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Micronesians In Island Conservation

Lessons from a Conservation Leaders' Learning Network: 2000 - 2010

Report by:

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COVER PHOTO
© Angelo O'Conner Villagomez. 11th Micronesians in Island Conservation Network Retreat, January 2009, Kepirohi Waterfall, Pohnpei

PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT, FRONT TO BACK
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Abbreviations & Acronyms

ABS	Areas of Biological Significance
CAP	Conservation Action Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-based Organization
CCS	Chuuk Conservation Society
CNMI	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COM	College of Micronesia
CPAL	Conservation Partnership and Leadership
CSP	Conservation Society of Pohnpei
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GOV	Government
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
KCSO	Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization
KIRMA	Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority
MC	Micronesia Challenge
MCT	Micronesia Conservation Trust
MIC	Micronesians in Island Conservation
MICS	Marshall Islands Conservation Society
MLIC	Micronesian Leaders in Island Conservation
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NISP	National Implementation Support Partnerships (FSM)
NOAA	The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PALARIS	Palau Automated Lands & Resources Information Systems
PAN	Protected Areas Network
PCS	Palau Conservation Society
PICRC	Palau International Coral Reef Center
PILN	Pacific Invasive Learning Network
PIMPAC	Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (formerly South Pacific Regional Environment Programme)
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
YapCAP	Yap Community Action Program

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WHEN WE SET OUT TO CAPTURE THE MICRONESIANS IN ISLAND CONSERVATION NETWORK LESSONS LEARNED, we never envisioned it would be an arduous two and half year process. We had 10 years of stories, documents, and qualitative data to sort through. The hardest part of the process was determining what would be the most poignant and relevant pieces to share. We soon realized that the Network's story is not just about history; it is also a story about the need for ingenuity and innovation when working in islands.

Due to the isolation in which islands have developed, they have produced some of the rarest species on the planet. The isolation in which islands developed has also made their ecosystems extremely fragile and easily disrupted. Due to this fragility, islands are extremely vulnerable to slight changes in their ecosystems. Therefore, island conservation is a race against time, requiring innovative ideas and tools and skilled people and leaders to put them into action.

When The Nature Conservancy (TNC) started its conservation effort in Micronesia, it was not receiving a lot of support from the communities. Bill Raynor soon realized that the best way to gain conservation traction at the grassroots level was to create conservation organizations as well as foster and enhance existing conservation organizations. Bill believed that the TNC Micronesia Program would not be successful without the support and partnership of local NGOs. However, he needed a "quick" way to develop not only conservation organizations, but leaders within the organizations to mobilize and inspire communities to conserve their natural resources.

As the American saying goes, "Necessity is the mother of invention." Bill was looking for an innovative way to "fast track" a conservation movement across the Micronesia region, and Audrey Newman, Asia Pacific advisor, was looking for a place to test her theory on "catalytic capacity-building." What transpired is the story of how Bill was willing to take a chance to test Audrey's theory to transform current capacity building norms to spur a conservation movement across Micronesia.

The authors are extremely grateful for the enormously valuable and thoughtful input provided in early listening sessions and work sessions by Bill Raynor, Trina Leberer, Susi Menazza Olmsted, Willy Kostka, Mary Rose Nakayama, Patterson Shed, and Alissa Takesy; and again to Trina and the members who attended the 2010 12th network retreat, who spent valuable retreat time to ensure accuracy and contribute important details to key sections of the report; Isao Frank, Lisa Ranahan Andon, Meileen Albert, Lihla Noori, Albon Ishoda, Cheryl Calaustro, Doreen deBrum, Donald David, Fabian Iyar, Fran Castro, Joseph Aitaro, Ellen Grant, Marjorie Falanruw, Robert Jackson, Sam Sablan, Tholman Alik, Tiare

Holm, Vanessa Fread, Wayne Andrew, Wisney Nakayama, Ileb Olkeriil, Andy George, Inocenti Penno, and Charlene Mersai.

In addition, this report was peer reviewed by a group of individuals who played an essential role in the Network's development and success over the years: Patricia Leon, Kathy Kesolei, Olivia Millard, Ian Dutton, Kath Shurcliff, Andrew Smith, Barbara Masike, Lucille Overhoff, Jason Spensley, and David Hinchley. Jenny Brown provided thoughtful comments that greatly improved the report's organization and focus.

Special thanks are also extended to Jeanine Almany and Susi Menazza Olmsted for graphic design, assembly of images and tables, and overall "beautification" of the report; to Elizabeth Winternitz-Russell for her editorial contributions and compilation assistance; and to Boston-based Coda Fellow Liz Isaac for editing the entire body of work with an eye for detail while keeping her eye on the big picture, project management, and "tough love" that got this report over the finish line.

The authors also wish to extend their sincere appreciation to the Network's sponsors, founders, leaders, and members past and present, without whom the MIC legacy of leadership and learning would not exist. Finally, please know that any errors are of course exclusively the responsibility of the authors.

Mae Bruton-Adams and Nina Paige Hadley
December 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY HAS DEMONSTRATED that creating and investing in strategic networks of motivated individuals and organizations yields real conservation results—at multiple scales and at relatively low cost—by fostering collaboration and strong conservation leadership and skills.

Micronesians in Island Conservation (MIC) is a peer-learning network created for conservation leaders in government and non-government organizations. The purpose of MIC is to strengthen leadership capacity to ensure effective management of local conservation organizations and agencies in order to sustain long-term conservation outcomes. The Nature Conservancy Micronesia Program is committed to maintaining long-term partnerships with local conservation entities to guarantee effective biodiversity conservation and resource management within Micronesia. The Nature Conservancy used the MIC Network to help build the capacity of conservation leaders throughout the Micronesia region, in hopes that local leaders and champions would one day take over management of their natural biological heritage.

Over its first ten years, 2001-2010, conservation leaders in the MIC Network strengthened their leadership and management capacity and expanded their ability to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate with each other's organizations. As a result, they have contributed significantly to advancing major conservation initiatives at site, national, and regional levels across Micronesia. Central to The Nature Conservancy's focus, this work included protecting priority conservation areas in five political jurisdictions, developing national Protected Area Networks in three island nations, and supporting a monumental initiative called the Micronesia Challenge.

It is through Micronesians in Island Conservation that The Nature Conservancy is helping partners improve management at more than 140 conservation sites across Micronesia. The Nature Conservancy does not take credit for the successes achieved by the members of the MIC Network. Yet it is widely agreed that MIC, through the nearly 50 members and their respective organizations (below), has played a key role in advancing many important conservation outcomes, helped its members build a vibrant community of conservation organizations and champions, and facilitated a strong collaborative working relationship with governments across Micronesia.

Ten of MIC's most widely relevant lessons are highlighted below. Leaders in Micronesia will always be challenged by the vast distances in their far-flung island region, but MIC has significantly diminished the twin challenges of isolation and the need for committed conservation organizations and leaders.

MIC's Top Ten Lessons

1

Design the network for the people, places, and issues the network will serve

It cannot be assumed that a successful approach can be successfully replicated. Adaptation to each place and context is essential. Consultation with stakeholders is key to determining whether a network is needed and then designing a successful network.

2

A "work plan" and tangible milestones are powerful tools

MIC's work plan served multiple purposes—strategic guide, internal and external communications, fundraising, and a practical way to gauge progress. The annual milestones were especially effective in describing MIC's hopes and progress to diverse audiences.

3

The coordinator is key

The success or failure of the network directly correlates to two essential inter-related elements: a dedicated coordinator who is effective as a facilitator of self-directed learning, and members committed to learning and adaptive management.

4

No coordinator can do it all

The coordinator requires access to high quality technical, cultural, and administrative support. For MIC, this support included a wide range of content specialists; learning network experience; cultural guidance, especially for expatriate coordinators; reliable administrative support; and trusted advisors. These roles were initially filled by the sponsor and resources team and later by the steering committee and members.

5

Founding members define the network

Founders personify the "target group of champions for change" that the network seeks to serve. Their reputations, credibility, and relationships help establish the network's status. Similarly, their strengths and priority needs define what the network focuses on in the first crucial year and sets expectations for future members.

6

Be clear about membership criteria, responsibilities, and obligations — early and often

Clearly document and communicate the criteria and expectations for membership and how a person retains membership. Revisit these expectations regularly.

7

Invest in the best and they'll help the rest

Be explicit with members that they were selected because of their status as leaders, and the network expects them to help others.

8

Create an environment and activities that accommodate diverse needs

Members will have differences in experience, work environments, culture, style, resources and more. MIC encouraged openness, sharing and learning, in an environment where everyone was valued. We used participatory, reflection, and interactive activities to build understanding and acceptance. This was most successful when the network support team included experienced individuals from each distinct sector or group served.

9

Limit measures to a simple few that are highly useful for decision-making

MIC tried to track too many measures at the start. It would have been better to choose one or two and implement them before adding others. One of the most common mistakes is trying to do too many things at once.

10

Create a tradition for documenting and sharing key lessons

Within MIC, lessons were documented when a coordinator was leaving, which was not ideal. Instead, agreement by the coordinator and members to reflect and document important key lessons annually or at least every two years would be more useful.

MIC'S DIRECT IMPACTS ARE THE STRONG, collaborative relationships, increased resources, and new opportunities the Network makes available to its members, their organizations, and their conservation programs and staff. The real conservation outcomes are achieved by Network members themselves—individually and collaboratively—through their leadership and commitment to action. It's important to highlight that The Nature Conservancy's interests have been well served by MIC as well.

Box 1

MIC member agencies and Organizations

Beautify CNMI (CNMI, NGO)
Chuuk Conservation Society (NGO)
Chuuk Environmental Protection Agency (GOV)
Chuuk Marine Resources (GOV)
Conservation & Environment Protection Program (FSM, GOV/NGO)
Conservation Society of Pohnpei (NGO)
Department of Environmental Quality (CNMI, GOV)
Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources (Guam, GOV)
FSM Protected Area Network (GOV)
Guam Environmental Education Partners, Inc. (NGO)
Hatohobei State Government (Palau, GOV)
Helen Reef Project (Palau, NGO)
Koror State Department of Conservation and Law Enforcement (Palau, GOV)
Kosrae Conservation & Safety Organization (NGO)
Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority (GOV)
Mariana Islands Nature Alliance (NGO)
Mariana Trench Marine National Monument (GOV/NGO)
Marshall Islands Conservation Society (NGO)
Marshall Islands Environmental Protection Agency (GOV)
Marshall Islands Marine Resource Authority (GOV)
Micronesia Challenge (Regional, IGO)
Micronesia Conservation Trust (Regional, NGO)
Palau Conservation Society (NGO)
Palau Int'l Coral Reef Center (GOV/NGO)
Palau Protected Area Network (GOV)
Pohnpei Division of Marine Development, Office of Economic Affairs (GOV)
Pohnpei State Attorney General's Office (GOV)
RARE (Guam, NGO)
The Nature Conservancy (Regional, NGO)
Yap Community Action Program (GOV/NGO)
Yap Environmental Protection Agency (GOV)
Yap Institute of Natural Science (NGO)
Yela Environment Landowners Authority (Kosrae, CBO)

OUTCOME 1: EXPANDING CONSERVATION ACROSS MICRONESIA

Before the establishment of MIC in 2000, conservation in the Micronesia region was taking place on a relatively small scale, focused on just a few areas of biological significance, with only a scant number of NGO partners and a few government agencies engaged or collaborating. By 2010, over 30 MIC member organizations, TNC staff, and other partners were collectively working to effectively manage more than 140 conservation sites across Micronesia.

OUTCOME 2: INCREASING CONSERVATION COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH PARTNERS

MIC helped TNC get "more bang for the buck." By 2010 the MIC Network had become an effective mechanism for TNC to engage with and/or assist more partners, jurisdictions, and sites across the region than it had previously. For example, by 2010 TNC's "cost to engage and influence" compared to 2000 was significantly reduced across the board: 60 percent less per jurisdiction, 69 percent less per partner, and 97 percent less per site (see Table 6 in Outcomes and Impacts section).

OUTCOME 3: STRENGTHENING CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONS

When MIC was launched in 2002, only three conservation NGOs and two government organizations with conservation mandates had professional staff and ongoing programs. While other government agencies also had

conservation mandates, many lacked the necessary staff, skills, resources, or political support to take effective action.

Emboldened with a toolbox consisting of strategic and conservation action planning, professional and institutional goal-setting and reporting, self-assessments, and learning exchanges, by 2010 MIC and its members, with support from TNC, had facilitated significant leadership accomplishments. These include:

- Expanding of the Micronesia Conservation Trust to serve all five Micronesia Challenge jurisdictions;
- Supporting a vibrant community of conservation NGOs who work collaboratively with government and communities;
- Developing frameworks for national protected area networks in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands;
- Introducing and adapting tools for the "Micronesian context" to increase organizational and conservation effectiveness.

OUTCOME 4: INCREASING COLLABORATION AND LARGE-SCALE ACTION

By bringing conservation leaders together, MIC helped many members recognize that by working collaboratively, they were much better able to affect local and large-scale changes across Micronesia. Significant collaborations advanced by MIC include:

- FSM National Implementation Support Partnership (NISP), an agreement by 12 government agencies and NGOs to work together on the Programme of Work on Protected Areas of CBD;
- Approval and support for environment sector priorities at the FSM Economic Summit;
- Government and NGO collaboration on legislation, protected areas and networks, resource monitoring, planning, and funding;
- High level collaboration among national governments and NGOs on funding by the Global Environment Facility; and
- Collaborative planning and implementation around measures, communications, and climate change adaptation for the Micronesia Challenge.

Of all its accomplishments, MIC's greatest may also be the simplest. The Network brought people together to build strong relationships and shared experience. In doing so, the Network strengthened the collaborative skills and spirit that have made the many impressive conservation accomplishments across Micronesia possible. The authors hope this review of MIC's experience provides an inspiring illustration of how peer learning networks, thoughtfully designed and implemented, can catalyze significant, tangible and lasting results, at scale.

INTRODUCTION

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

COVERING MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE, the Asia-Pacific region is the most biologically and culturally diverse area in the world. Yet the rich marine and forest habitats of Asia and the Pacific are also among the most imperiled on Earth. The Asia-Pacific region has lost more native forests in the past 100 years than in the previous 10,000 years. In the seas, the destruction of some of the most productive fisheries on the planet threatens the very survival of many of the region's people.

THE ISLANDS OF MICRONESIA

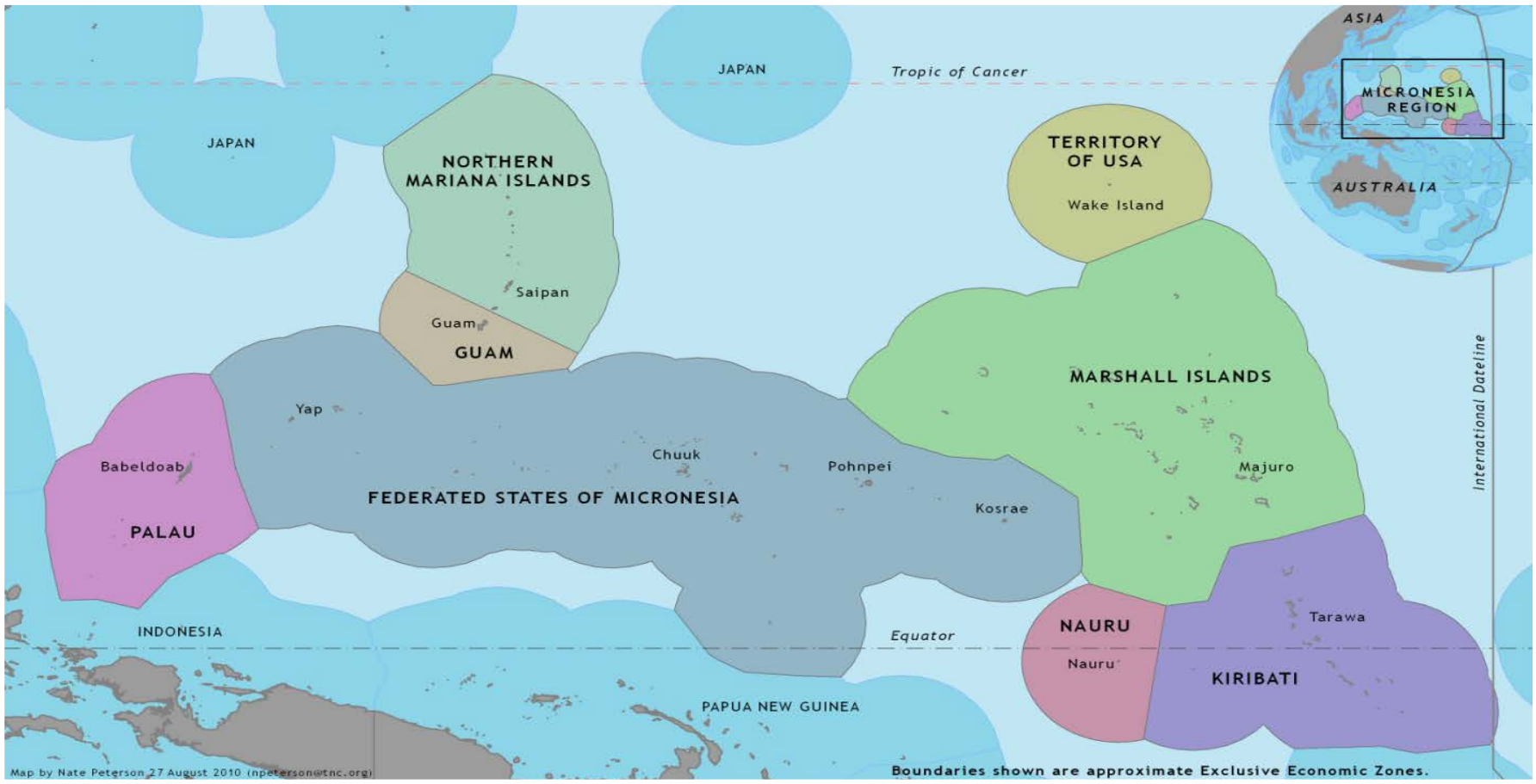
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S WORK IN MICRONESIA is meant to foster the right balance. A vast Pacific seascape nearly the size of the continental United States, Micronesia has five times its marine diversity, and is home to some of the planet's richest variety of plant and animal life. Lives of people and nature in Micronesia are shaped by the islands' remoteness and the rich resources of their lands and seas. Yet this dependence makes islanders especially vulnerable to environmental threats, such as rising sea levels, pollution, deforestation, and unsustainable fishing.

Our challenge today is to balance the economic needs of the world's most populous and fastest growing region with the urgent need to protect the valuable natural resources that its people depend upon for survival. Viable solutions will require leadership, collaboration, commitment, and hope.

When The Nature Conservancy made its first foray into Micronesia in the early 1990s, The Nature Conservancy and Micronesia were virtually unknown to each other. We quickly established "typical" TNC site-based programs in Palau and Pohnpei, where we worked with government partners and local NGOs, which we helped to establish, to protect high-priority conservation sites.

FIGURE 1.

MAP OF THE MICRONESIA REGION'S EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONES
(© 2010, NATE PETERSON/TNC)



BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY

HAVING DETERMINED THAT LOCAL LEADERSHIP is the key to success, TNC directed its efforts to strengthening partners' capacity, including some newly launched NGOs that were struggling to survive. Recognizing that biodiversity conservation can only be enhanced through a strong investment in today's and tomorrow's leaders, the Conservancy in 2001 launched Micronesians in Island Conservation, a peer learning network focusing on leaders in the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau.

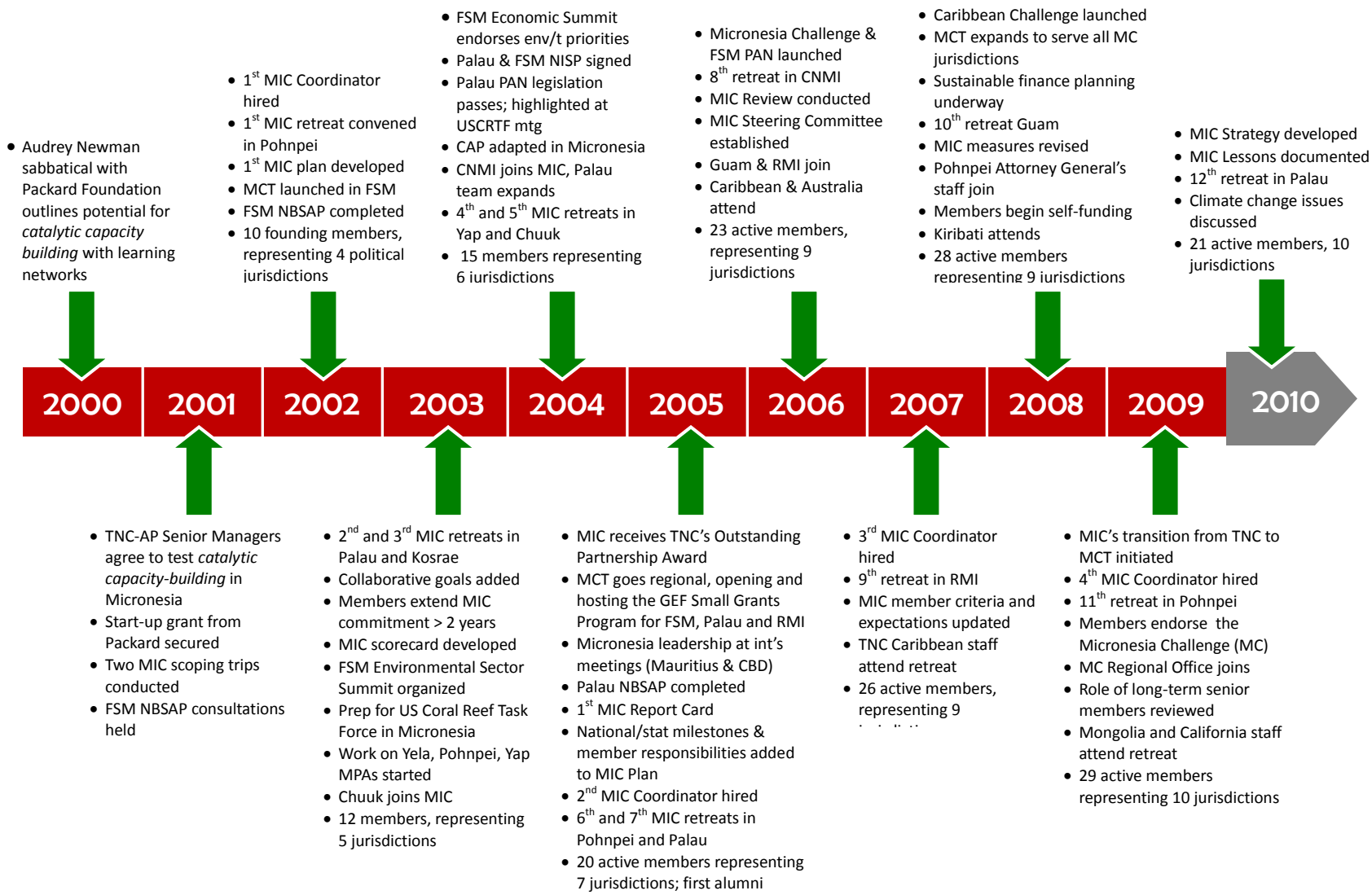
The purpose of the Micronesians in Island Conservation Network, hereafter abbreviated MIC, is to strengthen the organizational and technical skills of leaders and their organizations so that they can better protect important natural areas in Micronesia. Leaders are engaged in the Network through retreats, learning exchanges, facilitated self-assessments, peer mentoring, and one-on-one consulting. The Network's success has led participants to expand membership to include leaders from additional jurisdictions in the region, including the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, and Guam.

In its first three years, from 2002-2005, the MIC Network brought together 22 leaders, representing 20 government and non-government organizations across Micronesia to help them strengthen the effectiveness of their organizations and expand the impact of their conservation work. This broad area and diversity of influence is far greater than could have been achieved by TNC working merely at the site level, and it has also allowed The Nature Conservancy to stimulate action and impact conservation in places TNC does not operate. By 2010, nearly 50 leaders had been network members and more than 30 organizations represented.

Today, through the MIC network, The Nature Conservancy is working with partners to help facilitate effective management at more than 150 conservation sites across Micronesia.

FIGURE 2.

MIC'S KEY EVENTS TIMELINE: 2000-2010



Box 2

MIC's Role in the Micronesia Challenge

- Early planning, outreach, and conservation by MIC members created a growing need for protected areas and sustainable resource management.
- Members called upon to advise their leaders on the feasibility of the Challenge.
- MIC members helped their leaders secure a GEF pledge.
- Micronesia Challenge Regional Coordinator joined MIC and uses the network for coordination and support.
- MIC members helped promote better communication and buy-in with government and local communities.

PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, THIS APPROACH led to a unified conservation vision for the entire Micronesia region. The government of Palau was a key driver behind this vision, when in 2005 former President Tommy Remengesau Jr. committed on behalf of Palau to *"effectively conserve 30 percent of their near-shore marine resources and 20 percent of their terrestrial resources by 2020*."

This commitment, named the Micronesia Challenge, set the bar for coral reef and island conservation and prompted four other Micronesian governments—the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands—to make the same ambitious commitment to strike a critical balance between the need to use their natural resources today and the need to sustain those resources for future generations.

