. However, a renewed focus needs to address the links between the various hazards to reduce vulnerability. Accumulated risk is also not explicitly dealt with. The Environmental Assessment process in Palau provides a good platform upon which multi-hazard risk assessments can be based. The process is fairly comprehensive and gives attention to the issue of accumulated risks, albeit specific to environmental and social impact.[11]

PALAU
Country Overview

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Country Overview

The Republic of Palau is located in the Pacific Ocean approximately 890 kilometers (km) 550 miles (mi) east of the Philippines. Palau was previously part of a UN trusteeship (administered by the U.S.) up until 1994. It is one of the world's youngest and least populated nations. It is often referred to in English under its native name "Belau." Palau is considered part of Micronesia.

The original settlers of Palau are believed to have arrived from Indonesia as early as 2500 BC. Palau's position on the western part of Oceania and closer proximity to Southeast Asia enables a mixed population of Malay, Melanesian, Filipino, and Polynesian ancestry.

Palau was originally explored by the Spaniards in the mid 1500's and remained under nominal Spanish ownership for more than 300 years before Spain sold the islands to Germany in 1899. Japan occupied Palau during (World War II) and received a mandate over them from the League of Nations in 1920. They remained in Japanese control and served as an important naval base until the U.S. seized them during World War II. After the war, the islands became a UN trusteeship (1947), administered by the U.S. Palau signed a COFA with the U.S. in 1992, requiring the U.S. to provide economic aid in exchange for the right to build and maintain U.S. military facilities in Palau. Palau became a sovereign state in 1994.[12] Palau was the last Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to gain its independence. Under the compact, the U.S. remains responsible for Palau's defense.

The president of Palau, who is both head of state and head of government, is elected every four years. The government also has a bicameral parliament, known as the "OEK," elected by popular vote—the Senate consists of nine members and the House of Delegates consists of 16.

Palauans are Micronesian mixed with Melanesians and Malayans, and make up 70 percent of the population of 21,000 people. Indo-Europeans, Asians, and Europeans account for the minority groups. Life expectancy is 68.59 years.

Palauans have a matrilineal society. Clan lands continue to be passed through titled women and first daughters. Palauan women have always been endowed with land, titles, and money. Palauan villages are organized around 10 clans that are determined matrilineal. A council of chiefs from the ranking 10 clans governs the villages, and a parallel council of female counterparts plays a significant advisory role in the control and division of land and money.

Tourism is Palau's main industry, accounting for roughly half of Palau's GDP. Activities focus on scuba diving and snorkeling among the islands' rich marine environment, including the Floating Garden Islands west of Koror. The numbers of visitors—85 percent of whom come from Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S.—reached nearly 63,000 in 2003, more than quadruple the level of 20 years earlier. Arrivals from Asian countries dropped in 1998 and 1999 due to the regional economic downturn and the depreciation of many Asian currencies against the dollar, which made Palau's dollar-denominated prices more expensive. Tourism will likely expand though; as air travel in the Pacific has become more widespread, recent successes of East Asian countries, and increasing foreign finance of infrastructure.[13] Figure 1 shows a map of Palau.[14]

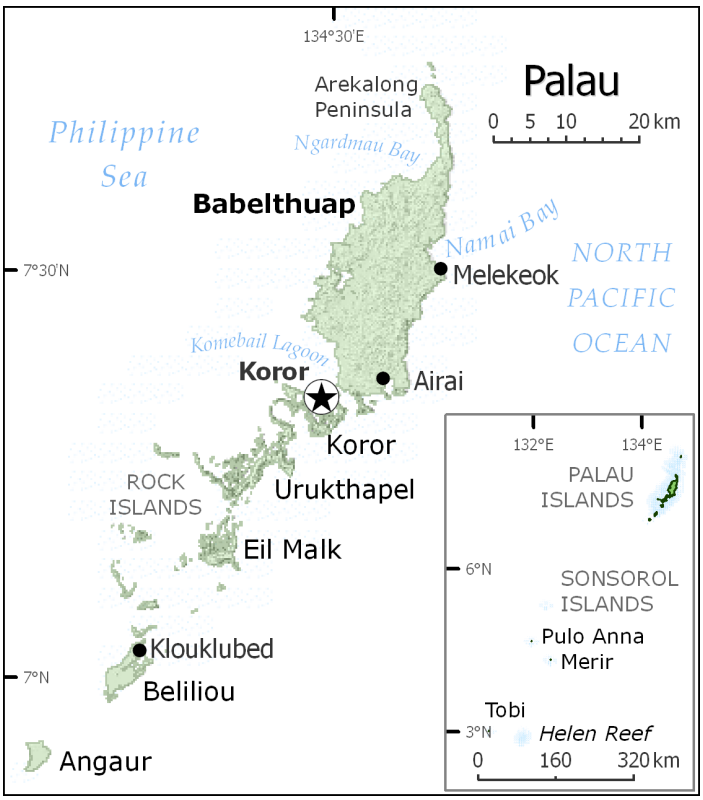

Figure 1: Map of Palau

Culture

Palauans are in general quite sociable. During daily interactions, most Palauans expect some form of salutation and it is considered rude not to say "hello" or some other greeting when encountering someone. When it comes to dining, it is considered proper to try everything that is offered. Eating more is considered a sign of enjoyment.

Palauan society traditionally follows a system of kinship with the mother or the female line. This especially comes into play with rites of passage such as death, birth, and marriages. Palau's political system is based on the U.S. model and western culture is being assimilated. Much of this is based on the fact many Palauan's continue their education abroad. Despite this fact, the traditional Palauan government still wields a lot of influence.[15] When visiting someone's home, it is considered appropriate to provide a small gift for the host. Photo 1 shows a traditional Palauan hut.[16]

Demographics

Ethnic Makeup

Approximately 70 percent of Palau's population is Palauan, which is often considered Micronesian. The Palauans have significant features of Malays and Melanesians, but like most Micronesians have traces of Filipino and Polynesian. Additionally, some Palauans have Japanese ancestry due to intermarriage between the two groups in the late 1800s and 1900s.

In addition to Palauans, Filipinos make up about 15 percent of the population in Palau. Ethnic Chinese constitute approximately 5 percent of the population, while the remainder consists of those with multiple ethnicities including other parts of Asia, Europe and various regions in Micronesia.

Palauan and English are the official languages. However, there are some islands that do not recognize English and others that do not recognize Palauan. Some states also recognize

Photo 1: Traditional Palauan Hut

additional languages, primarily Micronesian. Despite designation as official languages, there are very few native English speakers and in some areas very few Palauan. However, English is typically the language of communication between groups. Other native languages include Sosnsoralese, Tobi, and Angaur. Tagalog is spoken by Filipino immigrants, but is not officially recognized.

Palau's population is 40 percent Roman Catholic and another 25 percent is Protestant. These percentages are largely a result of the missionaries that converted many of the people in the past. Furthermore, 10 percent of the population is Modekngei, which is a monotheistic religion founded in Palau in the early part of the 20th century. It contains elements of Christianity as well as historic Palauan religions.[17]

Palauans have had a tendency to migrate overseas more so than other Micronesians. There are numerous Palauan communities in Guam, Hawaii and the West Coast of the U.S.[18]

Key Population Centers

Palau's total population is 21,522 with a population density of 47 people per square kilometer.[19] This is a relatively low figure for the Pacific Island States. Population density varies widely, with the outlying atolls uninhabited, and the majority of the population resident in the former capital, Koror. [20] The population living in urban areas accounts for 87 percent of the total population. Palau ranks 221st worldwide in total population. The population has grown from 8,259 in 1955 to its present day number.[21]

Vulnerable groups

Palau is a destination country for women subjected to sex trafficking. It is also a destination for women and men subjected to forced labor. Palau's foreign population (about one third) is the most vulnerable to trafficking. Filipino, Chinese, and Korean men and women pay thousands of dollars in recruitment fees and willingly migrate to Palau for jobs in domestic service, agriculture, restaurants, or construction. Upon arrival, some are forced to work in conditions very different from what is presented in contracts or recruitment offers, and many become trafficking victims. Women from China and the Philippines are recruited to work in Palau as waitresses or clerks, but many are subsequently forced into prostitution in karaoke bars, massage parlors or other venues—mostly operated by Taiwanese, Filipino, or Palauan nationals. Furthermore, foreign workers on fishing boats in Palau waters experience conditions indicative of human trafficking. Regulations that make it extremely difficult for foreign workers to change employers once they arrive in Palau results in foreign workers being at increased risk of becoming an indentured servant or in debt to bondage. Additionally, some government and immigration officials have been investigated for facilitating and colluding in human trafficking.[22]

Children

Palau averages 40-45 cases a year of reported cases involving abuse/neglect of a child. This is challenging as there is only one investigator and one social worker for the whole country. In addition to the child abuse/neglect cases they are also required to handle other cases of domestic violence/family breakdown issues. Furthermore, there are no "safe houses" to provide temporary shelter for abused or neglected children or other cases of domestic violence. It is Palauan tradition for the uncle to take care of children in times of crisis. While this has had some level of success, it is impossible to reach every child. Therefore, there are very few social services to provide assistance to at-risk children.[23]

The Poor

The vulnerability of Pacific Island Countries to natural disasters and economic shocks translates for households into high levels of vulnerability to poverty, hits the poorest and vulnerable harder, and can perpetuate cycles of poverty. These shocks impact whole societies but the poor are generally affected the most, because they lack adequate financial means to deal with shocks, and tend to have high-risk profiles by, for instance, living in higher risk areas. As poorer groups become affected by disasters and climate shocks repeatedly (frequent storms, floods, or droughts), they have less chances of re-building their livelihoods and investing in human capital, which results in becoming trapped in a cycle that sinks them further into poverty. In addition, poverty can actually increase disaster risks due to potential linkages between poverty and the over-utilization of resources. [24]

In most Pacific Island Countries, 20 to 30 percent of the population lives below the nationally-defined hardship threshold; this is where Palau falls. Hardship in Palau is at 24.9 percent, meaning roughly one quarter of the

population live below the hardship threshold.[25] One of Palau's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) was to halve the proportion of people living below the national poverty line between 1990-2015. However, data is not yet available on this progress.[26] It should be noted that national hardship thresholds vary considerably between countries, making it impossible to directly compare headcount rates.[27]

Economics

Palau has numerous natural and cultural resources and has therefore benefited from strong growth in the tourism sector that has driven overall economic growth. However, since it is a Small Island State it remains vulnerable to external economic shocks, climate-change impact, and other environmental and weather-related risks.

Palau receives annual grant assistance under the COFA with the U.S. Additionally, as a member of the ADB, they receive loans and technical assistance. Since 2005, Palau has received six loans totaling $69.8 million and six technical assistance projects totaling $3.8 million.[28]

In addition to tourism, Palau's economy also consists of other services such as trade, subsistence agriculture, and fishing. Under COFA, the government is a major employer of the work force. Palau has a per capita income roughly double that of the Philippines and much of Micronesia. Prospects for tourism have been enhanced by the expansion of air travel in the Pacific, the rising prosperity of industrial East Asia, and the willingness of foreigners to enhance infrastructure development.[29]

The rural areas of Palau reflect a subsistence economy. It is typical for women to gather and cultivate taro, sweet potato, and cassava while the men fish and tend pigs. Reef fishing close to the shore also contributes to the subsistence economy. Tuna fishing by foreign vessels provides a small amount of revenue through the sale of licenses. There are no exportable crops. However, tuna and clothing represent some of their main exports.[30]

In 1996, Palau developed a National Master Plan for Development (also known as Palau Vision 2020), which instituted a 25 year outlook. The vison was to "substantially enhance the quality of life of Palauans and future generations of Palauans."

The primary goals were to:

- Increase real economic growth on a sustained basis;
- Share the benefits of economic growth on an equal basis; and
- Enrich and enhance confidence in the Palauan culture, raise national consciousness, and protect the natural environment.[31]

Environment

Environmental issues are prevalent in Palau. Historically, Palauans have reflected strong anti-nuclear feelings, opposed developing oil storage facilities, and expressed deep concerns about the impact of global warming on the Pacific Island region. The tourists who are attracted by the islands' natural beauty also threaten it through their large numbers and irregular consumption patterns. Waste disposal is an increasing problem with the only waste treatment plant having reached capacity and landfills having to be created (with external funding) to meet demand.

In 2005, researchers found that Palau's coral reefs were showing good signs of recovery seven years after about 30 percent of them were killed during an El Niño bleaching event. Palau is putting in place environmental programs, laws and policies to protect the country's environmental security. This supports the nation's tourism industry along with Palau's political, cultural and social well-being.[32]

Palau has two institutions dedicated to promoting environmental governance. They are the Environmental Quality Protection Board and the Office of Environmental Coordination and Response. Additionally, the Belau Watershed Alliance is a multi-stakeholder forum that promotes spatial, cross-scale intersectional approaches to development planning.[33]

Geography

The Republic of Palau consists of 340 coral and volcanic islands, lying in the southwest corner of Micronesia, with Guam 1,330 km (830 mi) to the northeast, and the Philippines 890 km (550 mi) to the west.[34] The islands of Palau constitute part of the Caroline Islands chain.

Palau's most important islands are Angaur, Babelthuap, Koror, and Peleliu, which lie together near the same barrier reef. About two-thirds of the population lives on Koror. North of these islands is the coral atoll of Kayangel. The

uninhabited Rock Islands are located to the west of the main island group. A remote group of six islands, known as the Southwest Islands, approximately 595 km (370 miles) from the main islands, is also part of the country. Palau is divided into sixteen states.

The capital city is Melekeok. The total country land area is 458 square kilometers (177 sq miles) or slightly more than 2.5 times the size of Washington, DC. The terrain varies geologically from the high, mountainous main island of Babelthuap, to low, coral islands usually fringed by large barrier reefs. The highest point is Mount Ngerchelchauus on Babelthuap, at 794 feet. Natural resources include forests, minerals (especially gold), marine products, and deep-seabed minerals.

