CNMI Ocean Planning Team
Kick-Off Meeting

Garapan, CNMI
October 26-27, 2017

Meeting outcomes:

1. Increased understanding of the need for Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (ocean planning)
2. Identified opportunities to build upon existing ocean management groups and strategies
3. Confirmed membership and commitment to engage on CNMI Ocean Planning Team
4. Established first steps to developing an ocean plan for CNMI

Attendees: Sarah Pautzke, Miranda Foley, Fran Castro, Janice Castro, Tony Benavente, Andre Kozij, Larisa Ford, Paul Plunkett, Randy Sablan, Robbie Greene, Trey Dunn, Steven McKagan, Brooke Nevitt, John Gourley, Gus Kaipat, Ignacio Dela Cruz, Ignacio Cabrera, Denise Perez, Roberta Guerrero, Adrian Mendiola, Brad Ruszala, Laurie Peterka, Mike Tenorio

The CNMI Ocean Planning Team meeting opened with a welcome by Acting DCRM Director Janice Castro, followed by a welcome by DLNR Secretary Tony Benavente, both of whom are the Governor's appointees to represent CNMI on the Pacific Islands Regional Planning Body (PI RPB).

Ms. Sarah Pautzke, coordinator of the PI RPB, provided a brief description of what this team was created to do: develop an ocean plan for CNMI and provide input into the data tools to support spatial planning that are being developed by the PI RPB's Data Team.

Ocean Planning Review

The CNMI Ocean Planning Team (Team) listened to an overview of the National Ocean Policy (NOP), what ocean planning is, and what drivers can exist.

The NOP adopted the Final Recommendations of Ocean Policy Task Force. It does not change existing or create new regulatory authorities, nor does it supersede state/territorial laws. It is a call to action, but only mandates that federal agencies participate. Relevant outcomes of ocean planning include spatial plans for coastal and marine resources and data tools to support this effort.

Ocean planning, or coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP), is a planning process used to analyze current and anticipated uses of ocean and coastal areas. It aims to reduce use conflicts, promote sustainable compatible uses, promote transparent information about ocean uses, and improve and increase stakeholder engagement.

The PI RPB has seventeen members that include eight federal members and nine non-federal members, the names of which can be found on the PI RPB website. The federal members include Department of Commerce (NOAA), Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Defense (Marine Corps), Joint Chiefs of Staff (Navy), Department of Transportation (Maritime Administration), US Department of Agriculture (NRCS), Department of Homeland Security (US Coast Guard), and Department of Interior (US Fish and Wildlife Service). The non-federal members include two each (nominated by their respective governor) from Hawaii, CNMI, Guam, and American Samoa, as well as one representative from the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC). The federal co-lead is Michael Tosatto from NOAA, and the non-federal co-lead is Jason Biggs (Guam). The PI RPB is creating an overarching plan with five sub plans – one plan per jurisdiction plus one for the Pacific Islands Remote Island Area (PRIA). The PI RPB is also creating a data portal and mapping interface as a tool for ocean planning.

Ms. Janice Castro described the myriad uses of the Saipan Lagoon, and its recently updated management plan, the Saipan Lagoon Use Management Plan (SLUMP). The final SLUMP draft with appendices can be accessed HERE.

Ocean Planning and Mapping Exercises

Need for CMSP

Attendees worked together to respond to a series of questions in a worksheet designed to establish the need for ocean planning. The Team agreed that there are uses that conflict with other uses, uses that conflict with resources, the potential of future uses to conflict with resources and current uses, and overlapping regulatory agency jurisdictions. The success of the SLUMP was described as something this team can lean on while developing the ocean plan for all CNMI.

The CNMI Ocean Planning Team can lean on that prior work of the American Samoa Ocean Planning Team (ASOPT) to establish a way forward.

Overlapping Jurisdictions

Team members filled out a worksheet that identified which agencies have jurisdiction in surface/coastal waters, the water column, and the bottom substrate. For surface waters, agencies identified with jurisdiction include BECQ, DLNR DFW, NOAA, HPO, NRCS, US FWS, EPA, Army Corps, NPS, DPS Boating, and more. In the water column, identified agencies include DLNR, HPO, DFW, BECQ, NOAA, USCG, and EPA. For the ocean bottom, identified agencies include DLNR DFW, HPO, and Army Corps.