Spanning nearly 2.6 million square miles, the Micronesia Challenge represents 60% of the world's coral species and supports the livelihoods of nearly 500,000 people. The Challenge brings together more than 2,000 isolated islands, representing five political jurisdictions, inhabited by islanders speaking 12 different languages—all working towards the same goals.

In 2006, those five Micronesian governments made major waves with the announcement of the Micronesia Challenge. By agreeing to this commitment, they revealed a remarkable political will, challenging themselves—and the world—to steward the resources people need to survive.

The Network's and TNC's Role

The Nature Conservancy acts as a key partner supporting the Micronesia Challenge. As the Micronesia Challenge governments work to meet their ambitious goals, the Conservancy is helping them to establish networks of protected areas, increase funding for conservation, and address three pressing threats to the region's biodiversity—climate change, invasive species, and destructive fishing practices—by developing and testing strategies that can be applied in other island nations around the world.

The MIC Network played an important, catalytic role in laying a foundation for the Micronesia Challenge and continues providing support and playing a critical advisory role to the work of the Challenge. Some of the more significant aspects of MIC's role are highlighted below.

One of MIC's members described the symbiotic relationship between the network and the Micronesia Challenge very well. Patterson Shed, then executive director of the Conservation Society of Pohnpei, explained, "MIC can get us to work at a regional and international and global level. If we work in a bubble and the world changes around us, all our positive actions will be for nothing. If we are not in tune or connected with what is happening around us, we will not be able to share all our good work. That is why we need the Micronesia Challenge and that is why the Micronesia Challenge needs us."

LESSONS LEARNED

CAPTURING, SYNTHESIZING, AND SHARING LESSONS LEARNED is a principal component of an organizational culture committed to continuous improvement and adaptive management. Lessons learned communicate acquired knowledge more effectively and facilitate beneficial information being factored into planning, work processes, and activities going forward.[1]

This is the first report written with the specific purpose of helping others around the world learn from and adapt MIC's catalytic approach. The following sections tell the story of the MIC Network—from purpose, leadership, membership, and activities, to measures, management, and resources. It is here that for each tenet above, we highlight good practices, lessons learned, and offer a set of guiding questions for readers to consider. The next section outlines the outcomes and impacts derived by MIC, both intended and unintended. A concluding section provides closing remarks on this effort.

[1] White, M. and A. Cohan. 2010. A Guide to Capturing Lessons Learned. The Nature Conservancy. 16pp.

MIC AS AN EFFECTIVE NETWORK

FIGURE 3

SEVEN STANDARDS FOR DESIGNING AND OPERATING EFFICIENT NETWORKS

MIC'S LESSONS LEARNED ARE PRESENTED using *Standards and Good Practice for Designing and Operating Effective Networks,* written by Bruce Boggs, a learning specialist of The Nature Conservancy. In 2007, Bruce led a small group of TNC staff in developing a guidance document to define the qualities of effective networks.

These seven standards are conditions he and his group found essential for success:

STANDARD 1
Clear Strategic Purpose

STANDARD 2
Effective Leadership

STANDARD 3
Committed Membership

STANDARD 4
Well-Designed and Executed Activities

STANDARD 5
Measurement and Adaptive Management

STANDARD 6
Documentation of Lessons Learned

STANDARD 7
Adequate Resources

PURPOSE

THIS REPORT SEEKS TO CAPTURE AND DISTILL the rich experience, expertise, and insights of many key people in a way that is highly useful to others, for catalyzing conservation work on a grand scale. It highlights:

- Outcomes and impact of the MIC Network
- Guidance for The Nature Conservancy and others for ongoing and future learning networks
- Follow-up actions on the influential 2006 MIC Review
- Input for MIC strategic planning

We discuss each standard in four sections:

1. ***MIC's Story*** shares background and context essential to understanding the network and its lessons for each Standard.
2. ***Good Practices*** describes what MIC did to address the specific *good practices* identified in the Standard. (The *good practices* themselves, briefly described, are quoted from the Standards in *italics* at the start of the section*).*
3. ***MIC's Lessons*** highlights key insights and advice for networks.
4. ***Key Questions*** provide guidance to help other networks adapt MIC's experience.

For individuals who seek more detailed, how-to guidance, key references and appendices at the end of this report provide links to sample documents and additional tools.

STANDARD 1: CLEAR STRATEGIC PURPOSE

The network has clear goals and measurable outcomes and/or milestones, which are understood by its members, sponsor(s), funder(s), and other key stakeholders.

MIC'S STORY – ROAD TO CLEAR STRATEGIC PURPOSE

TNC ASIA-PACIFIC STAFF SELECTED MICRONESIA to test the feasibility and effectiveness of this catalytic capacity-building model for several reasons:

- TNC already had two strong programs, in Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), making it relatively easy to identify and recruit respected and capable leaders.
- TNC was ready to focus on projects with national and regional impact and was looking for a cost-effective way to work with more partners across Palau and FSM, with hopes of engaging other countries and territories in Micronesia over time.
- Both Palau and FSM had new National Biodiversity and Strategy Action Plans that would benefit greatly from sharing experience, expertise, tools and other resources through a peer-learning network.

The MIC Network was created to leverage conservation work across Micronesia by increasing the success, effectiveness and number of conservation leaders, and by strengthening the capacity of local conservation organizations, in both government and non-governmental sectors. This "clear strategic purpose" for MIC was developed through a consultation and design process that sought to develop a shared purpose, identify the target group of "champions for change" the network would serve, and design the network to meet their needs.

TNC outlined the desired goals and proposed role in a pilot network. Two staff members[2] organized consultations with key leaders and organizations to get their input to assess local demand and readiness for a network and advice on how it might be most effective. They also recruited a small design team[3] to help make strategic design decisions about the network.

By far, the most difficult decision the design team faced was identifying the "target group" or strategic set of people the network would serve. Political leaders, traditional leaders, and conservation organization/agency leaders were all considered and consulted. After much discussion, the design team agreed the leaders of non-governmental organizations and government agencies with

[2] Audrey Newman, then TNC Senior Advisor to the Asia-Pacific Conservation Region, and Bill Raynor, then TNC FSM Program Director.

[3] The MIC Design and Support Team include the following TNC staff: Audrey Newman, Andrew Smith, David Hinchley, Kath Shurcliff, Olivia Millard, Peter Thomas, Russell Leiman, Bill Raynor, Patricia Leon, and Paul Lokani.

conservation mandates were the group most ready and best placed to increase the scale of conservation in Micronesia.[4]

With this strategic decision, it was relatively easy to draft the first work plan, which included the MIC mission and goals. These were discussed, refined and endorsed at the first MIC retreat in September 2002. Revisited in and refined slightly in 2004, they still guide MIC today:

Box 3

MIC's MISSION

is to strengthen the collaborative, organizational, technical and policy skills of Micronesian conservation leaders and organizations, so that together with communities we can advance the conservation and management of important natural areas in Micronesia.

The MIC network has five goals**:**

1. MIC members strengthen essential leadership and management skills to build more effective conservation organizations.
2. MIC organizations demonstrate improved effectiveness, including continuous learning and improvement.
3. MIC organizations work with communities to improve the protection of important natural areas under their management.
4. MIC members work together on high priority local, national or regional issues.
5. MIC members and local institutions maintain and support an active, growing network of established and emerging conservation leaders throughout Micronesia to rapidly share experience, expertise, issues and resources.

GOOD PRACTICE: ASSESSING NEED AND DEFINING GOALS

ENGAGE PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS in assessing and defining the need for a network. This scoping process will require consulting prospective members concerning goals and other key questions of network design. Define the goal(s) of the network, and determine whether a network is the most cost-effective way to achieve it/them (see table 6 below). Determine the network's duration, appropriate to achieve its goal(s), recognizing that the term may require adjustment.

The MIC scoping process was conducted in two trips to the four FSM states and the capital city of Palau, in September and December 2001. During these visits, TNC sought guidance from over 100 individuals in the Micronesian conservation community on the following questions:

[4] The list of MIC Founding Members and Resources Team can be found in Appendix 1.

- What are the greatest challenges for you and your organization?
- Is this network needed? Or should we do this?
- Would you like to be involved? How?
- What activities would be most powerful for helping you?
- Who would be good participants for the first MIC group?
- Suggestions for partner institution?
- Suggestions for local coordinator? Who would be an excellent facilitator and is experienced running their own organization (but not necessarily conservation)?

Group meetings included leaders and staff members of conservation-related organizations in government and civil society. Where conservation organizations were limited or lacking, other prominent community groups and leaders were also consulted. Appendix 3 includes the interview guide and the MIC Concept paper.

During each consultation, staff recapped TNC's work in Micronesia, provided a brief introduction to peer learning networks, and discussed key questions. Except for a few meetings with individuals, at least two TNC staff participated in each consultation. As lead on the consultation, Audrey Newman participated in almost all discussions and was joined by one of TNC's local program managers, which provided valuable context. In all consultations, TNC stated clearly that the network would only be developed if there was strong local demand/interest, and TNC's role would be to assist with network start-up. Ultimately, the network would be "owned" and led by the participants.

During the consultation phase, TNC sought to identify and engage a Micronesian partner institution to serve as the home and host for the network. A regionally based and recognized home institution would house the Coordinator and provide administrative support, cultural context, colleagues, credibility, and long-term sustainability. Ideally, this partner would be involved in the design phase, so they would take full ownership. MIC's criteria for a prospective partner institution were:

- Located in Micronesia
- Established as a credible institution
- Holds relationships with key implementing partners
- Potential for long-term engagement
- Experience in organizational development
- Able to provide in-kind support with staff and logistics
- Has a stake in continuing and expanding the program over the long term

The consultations confirmed that creation of a network in Micronesia would indeed meet the following three needs:

1. Strengthen the capacity of members to adapt and use proven methods, tools, strategies or approaches.
2. Create best practices and the know-how to use them, by innovating, testing and documenting new strategies, methods, tools, or approaches.
3. Conceive and coordinate actions, across boundaries, to achieve particular objectives.

Based on input from these consultations, the design team blended activities and philosophies from four successful learning networks (also referred to as MIC's "grandparents"[5]), developed a member selection process, and created an agenda for the first network meeting that would address the priority outcomes.

GOOD PRACTICE: DEFINING OUTCOMES AND MILESTONES

ENGAGE MEMBERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS in assessing and defining outcomes and milestones. It may not be possible, or desirable, to define measurable outcomes at the outset of a network. Particularly if the network's goal is to solve a complex problem, its members may need to develop a shared understanding of the problem and to develop solutions through experimentation and learning before measurable outcomes can be articulated. Measurable milestones (activity and output measures) provide a framework for gauging progress.

TNC defined simple and clear outcomes and milestones for the pilot network at the start and shared these openly during the consultation process. Based on the input received, we refined MIC's goals and milestones, and they have continued to evolve with time and experience.

TNC's clarity created a valuable foundation of trust, transparency and understanding of expectations by all involved from the beginning and provided a starting point for identifying shared goals and milestones.

The MIC work plan drafted in September 2002 included the MIC Mission, Goals, Strategies and Activities, Seven Dimensions of Success, and Measurable Milestones for years one, two, three and five, to help everyone understand what success would "look like." The work plan guided all MIC activities from member/staff recruitment to retreat agendas and learning exchanges. This two-page strategy document also was an effective communications tool, used extensively to introduce the network to potential members, funders, partners, government, and others. The tangible milestones were intended to help the team make periodic "go/no go" decisions during and after the pilot phase.

The importance of a clear plan cannot be overstated. MIC's was tested when the funding situation changed unexpectedly. It was the outstanding progress toward all milestones (except funding) that provided the basis for TNC's continued

[5] MIC's "grandparents" are: Eureka Fellows, KAMALA (Indonesia), Efromyson Network (Conservation Coaches Network), and Philippine Coastal Resource Program.

support of MIC. This is just one example of how tangible milestones helped secure support from key people who were unfamiliar with or skeptical of the network approach.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT PURPOSE

1

Design the network for the people, places, and issues the network will serve

There is no "cookie cutter" approach to learning networks, and adaptation to each place and context is needed. Consultation with likely participants, host organizations, donors and other stakeholders is key to designing a successful peer-learning network. Broad consultation during scoping is a reality check on critical questions, including whether a network is needed at all, and provides basic information for key network design elements.

2

Four ears are better than two

Everyone brings bias, and it was very valuable to have two people listening in each consultation, so they could compare impressions and share different perspectives during design team discussions.

3

Transparency of goals builds a strong foundation

TNC, as sponsoring organization and network "facilitator," explicitly identified desired outcomes consistent with its conservation mandate. This served to make clear that the effort was a joint venture – not a gift – and needed to meet the needs of all parties. During unanticipated funding uncertainty, these explicitly identified TNC goals helped assure continued TNC support of the Network.

4

A work plan and tangible milestones are powerful tools

MIC's work plan served multiple purposes – strategic guide, communications, fundraising and a practical way to gauge progress. The annual milestones were especially effective in describing our hopes for MIC to diverse audiences. MIC used a work plan for the first three years, then by the MIC Review in 2006. However, once the Review's recommendations were implemented, the Network lacked clear priorities and direction. In response, members developed a strategic plan in 2010.

5

Be flexible and ready to make changes

MIC continued to revisit its mission and adapt in response to the changing needs of its membership. The development of a learning network is an evolutionary process; the network itself – like its members – should be set up to learn.

STANDARD 1: STRATEGIC PURPOSE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

ASSESSING NEED AND DEFINING GOAL(S)

- ✓ Do stakeholders feel a network is needed?
- ✓ Who is the target group of "learning leaders" the network will serve?
- ✓ Who are the ideal founding members for the network to give it a strong start?

DEFINING OUTCOMES AND MILESTONES

- ✓ Are there simple, clear goals and desired outcomes?
- ✓ Do you have a work plan that defines what success "looks like" via tangible, annual milestones?
- ✓ Is care being taken to manage expectations, ensure transparency and build trust?
- ✓ Is there a system for making "go/no go" decisions during and after the pilot phase?

STANDARD 2: EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

The network has explicitly identified leadership with appropriate skills and sufficient time allocated to this sole to adaptively manage activities that will meet the network's objectives.

MIC'S LEADERSHIP STORY

MIC'S LEADERSHIP WENT THROUGH THREE distinct phases as the Network developed. Before it was launched, the design team provided leadership. This shifted to the MIC coordinator when hired, with a small resource team providing support and guidance. Since 2006, the steering committee and MIC coordinator have co-led the network.

Phase 1: Design Team Lead

The MIC design team, a small group with broad perspectives and representation, charted the course for the Network from June 2001 until it was launched in September 2002. During MIC's two-year pilot phase, design team members continued to support the Network with fundraising, communications (especially with TNC senior managers), and network transitions. The design team's tasks were to:

- Conduct scoping consultations
- Create a work plan for the Network
- Secure initial funding
- Recruit a coordinator
- Select partner/host institution(s)
- Recruit the Network's founding members
- Help design and facilitate the first Network meeting or "launch"

Phase 2: Coordinator & Resource Team Leads

During the four years following MIC's launch, the MIC coordinator and resource team organized and facilitated retreats, introduced tools and issues for members to consider, and provided technical support aimed at strengthening organizational leadership and management skills.[6]

As of 2010, four highly qualified people have served as MIC coordinators; each has brought different skills, strengths, and background to the role. The design team actively searched for a local coordinator to launch the Network, but found it difficult to recruit an experienced Micronesian for this start-up position because its long-term funding and future were uncertain.

[6] See Appendix 4 for the MIC Coordinator Manual.

Patricia Leon was hired as the first MIC coordinator approximately four months before the first retreat. An experienced organizational effectiveness professional from TNC Latin America, Patricia relocated to Micronesia with a six-month commitment to the Network. This proved unrealistic, and her contract was extended repeatedly until 2005. These short-duration contracts created challenges in continuity, authority, and decision-making. Working with the resource team, Patricia established working protocols for MIC's core activities, including retreats, goal setting, reporting, learning exchanges, organizational assessments, and technical assistance.

Susi Menazza Olmsted, the second MIC coordinator (2005-2007), brought strong international and management experience to the role. An Italian expatriate living in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) with her family, Susi facilitated active leadership by members, coordinated MIC's first formal review, increased learning exchanges among members, and expanded the Network to new geographies. Under Susi's leadership, members assumed more responsibility for decision-making.

Mae M. Bruton-Adams became MIC's first "local" coordinator in early 2007**.** Mae was born in the United States and raised in the Federated States of Micronesia by her Chuukese mother and American father. She brought to the job strong organization and business skills, international experience, and a lifelong commitment to Micronesia. Mae worked with MIC members to develop an effective steering committee and added greater focus on accountability, practical measures, and self-financing. She was key in arranging MIC's transition to a new home, at the Micronesian Conservation Trust, including the recruitment and training of her successor.

FIGURE 4

MIC COORDINATORS 2002-2011

PATRICIA LEON
2002-2005

SUSI MENAZZA OLMSTED
2005-2007

MAE BRUTON-ADAMS
2007-2009

ISAO FRANK
SINCE 2009

Isao Frank, Jr. became MIC's fourth coordinator in August 2009 in a new position jointly responsible for coordinating MIC and the Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community—a sister network for conservation site managers. Frank, an FSM native, came to MIC with 15 years of experience with the Peace Corps Micronesia, in training, coordination, cultural, and director positions. Frank's first-year priorities were to help MIC develop and implement a new strategic action plan.

Phase 3: Steering Committee & Coordinator Co-Leadership

As recommended by the MIC Review (discussed further in Standard 5), Network members established a steering committee during the eighth retreat, in 2006. The steering committee was designed to support the coordinator, help structure the retreat agendas, provide early input on new initiatives, and help make tough management decisions. Network members designed and facilitated Network activities with support from the MIC coordinator. Resource volunteers with relevant expertise from various agencies ably assisted the Network when needed.

GOOD PRACTICE: LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS

EFFECTIVE NETWORK LEADERSHIP COMPRISES several crucial functions. A network leader or leadership team must possess the skills and have sufficient time allocated to perform all these functions well:

- Defining and adapting the network's objectives, in collaboration with its members and sponsor(s)
- Energizing members around the network's objectives, and building community among them
- Establishing, in collaboration with members, behavioral norms related to member participation and contribution, orientation to results, and constructive peer-critique
- Assessing the needs of network members, and ensuring that network activities are well-designed and facilitated to meet these needs
- Mobilizing resources, including funding and expertise external to the network
- Ensuring that network products or outputs are documented and distributed, widely and effectively
- Measuring the network's effectiveness and results

In MIC, four key individuals or groups fulfilled these leadership functions over time—the coordinator, sponsor, resource team, and steering committee—as described above. The emphasis on different functions varied, depending on the Network's needs and priorities and the coordinator's strengths and interests.

Coordinator Leadership Functions

The coordinator, as MIC's only dedicated staff, has primary responsibility for ensuring all essential leadership functions are met. S/he helps maintain continuity and the institutional memory of the Network over time. The coordinator role evolved as the Network matured. Her/his tasks have included:

- Organize retreats, training events, and exchanges with follow-up for reinforcement.
- Maintain consistent communication with members, design team, resource volunteers, and governments.
- Help identify learning needs, including facilitation of self-assessments and capacity- building action plans with staff and boards of participating organizations.
- Identify locally-based technical assistance for common organizational development and technical needs.
- Match members with mentors, trainers or experts for specific learning needs.
- Recruit and train local facilitators.
- Coach, train, and advise members in specific skills and duties.
- Develop MIC work plans and financial administration systems.
- Assist with design and evaluation of the Network's effectiveness.
- Report on MIC activities and progress against milestones.
- Maintain a biweekly blog.
- Help raise funds for the Network and/or specific projects.
- Cultivate strong personal relationships with members in formal and informal settings.
- Seek collaboration with other regional networks.
- Act as secretary for the MIC Steering Committee.

"Getting a local, permanent coordinator had a significant impact on MIC… someone was going to be working with us who had some local knowledge of how things might work."

~

Willy Kostka, Executive Director
Micronesia Conservation Trust

Sponsor Leadership Function

The MIC sponsors include the coordinator's supervisor and other key senior supporters. Their main function is to ensure the coordinator and Network have adequate resources (funding, staffing, and external support). The sponsor also focuses on the Network's effectiveness. During the two-year pilot phase, Audrey Newman was MIC's primary sponsor. She helped the Network develop the first plan with milestones and the *Seven Measures of Success* (in Standard 5). Audrey also actively shared MIC retreat highlights with a diverse "Friends of MIC" group, which included TNC program directors, donors, network experts, and other interested partners.

After the successful pilot phase, MIC was incorporated into TNC's Micronesia program, and Bill Raynor assumed the lead sponsor role and responsibilities. He was also an active MIC member. As sponsor, Bill ably provided funding and

strategic guidance for MIC as well as advocacy within TNC. In 2010, Willy Kostka, executive director of the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), became the current MIC sponsor as the Trust became the new "house" for MIC.

Resource Team Leadership Functions

The design team evolved into the resource team after the founding members were recruited, and the Network was launched at the first retreat. Resource team members provided significant leadership during the Network's first two years. In particular, Kathy Kesolei provided invaluable insights and guidance based on her expertise in Micronesian culture and her decades of experience as a successful director in government and social service organizations. Once the Network's main activities were identified and some key traditions established, its members assumed greater leadership, and the resource team provided technical support as needed.

Steering Committee Leadership Functions

The MIC steering committee, formed in 2006, codified the members' "ownership" of MIC, by assuming responsibility for Network direction, agendas, and reducing costs. The steering committee is composed of five committed members—one from each of the five jurisdictions in Micronesia (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Palau, and the Marshall Islands). They reflect MIC's diversity (senior leader, emerging leader, NGO, government, etc.). The steering committee's role is to:

- Help define Network goals and objectives for each fiscal year.
- Review and assist the coordinator with the Work Plan and annual budget.
- Review progress against the Work Plan.
- Develop retreat agendas.
- Develop and recommend policy on membership, attendance, and costs.
- Evaluate the coordinator and provide recommendations for improvement.
- Assist coordinator with fundraising.
- Work with coordinator to periodically evaluate MIC's mission, milestones, and measures.
- Select a chairperson.

GOOD PRACTICE: LEADERSHIP SKILLS

THE LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS LISTED ABOVE REQUIRE both content and process expertise. Designing an effective network activity, for example a workshop, requires process design and facilitation skills as well as knowledge of the content to be addressed. Process design and facilitation expertise is necessary to select and design the specific decision-making or learning methods to be used. These choices, however, cannot be made independent of content. The number and structure of steps required in each workshop session, for example, and the time necessary to execute them, pivot on content.

It is not common to find the requisite content and process expertise embodied in one individual. Thus, it might be necessary to assemble a leadership team of two or more individuals who collectively embody the skills required for effective network leadership.

Process expertise is required on a more continual basis than is content expertise, and the content expertise required for network leadership is often general. As implied by the list of functions above, the greater part of network leadership is procedural. Members often bring to a network much of the content expertise required to meet its objectives. The expertise embodied in network leader(s) and members can be augmented as needed by engaging specialists.

Coordinator Skills

The coordinator is the only dedicated staff position tasked with overseeing and supporting the MIC Network. S/he is the key "go to" person for both members and partners. The design team sought a coordinator with "strong capacity-building skills in facilitated self-assessment, board development, conservation and/or development project management, financial planning, management and oversight, and related areas…" (from Coordinator Terms of Reference in Appendix 5). To be successful, the coordinator must also be accessible, credible, and an effective "can-do" person. The members need to feel they can turn to the coordinator with concerns and questions.

For MIC, facilitation and organizational self-assessment were particularly important skills for all MIC coordinators. Technical advisors provided other skills and tools, such as strategic planning. Because conservation skills were in ample supply among Network members, the coordinator did not need these skills.

GOOD PRACTICE: LEVEL OF EFFORT

THE LEVEL OF EFFORT REQUIRED TO PERFORM the leadership role effectively varies with the number of network members and the intensity of network activity (e.g. frequency of network meetings, volume of network product, and extent of capacity-building activities that are to be carried out between meetings). Expect to allocate a minimum of 0.30 FTE to network leadership, and as much as 2 FTE.

The MIC coordinator is a professional staff position with a primary focus on supporting the Network. Actual time required varied from half time during relatively quiet periods to more than full-time during periods of ramped-up activity and responsibility. The coordinator requires commitment, support and assistance from others—the sponsor, resource team and steering committee. These people provided significant time and expertise to support the Network, usually without payment from the MIC budget.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT NETWORK LEADERSHIP

1

The coordinator is key

The success or failure of the Network is wholly dependent on two components: a dedicated coordinator—effective as a facilitator of self-directed learning—and members committed to learning and adaptive management.

2

No coordinator can do it all

The coordinator requires access to high-quality technical, cultural, and administrative support. For MIC, this support included a wide range of content specialists; learning network experience; cultural guidance, especially for expatriate coordinators; reliable administrative support; and trusted advisors. These roles were initially filled by the sponsor and resources team and later by the steering committee and long-term members.

3

Start-up takes time and special attention

The first coordinator needs at least two months to transition into the job and understand the network's design, players, process, and context before s/he recruits founding participants and organizes the first network meeting/retreat.

4

Plan for transition and turn-over

MIC transitioned through four coordinators in its first eight years, and each transition presented challenges. A two-year minimum commitment is highly recommended and should be agreed to during the hiring or contract process (assuming satisfactory performance, of course). During times of transition or major change, ensure that leadership roles and responsibilities are clear and that changes are transparent. With each change, MIC revisited the coordinator's role, priorities, style, and members' desired support. Recruitment and training took about six months. Key leaders in the Network provided continuity during transitions.