Much of Palau's fragile natural environment remains free of environmental degradation. However, there are several areas of concern, including illegal fishing with the use of dynamite, inadequate facilities for disposal of solid waste in Koror, and extensive sand and coral dredging in the Palau lagoon. Palau also has an inadequate water supply and limited agricultural areas to support the size of its population. The nation is vulnerable to earthquakes, volcanic activity, and tropical storms. Sewage treatment is a problem, along with the handling of toxic waste from fertilizers and biocides.

Global warming is a big concern along with the related rising sea level. Water coverage of low-lying areas is a threat to coastal vegetation, agriculture, and the purity of the nation's water supply.[35]

Borders

The Republic of Palau borders the North Pacific Sea on the southeast and the Philippine Sea to the northwest.[36] It is approximately 890 km (550 mi) southeast of the Philippines.[37] Palau's sea claims are 12 Nautical Miles (NM) from its coast. Additionally. Palau controls economic resources in a 200 NM Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), although it cannot prohibit routine ship and vessel passage.[38]

Climate

Palau's climate is tropical. Rainfall varies from about 120 to 160 inches per year. Humidity is fairly constant, ranging from 77 to 84 percent, and temperatures vary not more than 10 °F diurnally, monthly, or annually from a mean in the low 80s °F. Northeast trade winds prevail from December to March and the southwest monsoon from June to October. Prevailing oceanic currents offshore are the North Equatorial Current and the Pacific Equatorial Countercurrent.

Geologically, Palau sits on the Philippine Sea Plate only 30 miles west of the 26,200 foot deep Palau Trench, the western boundary of the up thrusting Pacific Plate. Despite its close proximity to this subduction zone, Palau rarely experiences earthquake activity.[39]

PALAU
Disaster Overview

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Disaster Overview

Hazards

The Republic of Palau is vulnerable to a number of natural disasters, which could potentially have a large impact on the economy and population. Historically, Palau has experienced disasters such as typhoons or tropical storms, and droughts. Figure 2 shows the Environmental Vulnerability Index for Palau.[40]

The index was developed by the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the United Environment Programme and other partners. According to SOPAC, the index is designed to be used with economic and social vulnerability indices to provide insights into the processes that can negatively influence the sustainable development of countries.[41]

Table 1 shows natural hazards type and risk

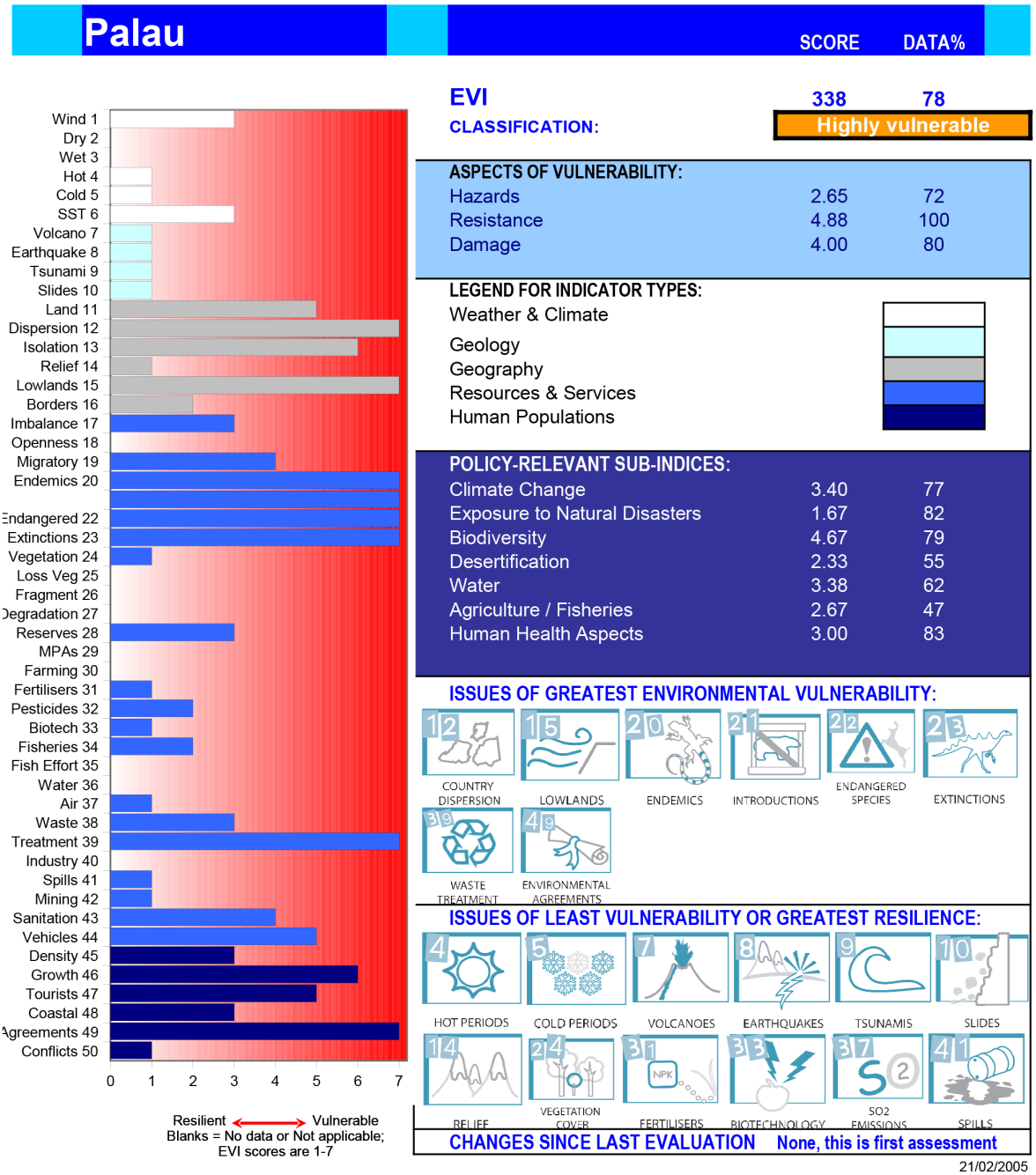

Figure 2: Environmental Vulnerability Index for Palau

level of disasters in Palau.[42] Figure 3 shows the Index for Risk Management (INFORM) for Palau in reference to hazards score.

Natural Hazards	Level of Risk
Storm Surge	Varied
Drought	High
Typhoon	High
Sea-level rise (sea-water intrusion/soil Saline/coastal inundation and erosion)	High
Tsunami	Low
Earthquake	Low
Landslides	Low

Table 1: Natural Hazards in Palau

INFORM Index is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters. The INFORM Index supports decisions concerning prevention, preparedness and response.[43] As the graph shows, Palau has a 2016 Hazard and Exposure Risk of 1.2/10, a Vulnerability Score of 3.2/10 and a Lack of Coping Capacity Score of 5.1/10. The greatest individual risk is aid dependency at 10/10.[44]

Recent History of Natural Disasters

March 2016 - Palau declared a state of emergency as they struggled with an extreme drought that was forecasted to last for months. Rainfall in Koror over the previous four months was the lowest recorded in 65 years. Additionally, the city's only dam had dried up and the only

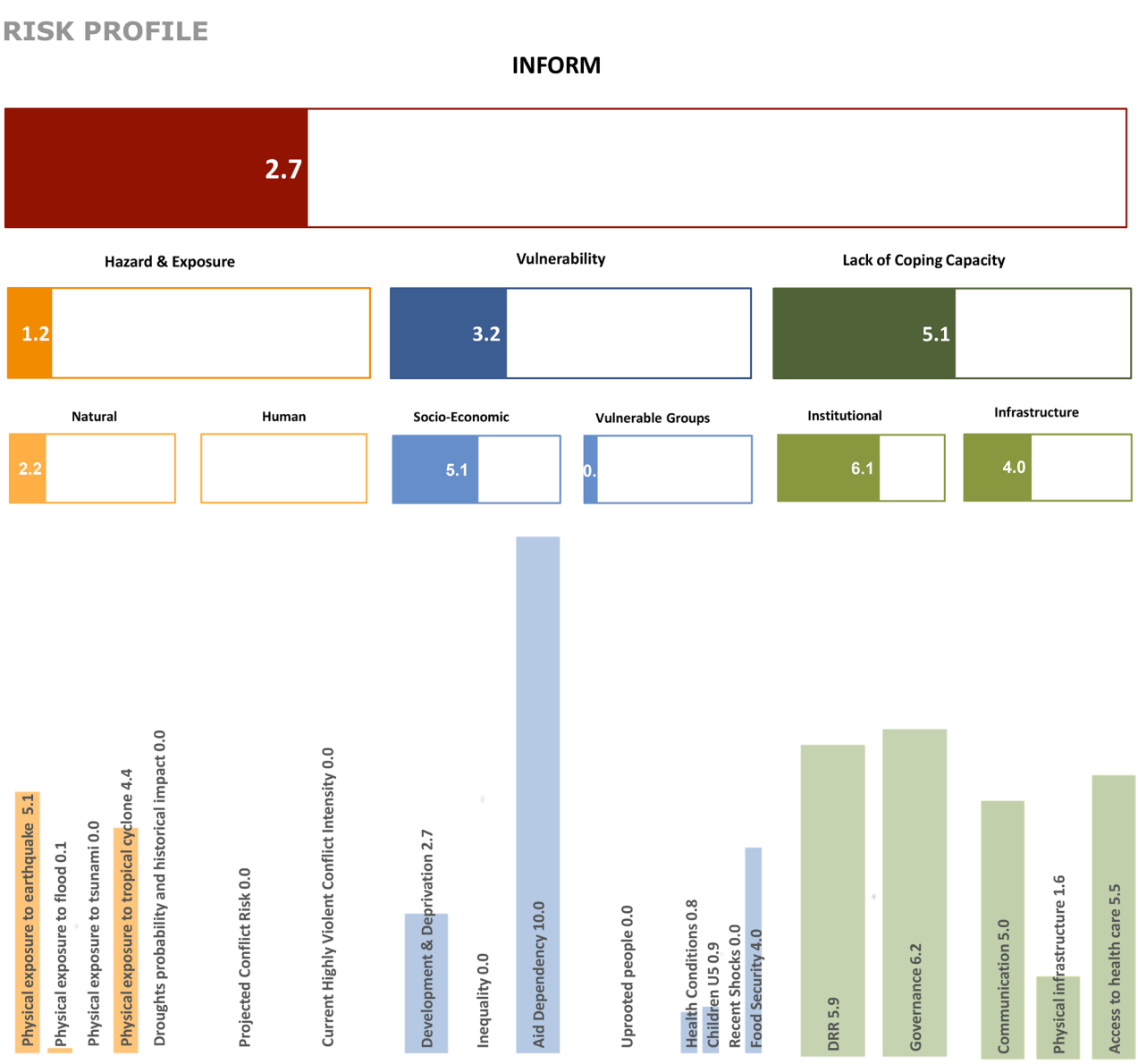

Figure 3: INFORM Index

alternate source of water, the Ngerikiil River, was at 19 percent capacity.[45] This led to a drop in school attendance rates as children were hungry and dehydrated, and faced a high risk of malnutrition due to crop failure, water shortages and poor sanitation.[46]

November 2013- The northernmost state of Palau, Kayangel received major damage to structures and trees as a result of Typhoon Haiyan. This resulted in many destroyed homes as well as loss of power and water in Koror, Babelthuap and Kayangel. [47]

December 2012- Typhoon Bopha passed to the south of the larger islands of Palau with winds as high as 250 km per hour (155 mph), damaging and destroying buildings and infrastructure. A state of emergency was declared.[48] Photo 2 shows damage from Typhoon Bopha.[49] The United States Agency for International Development/ Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/ OFDA) deployed several staff members to Palau and Guam to track the storm as it moved through the region, coordinate assistance efforts, and conduct assessments in affected areas. On December 5, 2012, the U.S. Embassy in Koror, Palau, declared a disaster due to the effects of Typhoon Bopha. In response, USAID/OFDA provided $100,000 to the Palau Red Cross for emergency support for typhoon-affected populations.

Climate Change

Palau has identified its main vulnerabilities due to climate change: increased drought and storm activity; extreme high tides; sea level rise; coastal erosion; habitat fragmentation; sea surface temperature rise; and coral bleaching. In response, Palau has identified a number of potential adaptation actions in the area of water, agriculture, coastal systems, marine resources, forestry, human health, and policy and planning.

Water: Improved management and maintenance of existing water supply systems is a high priority. Additional actions include centralized water treatment in urban centers;

Photo 2: Damage from Typhoon Bopha, 2012

catchment protection and conservation; and drought and flood protection strategies.

Agriculture: Important actions include the need to identify and document the uses, potential uses and preferred growing environment for trees and plant species in order to better enable selection of species suited to a particular physical environment; introduction of salt-tolerant root crops for use in low-lying areas; breeding more drought-resistant cultivars and crops for use in low-lying areas; introduction of alternative cultivation practices such as use of irrigation and raised-bed systems; improved soil and water conservation practices; promote use of agroforestry; preservation and dissemination of traditional knowledge; and diversification of subsistence crops.

Coastal Systems: Adaptation activities involve the need to enhance protection for mangrove forest areas and sensitive coral reef systems to help maintain their natural storm and erosion capacity while also sustaining their productivity; protection of foreshore resources through revegetation and the establishment of setbacks; and establishment of sea walls in very specific areas (due to their high costs); and pollution control measures.

Marine Resources: Initiatives involve development and extension of marine breeding and restocking programs for both fish and corals; expansion of marine reserves and protected areas; enhanced monitoring and enforcement of marine related legislation; and strengthening the monitoring of migratory fish stocks.