The Team also identified jurisdictional friction points: military use, federal versus local water rights, DLNR versus BECQ regarding submerged lands, data sharing and availability.

Spatial Uses

The CNMI Team spent time doing a mapping exercise in which they mapped out current uses as well as potential future uses. Overlapping uses helped further define the need for ocean planning and identify specific locations that warrant further attention.

CNMI Team meeting attendees then did an exercise in which they identified the spatial footprint of various uses within the water column. They also described the uses' frequency or intensity (e.g. once a year, daily, etc.).

To expand on this exercise, and document ideas/footprints of issues, Mr. Robbie Greene developed an interactive web app, which was then published on and hosted by CNMI BECQ ArcGIS online platform.

The app functions as both a "data dumping ground" to assist Mr. Robbie Greene in the data inventory/prioritization task, as well as a forum for people to get their ideas regarding overlap of ocean uses and concerns "on paper" in an actionable format. The app can be accessed by selecting "CNMI Ocean Planning App" from DCRM's public maps and apps site: http://dcrm.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html and the App itself.

Visioning

Attendees participated in a short visioning exercise to begin reflecting on a vision that could be advanced with a coastal and marine spatial plan. The team envisioned the future state of resources and was asked to describe those future conditions using a list of descriptive adjectives provided. Attendees also identified some additional adjectives, to describe the vision of the future of CNMI. Additional adjectives included bountiful, resilient, naturally vibrant, adaptive, manageable, clean, native, innovative, peaceful, functional, forward-thinking and backward-looking. Adjectives attendees listed as important included manageable, balanced, peaceful, sustainable, and renewable.

Goals

The CNMI Team took part in a goals exercise in which they turned concerns into goals. For repeated concerns, multiple goals were listed on the right.

CONCERN	**GOAL**
Marine pollution / debris	1. Identify and reduce hot spots in CNMI 2. Public outreach / behavior change campaign
Coral reef health (thermal, sedimentation)	Identify resilient reef systems and implement restoration efforts in the most suitable areas.
Human pressures (e.g. tourism)	
Confusion over management authorities	Create a resource that clarifies, details, and updates the coastal and ocean resource management authorities in CNMI – local and federal.
Loss of reef resources	Healthy resilient reefs
Overuse	Responsible and sustainable uses
Pollution	Decreased red flags, decreased trash and below all EPA thresholds
Loss of diversity	
Nonpoint source pollution	BMPs
User conflict / user capacity	Implementation of CMSP
Development	1. Incentivize better building practices 2. Support conservation-minded, sustainable development 3. Manage/regulate development
Heavy overuse of marine resources	Sustainable use of marine resources
Poor water quality	Improve water quality
Environmental unsustainable increase in tourism	1. Sustainable tourism 2. Plan for tourists
Coral bleaching	Worldwide change
Erosion / sea level rise	Engineering

Reviewing Other Coastal and Marine Spatial Plans
Attendees watched a short informational video about ocean planning: *Ocean Frontiers: The Dawn of a New Era in Ocean Stewardship*. Additional videos can be found by searching YouTube for Ocean Frontiers by Karen Meyer.

They reviewed the Mid Atlantic Ocean Plan (Mid-A Plan) and the Washington Coastal and Marine Spatial Plan (WA CMSP). They identified aspects of each plan that they did and did not prefer.

CNMI Team members thought the Mid-A Plan was too reliant on appendices. Implementation was not detailed enough, and the recommendations were too broad and too late. Regarding the WA CMSP, they felt the text was not engaging enough and the plan was too long. They also felt it ended with recommendations but was non-committal.

CNMI Team members described the Mid-A Plan as engaging with good visuals. They were impressed at the plan given the daunting task of including 6 states, 2 tribes, and 8 federal agencies. They felt the layout was comprehensive, brief, and efficient. CNMI Team members also liked the performance evaluation monitoring section.