5

Local leadership is essential, but may take time to develop

A local coordinator who identifies with the members' culture is ideal. However, experienced leadership and a facilitative style are the most critical criteria for coordinator success. MIC's experience showed that with strong local support, expatriate professionals made effective coordinators in an unfamiliar culture. Both were committed to transitioning their work to Micronesian professionals, so they invested in building the skills, confidence, and leadership of others.

6

An active steering committee is essential to network success

Co-leadership from the steering committee calls on the abilities, interests, and talents of the membership. It also serves to engage members in leadership decision making, and helps assure geographic representation of each jurisdiction. The coordinators who developed and actively engaged an effective steering committee were able to support the Network through significant positive changes, so this should be one of the coordinator's priority tasks. As with all leadership groups, planning for turnover and succession is key to long-term success and should include agreed terms, overlapping membership for continuity, and orientation for new members.

7

Sponsor(s) provide strategic external leadership

Each Network should have at least one sponsor to actively champion the Network, provide strategic guidance, and maintain links with important external audiences, such as senior management, donors, and other networks. Ideally, the sponsor would be an active member of the Network. All MIC's sponsors provided assistance with unexpected challenges, access to expertise, and external communications.

8

Effective leadership requires well-developed strategic action plan and standard operating procedures

The original MIC Work Plan provided clear guidance and was regularly updated the first two years. After that, the 2006 MIC Review identified specific recommendations for improvement, which were implemented, including a call to document the Network's operations to ensure continuity and consistency as it grew. Once the Review was addressed, the Network went without a strategic guiding document for about two years, until the first MIC Strategic Action Plan was agreed to in August 2010. In hindsight, the members believe this planning process would have helped the Network if conducted earlier, and they intend to regularly update their strategic plan and operations documentation in the future.

STANDARD 2: LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS

- ✓ Is the sponsor equipped and prepared to champion the Network?
- ✓ Does the coordinator have a team to provide cultural and institutional guidance, as well as strategic decision-making support?
- ✓ Does a steering committee represent the Network's diversity (geographic, cultural, and gender)?
- ✓ Is there support and engagement from senior management?

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- ✓ Does the coordinator have strong capacity-building skills in the desired focus areas?
- ✓ Does the coordinator have local experience and a facilitative style?
- ✓ Is the coordinator accessible, credible, and an effective "can-do" person?
- ✓ Does the coordinator have skills complementary to members' skills?

LEVEL OF EFFORT

- ✓ Can the coordinator dedicate half- or full-time to the Network, depending on the Work Plan?
- ✓ Can the coordinator make a minimum two-year commitment to ensure continuity?
- ✓ Has sufficient time been allowed for start-up of and transition between coordinators?

STANDARD 3: COMMITTED MEMBERSHIP

The network's members are personally committed to the network's objectives and to sharing know-how; and their organization or program explicitly authorizes their participation.

MIC'S MEMBERSHIP STORY

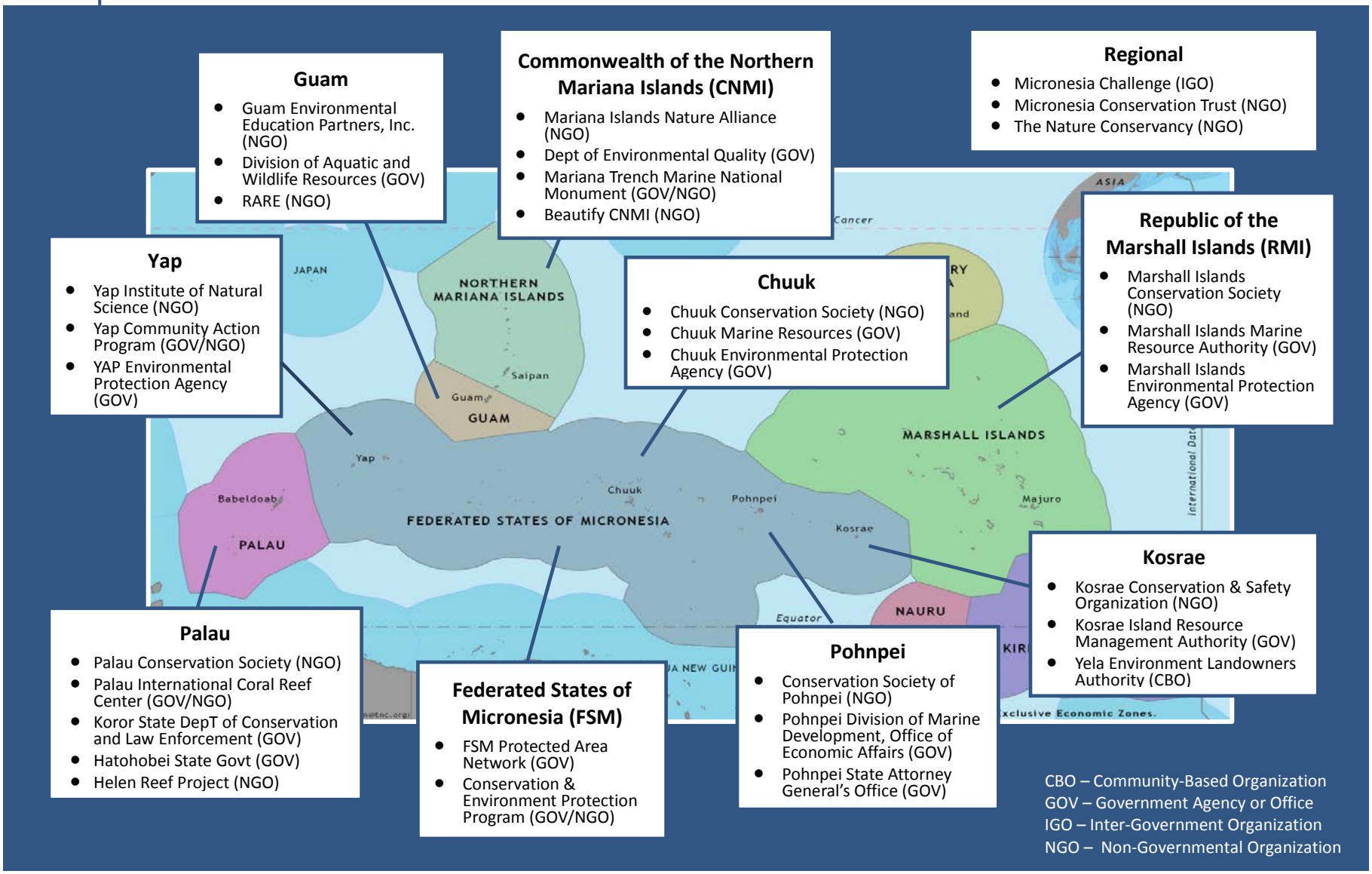
THE DESIGN TEAM IDENTIFIED RESPECTED CONSERVATION leaders and encouraged them to apply in an open application process. By design, the ten founding members were geographically distributed across the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau, while new members were invited to join retreats starting with the third retreat. Members agreed to limit the number of new recruits at each retreat, so the Network would maintain its culture while it grew. Typically each retreat included two to four new prospective members as invited guests.

Most members were strongly committed to the Network from the start, and some provided extraordinary service. For example, Willy Kostka (at that time the CSP Director) helped recruit and mentor Andy George, the first executive director for Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization (KCSO), a young and small NGO. Those who declined to attend retreats or take action on their goals are eventually deemed inactive.[7] As the Network matured, membership expanded to include emerging leaders, more women, and more Micronesian countries and territories. Since 2008, membership has held to the target of 21-25 active members.

[7] Members are considered inactive if they miss a MIC retreat without notice, decline to attend two consecutive retreats, do not participate in other Network activities, and become unresponsive to the coordinator.

FIGURE 5.

GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION



GOOD PRACTICE: DETERMINING NETWORK SIZE AND GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

NETWORK SIZE AND SCOPE – the number of members and where they work – are a function of network objectives and of resources available. Effective networks range in size from fewer than 20 members to greater than 100 members. Geographic scope may be national, regional or global. Greater size and scope generally require greater resources and present greater leadership, support and design challenges. If the number of members exceeds 100, or if some members must travel more than one day to participate in network activities, consider enlisting members into smaller sub-networks, in which most collective activity takes place.

Geographic Scope

During the consultation, core members of the design team visited all jurisdictions proposed for the pilot: the four Federated States of Micronesia and Palau. The pilot included two countries, to test the effectiveness of a network across national boundaries. If the pilot was successful, the network could expand to the other five Micronesian countries and territories in Phase Two.

Founding members came from Palau and three of the Federated States of Micronesia (Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap). These members invited potential new members to subsequent retreats. Later, conservation leaders from the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Marshall Islands joined. These jurisdictions all have strong cultural and political connections with one another, in part due to their status as current or former territories of the United States. These affiliations defined a practical and natural geographic range for MIC.

MIC members were interested in expanding to also include Kiribati and Nauru – two other Micronesian nations with cultural ties but looser political affiliations. However, this expansion proved difficult to accomplish, since engagement by jurisdiction varies greatly, due to resources, individual readiness, recognition of MIC's benefits to their work, and depth of leadership experience. Regarding Kiribati, for example, attending more than one retreat was difficult, due to high travel costs. Kiribati's representative has, however, continued to participate in MIC via email communications.

Network Size

Eureka Fellows, MIC's dominant "grandparent," found that when a group reached approximately 30 in number, they began to tackle large-scale issues more collaboratively. Like Eureka, MIC's initial design called for sequential cohorts of ten MIC fellows, who would graduate after two years. A new class of ten MIC Fellows would be recruited each year, resulting in twenty active Fellows at any given time, with opportunities to network with alumni after graduation.

At the second retreat, in Palau, members agreed that as long as they worked in conservation, they saw the Network as a lifelong rather than temporary commitment. From that point on, active members led recruitment of new members. Some of today's active members were MIC founders. There are also alumni – members who resigned from MIC when they retired or left their conservation positions – and others who chose not to remain active for various reasons.

During the 10th Retreat, in Guam in 2008, MIC members agreed upon a ceiling of 25 members as the ideal size group to advance MIC goals and objectives.

GOOD PRACTICE: SELECTING MEMBERS

USE THE NETWORK'S OBJECTIVES TO DEVELOP selection criteria, which might include:

1. *Alignment of prospective member's needs and know-how with the network's objectives;*
2. *Prospective member's geographic location;*
3. *The habitat type a prospective member works in;*
4. *Priority threats of concern to a prospective member;*
5. *Influence of a prospective member, e.g., involvement in other collaborative activities;*
6. *Readiness to use the network to advance their own and collective practice; and/or*
7. *Complementary skills and expertise across the entire membership.*
8. *Enlisting, among the network's initial or "founding" members, at least two or three exemplary practitioners helps to create a culture of success and achievement within the network.*

MIC Membership Selection Criteria

MIC's criteria for membership focused on four of the criteria cited above – alignment, geography, influence, and readiness. MIC requires a two-year minimum commitment from applicants who also fit the following qualifications:[8]

- Be established or emerging leaders of government or non-government organizations committed to protecting important natural areas or sustainably managing resources in the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Marshall Islands.
- Have authority to make decisions about budgets and program priorities in their organization.
- Be willing to commit approximately six to seven weeks over two years to learning with MIC.

[8] Adapted from Eureka Communities, these membership criteria are part of the Membership Profile/application. These have not changed since inception and appear to be a permanent part of MIC.

- Have three to five years of job experience (highly desirable).
- Have a strong commitment to Micronesia (natives or long-term residents).
- Be recognized or potential champions for change in their state and/or country (e.g., frequently asked to participate in important issues by government, communities, or NGOs).

"The diversity of people involved in MIC is wide and represents the traditional ways, new ways, like scientists… and when I am traveling on other islands, I have someone I always know. They will take care of me and we have become like a family. We are always meeting up with our 'relatives' [she laughs]."

~

Mary Rose Nakayama,
Conservation and Environmental Protection Program, 2009

Funding members gave top priority to organizations engaged in or planning work on marine protected areas and/or their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans. Nine of the ten founding members were established leaders, to give the network credibility and a strong foundation. After that, emerging leaders were recruited as well. Today, many of the most active members are from this younger generation. Exceptions are made for individuals with great potential and leadership capabilities, even if they do not formally lead an organization.[9]

MIC members added the following membership guidance during the ninth retreat, in 2007:

- **Gender:** Ensure that MIC has equal representation of men and women.
- **Jurisdiction:** Give more consideration to a state or country with fewer active members.
- **Expansion:** Consider whether resources are available and the timing is right to invite someone from jurisdictions beyond the current geographic scope (i.e., Kiribati or Nauru).
- **Ratio:** Aim for equal representation of government and NGO leaders.

[9] One such exception is Mary Rose Nakayama, an MIC member for almost five years, who although not the director of an organization, has led many successful conservation initiatives in Chuuk and Micronesia.

Box 4

Statement of Commitment

I have read the description of the Micronesians in Island Conservation Network and understand the time commitment and travel involved. As a member, I commit to:

Actively participate in the MIC Network. I understand that this will require attendance at the MIC retreats and brief meetings and conference calls between retreats.

Treat my participation and the appropriate participation of my staff and governing body (e.g., board of directors, advisory board, council or ministry) in MIC activities as a priority.

Join with my peers in ongoing MIC Network activities.

Learn from one or two conservation organizations or agencies known for their innovative practices through a structured learning exchange (usually one week visit).

Complete a questionnaire after each learning exchange.

Provide regular updates on the MIC Network to my staff and board or governing body, as appropriate.

Identify ways to incorporate some of the new management skills and techniques that I learn through the MIC Network and to encourage further professional development for my institution and myself.

Provide baseline and midpoint data on my programs, my institution and myself to aid in evaluating and improving MIC activities.

Allow MIC and The Nature Conservancy to use my photograph and quote me regarding my experiences about my participation in the MIC Network.

The founding members were recruited through an application process. After its first year, MIC adopted a more culturally appropriate means of enlisting members, in which active members identify potential new members who have shown personal commitment and demonstrated ability towards MIC's shared goals and agree on a small number to be invited to the next retreat. Interested prospective members fill out a membership profile (Appendix 6) in lieu of an application and attend their first retreat as guests to determine whether MIC could be helpful to them. Generally this approach has worked well, although MIC has been criticized as being "exclusive, elite, or closed." Some have suggested MIC offer an open application process in addition to membership by invitation, but this has not been implemented.

GOOD PRACTICE: ENLISTING MEMBERS

BE SURE THAT MEMBERS UNDERSTAND EXPLICITLY what membership will require of them (e.g. level of effort, frequency of meetings, duration of the network), and what they can expect to gain from it. Consider using a written member agreement to ensure that their understanding is explicit. Member commitment to a network's objectives is commonly tentative during the initial stage of its operation, particularly concerning objectives focused on results beyond their own work situations. Although it is crucial to enlist members with sufficient commitment to participate and contribute, also plan to foster increased commitment through well-designed and executed network activities (see Standard 4).

MIC identified what is expected of members in the *Statement of Commitment*, which is signed by the members and their agency or organization heads. Most members actively attend retreats, participate in discussions, engage in learning exchanges, provide input to MIC activities, and inform the network of new and exciting work within their organizations.

By far, the most effective commitment is the tradition of setting goals at each MIC retreat and reporting on progress at the next retreat. All members take this seriously and support one another in achieving their goals. MIC members have consistently been generous with their time and willingness to help one another through exchanges, coaching new executive directors, conducting joint training, helping others adapt successful programs, sharing fundraising skills, and even developing an MIC website and maintaining a blog.

When a few members became inactive, the Network responded by updating member responsibilities and incorporating them into the 2005 MIC Work Plan:

- Actively lead or co-lead a conservation organization, program, or initiative in Micronesia.
- Attend and fully participate in retreats.
- Share experiences, lessons learned, tools, etc. with other members.
- Be prepared to be called on for assistance (e.g., advice, learning exchanges).
- Each member organization has to work in at least one protected area (directly or indirectly via policy or finance).
- Help build capacity at a regional level to assist other MIC members and/or organizations.
- Regularly measure progress/improvement using simple self-assessment and monitoring tools for their organization and conservation work.
- Provide periodic feedback to the MIC Network, so it can better meet members' needs.
- By the end of five years, aim for member organizations covering 50 percent of Network costs.

Network members also clarified how members become *alumni* or *inactive:*

- When members leave their position, they typically resign and become MIC alumni.
- Members are considered inactive if they miss a MIC retreat without notice, decline to attend two consecutive retreats, do not participate in other Network activities, and become unresponsive to the coordinator.
- To become active again, the member contacts the coordinator, submits goals and attends the next retreat.
- If members miss a retreat, the coordinator contacts them personally to discuss interest in continuing with MIC and the desired extent of participation.

Government and NGO Members

MIC includes both government and NGO leaders because pre-network consultations clearly indicated that both sectors needed to be strong and work together for long-term success to be possible. The way MIC members would describe the mutually beneficial roles is of the NGO as is an *agent of change,* focusing attention on new issues and piloting new tools and programs to address society's challenges. Government's role, on the other hand, is that of

maintaining stability and core services for all of society, which means change may occur slowly but can have large-scale impacts.

Addressing the different needs of NGO and government leaders has been an ongoing challenge for MIC. This was a major issue raised in the 2006 MIC Review, and seemed to improve when the new coordinator focused on it and more resource team members with government experience were engaged. NGO and government members participate in MIC for different purposes and use its services differently. NGO leaders have more flexibility and independence to adopt new practices and tools introduced by MIC (e.g., institutional assessments and strategic action planning) or to adapt their programs to new opportunities. Government leaders work within a more bureaucratic and hierarchical structure, with stricter budgets, so it is more challenging for them to initiate agency-wide change. This may be why there has been a higher rate of inactive government members. Over the years, 25 to 35 percent of active MIC members are from government, while 50 to 65 percent are from NGOs. Nonetheless, the government champions active in MIC are highly effective and provide a valuable bridge between the sectors.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT COMMITTED MEMBERSHIP

1

Founding members define the network

Founders personify the "target group of champions for change" that the Network seeks to serve. Their reputations, credibility and relationships help establish the Network's status. Similarly, their strengths and priority needs define what the Network focuses on in the first crucial year and sets expectations for future members.

2

Existing affiliations will influence network size and geographic scope

In Micronesia, five jurisdictions – the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands – have very close political ties and connections from their ongoing close affiliation with the United States. In contrast, Kiribati and Nauru are culturally Micronesian, but their historic political/colonial affiliations are different, and their social ties to the other Micronesian islands are more distant. These proved to be important factors in determining the Network's most effective geography and size.

3

Be clear about membership criteria, responsibilities, and obligations – early and often

Clearly document and communicate the criteria and expectations for becoming and remaining members. This can be achieved with a written charter, statement of commitment, member guidelines, strategic plan, or other document. Be sure members revisit these criteria and expectations regularly and remove those no longer important to the group. It is also helpful to agree on how to communicate directly and respectfully with members who do not fulfill their obligations.

4

Include islands or groups when they express readiness

During the early MIC consultation phase, many contacts in the Federated States of Micronesia were enthusiastic about a network, while Palau contacts were more doubtful and only one leader applied. It is possible that the consultation did not reach the right people in Palau, and it took about two years before Palau had an active group of MIC members. The design team wanted to test the Network across national boundaries, but in hindsight, MIC could have started in the Federated States of Micronesia and maintained contact with Palau leaders until there was more demand.

5

Diverse membership requires attention to different needs and work environments

Working across sectors or groups with different cultures presents special challenges. In MIC, tension between government and NGO members has been addressed with facilitated discussions that helped them learn about the different worlds and needs of government officials and NGO leaders, so that now members have mutual respect and collaborate on major initiatives. It is particularly helpful if the coordinator has individual discussions with members about their needs, and the resource team reflects the diversity of the membership.

6

Invest in the best and they'll help the rest

Be explicit with members that they were selected because of their status as leaders, and that they are expected to help others. Sometimes it's assumed this will be a burden, but it is often viewed as a calling (especially in indigenous cultures), and members rise to this expectation, excelling even further. This may seem counter to cultural norms in many communal societies, where it is not appropriate to draw attention to oneself. Although MIC members did not want to be labeled as leaders publicly, the roles and responsibilities of leaders were discussed openly among members.

STANDARD 3: MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

DETERMINING NETWORK SIZE AND SCOPE

- ✓ How many members are desirable, manageable, and feasible?
- ✓ Is the geographic scope local, national, regional, or global? Can it change over time?
- ✓ Are the host institution and Coordinator prepared to serve a diverse or large membership?

SELECTING MEMBERS

- ✓ Is the target group clear?
- ✓ Are there "must have" criteria for members?
- ✓ Will gender, cultural diversity, or other factors be priority considerations?

ENLISTING MEMBERS

- ✓ Are member commitments and expectations explicit?
- ✓ Is the recruitment and application process culturally appropriate?

STANDARD 4: WELL-DESIGNED AND EXECUTED ACTIVITIES

Network activities are well designed and facilitated to create and share know-how among network members, and to help them resolve individual and collective challenges.

MIC'S STORY – ACTIVITIES TO BRING LEADERS TOGETHER

MIC USED A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES to accomplish the Network's goals. These were organized around three core strategies:

1. **Self-Directed Learning**
   The Network's activities and agenda are determined by the individual and shared needs of the participants:
   - All learning is tied to actual organizational and programmatic priorities.
   - Emphasis is on demand-driven assistance rather than formal curricula.

2. **Peer Learning**
   According to a key finding in Audrey Newman's research sabbatical[10], peer learning is widely recognized as one of the most powerful tools for personal, professional, and organizational development. MIC's activities are designed to:
   - Rapidly share successes and lessons learned.
   - Identify and address shared needs for technical assistance, training, and other support.
   - Promote learning exchanges with successful organizations rather than traditional training.
   - Facilitate collaboration on local, national, and regional issues.

3. **Learning by Doing**
   MIC brings the most cost-effective tools to its members:
   - Facilitated organizational self-assessments and action plans;
   - Peer coaching (one-on-one and retreats);
   - Targeted learning exchanges for specific goals;
   - Demand-driven technical assistance designed for specific needs; and
   - Shared indicators for monitoring and adaptive management.

[10] In 2000, Audrey Newman, TNC's then Senior Advisor to the Asia Pacific Region, undertook a research sabbatical, sponsored by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, to answer the question, "How can TNC fast track capacity building for conservation in Asia and the Pacific Islands?" Her final report, *Built to Change: Catalytic Capacity Building in Non-Profit Organizations* can be downloaded here. For more information on peer learning, see *The Power of Peer Learning: Networks and Development Cooperation* (2007) by Jean-H. Guilmette.

Regular retreats quickly became the heart of the MIC Network. In an island region where Network members are separated by great distances, retreats were a cost-effective way to serve multiple needs. Besides retreats, the most popular and effective activities MIC used were:

- **Learning exchanges** to share expertise with between members and their organizations;
- **Targeted technical assistance** to advance organizational development or conservation effectiveness; and
- **Facilitated self-assessments** to help members identify and prioritize capacity-building challenges facing their organizations or conservation projects.

GOOD PRACTICE: ASSESS INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE NEEDS

CONTINUALLY ASSESS MEMBERS' CHALLENGES, and design network activities specifically to help members resolve them. Such assessment can be accomplished relatively informally through conversations with members and/or through group discussions. Or it can be more systematic, for example using structured interviews, surveys, or self-assessment tools.

As part of its mission, MIC sought to strengthen four core skills of its members: organizational, technical, collaborative, and policy skills. MIC activities were developed to provide support, mentoring, and targeted training to enhance these skills. Most activities were demand-driven, organized in response to needs identified by members (e.g., fundraising, board development, site monitoring), and relied upon the experience within the group. In response to these needs, the coordinator or resource team occasionally saw a challenge that the members did not recognize and initiated discussions or activities to explore it further (e.g., collaboration).

Assessment of member needs and priorities started during the initial network scoping process and continued during the application and interview process. In its first two years, the Network tested formal assessment tools, including facilitated organizational self-assessment, a conservation scorecard, and collaboration tools. The founding group also participated in self-reflection exercises to provide insights into their leadership styles, personality types, and management characteristics. Individual and shared needs were identified during retreat discussions. Each new coordinator conducted an informal assessment during which they interviewed members as part of the orientation process.

Facilitated Organizational Self-Assessments (also known as Institutional Self-Assessments[11]) and Action Plans

These assessments and plans helped members determine the highest priority needs for assistance. Although members initially expressed concern the

[11] In 2001, TNC published Institutional Self-assessment. A Tool for Strengthening Nonprofit Organizations which was prepared by several TNC staff including MIC Coordinator, Patricia Leon.

process would be audit-like, the facilitator emphasized personal insight, constructive feedback, and the natural evolution of organizations and programs, so there was no external critique involved. Members found TNC's tool for organizational self-assessment useful, although this tool was a better fit for NGOs than for governments. The "early adopters" reported positive experiences, and others followed suit quickly. Eight of the ten founding members used organizational self-assessments within their organizations and developed action plans within the first year and a half. Most were partially or completely implemented.

Conservation Scorecards

In 2003, MIC members identified ten factors they considered essential for effective conservation programs and projects. They incorporated these into a "Conservation Scorecard," a tool for looking at the capacity of a team to implement work in the field.