Forestry: Actions include expansion of community based forest conservation projects and conservation focused forestry activities.

Human Health: Palau requires public awareness programs related to malaria, dengue fever and other diseases; and reduction in mosquito breeding sites.

Policy and Planning: There is a need to develop an overall vulnerability and adaptation strategy that also addresses wider development, social and environmental issues that includes: a national policy framework for adaptation; capacity building and institutional strengthening; public awareness and education; and community-based management.

Palau has current and planned adaptation actions to meet these challenges. This includes participation in regional and global action including the following:

- Pacific Islands Adaptation to Climate Change Project: This project implements long-term adaptation measures to increase the resilience of key development sectors.
- Strengthening the Capacity of Pacific Developing Member Countries to Respond to Climate Change: This project incorporates climate risk management, adaptation practices and greenhouse gas mitigation measures into infrastructure and key sector investment.
- Asia Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Project Preparation Facility: This initiative's goal is to increase access to financial resources for climate change adaptation investment projects.

These projects should assist in addressing vulnerabilities in some of these areas particularly, water, agriculture and coastal systems. Consideration should also be given to greater action including forestry and human health. Gender consideration should also be factored into any adaptation projects.[50]

In 2010, Palau endorsed both the National Energy Policy (NEP) and an Energy Sector Strategic Plan to implement the NEP. The NEP set national targets to reduce energy consumption by 30 percent by 2020 and produce a minimum of 20 percent of electrical energy from renewable sources by 2020.

Activities in Palau to manage climate change is categorized in two ways:

- Reducing fossil-fuel based energy consumption and emission of Greenhouse Gases; and
- Managing earthly resources such as forests and marine resources such as coral reefs. These resources remove carbon from the atmosphere and convert it to biomass.[51]

Table 2 on page 22 shows Human induced/ climate change disaster risks in Palau.[52]

Endemic Conditions

Demining operations in Palau have focused on the southern islands, Peleliu and Anguar. Photo 3 on page 22 shows demining operations in Palau.[52] The aim of the operation is to reduce the immediate risk of Explosive Remnants of War on the local community and tourists. Since 2010, Australia has worked with NGO Cleared Ground Demining to successfully destroy more than 11,500 dangerous explosives left on Palau from WWII.[53]

Human induced/climate change disasters	Level of Risk
Oil spill	High
Water Contamination including sewerage	High
Solid Waste Disposal	High
Wildlife behavior (affecting aircraft movement)	High
Increased sedimentation of watershed/coastal waters	High
Fire (Industrial areas)	High
Emerging/infectious disease	High
Fire (residential)	Medium
Invasive species	Medium
Hazardous substances spill	Medium
Terrorism	Low
Airport/port incidents	Low
Civil uprising	Low
Political instability	Low

Table 2: Climate Change Disaster Risks in Palau

Photo 3: Removal of Explosive Remnants in Palau

PALAU
Organizational Structure for Disaster Management

Disaster Management Reference Handbook | 2016

Organizational Structure for Disaster Management

The National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) is involved in all aspects of disaster management in Palau. NEMO acts in counsel and collaboration with the National Emergency Committee (NEC). NEMO also performs the day-to-day operations associated with disaster management and submits reports to the Vice President. NEMO's responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:[54]

- Maintaining and testing the National Disaster Plan;
- Providing assistance to national and state agencies in the development of Agency Support Plans;
- Coordinating the development of public education programs regarding disaster planning;
- Coordinating and assisting in the training of specific disaster-related skills;
- Providing logistical support to the Emergency Operation Center;
- Coordinating state and national disaster management planning;
- Reviewing state and national legislation and regulations to insure that all are in compliance and coordination with this Plan; and
- Performing other tasks as prescribed by law, executive order, and regulations or as required by the Disaster Executive Council (DEC).

The Palau disaster management framework provides for a tiered level of response to emergencies and disaster management. The highest tier is that of the DEC, and the second is the NEC. Within the NEC is the Central Control Group (CCG). The membership of the CCG is situational. The NEMO, as the National Disaster Coordinator (NDC), will select initial responding members during the response phase of a disaster. The tier, which represents on-site management of emergency or disaster events, serves as the Incident Command Post (ICP). This arrangement follows the National Incident Management System. Figure 4 reflects the Palau National Disaster Management Framework.[55]

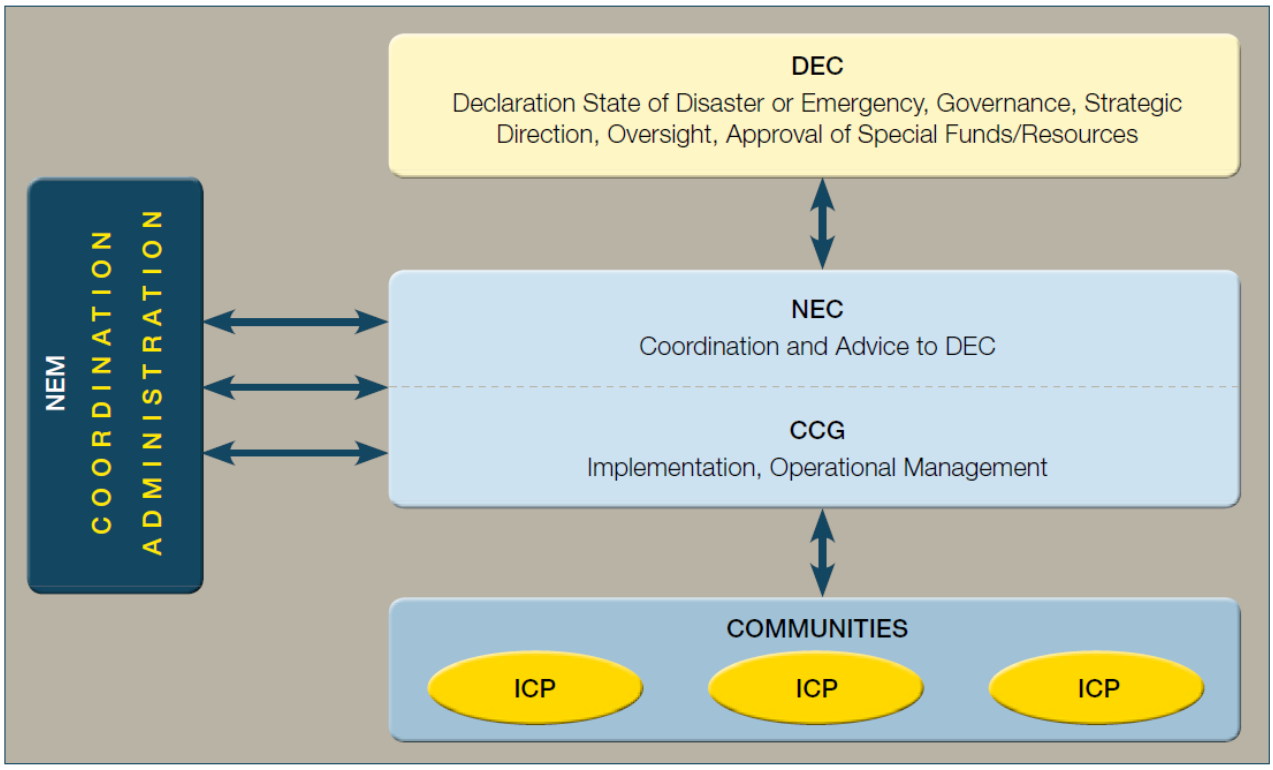

Figure 4: Palau National Disaster Management Framework

Response Roles and Responsibilities, and Membership

DEC

The DEC is convened and chaired by the President or in his absence, the Vice-President. In the event the President and the Vice President are absent, a minister shall be appointed to chair the DEC. All Ministers are members of the DEC.

Role of DEC

The role of DEC includes the following:

- Declare national state of emergency;
- Declare end of national state of emergency;
- Commit national or state resources for disaster management during the period of state of emergency or disaster;
- Provide overall direction and strategic oversight; and
- Request international assistance.

Membership of DEC

The members of DEC are as follows:

- President (Chair and Convener);
- Vice President (Alternate Chair);
- Minister of Justice;
- Minister of State;
- Minister of Public Infrastructure, Industry and Commerce;
- Minister of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism;
- Minister of Finance;
- Minister of Health;
- Minister of Education;
- Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs;
- Heads of the Council of Chiefs;
- Chairman, Governors Association;
- Senate President; and
- House Speaker.

The NEMO provides secretariat support to the DEC.

National Emergency Committee (NEC)

The NEC is convened by the Vice President or an Alternate chair (a minister) in his/her absence. The NEMO provides secretariat support to the NEC.

Role of NEC

- Implement and monitor all aspects of the NDRMF;
- Provide policy oversight for disaster management and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities to improve agency coordination and support of DRM;
- Command, control and coordinate operations for any nationally declared disaster or emergency;
- Operate the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC);
- Determine national action plans for disaster response;
- Issue early warnings through all available communication channels;
- Prioritize and allocate resource support of the ICP;
- Seek support and advice from the DEC as required;
- Request and coordinate use of external assistance;
- Provide situation report and status to DEC regularly during a state of emergency;
- Recommend declaration and end of state of emergency to DEC;
- Initiate and compile the initial damage assessment report and submit it to DEC with recommendations; and
- Oversee recovery efforts according to priorities set by the DEC.

Membership of NEC

The NEC is comprised of representatives from among the following ministries, bureaus, divisions and agencies:

- Office of the Vice-President;
- A minister (Alternate Chair);
- NEMO (Coordinator);
- Attorney General's Office;
- Bureau of Youth and Parks and Recreation (Director or Designee);
- Bureau of Public Works (Director or Designee);
- Bureau of Public Safety (Director or Designee);
- Palau Community College (President or Designee);
- Bureau of Education Administration;
- Palau Public Utility Corporation;
- Palau National Communications Corporation (PNCC);
- Foreign Affairs;
- Bureau of Domestic Affairs;
- Bureau of Agriculture;
- Governors Association;
- Palau Red Cross Society;
- National Weather Service (NWS);

- Office of Environmental Response and Coordination;
- Environmental Quality protection Board;
- Bureau of Aviation;
- Division of property and Supply; and
- Palau Chamber of Commerce.

The NEC operates from the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) in accordance with established Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for each type of disaster or emergency. The primary NEOC is located at the NEMO office. Depending on the type of disaster, various agencies represented on the NEC will take on a Lead Response or Support Response role.

National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC):
The NEOC functions include:

- Provide for the overall command, control and coordination of response to a natural disaster;
- Gather, collate and disseminate information;
- Serve as point of contact for the media through the Public Information Officer;
- Prepare and disseminate situation reports;
- Facilitate a damage and needs assessment process;
- Maintain effective communication and information systems;
- Coordinate all government, non-government, private, regional and donor assistance; and
- Manage the logistic arrangements of the immediate and medium term relief supplies.

The NEMO is responsible for the setting up and ongoing maintenance of the NEOC to ensure that it can be effectively utilized when required. This includes budgeting for all required supplies and maintenance, including exercises. The NEMO coordinates the development of appropriate NEOC SOPs and ensures that they are reviewed and exercised annually.

NDC
The Coordinator of NEMO, as the designated NDC, assumes overall control and coordination responsibilities for the duration of any declared national disaster in support of the role and responsibilities of the NEC. These responsibilities will include, but are not limited to the following:

- The direction and control of all government agencies and their resources;
- The acquisition of any Government asset, as well as acquisition of private and other assets and services, that may be needed to control the disaster situation;
- The ability to order the closure of any building, road, airport or seaport that is threatened by a disaster; and
- The ability to call on the assistance of any person or persons who may have expertise that will assist in controlling the disaster.[55]

Table 3 shows existing DRR activities and the responsible agencies.[56]

Community Based Disaster Risk Management in Palau

It is the responsibility of NEMO, along the NWS and Palau Red Cross Society (PRCS), to develop and distribute formal DRM community awareness programs. It is also state government responsibility to ensure that it has DRM coordinators to facilitate implementation of these measures in coordination with NEMO for technical advice and support. Additionally, NEMO is responsible for identifying evacuation shelters and informing communities of their location.

