



Photo courtesy of Jez O'Hare

Micronesia Conservation Trust: For land, sea, and people

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VISION

Enduring partnerships that conserve our land and sea to improve quality of life for communities across Micronesia

MISSION

We build partnerships, raise and manage funds, make grants, influence policy, and provide conservation and financing expertise.



Fund ... at a glance

- Country: Federated States of Micronesia (Incorporated), Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, US Territory of Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- Governing body: Board of Trustees – 7 Regional Members, 3 International Members, 1 Honorary, Ex-Officio Member (Donor Representative)
- Legal status: MCT is a charitable and irrevocable corporation incorporated under the laws of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2002. 501(c)3 tax exempt status (US IRS)
- Capital: US\$18.7 million (endowment)
- Beneficiaries: Micronesian conservation NGOs, local governments, local communities and technical partners.



Experience – Funds and Services

- Endowments – Micronesia Challenge (\$18 million) and MCT Operational Endowment (.7 million)
- Advised Sinking Funds – Multiple Donors (Private Foundations, US Federal Agencies, Multilateral Facilities, 1.5 million in FY2014)
- Re-Granting - supported work in over 150 sites across Micronesia
- Capacity-Building and network coordination (MIC and PIMPAC)
- Hosting (Rare Conservation)



Experience – Growth

- Budget - US\$55,000 in 2004 to US\$2million (present)
- Staff – 2 in 2004 to 8 (present)
- 2004, FSM only organization. 2007, expanded Micronesia region-wide with Board of Trustees
- Re-grants/projects – 4 projects in 2004, now range from 12 to 20 projects annually



Experience – NIE Accreditation

- Application submitted in April 2012
- Revisions and improvements to organizational policies, 2012 to 2014
 - Strengthened procurement procedures
 - Anti-fraud policy
 - Whistleblower policy
- Comments from Accreditation Committee
 - Level of re-granting and grant management insufficient to demonstrate capacity to manage AF funding
 - Improve monitoring and evaluation and quality at entry
 - Stronger oversight from Board of Trustees
 - Need for internal audit function

Experience – NIE Accreditation

(continued)

- Alternative (streamlined) accreditation process approved by AF Board October 2014
- MCT Accredited in March 2015 with conditions
 - A monetary limit for projects
 - Specify procurement procedures for each project that would have significant procurement
 - Stronger oversight by MCT Board Committee on Investment, Audit and Finance
 - Independent review of MCT's overall operation, corporate systems, processes, and effectiveness in implementing mandates
 - Website includes code of conduct and antifraud policy and accept complainants

Experience – Success stories

- AF Panel and Board receptive to accommodating smaller entities and consider alternative standards for areas with lower absorption capacity
- AF Panel personnel supportive, providing guidance and examples and site visit to Pohnpei
- Alternative/Streamlined accreditation process has opened door for other small organizations as NIEs
- AF accreditation has resulted qualification for “fast track” accreditation for Green Climate Fund
- Improved standing with other donors





Preparation of Proposals and Strengthening local capacity

- Currently working with FSM government and private consultant to prepare E&S risk screening and first project proposal
 - combination of outreach, local planning, and technical assistance
 - assist communities to develop targeted workplans with actions to reduce the exposure and sensitivity of coastal and marine resources
 - build their climate change adaptive capacity



Lessons Learned

- Challenging to strike a balance between sophistication required to meet international standards and simplicity/efficiency appropriate to small size of fund and commitment to maintaining small staff and minimal management overhead costs
- Historically limited absorption capacity “on the ground” for project funding resulted in lack of a track record for MCT’s ability to manage large awards and thus the limit imposed as a condition of accreditation
- Partnerships and networking essential to success – assistance and advocacy from TNC, SPC, PIF, AF Panel
- Accreditation process resulted in improved MCT capacity and effectiveness – improved project management & implementation and management effectiveness across the board. Results in successful conservation and adaptation efforts