Collaboration Factors[12]

Despite a strong interest and need for more and better collaborations within islands, the group held off on adopting the collaboration assessment tools and trainings that MIC provided, until they could be sure they had set good, clear goals everyone could work on. They also felt that measuring internal country and state collaboration took a front seat to measuring MIC member collaboration.

GOOD PRACTICE: DESIGN ACTIVITIES TO MEET MEMBERS' NEEDS

A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES CAN BE EFFECTIVE for creating and sharing know-how among network members, and they can often be used in combination. More formal activities should be complemented by planned social activities that foster unrestrained creative thinking and strengthening relationships among network members.

Retreats

Retreats became MIC's most important, popular, and overarching activity. Retreats offered members an open and honest forum in which to engage with conservation colleagues about their successes, mistakes, and lessons learned. As one member put it, retreats provided the "*opportunity to touch base with other members on issues dear to me."* Retreats allowed for significant exchanges and inter-regional updates. They also promoted the relationships, self-reflection, and connection with peers who could help on specific conservation challenges. Many

[12] The Wilder Research Center has reviewed hundreds of scientific studies about successful and not-so-successful collaborations to learn what made the difference. In their book, *Collaboration: What Makes It Work*, pinpoints 20 factors that have been shown time after time to make or break a group effort. Those factors fall into six general categories: general environment, membership, structure and process, communication, purpose and resources. The Collaboration Factors Inventory Tool can be accessed here.

new MIC members commented that they didn't believe they would have had the opportunity to learn from distinguished regional leaders if not for MIC. The retreats were hosted by Network members on rotation and provided insights into their communities, organizations, and programs. Retreats were held every nine months.

Developing a retreat agenda that forwarded conservation objectives, addressed organizational and leadership development, and followed up on member goals, while still allowing time to "recharge" and informally share ideas, was an evolutionary process. Based on feedback from MIC members, the resource team developed an "ideal agenda" (Appendix 7) for a four-day retreat, which is still used as a guide today.

The following principles guide retreat design:

- *Isolated retreat locations* allow for full concentration on retreat activities.
- An *atmosphere of trust and sharing* offers personal support, helping to reduce burn-out and increase member enthusiasm.
- A *relaxed pace* allows time for members to be creative, re-energize, and share time together. Many important ideas are generated during side conversations.
- An environment in which c*ultural differences are explicitly acknowledged* sets the stage for seeking guidance from the group on how to bridge gaps (e.g., Western leadership differs from Micronesian leadership).

The quality of the retreats was improved by:

- Putting participants in island groups or pairs to accelerate collaborative projects or help reveal conflicts.
- Cultivating facilitation skills in Network members through practice and feedback from peers and professional facilitators. They will use these facilitation skills within their organizations and communities.
- Including field trips to visit conservation projects or communities. This allows members to learn about challenges their peers face and to provide advice and help.
- Making the retreats more fun and interactive by including playful energizers, working in small groups, and diligently limiting lectures and formal training sessions.

Learning Exchanges

One-on-one targeted learning exchanges, where Network members traveled or had others visit their sites to address specific issues, were excellent for sharing knowledge and fostering collaboration. These exchanges allowed leaders to share solutions and discoveries with one another and proved to be more effective and cost-efficient than formal training or technical assistance by an outside expert.

Some members remarked it was an eye-opener to realize they can help each other rather than rely on outside consultants. At the eighth retreat, in 2006,

MIC members identified learning exchanges as perhaps the best way for members and their staffs to fulfill their learning goals between retreats. However, learning exchanges are budget-dependent, and budget cuts have limited their availability. (A list of MIC learning exchanges can be found in Appendix 8.)

"Trainings and leadership exercises have helped me to understand my leadership styles and how to use them better. I have learned to work with a much bigger group in order to tackle much bigger problems….it has shifted my focus from working locally, and as MIC has grown, I have begun to look at regional threats. I have expanded my knowledge and ability to engage in regional issues."

~

Willy Kostka, Executive Director
Micronesia Conservation Trust

Targeted Technical Assistance

Providing "demand-driven technical assistance" is another MIC benefit to members. Targeted technical assistance is derived from assessments, requests from members during retreats, or discussions with the coordinator. Common examples of technical assistance requests include board training, strategic planning, specific staff training, time management, and budgeting.

To meet demand for technical assistance in the region, MIC assisted the Pohnpei Campus of the College of Micronesia in launching a new Center for Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership Development. The Center offered capacity building services to civil society and governments in Micronesia, organizing and managing training events facilitated by regional experts skilled in organizational assessments, and development activities. The Center remained active until TNC ceased funding it due to budget cuts.

Conference Calls

In the early years, MIC organized periodic conference calls to follow up with members on action items, get input for future retreats, and foster on-going communication. These calls were not popular or effective; Micronesians prefer face-to-face interaction, and telecommunications between the islands is often very poor. Even though other networks find such calls very productive and cost-effective, MIC did not continue this frustrating exercise. Presently, only one call between retreats is scheduled to remind members what is coming up and to check on progress on goals.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT ACTIVITIES

1

Just say "no" to talking heads

MIC's most successful activities, including retreats, emphasized facilitated discussion among peers. These activities gave members an opportunity to do real work (e.g. conservation action planning for a priority site) and facilitated peer interaction and feedback. Presentations were kept short and intended to stimulate questions and shared insights by all attendees, not just the presenters. MIC did sponsor some formal training for common needs.

2

Use and adapt proven assessment tools

All the assessment tools used by MIC were tested and adapted by members from highly recommended tools developed elsewhere.

3

Create an environment that accommodates different needs

Members will have differences in experience, work environments, culture, style, resources and more. MIC provided an environment to encourage openness, sharing and learning where everyone was valued. It also used participatory, reflective, and interactive activities to build understanding and acceptance. To avoid unintentional bias, be sure the Network resource team includes experienced individuals from each distinct sector or group served.

4

Mobilize local experts and use foreign experts with care

Whenever possible, engage local experts, who can be more effective than highly credentialed expatriates. Network members often share challenges, know the regional culture, know how to best communicate with that specific group, and have highly relevant experiences of failure and success. Relying on local expertise enhances collaboration, learning, camaraderie, and pride among peers.

5

Networks catalyze collaboration

By bringing members together and fostering personal as well as professional bonds, MIC helped build a willingness to work together – as a Network or groups within the Network – on larger issues and across a much broader range of nations and states than was possible before MIC. However, despite MIC's results, some members still feel the Network has not evolved sufficiently for them to always know who to ask or work with on key issues or projects.

6 *Get creative in addressing conflict in cultural context*

All leaders (and networks) must deal with conflict in their work. Micronesians use "avoidance" as a strategy for dealing with conflict, yet the skills required for collaborative problem solving presume parties are talking about the problem and are willing to work on it together. MIC tried various ways to address this difficult issue with only limited success.

7 *Use network activities to engage member organizations at all levels*

Some members involved their staff, board members, government supervisors, and high-level officials in MIC activities (e.g., workshops, learning exchanges, and training). However, MIC members and coordinators did not always recognize the value of such updates, although they reinforce member learning, build support for the Network, and expand its influence.

8 *Retreat field trips help inspire members to build and maintain passion for conservation work*

At every retreat, the host MIC members organized a visit with a key community and/or conservation partners to discuss their work and share experiences. These exchanges often led to new insights and deeper commitment by all involved and almost always helped advance the host members' work with their partners.

STANDARD 4: ACTIVITY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

ASSESS INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE NEEDS

- ✓ Do members regularly use organizational self-assessment tools, scorecards or other self-reflection exercises to gain insights and track personal and organizational strengths and weaknesses?
- ✓ Does the coordinator periodically conduct formal or informal individual assessments?

DESIGN ACTIVITIES TO MEET MEMBERS' NEEDS

- ✓ How do activities advance network objectives?
- ✓ Do activities ensure members receive support, mentoring, and targeted training to enhance their desired skills?
- ✓ Is there motivation and funding for members to participate in retreats and other activities?
- ✓ Do the activities address members' personal and professional needs?

STANDARD 5: MEASUREMENT AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

The network measures its progress and results, evaluates them against its intended milestones and outcomes, and adapts its course accordingly.

MIC'S STORY – TOO MANY MEASURES

DURING 2002 TO 2005, THE MILESTONES in MIC's work plan proved to be the most useful tool for assessing Network progress. Due to MIC's excellent early performance that exceeded many of its first-year milestones, TNC was able to assist the Network pilot through several difficult financial periods.

Underestimating the time and resource commitment to track milestones, the MIC resource team introduced *Seven Measures of Success* (Table 1, below) at the first retreat for the members to prioritize. This list of potential measures of the Network's effectiveness was based on metrics used in other successful networks. The founding members saw high value in each, and ambitiously decided to pursue all of these measures.

Key assumptions were also agreed:

- Agencies will assess progress or improvement against their own baselines.
- The measures are not intended for comparisons between agencies.
- Threat and biodiversity measures will be tailored to the objectives of each site or management action.
- We will start simple and easy.
- MIC will use the combined measures to see where there are shared needs and where the network is being effective.

From 2005 to 2007, a measures session was included in every retreat to advance this work.

Two to three members tested the facilitated organizational self-assessment tools[13] and the Micronesian Effective Conservation Program Scorecard. Their testimonials about the usefulness for their respective organizations led to rapid adoption by others.

[13] Organizational assessment processes, also known as institutional development, are nothing new in the field of nonprofit management and are often conducted by an external expert or consultant. What is relatively new is the idea of organizational *self*-assessment. The Nature Conservancy has developed the Institutional Self-Assessment Tool (aka the facilitated organizational self-assessment tool) to assist organizations in determining their current level of development based on eight core institutional areas. Implicit in this notion is that, with a little guidance and the right tools, an NGO is capable of consciously self-reflecting and identifying its own strengths and weaknesses as an organization. Available online at www.parksinperil.org/howwework/methods/isa.html.

TABLE 1

MIC'S SEVEN MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The two resource-based measures—*threat reduction* and *biodiversity health*—were particularly challenging. Eventually the group asked the Palau International Coral Reef Center, the member with the strongest scientific mandate, to help train local staff in accepted standard monitoring methodologies. They also agreed that the most meaningful measures had to be tailored to each site and then "rolled up" into national or regional trends. TNC's conservation action planning process became MIC's accepted methodology for site-based measures, after it was tested and adapted to the Micronesian context.

Measure		Assessment Tool or Protocol	Purpose
1	Network Diversity	Member Profiles	Track network demographics (geographic, age, sector, gender, etc.).
2	Leader Satisfaction	Activity Evaluations & Member Interviews	Feedback for activity improvement and Network impact.
3	Organizational Effectiveness (Practices)	Facilitated Self-Assessment / Institutional Self- Assessment	Identify and take action on priority areas for the organization's development (e.g., strategic planning, financial management, board development).
4	Conservation Practices	Self-Assessment with MIC or CAP scorecard	Identify and take action on priority areas for improvement in conservation projects (e.g., community engagement, planning, staffing, long-term funding).
5	Collaborations	Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory	Examine current or proposed collaborations for factors of success; highlight areas of strength and take action on identified gaps, if needed.
6	Threat Reduction	Site-based planning (CAP or equivalent)	Assess changes in priority threats managed at the sites to determine strategy effectiveness and guide future management.
7	Biodiversity Health	Site-based planning (CAP or equivalent)	Assess changes in the status of priority ecosystems/species at the site to determine strategy effectiveness and guide future management.

By 2004, the group had some baseline information, and the first MIC "report card" was compiled in 2005. In addition to the seven measures (see Table 1, above), this report card also summarized progress on members' specific goals from each retreat. Compiling the report card was very time-consuming, and has not been repeated. At this point, the members and coordinator could not keep up with all the different measures, and each member simply monitored whatever their organization found useful.

In 2007-2008, the steering committee refocused on measures and identified four of the original seven as a practical set of MIC measures: *conservation practices, organizational effectiveness (practices), threat reduction,* and *biodiversity health*.

These measures are used not only to gauge effectiveness of the MIC Network, but also to report to donors and assess needs of MIC members. Additionally, most MIC member organizations actively use some or all of these measures today, as appropriate for their organizations' context.

Nonetheless, these first assessments helped the Network make informed decisions about its future. In 2006, a team of internal and external reviewers conducted the MIC Review to learn more about how programmatic reviews could improve management effectiveness. After review of key documents and broad consultation with MIC members, partners, and TNC staff, the reviewers recommended prioritized next steps for the Network. To help MIC members understand and implement the findings, recommendations were presented at the eighth retreat, in Saipan in August 2006. Almost all the priority recommendations were addressed soon after the retreat, with significant benefits to the Network. Action taken since the Review on the seven high priority recommendations broadly relating to leadership, membership, and conservation are highlighted above in Table 2.

TABLE 2.

ACTIONS TAKEN ON HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MIC REVIEW

	High Priority Recommendations	MIC Actions
1	**Form an MIC coordinating committee.**	Yes. Steering committee established (8th retreat).
2	**Improve MIC coordinator effectiveness:**	
	Cultivate strong personal relationship with Network members.	Yes, by way of site visits, informal meetings, during institutional assessments, training, and planning.
	More consistent communication and follow-up with members on Network activities.	Yes. Monthly Skype chats, email, and blog updates.
	Emphasize or encourage more learning exchanges.	Yes. These were popular, but budget-dependent, thus are now less frequently utilized.
	Increase communication with government to encourage participation in the MIC.	Yes. Government representatives invited to retreats.
	Actively seek collaboration with other regional networks.	Yes. Collaboration with PIMPAC, PILN, GLISPA and others.
	Develop a survey of member satisfaction with the MIC coordinator to ensure member needs are being met.	Yes, gathered via several mechanisms – evaluations, what worked / what needs to change (also known as plus/delta) feedback in retreat sessions, and direct solicitation from MIC members.
	Detail the role and requirements for the next MIC coordinator and a transition strategy.	Yes. Developed "Administration Manual Activities."
	Establish a committee for coordinator search and recruitment.	No search committee. In 2007 and 2009, TNC and MCT jointly hired the coordinator.
3	**Credit for MIC Results:**	
	Conduct a session on ensuring appropriate crediting of results from MIC activities.	Yes. This was discussed at the 8th retreat.

	Establish a policy on attribution of results.	Yes. Policy agreed upon, although not formally.
	Send drafts of external communications about MIC to the coordinating committee.	Yes. Anything written about MIC (retreats reports, activities, articles, blog, etc.) is shared with the steering committee and MIC group.
4	**MIC Ownership:**	
	Schedule a discussion about who owns MIC, and how to broaden the sense of collective ownership.	Yes. This was discussed at the 8th retreat.
5	**Membership**	
	Be clear about how people become members and retain their membership.	Yes. Documented in 8th retreat report.
	Be more forgiving when it comes to revoking membership.	Yes. There is now a forgiveness clause.
6	**Conservation Outcomes**	
	Provide additional assistance to MIC members to accelerate completion of CAPs for all conservation sites associated with the MIC network.	Yes. Two Efroymson workshops have been done (reports available from Trina Leberer, tleberer@tnc.org). Three CAP coaches were trained in Micronesia and a Micronesia CAP Franchise established to serve the region.
7	**Serving a More Diverse Membership**	
	Develop strategies to meet the needs of emerging leaders and senior members.	Yes. This is done via the MIC member's professional & institutional goals at each retreat and from the challenges identified in country/state reports that members submit in advance of retreats.
	Make clear that MIC is a network where government is welcomed and valued.	Yes. Equal number government and NGO members in 2009.
	Conduct in-depth assessment of government needs and how MIC can meet them.	Yes. Informal assessment completed as part of coordinator interviews with all members.
	Keep government members' supervisors informed of MIC accomplishments to ensure they understand the value of MIC to their organizations over time.	Partially. Summaries produced and distributed to all members, who are encouraged to share them with their supervisors.
	Make a special effort to tailor meeting and learning content to government.	Partially. At least one government member sits on the group setting the retreat agendas, but no specific content developed for government members.
	Encourage government cooperation at the regional level on conservation issues.	Yes. Extensive regional government cooperation on the Micronesia Challenge, invasive species prevention and eradication, and scrap metal recycling.
	Provide governments with the ability to substitute members as needed.	Not agreed. Evaluated on a case-by-case basis; maintaining personal commitment is highly valued by MIC members.

GOOD PRACTICE: EVALUATE ACTIVITIES

FOLLOWING A NETWORK ACTIVITY, ASSESS how well it met member needs, and how subsequent activities can be designed to meet their needs better. This assessment can be based on written or oral evaluations, or both. Consider conducting an After Action Review (AAR) immediately following an activity. An AAR is typically framed by questions like these:

- *What did we expect to be the key factors in ensuring that participants benefited from the activity?*
- *What were our results, in terms of participant satisfaction, and why did we get those results?*
- *What factors will we employ again in future activities, and what will we do differently?*

MIC consistently evaluates its two major activities that support MIC's core strategy–retreats and learning exchanges—and uses the feedback to improve. The most common evaluation methods used are strengths/weaknesses feedback, written evaluations, and interviews. Adjustments are made through group discussion and consensus. More analytical tools like after-action reviews and emergent learning are not used at this time.

GOOD PRACTICE: EVALUATE PROGRESS

EVALUATING A NETWORK'S PROGRESS REQUIRES assessing its activities and their immediate results over a period of time and comparing them to the measurable milestones and results that reflect its purpose or goals. Some of the questions that might be asked to evaluate progress include:

- *In the past [8]year[s], how many network members completed, in their local work situation, the planned activities associated with the network?*
- *To what extent are those "local" activities having the intended near-term results?*
- *In the past [8] year[s], to what extent did the network complete the collective activities planned?*
- *To what extent are those collective activities having the intended near-term results?*
- *To the extent we are not achieving the results intended, why not?*
- *What adjustments do we think would yield better results?*

At each retreat, every MIC member sets specific goals for him/herself (personal, professional, conservation, institutional, and often collaborative) and reports back on progress or difficulties at the following retreat. This is also a time for others to offer advice or assistance. This simple yet powerful tradition has strengthened members' comfort and skill in goal setting, accountability, and adaptive management. Each retreat also ends with action items to advance shared priorities.

MIC's current practice is to encourage self-reporting without questions or "tough love" by others to clarify or improve a member's strategy (though some of this may occur privately). The group does not discuss some of the deeper questions about intended results suggested above. MIC retreat reports contain a good record of progress against set goals and action items, but these have not been analyzed since the 2005 MIC Report Card. At this time, it seems that MIC has a strong practice of tracking results, but may not yet focus consistently on evaluating them.

GOOD PRACTICE: EVALUATE OUTCOMES

THE ULTIMATE OUTCOMES EXPECTED OF A NETWORK may take years to achieve (see Standard 1). For example, if a network's purpose is to increase the pace, scale and effectiveness of fisheries restoration, its outcomes likely will not be ripe for measure for a few years. Thus measurement of network outcomes will be less frequent than evaluation of activities and measurement and evaluation of network progress. At a minimum, outcomes should be measured at the termination of a network. The extent to which the network achieved its intended purpose, as well as conclusions concerning why it did or did not, should be reported to members, sponsor(s) and donor(s). Ideally this information would also be shared with other network leaders. In the case of networks focused on conservation practice this information might take the form of a case study published through the Conservation Gateway.

TABLE 3.

MAJOR MIC OUTCOMES & TIMEFRAMES

Measure	Timeframe
Improved Conservation Practices	FAST (1-2 years)
Improved Organizational Practices	FAST (1-2 years)
Threat Reduction	MEDIUM (3-5 years)
Changes in Biodiversity Health	FAST Degradation or SLOW Recovery (5-10+ years)

Two of MIC's major outcomes—threat reduction and biodiversity health for key sites—can take many years to achieve, while the others—improved conservation and organizational practices—are used to provide meaningful short-term feedback (Table 3, above).

As mentioned previously, MIC is committed to its identified outcomes and has good tools to assess them. However, MIC has not consistently gathered and analyzed members' information to objectively measure progress and impacts. However, as part of the Micronesia Challenge, heads of government have asked their agencies to track progress against the target to "effectively conserve, by 2020, 30 percent of near-shore marine resources and 20 percent of terrestrial resources," thereby encouraging MIC members to focus more on measuring outcomes.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT MEASURES AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

1

Set milestones when the network is launched

Milestones have provided critical guidance to the network and have allowed MIC to monitor what was and wasn't working. However, progress against milestones only provides a snapshot of MIC's overall impact. More comprehensive and integrated reporting systems are also required.

2

Use a few simple measures that are highly useful

Attempting to simultaneously launch the Network and track so many measures from the start was too ambitious. One of the most common causes of failing to monitor outcomes is trying to track too many at once. So choosing one or two measures would have been more realistic and achievable. Other measures could then have been added over time.

3

Use information the members are already gathering

Include progress on members' goals as a critical measure. MIC neglected to do this.

4

Adopt tools to the local context

Engaging members in designing the Conservation Scorecard was highly effective.

5

Plan a review

The 2006 MIC Review provided comprehensive, valuable feedback and clear recommendations to improve the Network's governance and benefits to members. These deeper insights could not have been provided by simple measures.

6

Conservation results are hard to measure, yet they are the ultimate determinant of success

Networks can make measuring results easier and more cost-effective by pooling resources, agreeing to use the same methodology, and sharing skilled staff.

7

Be careful about attributing credit for results

It is critically important that the network does not take direct credit for results. Networks do not directly implement conservation actions; their members do. While MIC developed a policy to deal with this sensitive issue in 2006, some members have continued to express concern.

STANDARD 5: MEASURES QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

EVALUATE ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Which activities will be evaluated?
- ✓ What methods and/or tools, e.g., what worked /what needs to change (also known as plus/delta) feedback, written evaluations, interviews, after-action reviews will be used for evaluation?

EVALUATE PROGRESS

- ✓ How will members evaluate their progress? How often?
- ✓ Are indicators simple to assess and useful for decision-making?

EVALUATE OUTCOMES

- ✓ How will outcomes be tracked and evaluated over the short term and long term?
- ✓ Is there a clear policy on how to attribute or share credit for results?

STANDARD 6: DOCUMENTATION OF LESSONS LEARNED

The network documents activities, results, and the lessons learned from them.

MIC'S STORY

TNC AND MIC RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE of documenting lessons learned, and recognized that this was different from documenting and evaluating activities and progress toward milestones. MIC members regularly shared their goals, actions, difficulties, and lessons in implementing conservation activities and strengthening their organizations. Historically, these were partially documented in the MIC retreat reports and learning exchange evaluations, but there had been no systematic effort to summarize them for use by future members or others.

To date, MIC has conducted three comprehensive efforts to capture key lessons to guide the Network's development and share valuable information with others:

MIC "Mind Dump" (2005-2006)

Patricia Leon, MIC's first coordinator, drafted the first "lessons learned" report with help from others, to document the Network's lessons from design phase through pilot and provide guidance for a potential Melanesia network. This document was neither finalized nor widely shared, but it did provide valuable context for the second MIC coordinator and the 2006 MIC Review.[14]

MIC Review (2006)

The most systematic and thorough lessons learned document was the MIC Review conducted by a five-person team led by Ian Dutton, then TNC's Asia-Pacific conservation science director. This formal review assessed the effectiveness of the MIC pilot and, as charted above, provided prioritized recommendations to improve progress. A final draft was disseminated widely within TNC, and its findings were included in publications.

Presentations to TNC Asia Pacific Conservation Partnership and Leadership (CPAL) network (2007)

MIC's early success as a partnership strategy was highlighted in two presentations for TNC Asia-Pacific senior managers and staff. Bill Raynor chronicled experiences from TNC's early days in Micronesia through the development of MIC and recapped the value of "working through partners."

[14] The MIC "Mind Dump" also provided the impetus for TNC's first international workshop on effective networks. Findings from this workshop, organized by Bruce Boggs, then director of TNC's Conservation Learning Initiative, led to the *Seven Standards and Good Practices for Designing and Operating Effective Networks,* which in turn provided the framework for this report.

Susi Menazza Olmsted examined what worked, what didn't work, and MIC's lessons to date.

All of these efforts are represented and updated here, coalesced into one report that supports learning and adaptive management. This document is also the first report with a target audience and distribution strategy beyond MIC members and TNC's Asia Pacific staff, with the aim of catalyzing conservation at large scale, globally.

GOOD PRACTICE: PACKAGING LESSONS LEARNED

THE KNOW-HOW CREATED THROUGH A NETWORK, the lessons learned through local and collective actions and results, may take a variety of forms and may be documented and packaged in a variety of ways. Examples include:

- reports of local actions, results, and conclusions about what did and did not work and why;
- reports of collective actions, results, and conclusions about what did and did not work and why;
- proceedings of network meetings or workshops; and/or
- standards and guidance for good practice, based on lessons learned in multiple situations.

In addition to the three broad syntheses of MIC lessons described above, MIC packaged specific lessons in various forms:

MIC Work Plan (2002 and 2005)

MIC's scoping results were summarized into a work plan, providing strategic guidance, early credibility, and a key fundraising tool for coordinators, members, and resource people for three to four years.

Retreat Reports and Evaluations

All retreats were fully documented, and members completed evaluations after every retreat. These evaluations guided the development of subsequent retreats and a model retreat template (Appendix 7). Retreat highlights were widely distributed for the first three years.

Learning Exchange Reports

The coordinator ensured that participants completed evaluations after each learning exchange.

Requests from Other Networks:

Valuable lessons learned were documented when MIC responded to requests from others—like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Programme of Work on Protected Areas—seeking information to guide their programs.