State level DRR programs should identify priority hazards requiring attention. Mechanisms to address these hazards should be included in local government plans and budgets. Community level DRR programs and activities are required to be developed and incorporated into community development programs, including coping mechanisms in times of disaster.[57]

Foreign Disaster Relief and Emergency Response (FDR/ER)

Disaster Relief Program Description
Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 404, the DOD can assist foreign countries to respond to manmade or natural disaster situations when necessary to prevent loss of lives. After the local U.S. Embassy has officially declared a disaster, OFDA assesses the needs and priorities of the country and may request DOD assistance. The assistance may be in the form of transportation, excess property items, Humanitarian Daily Rations (HDR), or some other commodity. The Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) appropriation or USAID may fund transportation of disaster relief.[58]

Agency	Disaster Risk Reduction tasks	Relevant legislative/policy mandate for mitigation
Bureau of Agriculture	Develop and implement forest management plans and quarantine regulations Develop rapid response plans for new introductions of pests and invasive species Introduce and distribute drought, salt and pest tolerant crops Educate farmers on proper and effective pesticide use, proper land-use to prevent soil erosion	Various agricultural development policies
Environmental Quality Protection Board (EQPB)	Environment Impact Assessments Earth moving permits Reduce GHG emission through efficient and effective solid waste management practices	
Bureau of Public Works	Protection of water resources through reduction of use and prevention of negative impacts. Water source protection, watershed management Safe drinking water Strengthened capacity for water resource management	Water Safety Plan (WSP) National Drought Mitigation Plan National IWRM policy
Bureau of Public Health, MoH	SARS and epidemic prevention plans Improvement of people's well-being and livelihoods through the reduction of negative public health impacts	
National Weather Services	Forecasting	
Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Industry, and Commerce Palau Automated Land and Resource (PALARIS)	Mitigate the causes and negative impacts of land degradation on the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems through sustainable land management	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) Economic Development Plan (EDP) National Environment Management Strategy (NEMS) Protected Areas Network (PAN)
OERC	Improved ecology and water quality, forest habitats, coastal waters Environmental enhancement	NEMS NBSAP
Ministry of State	Liaison with state governments on DRR activities	

Table 3: Existing DRR Activities and Responsible Agencies

FDR/ER

When a foreign country suffers a disaster, it may request assistance from the U.S. through the DOS and Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). If deemed necessary, the DoS requests disaster relief assistance from the DOD. Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict) approves the request and forwards it to Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) for action. DSCA (Programs Directorate) identifies the required supplies (HDR, Excess Property, etc.) and works directly with the Joint Staff Logistics Directorate (J4) to provide transportation in support of disaster relief efforts. [59]

A request for international natural disaster assistance is only made when it is clear the situation is beyond Palau's capabilities or when no national resources are available from the Government, NGO's or private agencies in Palau and with the approval of the DEC. Requests are normally made by the appropriate bureau under the Ministry of State. This process will likely be initiated during a meeting among diplomatic missions based in Palau. However, the President reserves the right to make an appeal to any foreign government directly.[60]

Congressional Notification for Foreign Disaster Assistance

Not later than 48 hours after the commencement of disaster assistance activities, the President is required by law (10 U.S.C. 404) to transmit a report to Congress containing notification of the assistance (proposed or provided) and a description of the following as is available: the manmade or natural disaster for which disaster assistance is necessary; the threat to human lives presented by the disaster; the U.S. military personnel and material resources involved; the disaster assistance provided by other nations or public or private relief organizations; and the anticipated duration of the disaster assistance activities.[61]

U.S. Government Agencies

U.S. Embassy
Address:
P.O. Box 6028
Koror, PW 96940
Palau
T: (680) 587-2920
F: (680) 587-2911
E: usembassykoror@palaunet.com
http://palau.usembassy.gov/

Disaster Management Organizations in Palau

Palau NEMO
Address:
P.O. Box 100
Koror, PW 96940
T: (680) 480-2249/2422
F: (680) 488-3312
E: nemo@palaunet.com[62]

Palau Red Cross Society (PRCS)
Address: P.O. Box 6043
Koror, PW 96940
T: (680) 488-5780/488-5781
F: (680) 488-4540
E: palredcross@palaunet.com; PRCS@palaunet.com[63]

The PRCS primary mission is to alleviate human suffering. It has over 400 members. The PRCS serves all 16 states and includes representation from each one.[64]

International Agencies

UNDP
Address:
P.O. Box 7086
Koror, PW 96940
Palau
T: (680) 488-6950
E: opolloi@palau-oerc.net[65]

National Commission of the Republic of Palau for UNESCO
C/O Ministry of Education
Address:
P. O Box 189
Koror, PW 96940
T: (680) 488 2952 (SG) +680 767 1126 (PT)
F: (680) 488-8465 (SG) +680 767 3354 (PT)
E: pnoc@palaunet.com (Chairperson) ; atabelual@palaumoe.net (SG) ; mcca@palaunet.com (PT)[66]

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
SPC Headquarters
Address:
BP D5
98848 Noumea
New Caledonia
T: +687 26 20 00
F: +687 26 38 18
E: spc@spc.int

Palau is a member of Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). SPC is an international organization that works across a number of areas, including but not limited to public health, agriculture, forestry, human rights, climate change and disaster management, to help Pacific Island Countries achieve sustainable development. SPC has 26 members including 22 Pacific Island countries and territories (PICT), plus four founding countries: USA, Australia, France, and New Zealand. SPC works closely with its members in determining what support is needed for the development of national policies and plans. Development goals of SPC community members are discussed in Figure 5.[67]

Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)

Palau is a member of the PIF Secretariat, which is "an international organization that aims to stimulate economic growth and enhance political governance and security for the region, through the provision of policy advice; and to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through coordinating, monitoring and evaluating implementation of Leaders' decisions. The organization's mandate is set by decisions made at annual meetings of Leaders from the 16 Pacific Island Forum member countries, ministerial meetings convened by the Forum Secretariat, and decisions made under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

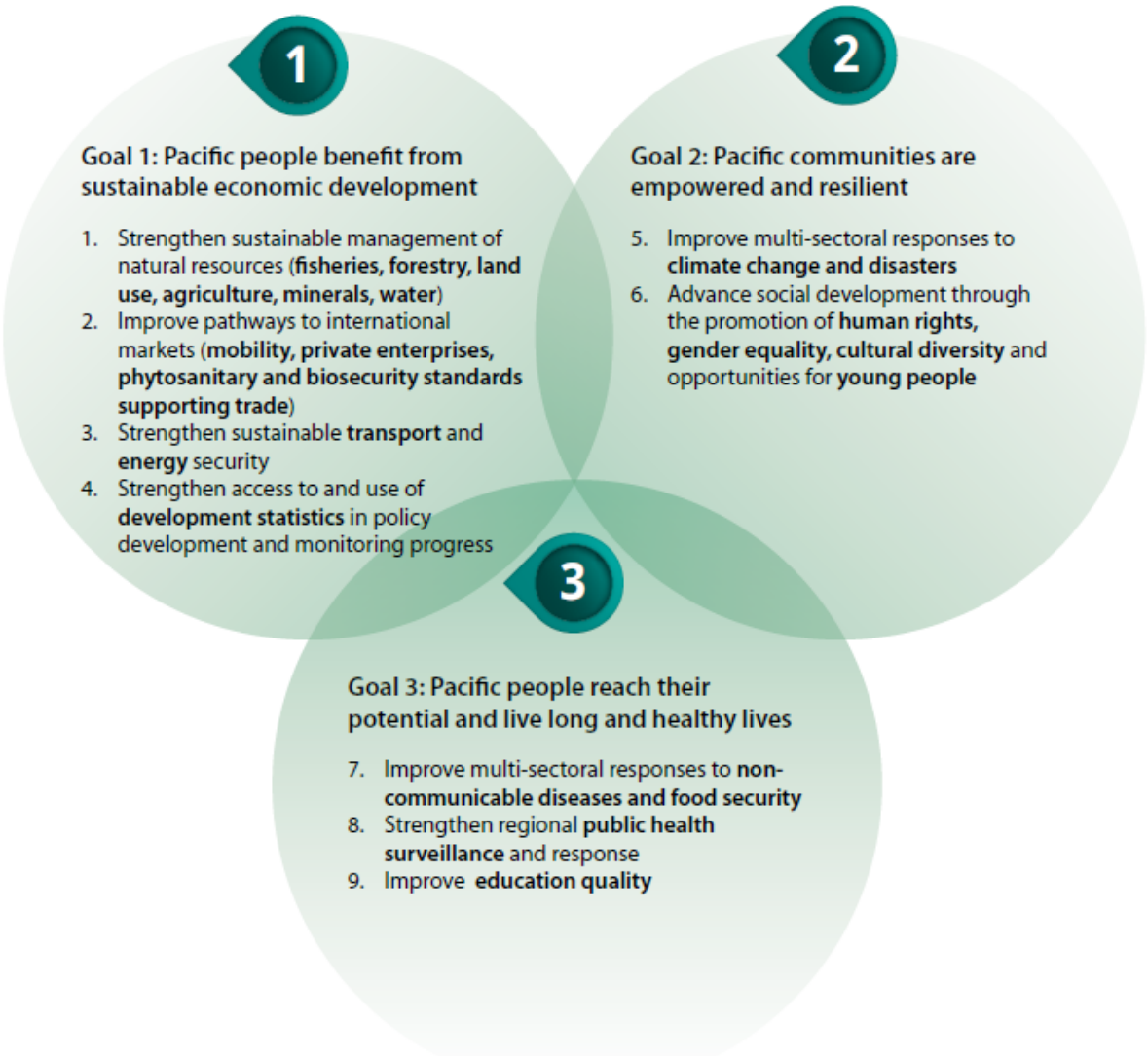

Figure 5: SPC Development Goals

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is also responsible for implementing the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination, which was agreed to by Pacific Island Leaders in 2009. The Forum Compact encourages Forum Island Countries to systematically examine and improve how national plans and budgets, public financial management systems, development partner coordination, monitoring and evaluation of results, and engagement between governments, parliamentarians, private sector and non-state actors, contribute to overall national sustainable development efforts."[68]

An emerging opportunity to improve intergovernmental coordination and cooperation is the Framework for Pacific Regionalism that was agreed by Pacific Island Leaders in 2014 as a replacement for the 2005 Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration. The Forum Secretariat is mandated to coordinate the implementation of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. The focus of the Framework is improving the effectiveness of regional mechanisms in supporting national priorities. The Framework sets out the:

- Pacific Vision, for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives;
- Regional values, which include our oceans, our culture, good governance, peaceful societies, inclusivity and equality, and durable partnerships; and
- Strategic objectives for Pacific regionalism, which cover sustainable development, inclusive and equitable economic growth, strengthened governance and security.

For each of the strategic objectives, Pacific countries will adopt forms of regionalism. Table 4 on page 31 shows collective actions supporting regionalism.[69]

Pacific Risk Management Ohana (PRiMO)

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 2003-2004 convened the Roundtable of Federal Hazard Mitigation Partners in the Pacific Islands. These meetings brought together representatives from local, national, and regional agencies, and organizations to explore opportunities to enhance coordination, and collaboration. Based on a mutual recognition of the benefits of collective action, the PRiMO was formed.[70]

Laws, Policies, and Plans on Disaster Management

The 2010 Palau NDRMF provides for the strengthening of national DRM structures and mechanisms to support improved disaster/emergency preparedness, response and recovery as well as the more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into the national development planning including budgetary allocation processes.[71]

2015 Palau Climate Change Policy and Action Plan for Climate and Disaster Resilient Low Emission Development: This policy outlines Palau's strategic priorities for adapting to impacts of climate change, preparing for and responding to disasters, and contributing to global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.[72]

In 1996, the National Master Development Plan (NMDP) was developed (known as Palau Vision 2020), which identified the country's vision for long term development. In 2008, a Medium Term Development Strategy was developed to provide additional guidance on how to achieve the goals identified in the NMDP.

In addition to the above plans, many other agencies have their own response plans:

- Ministry of Education- Plans for schools
- Ministry of Health- Public Health Emergency Operation Plan
- Palau Public Utilities Corporation (PPUC)
- Power Plant Facility Response Plan
- Ministry of Health- Water Safety Plan
- NEMO- El Nino National Action Plan

NEMO also has dedicated plans for typhoons/tropical storms, earthquakes, tsunamis, drought, marine search and rescue support, and pandemic flu response.[73]

Education and Training

Principles of DRR and hazard information are already integrated into the school curriculum. Specific education materials have been developed for school grades 6 – 8 for typhoon, drought, earthquake, landslides, and tsunami and are included in the science curriculum. Education on typhoons and fire is conducted by NWS, NEMO, and the fire department. This is mainly directed at schools and is primarily made up of presentations, drills, and brochures.

In general, agencies are responsible for identifying and meeting their own DRM training

Human induced/ climate change disasters	To achieve:	By:	Requiring:
Coordination	Open consultation and access to information; and coordinated application of shared, best-practice norms and standards.	Establishing and managing agreed processes that facilitate regional dialogue and access to (and use of) information.	Voluntary consultations and agreements; possible resource sharing.
Cooperation	An effective and strengthened voice in protecting and sustainably harnessing the region's physical, social and cultural assets for the benefit of all.	Developing and committing to coordinated regional or sub-regional policies and strategies.	Voluntary agreement to modes of regional cooperation; services are mainly funded and delivered nationally.
Collaboration	Achievement of economies of scale and equitable benefits that cannot be achieved nationally.	Delivering regional public goods and pooled services.	Voluntary agreement to modes of regional collaboration; national governments are freed from daily management of these priorities.
Harmonization	Achievement of shared institutional and/or legal objectives.	Entering into specific regional or sub-regional commitments to common policies, regulations, standards and/or processes.	Legally binding arrangements, including commitment to national resource allocation; each country free to amend their internal laws / requirements to meet the shared regional objectives.
Economic Integration	Greater economic prosperity founded on regional economic integration and sustainability and the equitable distribution of benefits and costs.	Lowering physical and technical market barriers to enable freer movement of people and goods within and among countries.	Legally binding arrangements, including commitment to national resource allocation; each country commits to amending their internal laws / requirements to meet the shared regional objectives.
Administrative / Legal / Institutional Integration	A secure and well governed Pacific region pledged to upholding regional values.	Agreeing to common rules, standards and institutions to foster and sustain integration.	Legally binding arrangements, including commitment to national resource allocation and to operating within regionally mandated requirements.

Table 4: Collective Actions Supporting Regionalism

needs. NEMO has some disaster management training modules and has done Introduction to Disaster Management workshops with some states. Palau Community College (PCC) used to run a GIS training course for government officials under a federal grant scheme, but uptake was limited due to agencies not having the required software and/or hardware. USAID/ OFDA provides training to agencies with a role to play in DRM from time to time. NWS staff is comprehensively trained though National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration channels.[74]

Public education also exists for typhoon and tsunami preparedness. Town hall meetings on emergency preparedness are held every two years. This includes education about moving to higher ground in the event of an earthquake. NEMO also works with the Ministry of Education and PCC to develop better community awareness materials.[75]

Disaster Management Communications

Early Warning Systems

Fairly well developed early warning systems are in place for typhoons and tsunamis, although a number of weaknesses remain with regard to reaching outlying communities. NEMO issues marine advisories to warn small craft of inclement weather. Palau's key international partners for early warning include: the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (data collection, analysis, and interpretation); the Hawaii based Pacific Tsunami Warning Center and Joint Typhoon Warning Centers; and the Weather Offices in Guam and Palau.