The WA CMSP did a good job describing current conditions and future trends, as well as recommending tools for implementation. And CNMI Team members also described the WA CMSP as having a clean layout, and were encouraged by the inclusion of cultural and historical resources.

Items the CNMI Team initially identified as desired for inclusion in their plan:

- Clearly defined goals and objectives
- Actions associated with objectives
- Clearly defined stakeholder engagement
- Vision and direction
- Areas of concern
- Identification of responsible agencies as well as overlapping jurisdictions
- Summary of the purpose and importance to CNMI

Existing Management Documents
Ms. Fran Castro guided the CNMI Team through a discussion about existing management documents, including the coastal zone management plan, Saipan Lagoon Use Management Plan (SLUMP), 309 Assessment and Strategies, state hazard mitigation plan, marine conservation plans, and more. Team members provided additional lists of documents. These included the Port Master Plans, USCG Marianas Area Contingency Plan, and military build-up documents. The goal isn't to create something totally new – reinventing a wheel, but instead build mapping into existing plans and nudging already-existing plans to work. Building on the SLUMP might be a good step.

Data and Mapping
The PI RPB Data Team is working to develop a mapping interface and data portal for ocean planning. The PI RPB Coordinator described the efforts to date, and provided information about what the mapping interface and data portals are. She also presented data that has been preliminarily identified as relevant for ocean planning in the Western Pacific.

The PI RPB Coordinator shared examples of three portals. First, the Mid Atlantic Ocean Data Portal – it is broken down by theme with data layers that pertain to the different uses in the Mid Atlantic, including shipping, fishing, and renewable energy. Second, PacIOOS, which was developed for the Western Pacific and has up-to-the-minute readouts of various biophysical characteristics from the ocean observing system buoys. It includes data such as observations, forecasts, and biology, as well as a few use layers (hazards, navigation).

The last portal described is under development by the Naval Postgraduate School in which they are acquiring data that was identified by the PI RPB Data Team. For CNMI, data layers that have been acquired include elevation, shoreline, bathymetry, marine protected areas, land cover, maritime boundaries, shipping, anchorage areas, shoreline access, aids to navigation, airports, areas of particular concern, and climate change vulnerabilities for Rota and Tinian. (http://www.oc.nps.edu/CMSP/).

CNMI has done extensive mapping of the Saipan Lagoon, the results of which has informed the SLUMP. There is also a wealth of open data available on the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) data portal for natural resources, climate change, regulated areas, and general purpose (recreation, buildings, etc.). Data include vegetation maps for Tinian and Rota, soils, Saipan Lagoon benthic habitat, Tinian contours, Saipan vegetation, and more.

Mr. Robbie Greene shared the work of the SLUMP mapping effort with the CNMI Team. Uses of the lagoon were mapped and overlaid to allow identification of heavily used areas for future conflict reduction and management.

Planning Process

Ms. Foley described the process the ASOPT used to develop its ocean plan – including drafting its content (vision, goals, objectives, and actions) and points of stakeholder feedback and PI RPB feedback.

The CNMI Team meeting attendees then were asked to draft a process for their own plan. They used a blank process template and populated it with elements from the Mid-A Plan and WA Plan that they liked.

The CNMI Team draft process included the following phases: *scoping* and *preparing a draft.* The participants discussed having a stakeholder engagement plan developed to aid with engagement during the process. It was identified as being developed prior to a *scoping* phase.

For *scoping*, the team discussed:

- Defining who the plan's audience is
- Developing a vision/direction, goals, objectives, and actions
- Survey to acquire data
- Identify areas of concern
- Identify stakeholders
    - Specific user groups
    - Meet with them to identify problems/issues
    - Also get general public input
    - Be careful to avoid participation burn-out
- Receive PI RPB input along the way
- Inventory resources

- Identify responsible agencies

For *preparing the draft*, the team discussed:

- Investigation phase to identify magnitude of problems
    - Do surveys and research
- Mapping exercises
- Vision and direction finalized

For reviewing and revising the draft was too far in the future for the CNMI Team to speculate about needed actions.