GOOD PRACTICE: SHARING LESSONS LEARNED

SOME NETWORKS USE INDEPENDENT WEBSITES or ConserveOnline workspaces to distribute the products of their learning. Additional channels of distribution include publication (e.g., journal articles, handbooks, etc.) and presentations at conferences or meetings.

Prior to this report, MIC primarily shared lessons learned internally, through:

MIC Blog (2006-2010)

The MIC Blog is a popular and accessible way to inform members and other interested parties over a wide geography about MIC events and concerns of common interest.

Retreat Highlights (2002-2005)

Prior to the MIC Blog, retreat highlights were sent to a diverse list of MIC members, donors, TNC staff, and others with an expressed interest in learning networks.

Presentations

Surprisingly, the presentations prepared for scoping consultations and TNC Asia-Pacific retreats were among the most useful sources of lessons for this report. Segments were also shared with others to respond to specific queries, showing these presentations to be effective and practical tools for synthesizing and conveying key lessons to a diverse audience over time.

Participation in Meetings and Other Networks

Two former MIC coordinators, who were also members of other TNC learning networks in the region, shared learning network coordination techniques and capacity-building tools with staff across the TNC Asia-Pacific and North Asia regions through the other network's retreats. Similarly, MIC provided significant input to TNC's 2005 workshop *Conservation through Learning Networks: Strengthening Partner Capacity & TNC Practice through Emergent Learning.* Audrey Newman also transferred many MIC insights to other networks that she helped develop. For example, the streamlined design and scoping process for the Pacific Invasive Learning Network was built from MIC's experience.

Awards

In 2005, MIC received TNC's Outstanding Partnership Award as "an exemplary program that has helped multiple partner organizations become results-oriented, strategically aligned, financially self-sufficient, and adaptive to change—all components necessary to achieve lasting conservation success for the future generations of Micronesians." This award helped increase MIC's profile with senior TNC managers and others.

GOOD PRACTICE: DEPLOYING NETWORK MEMBERS

ALTHOUGH ONLINE AND IN-PRINT DISTRIBUTION of network products may ensure extensive reach, it often is not sufficient to ensure effective adoption and use of network products. This is particularly so when adoption of a new practice

requires knowledge that cannot be readily documented, such as how to adapt a practice to a unique situation. To ensure widespread adoption of network products, it may be necessary for network members to coach prospective users.

MIC members are the Network's best teachers, coaches, and ambassadors. Over the years, MIC hosted representatives from the Caribbean, Mongolia, Australia, and many TNC inter-disciplinary teams at their retreats, to provide an immersion experience in a leaders' network. MIC members also travelled to the Caribbean and Western Indian Ocean to share their experiences with the Network and the Micronesia Challenge. Most of MIC's guests derived lessons from these exchanges and used them to strengthen their programs. However, MIC did not ask or document what their guests found useful or follow up later to get feedback on the impact of these visits—a missed opportunity for learning.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT DOCUMENTING LESSONS LEARNED

1

Documenting lessons requires time in addition to activity reporting

MIC regularly documented and evaluated its activities to support adaptive management. However, documenting lessons learned required another step—to reflect and record what is working and what is not. This can be done from one person's perspective, but is most valuable when a small group works together to provide different perspectives.

2

Keep a good archive

MIC's coordinators kept excellent documentation of MIC's activities. These were a valuable resource in compiling these lessons.

3

Create a good tradition for documenting and sharing key lessons

Within MIC, lessons were documented when a coordinator took the initiative, usually when leaving the position. This is not ideal. MIC members recommend including a standard session at every retreat to identify and document lessons learned. At minimum, the coordinator and members should agree to reflect and document important key lessons at least every one or two years.

4

Presentations and requests for information are good opportunities to document lessons

This was not fully appreciated until work on this report started. MIC also missed learning some potentially valuable lessons from their international guests at retreats and after the guests returned home.

5

Strategically disseminate lessons learned

Clearly identify the priority target audience(s) for your information and how best to reach them (e.g., one-on-one, via a website or blog, etc). MIC did not do this consistently, and dissemination of lessons beyond the MIC members and TNC was typically ad hoc.

6

Take advantage of high visibility opportunities to spread the word

Large international meetings (and awards) can spark interest in the networks or build their reputation. They also can be incentives to compile and document lessons in presentations that are easy to understand and share.

7

Often the best learning resource is personal contact

The people who benefited the most were those directly involved. It is not possible to capture the many details and intangible aspects of a learning network in a document, so it is important to recognize that sometimes the best approach is to share experiences in person.

STANDARD 6: DOCUMENTING LESSONS QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

PACKAGING LESSONS LEARNED

- ✓ Will lessons learned be captured, packaged, and shared? If so, how frequently? By what mechanisms?
- ✓ Are time and resources allocated in the network's plans for capturing and sharing lessons learned?
- ✓ Who will be responsible for capturing and packaging lessons learned?

SHARING LESSONS LEARNED

- ✓ Who are the target audiences for the lessons? How are they best reached (e.g., Web, internal reports, presentations, meetings)?
- ✓ Will both positive and negative lessons be shared externally?
- ✓ Does the Network have a policy on sharing lessons learned?

DEPLOYING NETWORK MEMBERS

- ✓ Will the Network host guests?
- ✓ Are there criteria for inviting guests to Network activities?
- ✓ Is there support for members to travel and share their experiences?
- ✓ How will exchanges be documented and assessed for their usefulness?

STANDARD 7: ADEQUATE RESOURCES

The network's resources are sufficient to achieve its purpose.

MIC'S STORY

MIC'S INITIAL SCOPING PROCESS WAS SUPPORTED by a grant from the Packard Foundation's Organizational Effectiveness program. Continued support for the full pilot seemed highly likely, until stock market and donor changes caused financial uncertainty. Nonetheless, the design team decided to proceed with only one year of funding secured, and to continue to seek additional funds while the Network developed. Fundraising proved difficult for a new approach in a little-known part of the world; thus, only partial funding was pieced together for the second year. Finally, it was MIC's excellent progress on its milestones and the members' two-year commitment that convinced TNC's Asia-Pacific regional director to fill the funding gap with discretionary funds. MIC members also set a goal to be 50 percent self-funded by 2007.

Resources include people and time, as well as money. MIC successfully engaged people with diverse skills and talents to assist the Network, with little or no financial compensation. Most of the founding members and resources team members were highly experienced and had staff and professional networks they could call upon for assistance.

Oversight for continuing MIC beyond the successful pilot phase was transferred to Bill Raynor, director of a newly consolidated TNC Micronesia Program in 2005. MIC resources remained secure, and self-funding was not an issue until the U.S. financial crisis in 2008 forced the Micronesia Program to make major budget cuts. TNC again focused on a sustainable long-term funding strategy for the Network. As the new MIC coordinator, Mae Bruton-Adams made this a priority when planning the MIC retreat in 2006, and many members responded by covering their own expenses, including travel.

In 2009, MIC relocated to the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT). MIC members and TNC agreed that MCT was an ideal long-term home for the Network because it is a Micronesian organization with a regional scope and a core mandate to build conservation capacity. MCT Director Willy Kostka is also a very active founding MIC member. MCT consolidated resources by hiring one coordinator to oversee and increase synergy between two related networks—Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community (PIMPAC) and MIC. Members have confidence in this long-term strategy because MCT is the funding mechanism for the Micronesia Challenge and has a strong track record in fundraising.

GOOD PRACTICE: SCOPING AND DESIGN COSTS

DEVELOPING A NETWORK GENERALLY REQUIRES considerable activity and some cost prior to securing sufficient funds to launch it. During this scoping and design phase, needs are assessed, purpose is defined, prospective members are identified, and resource requirements are determined. This phase will require a deliberate consultation process and may require convening prospective members. Wait until you have assurance of resources before initiating the second phase—launch and operation.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when the MIC design phase started; it was perhaps as early as January 2001 when the TNC Asia-Pacific team first discussed a pilot learning network, and then secured grant funding for the direct costs of scoping and design. All costs for staff time were covered by TNC. The approximate timeline for this phase occurred as follows:

June–December 2001
Prepared and implemented the consultation

January–May 2002
Designed the Network and recruited the first coordinator

May–September 2002
Recruited founding network members and organized the first retreat

If qualified TNC staff had not been available, a part-time consultant would have been needed to do consultations, convene the design team, and incorporate lessons learned from other networks.

GOOD PRACTICE: LAUNCH AND OPERATION COSTS

DETERMINE THE ACTIVITIES AND OTHER COST FACTORS that will be required to achieve the network's objective and how these costs will be distributed. The costs of a network are usually shared by the sponsor and the members. For example, the sponsor and donors enlisted by the sponsor may finance some or all costs of members' travel to participate in collective network activities. On the other hand, very rarely does the budget for a network cover the time contributed by members. The distribution of costs will be very important in prospective members' calculation of the cost/benefit of participation. The cost of participation should be clear to members and their organizations or programs.

The MIC annual budget includes a dedicated coordinator, travel and meeting expenses for retreats, and discretionary funds for activities to respond to member needs. These included learning exchanges, consultant services, technical assistance, and training. Meeting expenses include TNC support staff for overseeing retreat logistics. The members contributed their time, and MIC covered actual travel costs, accommodation, and meals. These funds were raised from foundations, individuals, the New Zealand government, and TNC discretionary funds. The coordinator and resource team supplemented the budget with in-kind assistance and asked members to help keep costs down.

Annual MIC costs decreased after 2005, even though the number of jurisdictions and members increased. This is partly explained by the transition from an expatriate coordinator to one on a local salary and by increasing the interval between retreats. Costs also decreased because the number of learning exchanges and other activities declined. In 2010, new coordinator Isao Frank urged members to use funds budgeted for their support or risk losing this benefit in the future. Financial sustainability was one of MIC's original milestones and was discussed with members from the beginning. Steps taken toward financial sustainability included:

- Setting clear expectations at the outset that the network would be financed long term by participants' efforts (including TNC);
- Trying to recruit at least one to two new donors each year to diversify the funding base;
- Discussing funding situation at Network meetings; providing financial reports to members starting in 2005;
- Encouraging and acknowledging participant contributions (e.g., self-funding of learning exchanges, travel to retreats, strategic planning, and other technical assistance initially provided by MIC), though these were not tracked; and
- Expanding the network to include U.S. territories, which increased access to U.S. government support.

TABLE 4.

MIC ANNUAL EXPENSES (IN US$ THOUSANDS)

Fiscal Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total Expenses	31	167	152	165	na	143	85	45	33
Active Members	0	12	15	20	23	26	28	29	24
Cost/ Active Member	--	14	10	8.3	na	5.5	2.4	1.6	1.4
Notes	Scoping	2 retreats	2 retreats	2 retreats	Local Coord.	Local Coord	Self-funding Travel	Self-funding Travel	Self-funding Travel

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT ADEQUATE RESOURCES

1

Secure two years of funding before launching a network

Scoping can be done with "shoestring" funding. However, at least two years of funding should be secured before the launch to provide solid support for the coordinator and activities, while the network develops a track record. Responding to enthusiastic new members while looking for funds was very challenging for MIC.

2

Resources include money, people and time

In addition to funding, the network needs a dedicated coordinator (preferably full time), sponsor(s), and at least one founding member able to commit significant time to its success for at least two to three years. Workloads for the coordinator can be unrealistic, and s/he will need administrative and meeting support. Finally, the coordinator and network need access to various local and international experts, either paid or engaged as volunteer resources.

3

Deliver real benefits and early wins for short-term success, support, and leverage

MIC succeeded despite early funding difficulties because its members valued and used it. The power of this network approach spread quickly, and two new networks were inspired by MIC: the Pacific Invasives Learning Network hosted by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Pacific Island Marine Protected Areas Community (PIMPAC), supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). MIC's strong reputation with members and others helped it secure funding from unusual sources.

4

Talk about sustainability from the start

Some networks are established for a defined period, but the investment in building a network often becomes more cost-effective and yields more significant results over time. Even as a pilot, TNC and MIC members recognized that if successful, it would have a long-term role. TNC was clear about its catalyst role—facilitating startup and providing early funding. Members understood that it was their network, including the responsibility for supporting it over time.

STANDARD 7: RESOURCES QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

SCOPING AND DESIGN COSTS

- ✓ Who will pay for the scoping costs?
- ✓ Who will be responsible for securing start-up funds? Ongoing funding?
- ✓ Does the network have at least two years of funding secured *before* the launch?
- ✓ Will short-term benefits and early wins be captured and leveraged to promote additional support?

LAUNCH AND OPERATION COSTS

- ✓ Besides sufficient funds, are there people committed to providing ongoing support?
- ✓ Are members expected to contribute to the network's operating costs? Will this change over time?
- ✓ Does the budget include the coordinator's salary, travel, meeting expenses, and discretionary funds for activities to respond to members' needs?
- ✓ Does the network have a strategy for long-term support?

MIC OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

IN 2001, TNC STAFF IDENTIFIED TWO MAJOR OUTCOMES they hoped a conservation leadership network would help achieve:

1. Expand conservation activities across Micronesia
2. Increase conservation cost-effectiveness and sustainability through partners

Micronesian conservation leaders understood the Conservancy's intention in creating a conservation leadership network, however, the conservation leaders had their own objectives that they wanted the network to fulfill and decided to expand the network's expectations to include the following:

3. Improve organizational and technical capacity of local conservation partners.
4. Increase collaboration and large-scale action on shared challenges.

Based on this broad input, clear and specific milestones for the two-year pilot and five-year milestones for a successful MIC network were developed and agreed upon by the founding MIC members. All these milestones were achieved, though not necessarily according to the original timeframes.

While a network cannot take credit for its members' successes, it is widely agreed that MIC played a key role in advancing many important conservation outcomes. MIC's direct impacts are the relationships, resources, and opportunities the Network provides to its members, their organizations, and their conservation programs. The real outcomes are achieved by Network members themselves—individually and collaboratively—through their leadership and commitment to action.

MIC was a major force in helping its members expand the conservation sector across Micronesia, by helping to launch and strengthen conservation organizations in all five jurisdictions, all four states within the Federated States of Micronesia, and the regional Micronesian Conservation Trust (MCT). The Network contributed significantly to catalyzing, facilitating, accelerating, and supporting major conservation initiatives at the site, national and regional levels across Micronesia. Along the way, the MIC Network provided conservation leaders with adequate support, including mentoring, training, and inspiration.

The table below illustrates the major outcomes the Network was designed to advance (expanding conservation across Micronesia and strengthening conservation leadership and organizations), as well as a number of unexpected outcomes that MIC members also considered significant—support of the Micronesia Challenge, increasing conservation leadership by women, and inspiring the creation of other networks.

To help illustrate the assumptions around how conservation strategies produce results around a specific conservation goal, TNC uses a series of "if-then" statements called *results chains*. In addition to the table above, two results chains—one at the local level and one at the regional scale—plus a narrative explaining the regional scale chain were drafted as a part of this lessons learned project (see Appendix 10).

TABLE 5.

MILESTONES FOR MIC PILOT PHASE 2003-2004 AND THE CONTINUING NETWORK 2005-2009

The purpose of this exercise was to retroactively trace how certain changes actually occurred *after* the network was created and conservation leaders were mentored, inspired, and trained as members of MIC. More specifically, these results chains provide a snapshot of how the investment in MIC connected to members' changes in behavior, knowledge, attitudes, and actions; how those changes improved collective action, members' organizational effectiveness, and capacity to embrace innovative opportunities; reduced threats and improved effective management; and ultimately the support and implementation of region-wide protection of marine and terrestrial resources across Micronesia.

MILESTONE	STATUS
YEAR 1 (2003)	
Launch Network with at least eight senior leaders in conservation as founding members	ACHIEVED
Network leaders report satisfaction and specific benefits in dealing with leadership and management tasks from participating in the initiative	ACHIEVED
Facilitated self-assessments and action plans with all participating MIC organizations	8 OF 10 COMPLETED
Network leaders actively sharing information in conservation	ACHIEVED
YEAR 2 (2004)	
Baseline established for monitoring effective conservation programs	IN PROCESS
Network members report satisfaction and specific benefits in dealing with leadership tasks from participating in the initiative	ACHIEVED
50 % of network members and their organizations report measured improvements in organizational capacity	POSTPONED; 2nd round of measures in the following fiscal year
Network members collaborating on one national and/or regional issue	EXCEEDED; 3 ongoing
MIC members co-design all network activities and recruit the second MIC group	ACHIEVED
Target 6-8 senior leaders and 2-4 junior ones	ACHIEVED (recruiting process changed)
MIC network led by long-term Micronesia-based MIC coordinator	ACHIEVED
YEAR 3 (2005)	
80 % of founding members and their organizations report measured improvements in organizational capacity from annual self-assessment	70 percent (8 of 10 founders did assessments; 7 of 8 reported progress)

80 % of network leaders report satisfaction and specific benefits in dealing with leadership tasks from participating in the initiative	ACHIEVED (7 of 10 founders active; 1 retired)
Network members report measured improvement in ability to form effective collaborations at the state, national, or regional level	Not yet achieved
YEAR 4 (2006)	
Baseline established for monitoring threats and biodiversity health in target areas	IN PROGRESS using CAP for monitoring tool
At least one national or regional collaboration of MIC members produces significant conservation outcomes	ACHIEVED (Palau & FSM PANs, Micronesia Challenge, and MCT)
Micronesians in Island Conservation Network is supported at least 25 percent [15] by locally based institutions and experts	ACHIEVED in 2010
YEAR 5 (2007)	
MIC includes members from at least 7 geographic areas (4 FSM states, Palau, and 2 additional countries or territories in Micronesia)	ACHIEVED
Each MIC member organization reports improved conservation practices in at least one target site	ACHIEVED
Threats measurably reduced at 25 % of these MIC target sites	Not possible to measure yet
80 % of active members and their organizations report measured improvements in organizational capacity from annual self-assessment	Five NGOs
80 % of network leaders report satisfaction and specific benefits in dealing with leadership tasks from participating in the initiative	ACHIEVED
Organizations in at least 5 geographic areas have improved collaboration based on scorecards	Not assessed
MIC Network is maintained by its members and supported at least 50 % by locally based institutions and experts.	Not yet
Building on the success and documented lessons learned by the pilot Micronesia network, similar networks are launched to serve conservation leaders and organizations elsewhere in the Pacific	ACHIEVED (PILN, PIMPAC, and GLISPA)
YEAR 6 (2008)	
MIC Measures have been revised and adopted by MIC members	ACHIEVED
MIC includes members from all the jurisdictions (4 FSM states, Palau, Marshall Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands) and other countries in Micronesia (a member in Kiribati participating remotely)	ACHIEVED
Each MIC member organization reports improved conservation practices in at least one target site	ACHIEVED
Threats measurably reduced at 25 % of these MIC target sites	IN PROGRESS by MC Measures Working Group

15 Includes direct contributions or fundraising, covering own costs for learning exchanges and self-assessments, referrals to new funding sources, and other forms of fundraising assistance.

80 % of active members report measured improvements in annual organizational self-assessment	IN PROGRESS— 4 of 9 NGOs using assessment
80 % of active members report satisfaction and specific benefits in dealing with leadership tasks	ACHIEVED
Organizations in at least 5 geographic areas have improved collaboration based on scorecards	SOME IMPROVEMENT (not using scorecard)
MIC retreats are partially funded by members	ACHIEVED
YEAR 7 (2009)	
MIC includes a member from Kiribati, participating remotely	YES
Each MIC member reports to MCT on the revised measures through the MIC Questionnaire	ACHIEVED
Members report on organization through annual organizational self-assessments	IN PROGRESS
MIC will have 2 to 3 attainable regional goals to work on as a whole	IN PROGRESS
Create list of indicators for MIC measures, to effectively monitor progress	ACHIEVED
MC coordinator will be a member of MIC	ACHIEVED
Begin work on a transition plan for MIC	ACHIEVED
Document lessons learned	IN PROGRESS 2010
MIC will have a Strategic Action Plan	IN PROGRESS 2010

OUTCOME 1: EXPANDING CONSERVATION ACROSS MICRONESIA

BETWEEN 1990 AND 2000, BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MIC, conservation in the Micronesia region was taking place on a relatively small scale. Even The Nature Conservancy was only focused on two areas of biological significance (Palau's Rock Islands and Pohnpei's Watershed) and working with just a few NGO partners) and government agencies.

With TNC's help, conservation expansion in Micronesia would soon grow exponentially.

- Between 2000 and 2002, TNC worked with leaders in the other three FSM states to help develop the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which included the FSM's first nationwide list of Areas of Biological Significance (ABS).

During the same period, TNC consulted with conservation leaders across the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau, leading to the launch of the MIC Network with ten founding members[16] in September 2002. (The goal of involving

[16] MIC was originally named Micronesian Leaders in Island Conservation (MLIC). The members of MIC eventually took "leaders" out of the title because they felt that they were elevating themselves to a status they didn't deserve. It is considered out of character for Micronesians to label themselves as leaders. The other difficulty many of the younger

leaders and organizations from all four FSM states, as well as the Marshall Islands, Guam, and the Mariana Islands would also soon be realized.)

- Over the next few years, MIC members helped recruit other members from their own islands and other jurisdictions in Micronesia.
- By 2006, the MIC Network had engaged all four FSM states and five jurisdictions within Micronesia, working with approximately 40 conservation partner organizations and assisting partners with activities in more than 50 conservation sites. Not only did the Network grow significantly, but so did TNC staff in Micronesia. By then, TNC staff had grown from 5 (in 2000) to 12, working with all of MIC's conservation partners.
- In 2009, the Network, which had been supported by TNC with a dedicated coordinator and funding for activities, relocated to the Micronesia Conservation Trust.
- By 2010, MIC members, TNC staff, and other partners were protecting more than 140 conservation sites across Micronesia.

OUTCOME 2: INCREASING CONSERVATION COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH PARTNERS

TABLE 6.

MIC COST-EFFECTIVENESS

BY 2010, THE MIC NETWORK BECAME AN EFFECTIVE mechanism for TNC to engage with and assist more partners, jurisdictions, and sites across the region than it had previously. For example, by 2010 TNC's "cost to engage and assist" compared to 2000 was significantly reduced across the board: 60 percent less per jurisdiction, 69 percent less per partner, and 97 percent less per site (Table 6, below).

TNC's Engagement in Micronesia (Units)	Before MIC Network (2000)	MIC Today (2010)	Cost per Unit – Before MIC	Cost per Unit – Today (2010)	Reduction in cost per Unit to TNC to Engage and Assist
No. of jurisdictions	2	10	$300K	$120K	60%
No. of partner organizations	<6	>38	>$100K	<$31K	~69%
Conservation sites[17]	2	140	$300K	<$8K	97%
Annual TNC budget (staff)	~ $600K	$1,200,000 (10)	-	-	-

members had was being called "leaders" while in the presence of other MIC members who were older and much more mature.

[17] This table highlights the cost-effective expansion of *TNC's engagement and assistance* across the Micronesia region. Many of the more than 140 conservation sites existed in 2000, but TNC's primary focus was direct implementation at "TNC sites." There was no mechanism to engage with or assist other conservation sites in the region.

OUTCOME 3: STRENGTHENING CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONS

WHEN MIC WAS LAUNCHED IN 2002, ONLY THREE conservation NGOs and two government organizations with conservation mandates had professional staff and ongoing programs. While other government agencies also had conservation mandates, many lacked the necessary staff, skills, resources, or political support to take effective action.

Since then, the Network with support from TNC staff has facilitated a great deal of leadership growth:

- MIC members motivated one another to start or strengthen professional conservation organizations and agencies in their home states/countries/territories;
  - Helped establish new organizations in Chuuk, the Marshall Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands and enhanced an existing conservation organization in Kosrae
  - Assisted with leadership transitions for organizations in Pohnpei, Palau, and the Northern Mariana Islands
  - Expanded the Micronesia Conservation Trust to serve all five Micronesia Challenge jurisdictions

- MIC activities support a vibrant community of conservation NGOs working collaboratively with governments and civil society across Micronesia:
  - Develop or strengthen frameworks for national Protected Area Networks (PANs) in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands
  - Engage traditional leaders in supporting conservation in the FSM states of Yap, Pohnpei, and Chuuk
  - Launched the Micronesia Challenge regional office in Palau
  - Developed the first conservation easement in Micronesia, in Kosrae

"MIC has increased the rate of success and funding because we have been able to demonstrate connection to TNC, local partners, and throughout the entire network, including scientists. It has all lent creditability."

~

Willy Kostka, Executive Director
Micronesia Conservation Trust, 2009

- MIC also **introduces tools to increase organizational and conservation effectiveness** and helps adapt them to the Micronesian context. Five tools regularly used by many active members are:
    - Strategic Action Plans (SAP) to prioritize activities and guide budgets
    - Conservation Action Planning (CAP) for key sites (Areas of Biological Significance)
    - Personal, professional, and institutional goal-setting and reporting
    - Periodic organizational self-assessments and actions to address key gaps (e.g., board training, fundraising strategy, etc.)
    - Targeted learning exchanges

OUTCOME 4: INCREASING COLLABORATION AND LARGE-SCALE ACTION

BY BRINGING CONSERVATION LEADERS TOGETHER from across Micronesia, MIC helped many of them realize that the threats to their island environments did not have borders and that conservation needed to happen at a national and regional scale. Members recognized that by working together, they were much better able to effect local and large-scale changes.