Context & Constraints:

According to the Tsunami National Capacity Assessment 2009, the process from receiving an international tsunami message to issuing advice to the community is too lengthy and confusing to effectively warn the Palauan public. Some of the problems that have been reported include:

- NEMO, which is responsible for issuing national warnings, is not 24/7.
- Radio stations close after midnight.
- Delays may also arise as a result of NEMO having to first consult with the NEC Chair
- Communication systems on outlying islands are not operating 24/7 to receive messages.
- None of the three broadcast stations dependably cover the southwest islands or all the villages in the north.
- Palau does not currently use bulk Short Message Service to disseminate warnings.
- No tsunami evacuation plans have been developed for Palau communities to date.[76]

Responsible Agencies for Flood And Storm Warning

The NWS Pacific Region Headquarters located in downtown Honolulu, Hawaii has administrative and management responsibilities for all National Weather Service field operations in Palau. The NWS Pacific Region Headquarters operates five Micronesian Offices in cooperation with the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia in accordance with the provision of the COFA between the U.S. and each Micronesian government. The five Micronesian Weather Service Offices provide adaptive weather forecasts and warning to their local constituents. The Richard H. Hagemeyer Pacific Tsunami Warning Center located at Ford Island, Hawaii on the island of Oahu serves as the operational center of the Tsunami Warning System (TWS) in the Pacific. The TWS locates and detects major earthquakes in the Pacific Basin to determine whether they have generated tsunamis and provide timely and effective tsunami information and warnings to the population of the Pacific.[77]

Military Role in Disaster Relief

Palau has no regular military forces. Under the COFA between Palau and the U.S. Palau defense is the responsibility of the U.S. The U.S. military has been granted access to the islands, but has not stationed any operational military forces there.[78] U.S military representation for Palau is through the Commander, Joint Region Marianas. In addition to Palau, the representative is responsible for Guam, Commonwealth of Marianas Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Commander of Naval Forces Marianas. The current commander of Joint Region Marianas is RDML Bette Bolivar. [79] Palau's only paramilitary force is the Maritime Law Enforcement Division (MLED), which is responsible to the Palau police force. The MLED is responsible for:

- Patrol and surveillance of the territorial waters of Palau
- Response, seizure, arrest, and investigation for prosecution of illegal fishing and activities within Palau's waters
- Enforcement of Republic of Palau National Laws and International treaties between member nations.
- Search & Rescue missions
- Medical evacuations from the southwest islands
- Assist other government agencies to southwest islands [80]

Foreign Assistance and International Partners

Relations with Pacific Island States

A degree of tension emerged between Palau and the U.S. commonwealth of the Northern Marianas when the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands split into the two entities. These differences have largely been resolved through regular meetings of the leaders of the Micronesian states. Co-operative efforts in patrolling the EEZ have also improved relations. A 'Compact impact' fund is available for Hawaii, Guam, and other territories affected by the right of citizens from Compact states to enter the U.S. and its territories, and use their educational, health and other social services.[81] The allocation of these funds, estimated to be over 100 million U.S. dollars (according to a government official in these areas) requires close coordination between state/territory governments and the federal government.[82]

USAID/OFDA Regional DRR Programs

The Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and the Republic of Marshall Islands are vulnerable to a number of natural hazards, including drought, floods, and storms. Through USAID/OFDA funding, the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society (MIRCS), Micronesia Red Cross Society (MRCS), and PRCS—supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)—partner with local government agencies, businesses, and communities to build awareness of disaster response activities and cultivate a trained volunteer base for emergency responses. USAID/OFDA has provided nearly $1.5 million since FY 2013, including $680,000 in FY 2016 funding, to support the preparedness and mitigation activities of MIRCS, MRCS, and PRCS.[83]

Relations with Japan

The Republic of Palau generally has dry season from November to April and there is little rainfall every year in the season. However, the Republic of Palau is suffering from severe drought this year due to extraordinary water shortage caused by El Nino since last year. Based on the situation, the President of the Republic of Palau declared a State of Emergency due to extreme drought on March 22, 2016. On April 1st, the Government of Japan decided to provide emergency relief goods (water containers and water bladders etc.) to the Republic of Palau through the Japan International Cooperation Agency) in response to the request from the Government of the Republic of Palau following serious damage from the drought in the country. The Government of Japan decided to provide emergency assistance from a humanitarian point of view for the victims as well as in light of the long friendly relationship between Japan and the Republic of Palau.[84] Photo 4 reflects Japan representation while visting Palau to conduct humanitarian missions during Pacific Partnership (PP) 2016.[85]

Photo 4: Japan Visiting Palau During Pacific Partnership 2016

Photo 5: Australian Patrol Boat

Relations with Australia

Australia's Patrol Boat Program provides patrol boats to twelve Pacific nations. The original impetus was the passage of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). UNCLOS divided formerly international waters mainly through the establishment of EEZ that extend 200 NM (370 mi) from the shores of each country. This had a particular impact on the small Pacific island states as they suddenly acquired the responsibility to police and regulate activities across vast stretches of water. The program will delivered patrol boats to Tonga, the Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Samoa, Vanuatu, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Cook Islands.

These patrol boats enable countries with limited fiscal resources to patrol their territorial waters and EEZ. The lightly armed vessels are suitable for maritime surveillance and patrol, as well as fisheries protection. This addresses the concern that countries lacking the capability to monitor, police, and enforce the law in their EEZs could be the victim of overfishing by other states' fishing fleets. The program also focuses on combating transnational crime They are not combat vessels. Recipients typically operate them through their small defense forces or police services.[86] Photo 5 shows an Australian Patrol Boat.[87]

PALAU
Infrastructure

Disaster Management Reference Handbook | 2016

Infrastructure

Infrastructure improvement is a consistent focus in Palau. The general availability and of civil engineer support equipment (i.e. backhoes, cranes, and loaders) is limited locally. Improvement efforts have been addressed via support from Civic Action Teams (CAT), as well as assistance provided during security cooperation exercises (This is further discussed in the section on DOD DMHA Engagements located in the Appendices of this document).[88]

Airports

The main airport is Roman Tmetuchl International at Airai in the south of Babelthuap Island. It is formerly known as Palau International Airport and alternatively as Babelthuap/Koror Airport or Airai Airport. The Senate adopted a resolution in May 2006 to rename Palau International Airport in honor of late local politician and businessman Roman Tmetuchl. The airport is six miles from Koror and 15 miles from Melekeok.[89] Major airlines serving Palau include Asiana, China, Delta and United. Table 5 lists the airports in Palau.[90]

There are unpaved runways on Peleliu and Angaur islands for light aircraft, both of which were reopened in early 2007 after undergoing improvements. A plan to build a world-class development in Peleliu, including a new international airport, was abandoned after the developer found the conditions of the Foreign Investment Board unacceptable. The Compact Road, which opened four years late in October 2007, enables visitors to Palau to journey from the airport to the capital and 10 other states by car rather than by boat.[94] Photo 6 shows Roman Tmetuchl International Airport.[95]

ICAO	IATA	Airport Name	Location	Runway Length
PTRO	ROR	Babelthuap/ Koror	Babelthuap	7200 feet[91]
N/A	N/A	Angaur	Angaur	7000 feet[92]
N/A	N/A	Peleliu	Peleliu	6000 feet[93]

Table 5: Airports in Palau

Table notes:

ICAO-code: International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) – a 4-letter airport location indicator.

IATA-code: International Air Transport Association (IATA) - a 3-letter identifier for the relevant airport.

Photo 6: Roman Tmetuchl (Palau) International Airport

Seaports

Palau has three International Ship and Port Facility Security-Compliant Ports that handle port-ship interface with ships on international voyages. The main port is the Koror-Malakal Commercial Port. Additional ports include: Chemiangel Bay, located in Aimeliik (receives tankers only), and the Palau Pacific Resort Bay which receives cruise ships that cannot be accommodated at Malakal. Peleliu and Ngardamu are ancillary ports of which Ngardamu is established as a Free Trade Zone.

Koror-Malakal Commercial Port

Koror is located on a major natural harbor, which includes the main port of Malakal (Ngemelachel). It is a commercial and cruise ship harbor, receiving cargo ships, tankers and other vessels arriving from foreign ports. Approximately 120,000 tons of cargo is handled per year, even though there is very little domestic shipping. Port operation is leased to the Belau Transfer and Terminal Company. This port also serves as the permanent base for Palau's only maritime patrol vessel.[96]

Land Routes

Roads

Aside from 38 miles of paved roadway, the majority of Palau's roads are unpaved. The paved roads are almost entirely on Koror and the adjacent area of southwest Bablethuap. This includes numerous concrete causeways between small islands. Some areas of the larger islands are inaccessible by road, a problem exacerbated during the wet season. A major extension of the road network (known as the Compact Road) was completed in August 2007 and handed over to the Palau government in October. It is an 85 km two-lane highway built as part of the COFA agreement around Babelthuap Island, thereby providing the link with the new capital of Melekeok. In January 2008 sub-surface drainage pipes were installed in some sections of the Compact Road by the Army Corps of Engineers to prevent water seeping under the surface and causing damage. Photo 7 shows the road leading to the Capitol.[97] Many of the roads built in 1944-46 by U.S. military forces on Peleliu and Angaur are still usable. Transportation between islands is normally by boat or airplane.[98] Additionally, sea connectors (barges, ferries, beach landing craft, etc.) are available in country.[99]

Photo 7: Road leading to the National Capitol Building

Bridges

In 2002, the new bridge linking Koror to Babelthuap was completed with funding from Japan. As a result it is widely referred to as the Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge.[100] Photo 8 shows the Koror to Babelthuap Bridge also known as the Palau-Japan Friendship Bridge.[101]

Railways

Palau has no railways.[102]

Waterways

There are no internal waterways in Palau. Additionally, maritime connections between the islands are negligible.[103]

Schools

Primary Education

Education in Palau follows the American system of grades K to 12. It is mandatory until either the age of 16 is reached, or graduation from high school. There are approximately 20 elementary state schools dispersed through village and islands, where pupils study for six years.

Secondary Education

Approximately two-thirds of students attend one of the two public high schools, with the remainder attending private ones. There are three educational paths that lead to a high school diploma, a vocational diploma, or an individualized one. The system is based on credits achieved vice years spent at school. Photo 9 shows Palau Community College (PCC).[104]

Vocational Education

Vocational education is available through the PCC, which has evolved from a trade school in the years since 1926. It is independent, has its own governing board, and provides a wide selection of opportunities.

Tertiary Education

There are no opportunities for university education in Palau except for distance learning through the University of South Pacific and San Diego State University.[105]

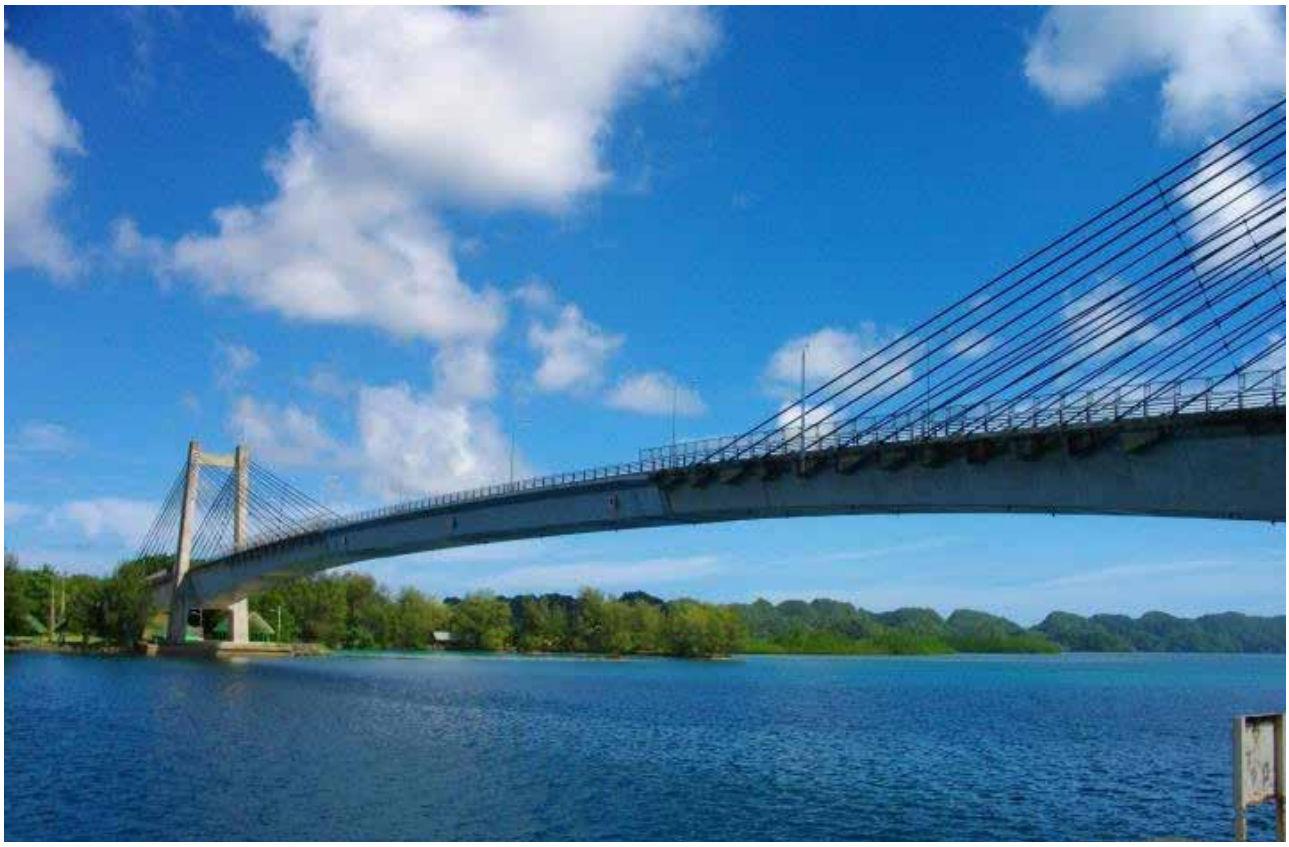

Photo 8: Palau-Japan Friendship Bridge (Koror to Babelthuap Bridge)

Photo 9: Palau Community College

Communications

Palau has a modern communications system, which includes a satellite earth station. The PNCC provides local and international telephone, cable, fax, and internet services. An undersea fiber-optic cable links Palau with Guam, providing the capacity for high-speed internet connection with the U.S. In 2004, Palau sold its rights to the .pw top-level internet domain name to a U.S. company, which offered 'personal websites' (abbreviated to pw) providing a higher level of privacy. In December 2007 Taiwanese company Chungwa Telecom signed a Memorandum of Understanding with PNCC to improve communication services in Palau. Palau is part of the domestic U.S. postal system. Radio stations are both publicly and privately owned. There is a private television station.[106]

Utilities

Power

The PPUC manages and operates the electrical power and the water and wastewater systems of the Republic of Palau.[107] Access to the national electricity grid in Palau is near-universal on the islands of Koror, Babelthuap, Kayangel, Angaur, and Peleliu. Power generation is accomplished solely by diesel engines using automotive diesel oil. Palau's southwest islands, which are between 300-550 km (186-342 mi) from the main archipelago and are composed of the states of Sonsorol and Hathohobei, do not have any reliable means of electricity generation.