There was also discussion of a different track suggested by a CNMI Team member that could also be used for implementation. The suggestion is to start with identification of a potential conflict or issue. Reach out to all stakeholders about that issue, then begin an investigation into the conflict/issue to determine 1) is the problem real, 2) is it serious, and 3) what is its magnitude? Following that could be a review of existing local and federal regulations relative to the identified problem. From that, the planning team could create a spatial plan, maps, interagency coordination framework, or something else to address it.

Following scoping, then draft preparation, review and revision, the plan would be adopted. This is a first draft of the process the CNMI Team will be developing and can be modified as we move along through planning.

Planning Tasks and Timelines

The CNMI Team identified which tasks from the scoping phase could be done in the near term, by whom, and with a timeline associated. The list is appended to the end of this document.

Roles, Commitments and Members

Roles

PI RPB members that participate on the CNMI Team liaise with the PI RPB as well as talk to the CNMI government.

CNMI Team government members communicate "inward" within their agencies and up their chains of command, but also "outward" to other agencies and the government. They also help engage stakeholders.

Members

The attendees noted other agencies who weren't in the room – either invited but did not attend, or those who should have been invited but were not.

CNMI Team members agreed to follow up with those invited but who did not attend, and to find contact information for agencies who should be included in the future. A determination has yet to be made about who should be planning team members versus who should be engaged through stakeholder engagement process.

Agencies that were invited to the CNMI kick-off meeting but did not attend included:

WPFMC EPA

The CNMI members discussed those who should/could be invited:

MVA	Carolinian Affairs
Ports	Indigenous Affairs
Zoning	HSEM
NRCS	HPO
CNMI DOC	DEQ

Commitments
Resources for this effort include the members and the PI RPB Coordinator. Funding is needed for a facilitator and for stakeholder engagement.

LEAD: Ms. Janice Castro agreed to be the team lead.

Tasks before next meeting:

- Ms. Pautzke, PI RPB Coordinator, will:
    - Develop shared Google documents for:
        - Stakeholder contact information
        - Planning team participants and invitees
        - Planning tasks and timeline
        - Funding pursuits
    - Email GOPT members for their respective agency's vision statement
- CNMI Team members will:
    - Contact invited participants who did not attend
    - Provide contact information for people whose agencies were identified at the meeting as relevant but who were not invited (Google doc)

Relevant Links:
http://www.oc.nps.edu/CMSP/
Mid Atlantic Ocean Data Portal
PacIOOS

Initial Task List developed by the CNMI Team

TASK	LEAD	TIMELINE	Notes
Stakeholder engagement			
ID Stakeholders	Sarah	1/31/2018	
Define audience - define the "who" (leads, decision makers)	Team	Today	
Meet with stakeholders	DCRM	Continuing	
Ensure PI RPB agencies are represented	Team		
Goals	Team		Brainstorming email that gets turned into potential goals
Objectives			
Actions			
PI RPB input			
Scope content			
Inventory of resources			
Vision/Direction	Team	3 months	
Areas of concern	Team	Next meeting	Agenda item; scope prior to meeting
Assessment of process			
with stakeholder input ID problems/issues	Team	3-4 months	Meet with stakeholders and team members to ID problems w/CNMI marine environment
Summary of purpose and importance to CNMI	Sarah	2 months	To gov't agencies w/in RPB
One pager	Sarah	4 months	
Investigate magnitude of problems identified			
Mapping			

TASK	LEAD	TIMELINE	Notes
Identify responsible agencies	Team	Next meeting	Use item 24 (overlapping jurisdictions) to ensure responsible agencies are identified
Identify gaps in resources, people involved, or data that's missing		Wait on gap analysis, but ID people	
Identify areas of multiple use or user groups to help reduce conflict	Team	Next meeting	
Identify overlapping jurisdictions	DCRM and NOAA (Robbie and Janice)	3 months	Robbie will approach through spatial data development regarding agency-specific plans (e.g. sketch agency planning footprints in Ocean Planning App).