"MIC has helped me increase communication with my counterparts… I have access to them across the region now… I know who can help make things flow back and forth, and that provides continuity across the region."

~

Alissa Takesy, Protected Areas Network Coordinator, Department of Resources and Development, Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2009

Significant collaborations advanced by the MIC network include:

- FSM National Implementation Support Partnership (NISP), an agreement by 12 government agencies and NGOs to work together on the Programme of Work on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Approval and support for Environment Sector priorities at the FSM Economic Summit in 2003
- Development of the Micronesia Conservation Trust in 2002 in FSM, and expanded in 2007 to include all of the MC jurisdictions.
- Government and NGO collaboration on legislation, protected areas, protected area networks (PAN), resource monitoring, planning, and funding
- High level collaboration among national governments and NGOs on funding by the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

- Collaborative planning and implementation of key elements of the Micronesia Challenge, including help with meetings and work groups focused on measures, communications and climate change
- TNC and Micronesian Conservation Trust collaboration on mitigation in-lieu fee prospectus for Guam military build-up

ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES

Supporting the Micronesia Challenge

The MIC Network's role in the Micronesia Challenge is multi-faceted and politically complex. Early planning, outreach, and conservation activities by many MIC members created a growing understanding of the need for protected areas and more sustainable resource management among communities, government officials, and leaders across the region, making the Micronesia Challenge possible. Though the MIC Network was not directly involved in the inception of the Challenge, individual members were called upon by their leaders to advise on the parameters and feasibility of achieving this ambitious regional goal.

Each jurisdiction had its own unique politics to address as they responded to this unexpected conservation initiative championed from the highest levels. However, the Challenge was recognized as a rare opportunity to implement nationwide protected area networks and other large-scale conservation strategies developed through careful consultation in the National and State Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs and SBSAPs), Local Action Strategies (LAS), and Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies (CWCS).

By March 2006, all five jurisdictions signed onto the Micronesia Challenge and announced this unprecedented collaboration to the world at a high-level event during the 8th Conference of the Parties to the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD COP8), in Brazil. This event also launched the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA)[18].

In the beginning, some MIC members provided strong leadership for the Challenge, while others had concerns about implementation, funding, stakeholder engagement, and other issues. Over time, however, all MIC members provided valuable input to the initiative during retreat discussions and other meetings, and at the 2009 retreat, they agreed to support and fully endorse the Micronesia Challenge.

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[18] The Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) assists islands in addressing one of the world's greatest challenges: to conserve and sustainably utilize the invaluable island natural resources that support people, cultures, and livelihoods in their island homes around the world. It brings together island nations and nations with islands — small and large, developing and developed — to mobilize leadership, increase resources and share skills, knowledge, technologies and innovations in a cost-effective and sustainable way that will catalyze action for conservation and sustainable livelihoods on islands. It is recognized by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as a partnership to advance the implementation of the CBD 2010 biodiversity target, to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss, and the programs of work on island biodiversity and protected areas.

Many aligned their programs to help advance Micronesia Challenge goals, each according to their strengths and priorities. These include:

- Micronesian Conservation Trust expanded to serve all five Micronesia Challenge jurisdictions and manage the Micronesia Challenge endowment.
- MIC members helped their leaders secure a Global Environment Facility (GEF) pledge for U.S. $6 million to endow long-term protected areas management by the GEF.
- TNC aligned its Micronesia Program to support partners in implementing the Challenge as well as assist each jurisdiction with their sustainable finance plans.
- The Micronesia Challenge regional coordinator joined MIC and used the Network for coordination and technical support.
- Protected Areas Network coordinators, NGOs, and government agencies provided lead support to establish, plan, and manage priority protected areas and implement other conservation activities.
- MIC members helped promote better communication and buy-in at different levels of government (state, national, regional) and with communities.

"MIC can get us to work at a regional and international/global level. If we work in a bubble and the world changes around us all our positive actions will be for nothing. If we are not in-tune or connected with what is happening around us, we will not be able to share all our good work. That is why we need the Micronesia Challenge and that is why the Micronesia Challenge needs us."

~

Patterson Shed, Executive Director, Conservation Society of Pohnpei

Since 2006, Micronesia's lessons from this regional Challenge have helped inform similar initiatives in other island regions and other commitments inspired by Micronesia's example.

Promoting Women Leaders in Conservation

In 2007, MIC members decided that gender balance in the Network was also important. MIC's founders included only one woman, while two others were part of the resource team.[19] In 2010, 13 (57 percent) of MIC's 23 active members were women. Women now hold top positions in seven government

[19] Marjorie Falunruw— Yap Institute of Natural Science (YINS) founder and director was among the ten initial MIC members; Kathy Kesolei—Palauan anthropologist, successful director of many social service programs and currently vice president of the Palau Senate; and Jean Thoulag—Assistant Director, Learning Resource Center, College of Micronesia; were part of the resource team.

agencies and three NGOs represented in MIC. Additionally, MIC includes three female conservation champions widely respected for their key roles in major conservation initiatives, but who do not hold formal director positions.[20]

"Women have always been resource managers, particularly of the land. Men have dominated the government, formal roles."

~

Alissa Takesy, Protected Areas Network Coordinator, Department of Resources and Development, Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2009

Inspiring Other Conservation Networks and Initiatives

Only one and a half years after MIC was launched, TNC was asked to assist with the design and launch of a similar network for resource and conservation practitioners working on invasive species in the Pacific region. This request was a direct result of MIC's strong reputation in the region. The Pacific Invasive Learning Network (PILN) was launched in 2005 by eight international partners and actively serves 14 multi-agency invasive species teams in 14 Pacific island countries and territories today.

To date, MIC has inspired and/or contributed to the:

- Scoping for leadership networks in Melanesia
- Start-up of the Caribbean Challenge
- Start-up of the Coral Triangle Initiative
- Development of the Micronesia Champion Interns
- Great Bear Wilderness in British Colombia, Canada
- Early discussions for a Western Indian Ocean Partnership

[20] These women include Vanessa Fread—YapCAP marine conservation manager; Mary Rose Nakayama—founder of the Chuuk Conservation Society (CCS), and Chuuk RARE Pride Campaign Coordinator; Cheryl Calaustro—Guam RARE Pride Campaign Coordinator.

CONCLUSION

GETTING CONSERVATION DONE IN TODAY'S GLOBAL CONTEXT requires that practitioners and managers make smart and informed decisions that can be leveraged, use resources efficiently, and excite ongoing action at scale. As a key part of The Nature Conservancy's Conservation by Design principles, documenting lessons learned constructively informs this way forward. In as much, TNC seeks to promote an organizational culture committed to continuous improvement and adaptive management.

The process of designing and operating an effective learning network that built conservation capacity across the Micronesia region was a yeoman's task; continually evolving over time due to members' needs, changes in TNC, emerging political opportunities and constraints, and lessons learned along the way. Early on, the dedication to using a collaborative approach to set clear goals and benchmarks, build a committed group of members, insert good Network leaders, and secure resources paid big dividends. Over the years, the continued honing of key activities—learning exchanges, retreats, and technical assists—and tracking the right set of useful measures enabled the Network members to build their individual skills as well as the collective momentum needed to succeed.

In this, we also learned lessons about what didn't work and where there were opportunities to improve—particularly around how to measure progress, articulate member responsibilities, and give credit. These lessons are just as valuable; leveraging expertise and knowledge effectively is just as much about being willing to identify, learn from, and share what didn't work, as well as what did.

"MIC has contributed to all organizations – at several levels – and has raised the profile of the region… amongst others in TNC, in other organizations, governments, in other networks. . . It got the thinking going in a generational way – [they were] started, encouraged, strengthened or inspired by MIC."

~

Willy Kostka, Executive Director, Micronesia Conservation Trust

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Of all its accomplishments, MIC's greatest may also be the simplest. The Network brought people together to build strong relationships and shared experience. In doing so, the Network strengthened the collaborative skills and spirit that have made the many impressive conservation accomplishments across Micronesia possible. It is important to recognize that MIC is not unique in the Pacific or the world; it is an early example of the fast-growing movement of demand-driven peer learning networks.

Leaders in Micronesia will always be challenged by the vast distances in their far-flung island region, but MIC has significantly diminished the dual challenges of isolation and the need for committed conservation organizations and leaders. The authors hope this review of MIC's experience provides an inspiring illustration of how peer learning networks, thoughtfully designed and implemented, can catalyze significant, tangible and lasting change, at scale.

We hope that the experiences, stories, and lessons learned which have been harvested from the Micronesians in Island Conservation Network will contribute to the future success of MIC and networks like it, to the internal strengthening of TNC and its partners, and that these lessons will be shared with other organizations interested in establishing leadership learning networks.

AFTERWORD AND METHODS

Over the years, MIC's evolution has been well documented in meeting reports, program reviews, lessons learned reports, and presentations. This report, however, is the first to be written and distributed with the specific purpose of helping others around the world learn from and adapt MIC's catalytic approach.

The report is specifically designed and written for **three key audiences**[21]:

1. TNC managers, funders, and partners interested in networks;
2. Conservation practitioners who are interested in developing new networks; and
3. The MIC coordinator and members to support adaptive management in the future through a clear understanding of the past.

The purpose and scope of the report[22] are to:

- **Clearly illustrate the outcomes and impact of the MIC Network** on expanding conservation across Micronesia, increasing conservation cost-effectiveness and sustainability through partners, strengthening conservation leadership and organizations, and increasing collaboration and large scale action. The report also shares the "unintended outcomes" of creating and strengthening enabling conditions for the launch of the Micronesia Challenge and the Protected Areas Networks, supporting women leaders in conservation, and inspiring conservation networks and initiative.
- **Help TNC and others leverage on-going and future learning networks** by using the lessons learned in the inception, launch, implementation, and evolution of the MIC network from 2001–2010.
- **Inform current and future MIC strategic planning**.
- **Provide follow-up** on the priority recommendations made in the 2006 MIC Program Review.

Early in the process, the authors reviewed knowledge management literature and decided to follow Collison and Parcell's steps for building a *knowledge asset*[23]:

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21 Our approach was based on a system of "Customer-Centered Job Mapping" described in detail by L.A. Bennencourt and A.W. Ulwick in the *Harvard Business Review*, May 2008, pp. 109-114. http://hbr.org/2008/05/the-customer-centered-innovation-map/ar/1

22 The purpose and scope of this document were developed in 2009 in consultation with Bill Raynor, TNC Asia-Pacific Marine Program Director and Micronesia Program Director for MIC's first eight years; Audrey Newman, TNC Asia-Pacific Senior Conservation Advisor and MIC's lead during the design and pilot phase; Olivia Millard, TNC Asia-Pacific Partnership and Learning Director; Mae Bruton-Adams, MIC Coordinator (2007-2009); and Nina Hadley, TNC Asia-Pacific Partnership Learning Manager .

23 C. Collison and G. Parcell (2004) have described a "knowledge asset" as the element(s) that we can learn from, and bring into our own environment in a timely manner. These

1. Identify a clear customer (audience, user).
2. Identify a specific and strategically important scope.
3. Have a community of practice who will steward and refresh the content.
4. Collate existing material (lessons learned reports, After Action Reviews, interviews, strategic plans, presentations, etc.).
5. Identify general principles or guidelines through careful, intentional distillation.
6. Build a checklist or question set list for the user, illustrated with stories, quotes, pictures, etc.
7. Include links to actual people—the most valuable asset—via email, photos, Web links, etc.
8. Validate the results with the community through a review process.
9. Publish the results and make them widely available using the right media.
10. Keep it alive!

The lessons learned captured here primarily represent the perspective of MIC coordinators, key TNC staff, and a few partners who provided leadership, sponsorship, or critical advice to MIC from 2001-2010. Mae Bruton-Adams, Policy & Partnership Advisor, Micronesia Program; and Nina Hadley, TNC Asia-Pacific Partnerships and Learning Manager, began this process in June 2009 with a review of key documents[24] and sessions with MIC members.

In February 2010, Audrey Newman, then TNC Asia-Pacific Senior Conservation Advisor, agreed to oversee the completion of this review, including integration of the first "lessons" compiled in 2005 with the current input compiled by Nina and Mae. Elizabeth Winternitz-Russell was hired as a consultant to support the writing and document production. A working draft was completed in June 2010 for the MIC steering committee's strategic planning meeting and circulated for input among a broader review committee. The revised working draft was then circulated to all MIC members in August. Key points and lessons learned were presented and feedback collected at the MIC retreat in August 2010 and incorporated into this final report.

elements may include actual documents used in similar scenarios, access to exactly the right detail of information where it is needed, access to key people, and access to summarized critical points—such as key messages or a list of lessons learned. http://www.learning-to-fly.org

[24] We gathered and reviewed current and historic MIC-related materials, which included MIC Retreat Reports (#7-12), presentations by coordinators and TNC field office managers, fact sheets, lessons learned reports, project-completion reports, 2007 TNC Conservation Audit report, interview notes, annual strategic plans, and forms used to document and administer MIC.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Mae and Nina asked me to share my perspective on working with them to finalize this report. It's been almost astounding to learn over the last few months how much conservation and related policy foundation-laying has been accomplished in just one decade, in such a vast geographical region, with such a very small staff. Just to learn how much has been achieved politically and culturally, in the name of conservation, among so many distinct populations, cultures, and mindsets is amazing. Working with the Micronesia team to help synthesize this material has truly brought home for me what Bill Ginn and others have been talking about: taking small pilot work to grand scale, and in the process sharing our expertise with as many other entities around us who can help us get the work done, since we cannot do it all ourselves, and since the work needs to continue long past our individual involvement. I'm grateful to the Coda Fellowship program and this team for bringing this lesson home to me in a very tangible way.

~ Liz Lytle Isaac

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APPENDIX 1. FOUNDING MEMBERS & RESOURCES TEAM

Founding Members

1. Aaron Sigrah, Kosrae Governor's Office
2. Madison Nena, Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization
3. Simpson Abraham, Kosrae Island Resource Management Program
4. Bill Raynor, The Nature Conservancy, Micronesia Program
5. Willy Kostka, Conservation Society of Pohnpei
6. Donald David, Pohnpei Marine Resources
7. Andy Tafileichig, Yap Marine Resources
8. Charles Chang, Yap Community Action Program
9. Margie Falunruw, Yap Institute of Natural Science and U.S. Forest Service
10. Francis Matsutaro, Palau International Coral Reef Center

Founding Resources Team

1. Patricia Leon, MIC Coordinator
2. Audrey Newman, The Nature Conservancy
3. Jean Thoulag, College of Micronesia
4. Kathy Kesolei, Palau traditional leader (recently retired)

APPENDIX 2. STANDARDS AND GOOD PRACTICE FOR DESIGNING AND OPERATING EFFECTIVE NETWORKS

Introduction

A network is a group of people, working across organizational and/or geographic boundaries, who collectively create, apply and test solutions to one or more common challenges.

This document is an initial iteration of a ***guidance package*** designed to help network sponsors and leaders design, launch and operate effective networks. This initial iteration includes *Standards* and *Guidance on Good Practice* for designing and operating effective networks. Further development of this package will add:

- more in-depth guidance on Good Practice;
- references and links to tools;
- case studies; and
- contacts with expertise related to each standard.

Standard 1. Clear Strategic Purpose.

The network has clear goals and measurable outcomes and/or milestones, which are understood by its members, sponsor(s), funder(s), and other key stakeholders.

Rationale

The goal(s) of a network give(s) prospective members a basis for determining whether to participate, provide a basis for selecting members, and drive the design of network activities. Explicitly stated measurable outcomes and/or milestones are essential for gauging a network's effectiveness by its members, leader(s), sponsor(s) and donor(s) (see Standard 5).

Good Practice

Assessing Need and Defining Goal(s). Engage prospective members and other stakeholders in assessing and defining the need for a network. This scoping process will require consulting prospective members concerning goals and other key questions of network design. Define the goal(s) of the network, and determine whether a network is the most cost-effective way to achieve it/them (see table below). Determine the network's duration, appropriate to achieve its goal(s), recognizing that the term may require adjustment.

Defining Outcomes and Milestones. Engage members and other stakeholders in assessing and defining outcomes and milestones. It may not be possible, or desirable, to define measurable outcomes at the outset of a network. Particularly if the network's goal is to solve a complex problem, its members may need to develop a shared understanding of the problem and to develop solutions through experimentation and learning before measurable outcomes can be articulated. Measurable milestones (activity and output measures) provide a framework for gauging progress.

Needs that may be met by a network	**A network may be warranted if. . .**	**Alternatives to a network**	**Examples of measurable milestones**
Strengthen the capacity of members to adapt and use proven methods, tools, strategies or approaches	• Building the capacity requires transfer of tacit knowledge and/or ongoing technical support. • Sharing experience and know-how among members will accelerate effective adoption. • Adoption requires cultural change. • The challenges facing members are similar.	• Training • Mentoring • One-on-one technical assistance	By July 2009, 30 members will have incorporated credible ecosystem services objectives into their shellfish restoration projects, and will have begun to monitor them.
Create best practices and the know-how to use them, by innovating, testing and documenting new strategies, methods, tools, or approaches	• The practice addresses a challenge common to many programs or projects. The practice(s) must be tested in multiple situations to be adequately validated.	• Single-site demonstration project • Cross-boundary project team	By July 2010 demonstrate and document, in 18 markets, an effective strategy to engage the nursery industry in preventing invasions of alien species.
Conceive and coordinate actions, across boundaries, to achieve particular objectives.	• Cross-boundary learning or knowledge-sharing is required.	• Cross-boundary project team	By July 2010 strategies for restoring Pacific salmon will be implemented in 35 priority watersheds.

Standard 2. Effective Leadership.

The network has explicitly identified leadership with appropriate skills and sufficient time allocated to this role to adaptively manage activities that will meet the network's objectives.

Rationale

Whether embodied in an individual or a team, effective leadership is required to focus members' collective attention and effort on the network's purpose, to engage members in activities that help them resolve their individual as well as collective challenges, and to ensure accountability for results to members, sponsor(s), donor(s) and other key stakeholders.

Good Practice

Leadership Functions. Effective network leadership comprises several crucial functions. A network leader, or leadership team, must possess the skills, and have sufficient time allocated, to perform all of these functions well:

- Defining and adapting the network's objectives, in collaboration with its members and sponsor(s);
- Energizing members around the network's objectives, and building community among them;
- Establishing, in collaboration with members, behavioral norms related to member participation and contribution, orientation to results, and constructive peer-critique;
- Assessing the needs of network members, and ensuring that network activities are well-designed and facilitated to meet these needs (see Standard 4);
- Mobilizing resources, including funding and expertise external to the network (see Standard 7);
- Ensuring that network products or outputs are documented and distributed, widely and effectively; and
- Measuring the network's effectiveness and results (see Standard 5).

Leadership Skills. The leadership functions listed above require both content and process expertise. Designing an effective network activity, for example a workshop, requires process design and facilitation skills as well as knowledge of the content to be addressed. Process design and facilitation expertise is necessary to select and design the specific decision-making or learning methods to be used. These choices, however, cannot be made independent of content. The number and structure of steps required in each workshop session, for example, and the time necessary to execute them, pivot on content.

It is not common to find the requisite content and process expertise embodied in one individual. Thus, it might be necessary to assemble a leadership team of two or more individuals who collectively embody the skills required for effective network leadership.

Process expertise is required on a more continual basis than is content expertise, and the content expertise required for network leadership is often general. As implied by the list of functions above, the greater part of network leadership is procedural. Members often bring to a network much of the content expertise required to meet its objectives. The expertise embodied in network leader(s) and members can be augmented as needed by engaging specialists.

Level of Effort. The level of effort required to perform the leadership role effectively varies with the number of network members and the intensity of network activity (e.g. frequency of network meetings, volume of network product, and extent of capacity-building activities that are to be carried out between meetings). Expect to allocate a minimum of 0.30 FTE to network leadership, and as much as 2 FTE.

Standard 3. Committed Membership.

The network's members are personally committed to the network's objectives and to sharing know-how; and their organization or program explicitly authorizes their participation.

Rationale

The members are the network, and its results pivot on their effective participation. To achieve their intended results, networks typically depend on members to work individually and collectively. The level of effort required of members often is considerable, and it should be explicitly incorporated into their annual performance objectives. A very substantial share of a network's value to its members is created through sharing of know-how and lessons-learned among its members. Thus members' willingness and ability to share what they know and what they are learning is an essential factor in network success.

Good Practice

Determining Network Size and Geographic Scope. Network size and scope – the number of members and where they work – are a function of network objectives and of resources available. Effective networks range in size from fewer than 20 members to greater than 100 members. Geographic scope may be national , regional or global. Greater size and scope, generally require greater resources and present greater leadership, support and design challenges. If the number of members exceeds 100, or if some members must travel more than one day to participate in network activities, consider enlisting members into smaller sub-networks, in which most collective activity takes place.

Selecting Members. Use the network's objectives to develop selection criteria, which might include:

- Alignment of prospective member's needs and know-how with the network's objectives;
- Prospective member's geographic location;
- The habitat type a prospective member works in;
- Priority threats of concern to a prospective member;
- Influence of a prospective member, e.g., involvement in other collaborative activities;
- Readiness to use the network to advance their own and collective practice; and/or
- Complementary skills and expertise across the entire membership.

Enlisting, among the network's initial or "founding" members, at least two or three exemplary practitioners helps to create a culture of success and achievement within the network.

Enlisting Members. Be sure that members understand explicitly what membership will require of them (e.g. level of effort, frequency of meetings, duration of the network), and what they can expect to gain from it. Consider using a written member agreement to ensure that their understanding is explicit. Member commitment to a network's objectives is commonly tentative during the initial stage of its operation, particularly concerning objectives focused on results beyond their own work situations. Although it is crucial to enlist members with sufficient commitment to participate and contribute, expect to grow commitment through well-designed and executed network activities (see Standard 4).

Loosely-Linked Affiliations. In some instances there may reason to encourage individuals to affiliate loosely with the network. For example, if the network's objectives include innovating and distributing a solution to a particular challenge, encouraging potential users of that solution to engage "around the edges" of the network may accelerate adoption of the solution. Such loose affiliation might include subscription to a network's listserv, participation in on-line discussions, or peer-reviewing network products.

Standard 4. Well-Designed and Executed Activities.

Network activities are well designed and facilitated to create and share know-how among network members, and to help them resolve individual and collective challenges.

Rationale

A network's activities are the principal means of ensuring that a network benefits its members and achieves its objectives. They are the principal determinant of network costs as well as benefits. Well-designed and executed activities with clear objectives are essential for sustaining member commitment.

Good Practice

Assess Individual and Collective Needs. Continually assess members' challenges, and design network activities specifically to help members resolve them. Such assessment can be accomplished relatively informally through conversations with members and/or through group discussions. Or it can be more systematic, for example using structured interviews, surveys, or self-assessment tools.

Design Activities to Meet Members' Needs. A variety of activities can be effective for creating and sharing know-how among network members, and they can often be used in combination. The following table lists examples of activities. These more formal activities should be complemented by planned social activities that foster unrestrained creative thinking and strengthening relationships among network members.

Activity	**Application Example**
Multi-site experiments to develop and/or test practice(s)	The Aridlands Grazing Network is conducting a ten-year experiment to determine effective ways to manage the interaction of prescribed fire and grazing.
Action training, in which participants are introduced to a new skill or technique and apply it, getting real work done as they learn	The Efroymson Coaches Network uses action training to build practitioner capacity for Conservation Action Planning.
Peer-exchanges, in which one or more members share know-how at the work site of another member, helping the latter resolve a challenge	A member of Micronesians in Island Conservation helped a colleague in another country train 20 conservation officers and develop legislation for marine protected areas.
Peer-review, in which a work product or work-in-progress is evaluated against standards of practice	Grassland Restoration Network members peer-review each others' work, and offer peer-review to non-members.
After Action Review, in which the results of an action are assessed against intended results to increase the effectiveness of future action	The Latin American Private Lands Conservation Network used AAR to draw lessons from the execution of land deals, and to define standards and best practices.
Facilitated discussions to solve a clearly-defined individual or common challenge	Micronesians in Island Conservation dedicates a portion of every member retreat to defining and solving common challenges its members face, producing local, national and region-wide solutions.

Standard 5. Measurement and Adaptive Management.

The network measures its progress and results, evaluates them against its intended milestones and outcomes, and adapts its course accordingly.

Rationale.
Evaluating the effectiveness of the network's activities, both local and collective, and tracking its progress toward its goals, provide feedback that is essential in assessing the overall effectiveness of the network. This assessment allows the network leader(s) and members to adjust its plans to better meet its purpose.

Good Practice.
Evaluate Activities. Following a network activity, assess how well it met member needs, and how subsequent activities can be designed to meet their needs better. This assessment can be based on written or oral evaluations, or both. Consider conducting an After Action Review (AAR) immediately following an activity. AAR is typically framed by questions like these:

- What did we expect to be the key factors in ensuring that participants benefited from the activity?
- What were our results, in terms of participant satisfaction, and why did we get those results?
- What factors will we employ again in future activities, and what will we do differently?

Evaluate Progress. Evaluating a network's progress requires assessing its activities and their immediate results over a period of time, and comparing them to the measurable milestones and results that reflect its purpose or goals (see Standard 1). Some of the types of questions that might be asked to evaluate progress include:

- In the past year, how many network members completed, in their local work situation, the planned activities associated with the network?
- To what extent are those "local" activities having the intended near-term results?
- In the past year, to what extent did the network complete the collective activities that were planned?
- To what extent are those collective activities having the intended near-term results?
- To the extent we are not achieving the results intended, why not?
- What adjustments do we think would yield better results?