Hot water heating is primarily accomplished with electricity, with some larger installations using diesel fuel and some commercial installation using solar hot water heaters. Tourism is the largest consumer for water heating. Electrical socket outlets in Palau are very similar to electrical outlets in the U.S. and carry the same voltage (110-120).[108]

Palau's energy economy relies primarily on fossil fuels with an annual supply of almost 14.5 million gallons of diesel fuel and 15.8 million gallons of gasoline. The majority of Palau's diesel consumption is for power generation, with the rest used for transport. Most of the diesel consumed for transport is used by fishing vessels and state-owned ferries.[109]

Water and Sanitation

Status of Water Resources

Palau produces 300 billion gallons of water per year from surface water run-off. The island of Babelthuap has five major watersheds with an additional 11 minor watersheds. The Ngerikiil River in Airai supplies 3 million gallons a day to the Koror/Airai Water Treatment Plant for use by three-fourths of the population of Palau. The rest of the islands of Palau rely on groundwater sources and rainfall.

The following reflect issues with water resources and associated environmental issues:

- **Exploitation of groundwater and surface water resources**
  The Ngerimel Dam decreased water flow into the lower part of its watershed, but the flora and fauna of that area have acclimated to the decreased water levels over the past decades.

- **Use of alternative sources**
  Almost every household has some sort of rainwater catchment system, ranging from simple plastic lined 55-gallon steel barrels to imported aluminum 400 gallon tanks to constructed cement tanks. Desalination has been raised in the past though never thoroughly explored. Store bought water bottles are a popular alternative drinking water source.

- **The demands placed on watersheds/water resources**
  Watersheds are heavily relied upon as water sources. The Koror/Airai treatment plant estimates extraction of 4.5 million gallons per day from the Ngerimel Dam and Ngerikiil River. However with an expected migration to Babelthuap, increased water usages from the rural public water systems are expected.

- **Competing uses of water and priority uses**
  Competing uses on the water supply comes from the tourism industry, which diverts hundreds of thousands of gallons. Mangroves and coral reefs are dependent on certain level of freshwater. How water extraction is impacting the coastal environment and the extent to which impounding water has on decreasing fresh water flow to coral reefs is unknown at this time.

- **Sources of pollution of surface water, groundwater and coastal waters**
  The main source of pollution is sedimentation caused by poor erosion controls, loss of riparian buffers, and poor land use practices. Pollution into the groundwater sources is from poorly maintained septic tanks, leachate from nearby landfills and also from saltwater intrusion. On the platforms and atolls, there is a need to limit the amount of water extracted per day. Coastal waters are impacted daily from land-based pollution, gasoline and oil from outboard motors and ships.[110]

PALAU
Health

Disaster Management Reference Handbook | 2016

Health

Overview

Palau has undergone an epidemiological shift from malnutrition and communicable diseases to an increasing burden of Non-communicable diseases (NCD) such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity and kidney failure. In 2009, the leading causes of death included cardiovascular disease, and cancer.

The cost of off-island medical referrals and intensive-care services is placing a burden on human, material, and fiscal resources. As a result, the Ministry of Health spends 55 percent of its annual budget on managing of NCDs.

In 2009, the leading causes of morbidity were diseases of the respiratory, genito-urinary, and digestive systems. In 2010, the President of Palau declared a national NCD emergency and further strengthened a multi-sectoral NEC led by the Minister of Health to address the crisis.

Most health services are supported by grant funds and technical assistance from the Government of the U.S. This is in addition to technical support and limited funding from UN agencies.[111]

Before 1996, COFA migrants had access to Medicaid through their designation as legally residing non-citizen nationals. The passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act in 1996 stripped COFA migrants of their eligibility for most federal benefits, including Medicaid, by excluding them from the category of "qualified immigrants" for purposes of eligibility. In the aftermath of this decision, some states continued to provide health care to COFA migrants through state and territory funded programs.[112]

Structure

The Belau National Hospital is the main health facility in the country. Four community health centers, known as super dispensaries, are located strategically throughout the countries. In addition, four satellite dispensaries serve hard-to-reach outlying localities. According to 2010 estimates, the health worker-to-population ratio in Palau was 1:714 for doctors, 1:179 for nurses, and 1:10,000 for dentists.[113]

Health Care System

The objectives of the Ministry of Health Strategic Plan (2008-2013) is to create an environment conducive to making positive, healthy choices, assisting individuals to contribute to their own health promotion and maintenance, developing and maintaining partnerships for health and making quality care accessible to people needing restoration to health.

To achieve these objectives, the Bureau of Public Health developed priority areas which support the Bureau's vision. This includes:

- Creating healthy workplaces;
- Reducing obesity, alcohol abuse and tobacco use; and
- Reducing injury/violence, depression, emerging and re-emerging infections.

The NEC is coordinating the national response to NCD threats. This effort is in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Taiwan, China, World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Population Fund, UNICEF and local NGO's.[114]

Challenges in the Healthcare System

The following challenges represent a focus of the WHO in relation to their Country Cooperation strategic agenda from Palau:

- Address health burdens including injury, violence and mental health;
- NCD risk factors such as food insecurity, the harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use and physical inactivity;
- A health information system policy and strategy is required including the need to improve the national hospital laboratory and the national medicines and pharmacy strategic plan;
- Improve surveillance for vaccine-preventable diseases;
- Health-sector response to climate change; and
- Improve performance and production in the health workforce and reduce imbalances in the various skill sets.[115]

Non-Communicable diseases

The top NCDs in Palau are Heart disease (cardiovascular diseases), Cancers, Obesity, Stroke due to high blood pressure, High cholesterol, Injuries, Depression, Gout and Asthma.[116]

The causes are either due to modifiable lifestyle choices (i.e. tobacco use, alcohol abuse, poor nutrition and lack of physical activities) or non-modifiable causes such as aged, gender (men are more vulnerable) and genetics.[117]

PALAU
Women, Peace and Security

Disaster Management Reference Handbook | 2016

Women, Peace and Security

As an outcome of the UN Women, Peace and Security Initiative, there is a growing recognition and understanding within the Pacific that empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth. To this end, some progress towards gender equality has been made at regional, national and community levels.

Palau falls under the umbrella of UN Women's Fiji Multi-Country Office (MCO) based in Suva. The MCO covers 14 PICT's, working to progress gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific through four key programs:

- Women's Economic Empowerment;
- Ending Violence Against Women;
- Advancing Gender Justice in the Pacific; and
- Increasing Community Resilience through Empowerment of Women to Address Climate Change and Natural Hazards Program.[118]

One of Palau's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is to *Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*. Target 1 includes eliminating disparity in education, however there is no significant disparity between sexes in education the public and private elementary and secondary schools. Target 2 promotes gender equality and empowering of women in economic, political, and all other spheres of life. There are two laws that discriminate against married women; one with respect to rape and the other in respect to inheritance.[119]

Gender Policy

During 2013, the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs began consultations towards the development of a Gender Policy in Palau with an inception meeting to discuss issues. The top issues were (1) elderly care and home bound care; (2) human trafficking: (3) abuse of women; (4) more representation in politics and top decision making positions and sports; and (5) human rights. Gender was considered to mean both men and women in balanced roles in society.[120]

Palau does not have a recent history of conflict. Palau is a matrilineal society where women are respected and revered. They are not ranked on the Global Gender Gap Index of 2015 and have signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2011. In modern day Palau women are active in politics as well as the economic sectors, although there are no women in the current legislature. Several NGO's represent and champion women's issues in Palau.[121] Photo 10 shows Palau women taking a training course in English as a second language.[122]

Photo 10: Palau Women Take a Training Course in English as a Second Language

PALAU
Conclusion

Disaster Management Reference Handbook | 2016

Conclusion

Environmental degradation, climate change, and disasters threaten Pacific economies, livelihoods and cultures, and impact a range of sectors, including natural resources, agriculture, food security, education, public health, and infrastructure. Disaster response efforts dictate that resources must be diverted to humanitarian assistance and recovery, potentially interrupting development progress. Some Pacific Island countries and territories experience among the highest average annual disaster losses, as a percentage of GDP, in the world. These challenges affect the Pacific region's capacity to alleviate and prevent poverty, and achieve sustainable development.[123]

The major natural disaster threats to Palau include storms, floods, droughts, and sea level rise. Palau has made slow, but steady improvement in order to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from the effects of a natural disaster. The development of the Natural Disaster Framework of 2010 and the 2014 Climate Change Policy provides a foundation for increased capabilities to address these threats. However, it is unknown if progress has been made in advancing the functions described in the framework. This includes the lack of provisions for decentralization of DRM responsibilities to the state or community levels.[124]

Palau is very vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This is partially due to high drought and storm activity, sea level rise, and coastal erosion. Adaptation actions have been developed to improve maintenance and management of water systems, alternative uses of tree and plant species, protection of mangrove and coral reef systems, development of marine resources, and public awareness of potential disease threats such as dengue fever and malaria. Follow through on implementing these adaptation actions are key to minimizing climate change effects.

Palau's regional partnerships are a key entity in obtaining a robust Natural Disaster Management Program. This is especially true in the area of early warning. The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Hawaii based Pacific Tsunami Early Warning, and Pacific Typhoon Warning Centers and weather offices in Guam all provide a critical support function.[125] Additionally, the COFA agreement with the U.S. provides Palau a higher level of security and wealth.[126] U.S. DOD activities, including the CAT, have helped develop the country's infrastructure. These continued partnerships are crucial to maintaining and improving Palau's disaster management capabilities. Relations with neighboring states have been stabilized through regular meetings of Micronesian state leaders as well as cooperative efforts in patrolling the EEZ. Additionally, relations with other U.S. Pacific Territories have been improved by the establishment of a 'Compact impact' fund for Hawaii, Guam and other territories. This funding assists those states and territories that are affected by the rights of citizens from Compact states to enter and use their educational, health, and other social services.[127]

PALAU
Appendices

Disaster Management Reference Handbook | 2016

Appendices

DoD DMHA Engagements in the Past Five Years (FY 2011-2016)

August 2016- Palau participates in PP 2016. The two primary objectives for the mission were to: 1) Advance Japanese, PN, and interagency priorities by demonstrating interoperability through mission planning and execution and 2) Exchange professional medical knowledge to enhance regional interoperability and foreign disaster relief capabilities for both Japan and PN. The Lines of Effort focused on Medical, Engineering, and Community Relations (COMREL). The exercise objectives were to develop interoperability with Palau and PN, while enhancing medical capability and capacity. The Mission summaries are as follows:

- Medical engagements included both dental and medical exchanges including examinations, minor direct care and pharmaceutical support of several hundred patients. Subject Matter Expert (SMEE) exchanges were conducted to include Basic Life Support, Pediatric medical technologist, and dental. The SMEEs enhanced knowledge of Palau medical providers, local public health workers and community members. Photo 11 shows a Cooperative Health Engagement during PP 2016.[128]
- Engineering projects included construction projects at Belau National Hospital, Palau High School and Koror Elementary School. They conducted renovation and repair projects including painting and facility reconstruction at all three locations. This engineering team painted the roof of multiple classrooms and the gym frame at Koror Elementary School, roof of Palau High School, and repaired doors throughout the Belau National Hospital. Photo 12 shows an Engineering Engagement during PP 2016[129]
- COMREL was enhanced as hundreds of Palauan citizens were connected through sporting events, cultural exchanges, and volunteer opportunities.[130]

Photo 11 : Cooperative Health Engagement During PP 2016

Photo 12: Engineering Engagement During PP 2016

The DOD regularly deploys CAT to provide construction capabilities, apprenticeship training, medical outreach and community engagement opportunities to the Republic of Palau. The CAT teams operate for six month assignments and rotate between Army, Navy and Air Force Teams.[131] The highest infrastructure priority is given to primary and secondary education capital projects which directly affect health and safety, including water and wastewater projects, solid waste disposal projects, and health care facilities. Second priority is given to economic development-related projects, such as airport and seaport improvements, roads, sea walls, and energy development.[132]

2006-2016- Palau participated in Exercise Pacific Wave. The exercises were used to test the effectiveness of the Pacific Typhoon Warning System, in addition to evaluating the readiness of participating countries to respond to both distant and local tsunamis.[133]

August 2015-February 2016- The Pacific Air Forces teamed up with the Republic of Palau to complete more than 100 community outreach events and several construction projects, totaling approximately 1800 hours of labor.[134]

February 2015-August 2015- The U.S. Army CAT completed 10 construction projects, supported more than 100 community relations activities and provided medical assistance to more than 1000 patients.[135]

December 2014– Personnel from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam and Yokota Air Base, Japan, participated in Operation Christmas Drop. This included donations of toys, clothing, fishing equipment, sporting goods, food items, tools and other materials to support residents of Chuuk, Palau, Yap, Marshall Islands, and commonwealth of the Mariana Islands.[136] This event is held annually.[137]

December 2013- Naval Special Warfare Unit 1 conducted a communication familiarization seminar with Palauan security forces. The main objective was to concentrate on the tactics, methods, and procedures for internal and external communication. It increased capacities to perform search and rescue operations as well as monitor commercial fishing.[138]

Feb-Mar 2013- The U.S. Coast Guard conducted a multilateral exercise with Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia. The purpose was to test ship rider agreements and ensure maritime security in the Palau and Federated States of Micronesia EEZ.

