

Pacific Ocean Finance Fellows Nius

Hear from our First Cohort of Fellows



FEATURING:
**PACIFIC OCEAN
FINANCE FELLOWS**

FSM Fellow

Alissa Takesy

Pacific Ocean Finance Fellow
Federated States of Micronesia



Alissa Takesy comes from a diverse Micronesian background and grew up in a multilingual household, which has enabled her to work in a variety of sectors including government, civil society, education, and retail. In her last assignment with the national government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), she oversaw the complex institutional arrangements of the agriculture, forestry, biosecurity, coastal fisheries, and tourism sectors. Alissa's work has focused on integrated management of FSM's natural resources and maintaining partnerships to achieve collective goals in the region. She is currently interested in the 'sustaining livelihoods' objective of the Micronesia Challenge, a shared commitment by five Micronesian governments to conserve 30% of near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources by 2020.

IN DEPTH with Alissa

- **Who was your mentor?** I was mentored by Rhona Barr and supported by Melissa Walsh and David Meyers in their technical capacities relating to finance and governance.
- **Which/What project did you choose to undertake and why?** I undertook a project which focused on my country's financial aspect in its commitment towards the Micronesia Challenge, which set conservation targets and associated to a financial mechanism where all work towards a 2020 goal.



- **How have you progressed with your project?** Unfortunately, the global COVID19 pandemic sidelined my project schedule and had to modify some of the scheduled activities (workshops) and deliver only one project objective. There were next steps identified out of the workshops and will be working with local partners on addressing them.
- **How does being part of the First Cohort of Fellows program assist in your career or future aspirations?** –It helped positioned me better to advance towards a graduate study program at the University of California, Santa Cruz in the Environmental Studies Department and Coastal Science and Policy Program. In my new role as a graduate student, I plan to reciprocate to my fellow Cohort by sharing opportunities and information which they or their organizations could benefit from.
- **Tell us how the Fellowship program has helped contribute to your government's efforts towards ocean financing and governance and conservation of critical fishery habits?** The Fellowship program enabled me to collaborate with my local partners on working out the finance linkages between conservation and governance within our national protected areas network context and linkages to relevant regional and international commitments. This would boost my government's profile on its ocean finance efforts.
- **Anything else you want to share?** I greatly appreciate my Cohort's camaraderie and Mentors' guidance and encouragement; this has expanded my professional network.

FELLOW'S PROJECT



FSM Fellow with the Micronesia Challenge Steering Committee and Coordinator in the margins of the 23rd Micronesia Islands Forum in Saipan
Photo Credit: Micronesia Conservation Trust

Title: Updating and Aligning the Federated States of Micronesia Protected Areas Network's Sustainable Finance Plan to the Micronesia Challenge - 2030 Targets

Project Summary:

The project was to apply the fourth pillar methodology (accounting) of the ocean finance profile by focusing on a component of the Federated States of Micronesia's (FSM) ocean governance to improve its capacity at ocean finance and management. I collaborated with the FSM National Support Partnership (NISP) Signatories from October 2019 to August 2020 in reviewing the accounting metadata on protected areas networks (PAN) and update this accounting status to provide further guidance on re-aligning FSM's commitment towards the Micronesia Challenge – MC 2030 (MC-2030).

The FSM President placed the entire FSM under a national public health state of emergency in relations to the COVID19 pandemic on March 14, 2020. This limited public activities, thus diverting my efforts of coordinating a comprehensive desktop exercise workshop in each State to a scaled down version with only the State PAN Teams. This national COVID19 pandemic declaration impacted my project timetable by delaying it up to three months, where it led me to coordinating and cofacilitating virtually three State PAN Teams' desktop exercises from May to August 2020.

It was concluded from the three desktop exercises that each State team needed more time to validate and consult with key agencies/organizations and local experts on the governance, management and budgetary components of their respective PAN tabulation.

The lessons learned from these desktop exercises would provide further guidance to the Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap State PAN teams on working within their States and cooperating on cross-cutting (national) issues. It was anticipated that outcomes of these desktop exercises would provide guidance or linkages to relevant national policies and programs and efforts towards regional and global commitments. Next steps were identified by each team to continue on their efforts on validating their tabulations and expand on their outreach to leverage support.

FFA in partnership with OPOC implemented the PROP Fellowship Program with Conservation Strategy Fund, Conservation Finance Alliance and Wildlife Conservation Society from April 2019 to May 2020. Fellows from 12 nations in the Pacific were chosen to be trained and mentored by the Pacific Ocean Finance Fellowship Program. Fellows conceived, designed and conducted individual projects in their home country with support and personalized technical assistance from the team of Mentors.



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