Evaluate Outcomes. The ultimate outcomes expected of a network may take years to achieve (see Standard 1). For example, if a network's purpose is to increase the pace, scale and effectiveness of fisheries restoration, its outcomes likely will not be ripe for measure for a few years. Thus measurement of network outcomes will be less frequent than evaluation of activities and measurement and evaluation of network progress.

At a minimum, outcomes should be measured at the termination of a network. The extent to which the network achieved its intended purpose, as well as conclusions concerning why it did or did not, should be reported to members, sponsor(s) and donor(s). Ideally this information would also be shared with other network leaders. In the case of networks focused on conservation practice this information might take the form of a case study published through the Conservation by Design Gateway.

Standard 6. Documentation of Lessons-Learned.

The network documents activities, results, and the lessons learned from them.

Rationale

In an effective network, members document and share with each other information about the actions they take, the results of those actions, and the lessons learned from both. The network also documents the lessons learned from collective action and results. Documentation allows members to access information about lessons learned whenever they need it. It also makes it possible to share know-how created through the network more broadly, leveraging the investment in the network by improving the practices of others.

Good Practice

Packaging Lessons Learned. The know-how created through a network, the lessons learned through local and collective actions and results, may take a variety of forms and may be documented and packaged in a variety of ways. Examples include:

- reports of local actions, results, and conclusions about what did and did not work and why;
- reports of collective actions, results, and conclusions about what did and did not work and why;
- proceedings of network meetings or workshops; and/or
- standards and guidance for good practice, based on lessons learned in multiple situations.

Sharing Lessons Learned. Some networks use independent websites or Conserveonline workspaces to distribute the products of their learning. Examples include:

- US Fire Learning Network http://www.tncfire.org/training_usfln.htm
- Western Invasives Learning Network http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/networks/western/western.html
- Shellfish Restoration Network http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/shellfish

The Nature Conservancy recently launched the Conservation by Design Gateway (http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/cbdgateway), an online portal to distribute conservation know-how. The Gateway is a vehicle for distribution of case studies, tools and methods related to implementing Conservation by Design.

Additional channels of distribution include publication (e.g., journal articles, handbooks, etc.) and presentations at conferences or meetings.

Deploying Network Members. Although online and in-print distribution of network products may ensure extensive reach, it often is not sufficient to ensure effective adoption and use of network products. This is particularly so when adoption of a new practice requires knowledge that cannot be readily documented, such as how to adapt a practice to a unique situation. To ensure widespread adoption of network products, it may be necessary for network members to coach prospective users.

Standard 7. Adequate Resources.

The network's resources are sufficient to achieve its purpose.

Rationale

Effective networks often entail substantial costs, whether those are aggregated into a single budget or, as is more common, shared by the sponsor and members. Frequently these costs must be covered over multiple years, if the network's objectives are to be met. To ensure that the network is able to complete the work required to achieve its purpose, the resources required should be reasonably assured before launching the network.

Good Practice

Scoping and Design Costs. Developing a network generally requires considerable activity and some cost prior to securing sufficient funds to launch it. During this scoping and design phase, needs are assessed, purpose is defined, prospective members are identified, and resource requirements are determined. This phase will require a deliberate consultation process and may require convening prospective members. Wait until you have assurance of resources before initiating the second phase – launch and operation.

Launch and Operation Costs. Determine the activities and other cost factors that will be required to achieve the network's objectives, and how these costs will be distributed (see table below). The costs of a network are usually shared by the sponsor and the members. For example, the sponsor and the donors enlisted by the sponsor, may finance some or all of the costs of members' travel to participate in collective network activities. On the other hand, very rarely does the budget for a network cover the time contributed by members. The distribution of costs will be very important in prospective members' calculation of the cost/benefit of participation. The cost of participation should be clear to members and their organizations or programs.

Principal Cost Factors	Typical Responsibility
Network Leadership 0.03 to 1.0+ full time equivalent Determined by frequency and scope of network activity, and extent of network support between collective activities (e.g. site visits, one-on-one coaching, etc.)	Network sponsor
Collective Network Activities Member time Member transportation, meals and lodging	 Members Network sponsor, members, or shared
Local Activities to Advance Network Objectives E.g., member effort and costs to apply and test practice "at home"	Members, network sponsor, or shared
Network Support E.g., research, communication, website development and maintenance, meeting logistics, etc.	Network sponsor
Peer Assists/Exchanges, Peer-Reviews Time and travel of participating members.	Network sponsor, members, or shared
Documentation and Distribution of Network Products E.g., capturing lessons-learned, documenting good practice, translating for users worldwide, and distributing them	Network sponsor
External expertise E.g., specialist engaged for a specific activity, such as a workshop session or technical assistance to members	Network sponsor

APPENDIX 3. SCOPING: INTERVIEW GUIDE AND MIC CONCEPT

A. MICRONESIA INTERVIEW GUIDE*

9 September 2001

Purpose of Meeting

Learn more about you and your organization
Get your input and advice on the proposed MLIC network

Leadership

1. Please take a few minutes to give me an overview of your organization's history and mission.
2. What is your role?
3. What is your vision for the future of this organization? Conservation in your state/country?

Needs, Strengths & Obstacles

4. What does your organization do really well?
5. What do you do really well?
6. What are your challenges right now?
7. What would help you and your organization be even more effective?

Input on MLIC Network

Quick overview of MLIC purpose & catalytic capacity building model

8. How do you think the MLIC network could help you and your organization?
    - What types of information would you like to know from your fellow conservation leaders in Micronesia? What are the best ways to get this info?
    - What do you think a network of Micronesian conservation leaders could achieve? What do you think it would not achieve?
    - Do you think a network is needed in Micronesia?
9. Who would benefit most from this network? (people, positions, comments on criteria for first group). How should we find them?
10. What kinds of activities do you think would be most useful? (add to list; prioritize)
11. Would you support such a network?
    - If yes, in what ways?
    - Are you interested in participating in the first group?
12. How would we know if the network is successful?

Contacts

13. Who would you recommend for the first group (anywhere in FSM or Palau)?
14. Who else should we talk to about this?
    - Are there people in [this state] who are good at facilitating group meetings and discussions?
    - Are there people in [this state or country] who people go to for help with starting or running their businesses or organizations?
15. Anything else we should know?

*updated with Kath S questions

B. MIC CONCEPT

MICRONESIAN LEADERS IN ISLAND CONSERVATION

A Pilot Learning Network for Conservation Leaders in the Pacific

UPDATED DRAFT FOR COMMENT

Audrey Newman
The Nature Conservancy
19 November 2001

Background: Over the past ten years, The Nature Conservancy has worked with partners in Palau and Pohnpei to protect the unique reefs and forests on these isolated islands and has built strong relationships with government, NGOs, communities and businesses in both countries. The Palau Conservation Society and the Conservation Society of Pohnpei have demonstrated that a committed, well-led local organization can be a powerful catalyst for conservation in their country. Their success is inspiring leaders throughout Micronesia. Recent political events in both Palau and FSM have heightened public interest and urgency for conservation action, providing a window of opportunity for effective conservation organizations to have significant impact.

Need: However, many conservation leaders in each country continue to work in isolation from one another, and there is a need for ways to rapidly share basic skills, knowledge, information, experiences and innovations on key issues. With historic connections to the U.S., good infrastructure and the Conservancy's excellent staff in both countries, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Palau provide the best possible conditions for launching a successful pilot learning network in the Pacific.

Approach: Working with conservation leaders in Micronesia, TNC proposes to "co-design" and develop a pilot learning network for Pacific conservation leaders modeled after the experiences of successful peer networks in Indonesia, Philippines and the U.S. Peer learning networks are widely recognized as one of the most powerful tools for personal, professional and organizational development. Through peer learning networks, people can

- rapidly share successes and lessons learned
- identify and address shared needs for technical assistance, training, and other support
- work together on local and national issues.

The purpose of the pilot Micronesia Leaders in Island Conservation (MLIC) network is to strengthen both the organizational and technical skills of leaders and their organizations, so they can better protect important natural areas in Micronesia. The Conservancy will partner with a Micronesian learning institution to serve as the local coordinator for the pilot MLIC network. Assuming the pilot is successful, the participating leaders and partner institution would work together to support and maintain an expanding network over time.

Common Topics in Leader's Networks

Conflict Management	Participatory Mapping & Community-based Management
Financial Management	Awareness & Outreach
Working with Boards	Site Conservation Planning

Supervision & Recruiting	Strategic & Program Planning
Capital Campaigns & Fundraising	Monitoring & Evaluation
Succession Planning	Conservation Knowledge
Group Management & Meetings	Policy & Regulatory Issues

Proposed Actions (adapted from proposal to Packard Foundation):

1. Co-design and pilot a peer learning network, starting with ten leaders from government and non-government conservation organizations in Micronesia with links to traditional leadership.
2. Help leaders identify and address priority capacity-building needs in their organizations.
3. Help participants strengthen essential leadership and management skills including a commitment to continuous learning and improvement.
4. Develop and track locally relevant indicators to evaluate the network's impact on individual, organization and conservation goals.
5. Document the process every 3-6 months to maximize learning and aid replication.

Possible elements of the learning network include:

a. Selected leaders will commit to actively participating in the learning network for 1-2 years
b. Facilitated self-assessments of participating organizations
c. Specific "learning goals" that will lead to concrete improvement in organization's or individual's effectiveness
d. Retreats designed to address individual learning goals and shared goals identified by the group
e. Formal training or workshops for specific skills
f. Site visits to an organization known for "best practices" in a learning exchange
g. Regular (monthly?) conference calls or electronic meetings for support and learning
h. Develop and track shared "measures of success" and benchmarks for progress on individual, organization and conservation goals

Draft Criteria for MLIC Participants (to be revised with field input)

- Leaders of government or non-government organizations committed to protecting important natural areas or sustainably managing resources in the Federated States of Micronesia or Palau[*]
- Has authority to make decisions about budgets and program priorities in their organization
- Willing to commit approximately 4-5 weeks over one year to learning with the MLIC Network
- 3-5 years of job experience highly desirable
- Strong commitment to Micronesia (native or long-term resident)
- Recognized or potential champion for change in their state and/or country
- Others?

Draft Criteria for Partner Institution (to be revised with field input)

- Established organization already serving Micronesia
- Some experience and expertise in organizational development
- Strong support for partnership by top leadership
- Interest in continuing and expanding program long-term
- Qualified person on staff to serve as MLIC Coordinator or Director highly desirable

[*] The organization's mission may be broader than this, but ideally all groups would be involved or interested in site-based conservation or resource management. Organizations can be established or emerging.

- Others (e.g. in-kind support with logistics?)

TNC's Measures of Success for MLIC Network

YEAR 1

- Measured improvements in organizational capacity and leadership skills reported by network participants;

YEAR 2

- Improved conservation practices by at least one local organization working with communities and other partners in Palau and each of the four FSM states
- MLIC participants assist with improving the program and recruiting/supporting the second cohort.

YEAR 5

- Threats are reduced and management is improved at MLIC participant sites
- Micronesian Leaders in Island Conservation network is maintained by its members and supported by locally based institutions and experts.
- Building on the success and documented lessons learned by the pilot Micronesia network, similar networks are launched to serve conservation leaders and organizations elsewhere in the Pacific.

Questions for Discussion

1. Is a peer learning network needed in Micronesia? What would it achieve?
2. What would you want to learn from other colleagues in the field? How would you like to learn it?
3. What features would you most want to see in the network? How would you make it better?
4. Who would be good participants for the first group of Leaders?
5. Suggestions for local partner institution and local coordinator/facilitator?
6. Would you like to be involved in the network? How?
7. Who else should we talk to about this?
8. Anything else we should know?

Follow-up Meetings (if possible)

1. Learn more about your organization (history, mission, programs, people involved, vision for the future)
2. Get more input on the proposed network (needs, ideas, concerns)

Please send comments to Audrey Newman (anewman@tnc.org) by December 15.

APPENDIX 4. MIC COORDINATOR MANUAL

MICRONESIANS IN ISLAND CONSERVATION

MIC

A Peer Learning Network for Conservation Leaders

Administration Manual Activities

1. **Retreat**
2. **Conference Calls**
3. **Learning Exchanges**
4. **Organizational Assessments**
5. **Technical Assistance**

1. RETREAT

The Retreat is a 4-day event that occurs every 6 months. It is one of the main tools of the MIC Network as it addresses several purposes:

1. Brings the leaders together to exchange ideas and experiences in a setting that allows for isolation from daily issues and privacy to discuss confidential matters.
2. Focused discussions on Regional conservation issues that lead into collaborative actions.
3. Identification and standardization of shared indicators for monitoring and adaptive management to be use in a widespread manner in the Region.
4. Skill improvement on organizational effectiveness issues such as fundraising and board development – to be reinforced later by technical assistance upon request.
5. Improvement on leadership abilities through utilization of tools that lead into self-reflection applied to work and life behavior.
6. Improvement of collaborative abilities through the identification and use of tools that assist the institutions in working together.

Steps to Organize a Retreat

6 months early

- Complete first draft of agenda
- Determine date and State within the last day of the Retreat with the full participation of MIC members
- Do preliminary booking of accommodations and begin negotiations for meals and services to be provided.

3 months early

- Organize conference call to agree final details of Retreat.
- Remind members of proposed agenda and dates. Agree on final date so accommodations can be confirmed and can begin preparation for the binder.

- Finalize agreement of attendance of observers and new members.
- Send proposed itineraries by State.
- Follow-up with members until all have responded.
- Book plane tickets of members that have confirmed.
- Purchase binders, dividers and flipcharts (sometimes there are not available on island – 3 months give you the ability to have them ordered if they are not available).

2 months early

- Send rooming list to selected hotel, fine-tune menus
- Finalize agenda and begin working with presenters and facilitators so that they send their material for the binder.
- **Deadline for inviting non-members (format letter has to be created)**
- Work with host State to determine field trip and main event (either NGO community discussion or cocktail party).
- Ask facilitators for visual aid needs

1 month early

- Send logistic announcement and agenda.
- Print and photocopy standard components of the binder (minutes of previous meeting)

15 days early

- Deadline for presenters to send materials for printing and binding.
- Last reminder for participants.

1 week early

- Final printing and compilation of binders.
- Decide who will welcome the participants at the informal dinner on Sunday evening.
- Decide who on Monday morning will do: 1) the opening prayer; 2) the Welcome; 3) Introductions and Expectations
- Arrive at venue at least 3 days before the participants. Everything should be organized by the time they arrive.

1 day early

- Set up recorder for any session

Event

- Welcome members upon arrival
- Organize alternative activities for the members that arrive early due to flight schedule
- Have per diems ready for those that arrive early and may not want to join MIC activities
- Organize a welcome dinner for early arrivals if the majority of the group arrives early
- Assist facilitators by having room set-up ready, visual aids, processing and separating the flipcharts written at the end of each day so they will be classified by the end of the meeting.
- Assist in taking minutes of the meeting.
- Have a daily meeting with hotel staff to make any adjustments to logistics prepared – all room set-ups, meals or cocktails need to be set up an hour in advance at least.
- Decide who will do the Thank You's & Closing on Thursday evening: 1) Retreat highlights; 2) acknowledge guests & new members; 3) thank host, facilitators, session leaders, resource people (e.g. Olivier), office staff not there, hotel staff and anyone else who helped; 4) invite to dinner

Post Event

- Audrey Newman sends highlights within first month
- Evaluation report ready within first month
- Minutes of meeting ready within first month.
- Financial report ready within first month.
- CD ROMs send to participants within two months.

Sample Formats

1. Itinerary sent to participants – don't forget to include it in main body of email
2. Rooming list send to hotel
3. Logistics announcements
4. Invitation Format for formal cocktail
5. Budget
6. Agenda
7. Highlights report
8. Evaluation report

2. CONFERENCE CALLS

The original intent of the conference calls was to keep momentum going in between Retreats for implementation of goals and action items, to exchange progress reports and become aware of any challenges in implementation in which the group might be helpful. However, the conference calls took a long time to be organized and many members didn't show up on the last minute.

Therefore, instead of 4 conference calls a year, now we do only 2 – right in between Retreats. Although we make progress report on goals, the main purpose is to fine-tune the agenda for the next Retreat and inform members of any pressing conservation issues at the State/Country level to either incorporate in the agenda or for immediate action.

Steps for Conference Call:

- Set up date during Retreat.
- 2 months in advance verify that they all have speaker phones (all but Chuuk covered right now). If they don't MIC pays for it – if they don't have them on island we send them a phone.
- Confirm date one month in advance – most likely it will change. Ask if the members have any items they wish to discuss in addition to standard agenda.
- Distribute agenda in advance in the main body of the email. Standard agenda:
    - Finalize Retreat Agenda – topics
    - Deal with any issues in logistics for Retreats – ie. Field trip by host organization.
    - Review personal, professional, institutional goals.
    - Brief conservation reports on main issues at the local level.
- Verify phone numbers to be called – set up service with Australia – Robyn Curnham.
- TWO DAYS before the meeting send everybody their goals and agenda once more and ask the agencies that are hosting the meeting to please print them for all the members – as they usually forget to bring them.
- Print the goals and agenda for yourself because they will most likely forget them anyway.
- Send minutes within 2 days of the meeting.

Sample Formats

1. Sample agenda
2. Sample email setting up meeting / phone numbers…
3. Samples minutes of meeting

3. LEARNING EXCHANGES

These occur when a member identifies a project or person that they need to learn from and travels for the exchange to occur, or we bring the person to the area.

Steps for a Learning Exchange

- Member identifies a specific issue they need to learn.
- Member either proposes the person/institution or we help them identify it – at this point of time all learning exchanges have been identified by the members.
- We assist the member in fine-tuning the learning exchange goal -- at this point of time this usually requires at least a phone call to guide them through the process. They should set SMART goals – VERY IMPORTANT.
- Send letter to Mentor to set up learning exchange including the specific objectives **(a format needs to be developed)**
- Help member and mentor set up dates
- Help member send mentor relevant materials for the visit or vice versa.
- Send logistics for the person that will visit – **format needs to be developed**
- Arrange payment modality for plane ticket, meals and lodging with the host organization (is it by reimbursement or do they need TNC to cover things in advance).
- Verify that there are no other costs involved like payment for community meetings. Maximum budget (but flexible) is $2500
- Send evaluation format to member and mentor one week after the meeting.
- Send any relevant thank you notes.
- Send report of evaluation one month after the exchange takes place.

Sample Formats

1. Sample letter with objectives (needs to be fine-tuned with A. Newman)
2. Audrey Newman's description of learning exchanges
3. TNC's Conservation Fellow description
4. Member format interview
5. Mentor format interview
6. Samples of interviews

4. ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

This is an institutional diagnostic that includes 9 categories:

a. Vision and Planning
b. Institutional Framework
c. Leadership
d. Organizational Structure
e. Human Resources
f. Resource Development
g. Financial Management
h. Building Constituencies
i. Ability to Implement

MIC members are expected to undertake one assessment upon joining the network but it is not mandatory. The facilitator assesses each circumstance. For example there are some individuals invited to the network who are just in the first stage of creation on an organization – thus this assessment is irrelevant. In the case of government representatives we have found that unless there is commitment and approval of the process high up in the hierarchy, even if the assessment takes place, it will most likely not be implemented. Therefore it is important to talk to each of the members individually to find out about their real situation.

MIC commits to assist an organization in their first two organizational assessments. At the same time the facilitator should aim to create internal capacity in the organization so they can use the tool in by themselves in the future.

Steps to Set Up an Organizational Assessment for Coordinator

- Member agrees to undertake it for first time or 2nd round.
- Identify facilitator availability.
- Assist in coordination of dates between organization and facilitator.
- Assist in logistics arrangements (if needed) such as hotel and air ticket. There is a maximum of $2500 allocated for each assessment including the fee for the facilitator or any funding necessary to ensure conference room or coffee breaks (we usually expect the recipient to contribute to this but in same cases it is not possible).
- Request materials from organization for background reading for facilitator.
- Ensure recipient has made adequate arrangements for a conference room and visual aids (only flip chart and easel) plus the photocopies for EACH participant.
- Send electronic copy of assessment at least three days in advance so the recipient can make copies for ALL participants – ask facilitator if he/she wishes to fine-tune the assessment to fit the profile of the organization prior to sending.
- After the assessment ensure that the facilitator provides a report generally following the guidelines of previous reports within 15 days of delivery.
- Arrange contract for facilitator and payment of fees according to schedule set in contract.

Steps to Set Up an Organizational Assessment for Facilitator

- Once conditions have been accepted contact the organization to learn about any details that will be important in setting up the assessment event.
- Request background material.
- Usually we are doing the assessments with 3 different distinct audiences:

    - The staff
    - The Executive Director
    - The Board
- Three separate events need to be organized, usually 1 day with the staff (recommended to split in two half days) a half day with the Board and a half day with the Executive Director. This is to ensure that participants really open up (as usually they won't talk in front of superiors).
- Facilitator should also ask the organization if there are any delicate issues to handle in which case sometimes we do some separate interviews (when someone won't disclose issues if it is in the presence of a group).
- The key to facilitating this tool is not only to explain the audience the meaning of each section but to ensure they have understood it, and compare interpretation when scores differ widely. The typical sequence I follow is:
    - Explain one section at a time.
    - Allow time for them to read and answer the entire section chosen
    - Encourage to ask any questions in the case they are not understanding the meaning
    - Distribute a sheet with columns so that they can write their scores, thus ensuring anonymity (it greatly changes the scores). Sample:

Indicators	Scores per person by indicator								
A1	3	3	5	3	3	4	3	3	3
A2	1	4	4	4	5	5	2	4	4
A3	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	2
A4									

    - Then I ask THEM to tell me what do they think is their average.
    - In the case scores are fairly similar (example A1) I still ask the question: even if this is highly rated, do you have any suggestions to improve? Get ready to take notes, there is usually discussion and people start opening up.
    - In the case scores are very different (A2) I ask the question, so why the difference? Usually the ones that wrote the low number will speak up, but if they don't I start reading what a 1 means versus a 4 and start going word by word to see where the difference was. They open up. Then I still ask: so what can we improve?
    - In some cases like A3 there is consensus on very low score. We all laugh about it, and I remind them that this doesn't meant the organization is bad but this may be an area to improve whether now or in the future if it is not a priority for them. Then we definitely look at how to improve.
    - At the end of the exercise I pull all average scores (I record them directly in the computer) and come up with all the scores below 3.5. Then I ask them to choose 4 priorities and create an action plan to improve them.
    - The suggestions to improve other areas whether low or high score will all be included in the report….but not as main priorities. If the participants fail to identify priorities from the low scores then I look at the entire set of indicators where they provided suggestions and then request for them to choose a priority.
    - I used a shorten version for the Board but same methodology. Usually discussions are much longer.
    - The Executive Director can answer questionnaire in advance and then meet with facilitator for comments.

- Finally if it is possible before departure I ask the organization to arrange an 1 ½ meeting with Board, staff and ED and show the comparison of scores and the Priority Action Plan taking into consideration the 4 priorities from all audiences (at the end only 4 priorities should remain so this is where the facilitator shows skill in interpreting all the information and attitudes and helping in bringing the subjects together).
- Try to do the report within a week otherwise the nuances of the discussion start fading from memory.
- Send report within 15 days of event finalized to keep momentum.
- Ideally the same facilitator will be utilized for the second assessment.
- Good luck.

Sample Formats:

- Original organizational assessment
- Patricia's organizational assessment for staff
- Patricia's organizational assessment for Board
- Patricia's organizational assessment for Government
- Report to Office of the Governor of Kosrae / scores / comments
- Report to Conservation Society of Pohnpei / scores / comments

5.TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND FUNDING

There are three ways in which technical assistance may be requested:

- As a result of an organizational assessment
- As a result of a need for the group identified through a Retreat
- Specific request by an organization

Once a need has been expressed, funding must be identified. Right now we have four sources for such funding:

- Just in Time Grants – lead by Kath Shurcliff
- MIC funding – if the need is identified as a priority and there is funding available
- Packard Organizational Effectiveness – only available to their grantees
- By the organization identifying funding but requesting assistance in finding a service provider.

The role of the coordinator in providing technical assistance is:

- Once the need has been expressed (and assuming funding is available) the Coordinator must try to find a service provider. For the time being in Palau this will be done through Patricia Leon for assistance, and in FSM with the assistance of Pohnpei campus, Patricia Leon, and Felicia Hunt.
- Specific goals and outcomes should be identified.
- The coordinator will assist the organization and facilitator in ensuring all steps are taken for the delivery of service, logistics and fee payment.
- A report should be delivered 15 days after the provision of the technical assistance.

The role of the coordinator in ensuring funding is:

- If the organization doesn't have the funding, then contact Just in Time or Packard OE with a two paragraph concept to ensure this is consistent with their guidelines (please see guidelines attached).

- Assist the organization in developing the proposal (editing).
- The organization should send the proposal themselves.