2012-2016- The 3rd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) conducted certification exercises in Palau and Guam. The purpose of the exercises is to evaluate the MEU on missions the unit may be tasked to execute as the Marine Corps Crisis Response Force for the Asia-Pacific Region.[139]

HFA Country Progress Report

The Hyogo framework for Action (HFA) was adopted as a guideline to reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazards. The HFA assists participating countries to become more resilient and to better manage the hazards that threaten their development. The levels of progress of the 2011-2013 results of the Interim HFA for Palau are represented in Figure 6 and Table 6. Future Outlook areas are also discussed in Table 7.[140]

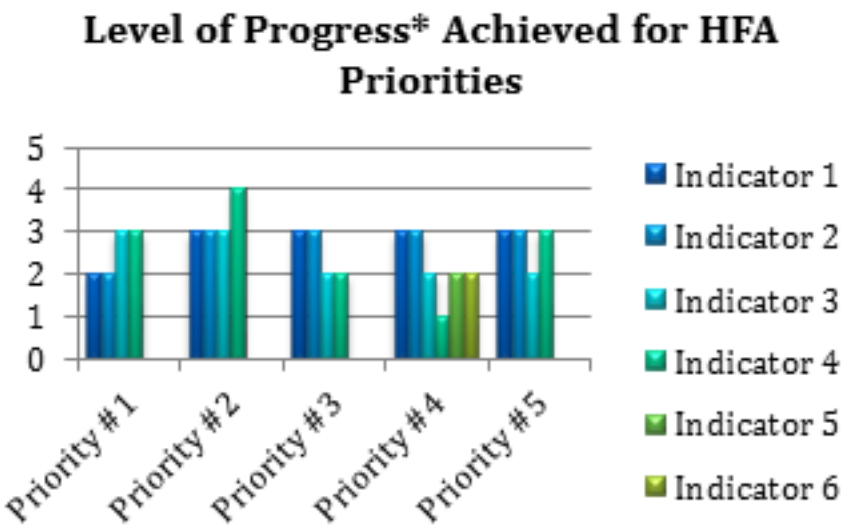

Figure 6: HFA Level of Progress

Priority #1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.		
Core Indicator*	Indicator Description	Level of Progress Achieved
1	National policy and legal framework for DRR exists with decentralized responsibilities and capacities at all levels.	2
2	Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement DRR plans and activities at all administrative levels.	2
3	Community Participation and decentralization is ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to local levels.	3
4	A national multi sectoral platform for DRR is functioning.	3

Priority #2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.		
Core Indicator*	Indicator Description	Level of Progress Achieved
1	National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors.	3
2	Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities.	3
3	Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.	3
4	National and local risk assessments take account of regional / trans-boundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.	4

Priority #3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels		
Core Indicator*	Indicator Description	Level of Progress Achieved
1	Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels, to all stakeholders (through networks, development of information sharing systems, etc.).	3
2	School curricula, education material and relevant trainings include DRR and recovery concepts and practices.	3
3	Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.	2
4	Countrywide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities.	2
Priority #4: Reduce the underlying risk factors		
Core Indicator*	Indicator Description	Level of Progress Achieved
1	DRR is an integral objective of environment related policies and plans, including for land use natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.	3
2	Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk.	3
3	Economic and productive sectorial policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities.	2
4	Planning and management of human settlements incorporate DRR elements, including enforcement of building codes.	1
5	DRR measures are integrated into post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes.	2
6	Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure.	2
Priority #5: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels		
Core Indicator*	Indicator Description	Level of Progress Achieved
1	Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for DRM, with a DRR perspective are in place.	3
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 programs.	3
3	Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required.	2
4	Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters, and to undertake post-event reviews.	3

Table Notes:
*Level of Progress:
1 – Minor progress with few signs of forward action in plans or policy
2 – Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment
3 – Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial
4 – Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities
5 – Comprehensive achievement with sustained commitment and capacities at all levels

Table 6: HFA Country Progress Report Priorities and Progress Achieved

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.	
Challenges:	Planning department and sector agencies do not see DRR as a priority, or do not understand the linkages. Absence of legislation supporting implementation of the NDRM Framework. Absence of a multi-stakeholder forum that includes strong representation from civil society. Weak coordination and dissemination of information by NEMO
Future Outlook Priorities:	The NDRMF is being effectively implemented through the development of supporting legislation, improved coordination and the integration of DRR into sectoral, agency and state master plans.
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.	
Challenges:	Limited technical capacity of NEC in DRM planning. Weak capacity at sub-national levels – State and Community levels. Limited use of available technical agencies.
Future Outlook Priorities:	Timor-Leste intends to improve profile and performance in order to reach internationally accepted standards ad principles of DRM. With this regard, Timor-Leste will focus on promoting DRM as a multi-sectoral responsibility, assigning accountability of disaster losses and impacts, allocating necessary resources for DRR, enforcing implementation of DRM, and facilitating participation from civil society and the private sector.
Future Outlook Area 3: The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programs in the reconstruction of affected communities.	
Challenges:	Weak systems for conducting post-disaster damage assessments and analysis and integration of lessons learned.
Future Outlook Priorities:	State and community level programs for emergency preparedness, response and recovery are strengthened including improved coordination between different levels of government.

Table 7: Hyogo Framework for Action Country Progress Report Future Outlook Areas

Force Protection/Pre-Deployment information

Passport/Visa

U.S. citizens visiting for one year or less do not require a visa. To visit Palau, a passport valid for at least six months is required at the time of entry. This requirement does not apply to U.S. military personnel traveling or visiting Palau on official business.

U.S. military personnel:

- U.S. military personnel must present official orders or documents certifying their status;
- U.S. military dependents ten years or older must have a U.S. Government-issued photo-ID card showing the name, date of birth, and their status; and
- Dependents under ten years will be granted entry if they are listed in the official orders.[141]

Emergency Contact Information

U.S. citizens should contact the U.S. embassy in Koror Airai State, in an area known as Omsangel (no street address)

Address:
P.O. Box 6028,
Koror, Palau 96940
T: + (680) 587-2920/2990
Emergency After-Hours Telephone:
+ (680) 775-6150
F: + (680) 587-2911
E: usembassykoror@palaunet.com

The U.S. embassy in Koror accepts passport applications, but does not issue passports or make decisions about citizenship claims. This function is performed by the Honolulu Passport Agency. Additionally, the embassy does not issue immigrant visas. This function is performed by the U.S. Embassy in Manila, Philippines.[142]

Currency Information

The official currency of Palau is the U.S. dollar. MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in the majority of tourist areas. However, American Express is not accepted in many places. There are several ATM's in Koror at branches of local U.S. banks.[143]

Travel Health Information

The below list represents infectious disease threats in Palau. This is not an all-inclusive list.

Vaccine Preventable diseases

- **Hepatitis A**- This can be contracted through contaminated food or water in Palau.
- **Hepatitis B**- This can be contracted through sexual contact, contaminated needles, and blood products.
- **Typhoid**- This can be contracted through contaminated food or water in Palau.
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella, diphtheria-tetanus are also common.

Non-Vaccine preventable diseases

Chikungunya is an illness spread through mosquito bites. Symptoms include headache, muscle joint pain, swelling or rash. The mosquito carrying the virus bites primarily during the daytime, both indoors and outdoors, and often resides around buildings in urban areas.

Dengue is an illness caused by a virus that is spread through mosquito bites. Symptoms include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, rash, and pain in the eyes, joints, and muscles. After you are bitten by an infected mosquito, symptoms can take up to 2 weeks to develop, but usually end in a week. In severe cases, symptoms may include intense stomach pain, repeated vomiting, bleeding from the nose or gums, and death.

Airborne and droplet

Tuberculosis risk is generally low for most tourist travelers.[144] Palau has experienced periodic outbreaks of Dengue Fever. A major outbreak occurred in 2000 resulting in 739 cases and one death. In 2008, 31 cases were reported. There was also an increase in the number of cases in the first half of 2007. Additionally, an outbreak of Scrub Typhus was reported in the southwest islands in 2001, resulting in a total of 15 cases by 2003. Scrub typhus is spread by the bite of larval mites and results in fever, abdominal pain, vomiting and rashes.[145]

Palau Government Ministries, Offices and Committees

The **Ministry of Finance** ensures accountability, continuous productivity of government services, and economic growth by promoting policies for, and sound management of, expenditures, revenues, financing and human resources. It consists of:

- Bureau of Budget and Planning;
- Bureau of National Treasury;
- Bureau of Public Service System;
- Bureau of Revenue, Customs, and Taxation; and
- Information Systems Support Services.

The **Ministry of Education** is responsible for managing, operating and promoting the public elementary and secondary schools systems throughout Palau and developing and implementing educational curricula and standards at every level. It consists of:

- Bureau of Education Administration; and
- Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction.

The **Ministry of Health** promotes health and social welfare, the protection of family and health safety, and provides health care services throughout Palau. The Ministry of Health consists of:

- Bureau of Hospital & Clinical Services;
- Bureau of Nursing; and
- Bureau of Public Health.

The **Ministry of State** consists of:

- Bureau of International Trade and Technical Assistance;
- Bureau of Domestic Affairs;
- Bureau of Foreign Affairs;
- Public Defender's Office;
- Office of Administration;
- Office of Protocol;
- Passport Office; and
- Embassies and Consulates.

The **Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs** implements mandatory functions and duties under the laws, executive orders, and regulations, while providing services to improve the well-being of the communities and preservation of Palau's cultural and traditional heritage. The Ministry consists of:

- Bureau of Aging and Gender;
- Bureau of Youth, Sports and Recreation;
- Bureau of Arts & Culture; and
- Bureau of National Archives.

The **Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism** manages Palau's natural resources, specifically in Marine and fisheries, agriculture, aquaculture, forests, mineral and other land-based and ocean-based resources as well as tourism. The Ministry consists of:

- Bureau Of Agriculture;
- Bureau of Marine Resources;
- Bureau of Tourism; and
- Protected Areas Network.

The **Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Industries and Commerce** consist of:

- Bureau of Aviation;
- Bureau of Public Works;
- Bureau of Land and Survey;
- Bureau of Commercial Development;
- Small Business Development Center;
- Palau Energy Office; and
- PALARIS

The **Ministry of Justice** consists of the following:

- Office of the Attorney General;
- Bureau of Immigration;
- Bureau of Public Safety;
- Division of Criminal Investigation/Drug Enforcement;
- Division of Patrol;
- Division of Fire and Rescue;
- Division of Corrections;
- Division of Marine Law Enforcement; and
- Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection.[146]

Country Profile

The information in the Country Profile Section is sourced directly from the CIA World Fact book.[147]

Background

After three decades as part of the UN Trust Territory of the Pacific under U.S. administration, this westernmost cluster of the Caroline Islands opted for independence in 1978 rather than join the Federated States of Micronesia. A COFA with the U.S. was approved in 1986 but not ratified until 1993. It entered into force the following year when the islands gained independence.

Geography

Location:

Oceania, group of islands in the North Pg zone: 200 nm

Climate: Hot and humid; wet season May to November fringed by large barrier reefs

Elevation:

Mean elevation: NA

Elevation extremes: lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m
highest point: Mount Ngerchelchuus 242 m

Natural resources:
forests, minerals (especially gold), marine products, deep-seabed minerals

Land use:

Agricultural land: 10.8 percent
arable land 2.2 percent; permanent crops 4.3 percent; permanent pasture 4.3 percent

Forest: 87.6 percent

Other: 1.6 percent (2011 est.)

Irrigated land:
0 sq km (2012)

Natural hazards:
typhoons (June to December)

Environment - current issues:
inadequate facilities for disposal of solid waste; threats to the marine ecosystem from sand and coral dredging, illegal fishing practices, and overfishing

Environment - international agreements:
party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Wetlands, Whaling
signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:
westernmost archipelago in the Caroline chain, consists of six island groups totaling more than 300 islands; includes World War II battleground of Beliliou (Peleliu) and world-famous rock islands

People and Society

Nationality:

Noun: Palauan(s)

Adjective: Palauan

Languages:
Palauan (official on most islands) 66.6 percent, Carolinian 0.7 percent, other Micronesian 0.7 percent, English (official) 15.5 percent, Filipino 10.8 percent, Chinese 1.8 percent, other Asian 2.6 percent, other 1.3 percent
note: Sonsoral (Sonsoralese and English are official), Tobi (Tobi and English are official), and Angaur (Angaur, Japanese, and English are official) (2005 est.)

Population:
21,265 (July 2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 220

Age structure:

0-14 years: 20.26 percent (male 2,225/female 2,084)

15-24 years: 17.18 percent (male 1,819/female 1,834)

25-54 years: 46.21 percent (male 5,992/female 3,834)

55-64 years: 9.03 percent (male 667/female 1,253)
65 years and over: 7.32 percent (male 418/female 1,139) (2015 est.)

Population pyramid:
Median age:

Total: 33.2 years

Male: 32.6 years

Female: 34.4 years (2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 88

Population growth rate:
0.38 percent (2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 167

Birth rate:
11.05 births/1,000 population (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 178

Death rate:
7.99 deaths/1,000 population (2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 100

Net migration rate:
0.71 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 68

Urbanization:

Urban population: 87.1 percent of total population (2015)

Rate of urbanization: 1.66 percent annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:
MELEKEOK (capital) 299 (2012)

Sex ratio:

At birth: 1.06 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.07 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 0.99 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 1.56 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.53 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.37 male(s)/female

Total population: 1.1 male(s)/female (2015 est.)

Infant mortality rate:

Total: 11.15 deaths/1,000 live births

Male: 12.67 deaths/1,000 live births

Female: 9.53 deaths/1,000 live births (2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 129

Life expectancy at birth:

Total population: 72.87 years

Male: 69.69 years

Female: 76.23 years (2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 135

Total fertility rate:
1.71 children born/woman (2015 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 170

Health expenditures:
9.9 percent of GDP (2013)

Country comparison to the world: 28

Physicians density:
1.38 physicians/1,000 population (2010)

Hospital bed density:
4.8 beds/1,000 population (2010)

Drinking water source:

Improved:
urban: 97 percent of population
rural: 86 percent of population
total: 95.3 percent of population

Unimproved:
urban: 3 percent of population
rural: 14 percent of population
total: 4.7 percent of population (2011 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

Improved:
urban: 100 percent of population
rural: 100 percent of population
total: 100 percent of population

Unimproved:
urban: 0 percent of population
rural: 0 percent of population
total: 0 percent of population (2015 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:
NA

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:
NA

HIV/AIDS - deaths:
NA

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:
47.1 percent (2014)

Country comparison to the world: 7

Literacy:

Definition: age 15 and over can read and write

Total population: 99.5 percent

Male: 99.5 percent

Female: 99.6 percent (2015 est.)
School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

Total: 14 years

Male: 14 years

Female: 14 years (2013)

Government

Country name:

Conventional long form: Republic of Palau

Conventional short form: Palau

Local long form: Beluu er a Belau

Local short form: Belau

Former: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Palau District

Etymology: from the Palauan name for the islands, Belau, which likely derives from the Palauan word "beluu" meaning "village"

Government type:
presidential republic in free association with the U.S.

Capital:

Name: Melekeok

Geographic coordinates: 7 29 N, 134 38 E

Time difference: UTC+9 (14 hours ahead of Washington, DC, during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:
16 states; Aimeliik, Airai, Angaur, Hatohobei, Kayangel, Koror, Melekeok, Ngaraard, Ngarchelong, Ngardmau, Ngatpang, Ngchesar, Ngeremlengui, Ngiwal, Peleliu, Sonsorol

Independence:
1 October 1994 (from the U.S.-administered UN trusteeship)

National holiday:
Constitution Day, 9 July (1979), day of a national referendum to pass the new constitution

Constitution:
ratified 9 July 1980, effective 1 January 1981; amended 1992, 2004, 2008 (2016)

Legal system:
mixed legal system of civil, common, and customary law

International law organization participation:
has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICCt

Citizenship:

Citizenship by birth: no

Citizenship by descent only: at least one parent must be a citizen of Palau

Dual citizenship recognized: no
residency requirement for naturalization: note - no procedure for naturalization

Suffrage:
18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

Chief of state: President Tommy REMENGESAU (since 17 January 2013); Vice President Antonio BELLS (since 17 January 2013); note - the president is both chief of state and head of government

Head of government: President Tommy REMENGESAU (since 17 January 2013); Vice President Antonio BELLS (since 17 January 2013)

Cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the Senate; also includes the vice president; the Council of Chiefs consists of chiefs from each of the states who advise the president on issues concerning traditional laws, customs, and their relationship to the constitution and laws of Palau

Elections/appointments: president and vice president directly elected on separate ballots by absolute majority popular vote in 2 rounds if needed for a 4-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held on 6 November 2012 (next to be held in November 2016)

Election results: Tommy REMENGESAU elected president; percent of vote - Tommy REMENGESAU 58 percent, Johnson TORIBIONG 42 percent; Antonio BELLS elected vice president
Legislative branch:

Description: bicameral National Congress or OEK consists of the Senate (9 seats; members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by majority vote to serve 4-year terms) and the House of Delegates (16 seats; members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote to serve 4-year terms)

Elections: Senate - last held on 6 November 2012 (next to be held in November 2016); House of Delegates - last held on 6 November 2012 (next to be held in November 2016)

Election results: Senate - percent of vote - NA; seats - independent 9; House of Delegates - percent of vote - NA; seats - independent 16
Judicial branch:

Highest court(s): Supreme Court (consists of the chief justice and 3 associate justices organized into appellate trial divisions; also within the Supreme Court organization are the Common Pleas and Land Courts)

Judge selection and term of office: justices nominated by a 7-member independent body consisting of judges, presidential appointees, and lawyers, and appointed by the president; judges appointed until mandatory retirement at age 65

Subordinate courts: National Court and other 'inferior' courts

Political parties and leaders:
none

Political pressure groups and leaders:
NA

Diplomatic representation in the U.S.:

Chief of mission: Ambassador Hersey KYOTA (since 12 November 1997)

Chancery: 1701 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036

Telephone: [1] (202) 452-6814

FAX: [1] (202) 452-6281

Consulate(s): Tamuning (Guam)
Diplomatic representation from the U.S.:

Chief of mission: Ambassador Amy Hyatt

Embassy: Koror (no street address)

Mailing address: P. O. Box 6028, Koror, Republic of Palau 96940

Telephone: (680) 587-2920

FAX: (680) 587-2911

Flag description:
light blue with a large yellow disk shifted slightly to the hoist side; the blue color represents the ocean, the disk represents the moon; Palauans consider the full moon to be the optimum time for human activity; it is also considered a symbol of peace, love, and tranquility

National symbol(s):
bai (native meeting house); national colors: blue, yellow

National anthem:

Name: "Belau rekid" (Our Palau)

Lyrics/music: multiple/Ymesei O. EZEKIEL

Note: adopted 1980

Economy

Economy - overview:
The economy consists of tourism and other services such as trade, subsistence agriculture, and fishing. Government is a major employer of the work force relying on financial assistance from the U.S. under the COFA with the U.S.. The population enjoys a per capita income roughly double that of the Philippines and much of Micronesia. The Compact took effect, after the end of the UN trusteeship on 1 October 1994. The U.S. provided Palau with roughly $700 million in aid for the first 15 years following commencement of the Compact in 1994 in return for unrestricted access to its land and waterways for strategic purposes.

Business and leisure tourist arrivals numbered over 125,000 in fiscal year 2014, a 13.4 percent increase over the previous year. Long-run prospects for tourism have been bolstered by the expansion of air travel in the Pacific, the rising prosperity of industrial East Asia, and the willingness of foreigners to finance infrastructure development. Proximity to Guam, the region's major destination for tourists from East Asia, and a regionally competitive tourist infrastructure enhance Palau's advantage as a destination.

GDP (purchasing power parity):
$272 million (2015 est.)
$248.7 million (2014 est.)
$238.6 million (2013 est.)

Note: GDP estimate includes U.S. subsidy

Country comparison to the world: 217

GDP (official exchange rate):
$287 million (2015 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:
9.4 percent (2015 est.)
4.2 percent (2014 est.)
-2.4 percent (2013 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 3

GDP - per capita (PPP):
$15,100 (2015 est.)
$13,800 (2014 est.)
$13,300 (2013 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 106

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

Agriculture: 3.2 percent

Industry: 20 percent

Services: 76.8 percent (2012 est.)

Agriculture - products:
coconuts, copra, cassava (manioc, tapioca), sweet potatoes; fish

Industries:
tourism, craft items (from shell, wood, pearls), construction, garment making

Industrial production growth rate:
NA percent

Labor force:
10,470 (2014)

Country comparison to the world: 218

Labor force - by occupation:

Agriculture: 20 percent

Industry: NA percent

Services: NA percent (1990)

Unemployment rate:
4.2 percent (2005 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 41

Population below poverty line:
NA percent

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

Lowest 10 percent: NA percent

Highest 10 percent: NA percent

Budget:

Revenues: $123.6 million

Expenditures: $97.53 million (2012 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:
47.4 percent of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 20

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):
10 percent of GDP (2012 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 4

Fiscal year:
1 October - 30 September

Inflation rate (consumer prices):
2.2 percent (2015 est.)
4 percent (2014 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 121

Market value of publicly traded shares:
$NA

Current account balance:
-$1 million (2015 est.)
-$30 million (2014 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 54

Exports:
$19.1 million (2014 est.)
$14.4 million (2013 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 210

Exports - commodities:
shellfish, tuna, copra, garments

Imports:
$177.7 million (2014 est.)
$146.5 million (2013 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 209

Imports - commodities:
machinery and equipment, fuels, metals; foodstuffs

Debt - external:
$18.38 billion (31 December 2014 est.)
$16.47 billion (31 December 2013 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 89

Exchange rates:
the U.S. dollar is used

Communication

Telephones - fixed lines:

Total subscriptions: 7,100

Subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 34 (2014 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 203

Telephones - mobile cellular:

Total: 19,100

Subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 90 (2014 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 210

Telephone system:

Domestic: fixed-line and mobile-cellular services available with a combined subscribership of roughly 100 per 100 persons

International: country code - 680; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Pacific Ocean) (2009)

Broadcast media:
no TV stations; a cable TV network covers the major islands and provides access to rebroadcasts, on a delayed basis, of a number of U.S. stations, as well as access to a number of real-time satellite TV channels; about a half dozen radio stations (1 government-owned) (2009)

Radio broadcast stations:
AM 1, FM 4, shortwave 1 (2001)

Television broadcast stations:
1 (cable) (2005)

Internet country code:
pw

Internet hosts:
4 (2012)

Country comparison to the world: 231

Disputes - international:
maritime delineation negotiations continue with Philippines, Indonesia

Government

Constitution

Palau is a democratic republic. Palau adopted its own constitution in July 1980 and the first president, Haruo Remeliik, took office in January 1981. It became an independent sovereign state on 1 October 1994 and entered into a COFA with the U.S., under which the U.S. agreed to provide defense protection and revenue in return for the free use of Palauan territory for military purposes (not taken up) and a veto on its foreign policy should it contravene U.S. security interests.

Executive Branch

The executive branch of the government consists of the president and vice-president, advised by the Council of Chiefs. The president and vice-president are directly elected for four-year terms. In the past they have been elected separately but, as of the last general election in November 2008, they are elected on a joint ticket. The president (but not the vice-president) is restricted to a maximum of two terms.

Council of Chiefs

High-ranking chiefs from each state form a 16-member Council of Chiefs which advises the president on matters concerning traditional laws, customs and their relationship to the constitution and the laws of Palau. There are two principal high chiefs, the Ibedul, based on Koror in the south and the Reklai, based on Melekeok in the north, between which there is a traditional rivalry. The chiefs' influence is mainly exercised at the local level.

Legislature

The bicameral National Congress is known as the OEK, which means "House of Whispered Decisions". The House of Delegates consists of 16 members, one for each state. The nine-member Senate (reduced from 14 for the 2000 election) is elected from geographic districts reflecting equal population. The Senate controls the national budget and has the power to confirm appointments. Members of both houses serve four-year terms and are elected by popular vote. As a result of a constitutional amendment the number of terms a member may serve in Congress was limited to three from November 2004.

Judiciary

The constitution vests final judicial power in the Supreme Court presided over by the chief justice, below which are the National Court and a Lower Court of Common Pleas, members of which are appointed for life, and the Land Court. The Supreme Court has trial and appellate divisions.[148]

Participation in International Organizations:

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, ADB, Alliance of Small Island States, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Civil Aviation Organization, International Development Association, International Finance Corporation, International federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Labor Organization, International Maritime Organization, International Mobile Satellite Organization, Interoil Corporation, Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, PIF, SPC UN, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CAT	Civic Action Teams
CCG	Central Control Group
CFE-DM	Center for Excellence in Disaster Management anmd Humanitarian Assistance
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COFA	Compact of Free Association
COMREL	Community Relations
DEC	Disaster Executive Council
DOD	Department of Defense
DOS	Department of State
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DSCA	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
FDR/ER	Foreign Disaster Relief and Emergency Response
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
HDR	Humanitarian Daily Rations
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICP	Incident Command Post
INFORM	Index for Risk Management
KM	Kilometers
MCO	Multi-Country Office
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEU	Marine Expeditionary Unit
MIRCS	Marshall Islands Red Cross Society
MLED	Maritime Law Enforcement Division
MRCS	Micronesia Red Cross Society
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NDC	National Disaster Coordinator
NDRMF	National Disaster Risk Management Framework
NEC	National Emergency Committee
NEMO	National Emergency Management Office
NEP	National Energy Policy
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Center
NM	Nautical Miles
NMDP	National Master Development Plan
NWS	National Weather Service
OEK	Olbiil Era Kelulau
PALARIS	Palau Automated Land and Resource Information System
PCC	Palau Community College

Acronym	Definition
PICT	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PN	Partner Nation
PNCC	Palau National Communications Corporation
PP	Pacific Partnership
PPUC	Palau Public Utilities Corporation
PRCS	Palau Red Cross Society
PRiMO	Pacific Risk Management Ohana
SMEE	Subject Mattter Expert Exchange
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
TWS	Tsunami Warning System
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
U.S.	United States
USAID/OFDA	United States Agency for International Development/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance

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