Sample Formats

- All reports produced for MIC members
- JIT guidelines
- Packard OE guidelines

APPENDIX 5. COORDINATOR TERMS OF REFERENCE

MLIC COORDINATOR TERMS OF REFERENCE, 2002

TERMS OF REFERENCE
COORDINATOR, MICRONESIA LEADERS IN ISLAND CONSERVATION

Prepared by: Audrey Newman
Revised: 16 May 2002

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) seeks candidates with senior management experience and organizational development skills to serve as the Coordinator for a new peer learning network for leaders of conservation programs in Micronesia -- the pilot Micronesia Leaders in Island Conservation (MLIC) network. Strong capacity building skills in facilitated self-assessment, board development, conservation and/or development project management, financial planning, management and oversight, and related areas is highly desirable. The position is located in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), with the option of changing location to Palau after the initial 6 months. The initial contract period is for six months, with possible extensions up to two years.

The Coordinator will serve as the primary organizational development advisor during the start-up phase of the MLIC network. MLIC is a peer learning network designed to help Micronesian conservation leaders strengthen their agencies by supporting shared and targeted self-directed learning that addresses priority organizational and technical needs. A brief description of the MLIC pilot is attached.

Initial activities will include facilitated self-assessments and capacity building action plans with staff and boards of the participating organizations; identifying locally-based technical assistance for common organizational development and technical needs; recruiting and training local facilitators for MLIC; recruiting and selecting the first group of MLIC participants; coaching and training participants and facilitators in specific skills and duties; organizing retreats, training events and exchanges with follow-up for reinforcement; and generally serving as a mentor and advisor to the MLIC participants. The MLIC Coordinator will also develop or refine MLIC work plans and financial administration systems, as needed, and assist with the design and evaluation of the network's effectiveness. High priority will be given to identifying, recruiting and training a Micronesian-based professional to assume the role of Coordinator within six months to one year.

DUTIES:

The scope of duties includes:

1. **Micronesia Leaders in Island Conservation Assistance**
    - Work with the MLIC Design Team to recruit and select the first group of MLIC participants, including development and documentation of application and selection materials and procedures. Documentation will include organizational and individual profiles.
    - Assist (and train if needed) local facilitators to lead organizational self-assessments and capacity building action plans for MLIC participants and their agencies. Working with the local facilitators and MLIC participants, use this information to jointly identify priority needs

that can be addressed through MLIC leader retreats, targeted learning exchanges or other methods.

- With input from MLIC participants and Design Team, plan and facilitate four MLIC leader retreats over two years to address common priority needs and to maximize shared learning from targeted learning exchanges. The first leader's retreat will be 16-20 September 2002.
- Identify and organize at least one targeted learning exchange for each MLIC participant that addresses one or more of their priority needs. Work with participants and Senior Conservation Advisor to identify appropriate programs for exchanges.
- Hire one or two local facilitators (one in FSM and one in Palau) to assist with 1) facilitated self-assessments for participating leaders and organizations, 2) planning and conducting MLIC leader retreats, 3) coaching and mentoring MLIC leaders, and 4) providing long-term continuity to the MLIC network.
- Work with facilitators to advance their skills in priority capacity building areas (e.g. strategic and related financial planning, fundraising, board development, etc)
- Identify and recruit a Micronesia-based MLIC Coordinator to assume long-term leadership of the network within one year.

2. Administration

- Provide administrative and financial management for MLIC. This will include annual budget development and management, income and expense reporting, and narrative reports. Accounting support will be provided.

3. Monitoring:

- With input from the MLIC Design Team and participants, establish baseline data and a system for objectively evaluating the effectiveness of the network and component activities, and recommend ongoing changes. The monitoring system will include both performance and outcome indicators.
- Document interim goals, assumptions, and lessons learned quarterly to guide the development of future networks

4. Fundraising:

- Assist MLIC Design Team to secure additional financing for the programs through developing strong, current relationships with potential public and private donors identified by the MLIC Team and assisting with funding proposals and reports.

5. Special Assignments:

- By mutual agreement of the Coordinator and Senior Conservation Advisor overseeing this contract, the Coordinator may accept special short-term capacity building assignments to support other programs in the Pacific Island Countries Program if they do not interfere with performance of priority MLIC activities. These short-term assignments will be documented as additional terms to this contract and charged to the appropriate budget center. It is understood that the Coordinator is an independent contractor committing 70% of her time to the MLIC project. As such, the Coordinator may accept any other contracts during her spare time if they do not interfere with performance of priority MLIC activities.

MILESTONES AND DELIVERABLES:

The following milestones and deliverables will be used to track progress on this project and contract. For a more complete list of activities to be done in each month with estimated time allocations, a detailed timeline will be developed.

June 2002
- Detailed MLIC workplan and budget for 6 months;
  (Optional: refine indicative budget for 1-2 year)
- Local facilitator short list
- Draft materials for selected MLIC participants

July 2002
- MLIC participants selected, notified and interviewed
- Facilitators selected and contracted
- Draft agenda for September retreat

August 2002
- Facilitated self-assessments and capacity building action plans completed for two MLIC participating organizations (with Andy Walker & facilitators)
- Retreat agenda (& logistics?) finalized
- Eureka learning exchange (July or August, if time permits)

September 2002
- First MLIC Retreat facilitated & evaluated
- Two draft learning goals for each MLIC participant
- Input to Packard report

NOTE to Kath: We may ask to a one month delay in the deadline for this report, so we can include the results of this first retreat

October 2002
- Facilitated self-assessments and CB action plans completed for 2-4 more MLIC participating organizations by/with local facilitators (total: 4-6)
- Initial survey of local technical assistance resources for common OD needs
- Feedback on first video conference call and buddy calls
- Draft detailed workplan and budget for December 2002 to June 2003.

November 2002
- Facilitated self-assessments and CB action plans completed for 4 more MLIC participating organizations by local facilitators (total: 8-10)
- At least two learning exchange matches identified (with AN assistance)
- Monitoring baseline data gathered and summarized.
- Coordinator and facilitator contracts updated.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Proven track record in organizational development, including skills in executive leadership, Board development, planning, financial management and administration, and fundraising.
2. Advanced degree or equivalent work experience in management, organizational development, conservation, sustainable development, or other relevant field.

3. Demonstrated ability to assist organizations in developing a strategic focus and setting program priorities.
4. Proven ability to work independently and collaboratively as a member of multidisciplinary and multicultural teams. Ability to work effectively in cross-cultural situations with a wide range of people with diverse backgrounds.
5. Excellent organizational skills, demonstrated strategic agility, and consistent drive for tangible results. Ability to prioritize and maintain complex projects in a demanding work environment and to work with multiple deadlines.
6. Excellent verbal and written communication and interpersonal skills in a multi-cultural environment. Successful track record in writing proposals, performance reports, and related materials required by bilateral and/or multilateral institutions is desirable.
7. Experience with or strong knowledge of conservation or rural community development programs and organizations in the Pacific islands is highly desirable
8. Commitment to the preservation of significant natural areas and to the goals of The Nature Conservancy.

MIC COORDINATOR TERMS OF REFERENCE, 2006

The Nature Conservancy
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	**PROGRAM COORDINATOR**
JOB FAMILY:	Conservation - Field
JOB NUMBER:	**8037**
WORK LOCATION:	Preferably in Pohnpei or Palau
RELATED POSITION TITLES:	Protection Assistant, Land Protection Assistant, Ecologist Tech., Conservation Assistant

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

The MIC Coordinator manages all activities and provides administrative and logistical support to the Micronesians in Island Conservation (MIC) network. MIC is a peer learning network designed to help Micronesian conservation leaders strengthen their agencies by: 1) identifying and addressing shared needs for technical assistance, training, and other support; 2) rapidly sharing successes and lessons learned; and 3) working together on local, national, and regional issues. The MIC Coordinator works closely with MIC members, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Micronesia staff and under the direct supervision of the TNC Partnership Specialist to organize MIC retreats, learning exchanges, facilitated self-assessments, training and capacity building events, and provides follow-up for evaluation and reinforcement. S/he helps to raise funds for the network and/or specific projects by writing proposals, negotiating with bilateral and multilateral agencies and cultivating donors as needed. S/he collaborates with TNC programs/initiatives to provide and extract useful lessons and experience and coordinate on joint functional initiatives. S/he is responsible for maintaining all documents relevant to the MIC network, including budgets, financial administration systems, contract, workplans, and training materials.

The position is full time and based in Pohnpei (Federated States of Micronesia) but requires frequent travels throughout the Micronesia Region and occasionally to other Asia-Pacific countries and the United States.

Priority will be given to a Micronesian national or long-term resident.

KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree and 3-5 years' experience in the functional field, or equivalent.
- Ability to set objectives, manage multiple priorities and independently complete tasks within assigned time frames.

- Experience organizing meeting or events remotely, including arrangements for air travel, accommodations, meeting venues, meals, receptions and other logistics.
- Ability to plan, administer and record results of work-team meetings and activities.
- Ability to coordinate project information from a number of sources to create reports and maintain good program records and files.
- Strong administrative skills, attention to details and numerical ability.
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office suite.
- Excellent communications in English.

COMPLEXITY/PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Works effectively under pressure and meets deadlines.
- Diagnoses complex problems and identifies creative solutions.

DISCRETION/LATITUDE/DECISION-MAKING:

- Significant opportunity to act independently within broad program goals and work with supervisor as needed.
- Makes strategic decisions based on analysis, experience and judgment.

RESPONSIBILITY/OVERSIGHT –FINANCIAL & SUPERVISORY:

- Supervises no staff but may oversee and direct work of office volunteers and interns.
- Prepares and monitors program budget.
- Negotiates contracts and services. Purchases equipment and supplies.
- Responsible and accountable for meeting strategic/financial goals and objectives.

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERPERSONAL CONTACTS:

- Ability to communicate professionally with a wide variety of people of different cultures to develop, negotiate and/or implement functional programs.
- Ability to work cooperatively often under pressure to complete project work and achieve goals.
- Solicit program support through clear written communications, including proposal writing and other written materials.
- Strong communications and presentation skills
- Work in partnership with other organizations in a collaborative and advisory capacity.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL EFFORT:

- Willingness to travel 25-40% of time.
- Work requires only minor physical exertion and/or physical strain.

The Nature Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer

MIC

Micronesians in Island Conservation Network

2008
Membership Profile

Micronesian in Island Conservation Network (MIC)
The Nature Conservancy
P.O. Box 216
Kolonia, Pohnpei, FM 96941
Phone: +691-320-4267
+691-320-8083
Fax: +691-320-7422

Name _____

Thank you for your interest in joining the Micronesian in Island Conservation network (MIC). MIC is a peer learning network for leaders of Micronesian conservation institutions[25] to promote personal, professional and organizational development by rapidly sharing successes and lessons learned; identifying and addressing shared needs for technical assistance, training, and other support; and working together on local, national and regional issues.

MIC membership is available to executive directors, CEOs, directors, coordinators or other executive leaders of government or non-government organizations committed to protecting important natural areas or sustainably managing resources in the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Territory of Guam and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. A brief program description is attached.

If you have any questions about this application form or the MIC network, please call or email the MIC coordinator Mae Bruton Adams:
Phone: +691-320-4267
Fax: +691-320-7244
madams@tnc.org

Please return by email or post the completed Membership Profile form to:

Mae Bruton Adams
Coordinator
Micronesians in Island Conservation Network
(The Nature Conservancy)
P.O. Box 216

Kolonia, Pohnpei, FM 96941

For your convenience, following is a checklist of items that should be included in your application. Please be sure these items are enclosed in your packet before mailing.

_____Application

_____Your current resume

_____Statement of Commitment, signed by you and the chair of the governing body for your institution (e.g. board of directors, advisory board, council or ministry). (Part 3 of the application)

_____A list of the members of the governing body for your institution, including names and affiliations

_____A brochure, fact sheet or other literature providing an overview of your programs to the public

[25] Throughout this application, we use "institution" to include government agencies, non-government organizations or any other type of organization.

ALL INFORMATION ON THIS APPLICATION WILL REMAIN STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

PART 1: PROFILE AND INSTITUTION INFORMATION

1. Name: _____ 2. Title: _____

3. Institution _____

4. Address: _____ City: _____

   State: _____ Country: _____ Zip: _____

5. Email(s): _____

6. Website (optional): _____

7. Phone (work): _____ 8. Fax: _____

9. When was your institution established? _____

10. What islands or countries do you serve? _____

11. Institution's Mission Statement (attach description if necessary):

12. Please check the general activities (as many as apply) in which your institution engages:

___ Conservation area management	___ Education	___ Research
___ Marine resource management	___ Awareness & outreach	___Site Planning
___ Land management	___ National planning	___ Regulation
___ Establishing protected areas	___ Working w/ communities	___ Policy
___ Resource surveys	___ Government relations	___ Enforcement
___ Resource monitoring	___ Building partnerships	___ Advocacy
___ Sustainable economic development	___ Other: _____	

13. List the top three issues or programs your institution works on (attach a short description if necessary):

    I)

    II)

    III)

14. Name of the chair of the institution's governing body and/or institution's ultimate decision maker:

    Name: _____ Title: _____

    Contact information: _____

15. Number of staff: Full time: _____ Part time: _____

16. Number of volunteers: Full time: _____ Part time: _____

17. Does your institution have private members (e.g. individuals, businesses, etc.) Yes _ No_
    If yes, how many? _____

18. Is your institution a coalition of member institutions? Yes ___ No___
    If yes, how many? _____ (Please attach a list of member institutions)

19. Are you the founder of your institution? Yes ____ No____
    If no, are you the founder's immediate successor? Yes____ No

20. What is your current position? _____
    How long have you been in your current position? _____

21. How long do you expect to remain in your current position? _____
    If you foresee a change of position:
    When do you expect this position change to happen? _____

    What would your new position be? _____

22. Please indicate the three greatest challenges you face as a member of your institution:

___Planning	___Monitoring & evaluation	___Conservation knowledge
___Managing volunteers	___Working with communities	___Financial management
___Managing staff	___Strengthening board	___Building membership
___Fundraising	___Personal burnout	___Dealing with conflict
___Running meetings	___Working with media	___Succession planning

Other: _____

PART 2: ORGANIZATIONAL AND PERSONAL ASSESSMENT NARRATIVE

Please type or word process your answers to the following questions on separate sheets (no more than three pages total) and return them with your Membership Profile.

ALL ANSWERS ARE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. THEY SHOULD REFLECT YOUR PERSONAL VISION AS A LEADER/CHAMPION ABOUT DIFFERENT ISSUES.

1. Why do you want to participate in the Micronesians in Island Conservation (MIC) Network and what do you hope to gain from it? How do you think this will assist your institution in fulfilling its conservation mission/objectives?
2. What special experiences, skills, resources, networks, collaborations, outlook or knowledge do you have to share that may benefit other participants in the MIC Network?
3. Give a brief explanation of your strengths and weaknesses in your current leadership role within your institution. (If you are in training or relatively new on the job, please anticipate what you think your strengths and weaknesses might be.)
4. Briefly describe your institution's history. How was it started, what is its purpose, and how is it structured?
5. In your opinion, what are your institution's internal strengths and weaknesses?
6. In your opinion, what external threats and opportunities confront your institution in the next three to five years?

PART 3: STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I have read the description of the Micronesians in Island Conservation Network and understand the time commitment and travel involved. As a member, I commit to:

- ✓ Actively participate in the MIC Network. I understand that this will require attendance at the MIC retreats and brief meetings and conference calls between retreats.
- ✓ Treat my participation and the appropriate participation of my staff and governing body (e.g. board of directors, advisory board, council or ministry) in MIC activities as a priority.
- ✓ Join with my peers in ongoing MIC Network activities.
- ✓ Learn from one or two conservation organizations or agencies known for their innovative practices through a structured learning exchange (usually one week visit).
- ✓ Complete a questionnaire after each learning exchange.
- ✓ Provide regular updates on the MIC network to my staff and board or governing body, as appropriate.
- ✓ Identify ways to incorporate some of the new management skills and techniques that I learn through the MIC network and to encourage further professional development for my institution and myself.
- ✓ Provide baseline and midpoint data on my programs, my institution and myself to aid in evaluating and improving MIC activities.
- ✓ Allow MIC and The Nature Conservancy to use my photograph and quote me regarding my experiences about my participation in the MIC Network.

_____ _____ _____

Applicant (Print Name) | Signature | Date

The _____(name of institution) understands that the requirements of the MIC membership include up to six weeks traveling away from work over a two-year period and additional activities within our institution. We agree to terms described once our organization becomes a member.

_____ _____ _____

Chair of Institution's Governing Body (Print Name) | Signature | Date

APPENDIX 7. "IDEAL" RETREAT AGENDA

Micronesians in Island Conservation Network (MIC)
Retreat # _____
LOCATION, STATE, COUNTRY_____
Date _____

MIC Mission: *To strengthen the collaborative, organizational, technical and policy skills of Micronesian conservation leaders and organizations, so that together with communities we can advance the conservation and management of important natural areas in Micronesia.*

"IDEAL" AGENDA

Retreat Objectives:
Many of these are the same at every retreat. Draft the ones for the Upcoming Retreat and put the constant ones here:

- …
- …

Remember:

1. Set up Recorder for each session in advance!
2. Give Recorders a copy of the agenda with their names near the sessions.
3. Confirm every lead person (in red) in advance.
4. Every session should have the name of the lead person to be clear.
5. Ask a few people to take good pictures for the final highlights.

Day 0	Free day for those who arrive on Day 0 or earlier.
7:00PM	Informal dinner for those in town. Welcome by the MIC coordinator or country director *(set up in advance—our host will do the official welcome too, but often does not join us the first night).*
Day 1	*Since the start of a meeting sets the tone, you want it to run smoothly. It is best for Susi & Kathy to take people through the opening rites and then delegate facilitation after the tone is set*.
7:30AM	Breakfast
9:00	_____*- facilitates this block of activities -* _____ *records* Prayer by host member Official Welcome by senior MIC member of island Introductions & Expectations *Optional: Participants can write their expectations first, but we still need someone to facilitate the session when they share them.*
10:00	Objectives & Agenda Review – Coordinator Binder & Logistics *(include internet, phone, any $$ issues)* – Coordinator

10:30	State/Country/Region Report on conservation issues *(about 15-20 minutes each – include FSM, Micronesia Region, Pacific Region)* Format: 1) 3-5 conservation successes in your State/Country/Region or Project 2) 3-5 conservation challenges in your State/Country/Region or Project 3) Anything you'd like other members of MIC to help you out? Break
11:00AM	State/Country/Region Reports continues. *Do critical conservation topic list & vote before lunch to decide which topics will be discussed by the whole group and which ones in concurrent sessions*
12:30PM	Lunch
2:00	*Set recorders for each session* Open time for Critical Conservation Regional discussion
3:30	Break
4:00	Critical Conservation Regional Discussion continues
5:40	Plus/Delta and Announcements – Coordinator
5:45	Free time
6:30	Welcome dinner and reflection question
Day 2	
7:30AM	Breakfast
8:30	*NAME HERE records* *Session – Focus Topic for this Retreat* • …
10:00	Break – GROUP PHOTO!! – Coordinator
10:30	*Session – Focus Topic for this Retreat* • …
12:30PM	Lunch
2:00	*NAME HERE records* *Session – Core Skill for this Retreat (e.g., Fundraising, Leadership, Facilitation)* • …
3:30	Break
4:00	*Session – Core Skill continued* • …
5:40	Plus/Delta & Announcements – Coordinator
5:45	Free time
6:30	Dinner
8:00	Member's report from the field
Day 3	
7:30AM	Breakfast

8:30	Field trip *(half day if possible)* _____ *records* ▪ Presentation of the project – site host ▪ Review of questions for the community *(especially questions we'd like to start with; ask each person "What do you want to learn from this field trip?" and share it with the group)* ▪ Arrangements - Coordinator & MIC member who organized the trip Lunch Debriefing of meeting Plus/Delta & Announcements – Coordinator
2:00PM	Free afternoon *(if possible)*
6:30	Party!!! *Provide info on location, directions, arrangements* – Susi & Host

Day 4

8:30AM	*NAME HERE records* *Session* • ….
10:00	Break
10:30	MIC Business – Coordinator • Financial Report? • New members, future guests • Action Items • Communications priorities • Next retreat (priority topics, invitations, location, dates) • Retreat evaluation
12:30PM	Lunch
2:00	Goal Review – MIC Member or lead, coordinator records
3:30	Break
4:00	_____records Thank You's & Closing – coordinator *1) Retreat Highlights by coordinator* *2) Acknowledge guests & new members* *3) Thank host(s), field trip organizers, facilitators, session leaders, resource people, office staff, staff not there, hotel staff, anyone else who helped* *4) Opportunity for reflections/closing comments (start with host, then others, end with next host)* *5) Invite people to closing dinner* Checkout, airport, and final logistics – coordinator
6:30	Farewell Dinner

Day 5

9:00 AM	Facilitator Debrief – Coordinator with Facilitator Team

MIC No. Retreat Participants

Members

Name	Position/Organization	State or Country

Invited Guests

Name	Position/Organization	State or Country

Facilitation & Resource Team

Name	Position/Organization	State or Country

APPENDIX 8: MIC LEARNING EXCHANGES

2003-06	Learning Exchange: Ada Eledui Director Koror State Department of Conservation, Palau went to Pohnpei to conduct conservation enforcement training for CSP
2003-06	Learning Exchange: Dan Quinn, Senior Fundraiser with TNC and former country program director, to help Bill Raynor with Micronesia fundraising strategy.
2003-09	Noah Idechong, Delegate, house of Representatives, Palau, went to Kosrae to share experience on community participation and effective environmental legislation. Focused on Utwe-Walung Conservation Area and Marine Park, Yela Ka Forest (invited by the governor)
2003-09	Learning Exchange: Willy Kostka, CSP, Pohnpei, traveled to Kosrae to facilitate KCSO strategic planning
2005-01	Learning Exchange:. Willy Kostka traveled to Chuuk to advise on starting a new NGO
2005-11	Wayne Andrew of Yap Community Action Agency assisted Council of Tamoi, and Communities of Gilmar and Ngulu with designating protected reef areas.
2006-01	Bill Raynor and Willy Kostka assisted Mary Rose Nakayama of the Chuuk Conservation Society with strategic planning
2006-02	Ben Namakin and Leinsom Neth of CSP traveled to Palau to assist PCS regarding the Green Road Show. (looks like the one above, but different dates)
2006-05	Ben Namakin and Leinsom Neth of CPS assisted Jason Jack of KCSO with improving KCSO's environmental education program.
2006-05	Photography class, Pohnpei
2006-08	Ben Namakin of traveled to Palau to assist Yalap Yalap of the Palau Conservation Society in building up the Ridge to Reef Road Show in Palau.
2006-09	Leisom Neith of CSP visited Jason Jack of KCSO in Kosrae to strengthen and enhance KCSO's capacity to implement its Nature Road Show in the schools.
2007-07	Educators from MIC member countries and the Pacific region traveled to Honolulu to participate in a conference on environmental education.
2007-09	Dr. Tholman Alik of YELA traveled to the Cook Islands to learn about the Takitumi Conservation Area from mentor Ian Karika.

APPENDIX 9. MIC REGIONAL SCALE RESULTS CHAIN EXPLAINED

See image at the bottom

First Yellow Bubble: Micronesians in Island Conservation Network

- Committed, well-led local organizations are powerful catalysts for conservation in their own countries. Local conservation organizations have motivation, direction, and committed leadership to accomplish their goals over the long-term.
- Creating a network that will ultimately help achieve the goals of the Micronesia Challenge—20% terrestrial and 30% marine

First Blue Bubble: The Right Movers & Shakers (NGO & Government) are recruited into the network.

- MIC Network helps identify the right people within the NGO and government sectors to achieve the goals of the Micronesia Challenge.
- These people are leaders (sometimes potential leaders) of NGO and government in conservation.
- All persons identified have met certain criteria outlined in Standard 3.

Second Yellow Bubble: Identify and Recruit Right People

- Clarifies that this is a continuous process; MIC determines who should be a part of Network, who will help enhance the network and help achieve the conservation goals of the Micronesia Challenge.

Second Blue Bubble: MIC Members participate in leadership training

- MIC Members undergo a series of leadership training activities:
    - MIC Retreats
    - Learning Exchanges
    - Technical Assistance
- If the members undergo a series of leadership training activities, they will become better leaders in their fields, and you should expect to see certain results.

Third set (column) of Blue Bubbles:

- 1st Blue Bubble: Improved Communications Across MIC Network and Borders
    - Organizations grow stronger when they find ways to rapidly share basic skills, knowledge, information, experiences, and innovations on key issues.
    - Many conservation leaders work in isolation from one another; MIC provides a venue for members to come together to share their ideas, skills, challenges, and successes.
    - MIC Members come together at Retreats to discuss challenges and successes related to their organizations as well as the conservation work they are doing in their region.
    - Discussing your challenges and successes with your peers allows them to see that they are not alone in their challenges.
    - Discussions allow members to help each other turn their challenges into success by adopting methods, processes, and systems that worked in other regions, institutions, or organizations.
    - Members offer assistance, staff, and information to their peers to help them accomplish institutional and/or programmatic goals.

    - Trust and friendship are ultimately built, which makes way for collaboration in state, country and across the region.
- 2nd Blue Bubble: MIC Members Develop Personal Connections
    - By sharing your struggles, your peers empathize because they are either going through the same struggles or have been through them.
    - By sharing your accomplishments, those who are currently struggling see that there is hope and a way forward.
    - By sharing your struggles and successes, members seek out help from each other to find solutions and ways forward. They seek each other's assistance and work together to help peers accomplish their goals.
    - Being transparent and open and working together builds camaraderie and a fraternity.
- 3rd Blue Bubble: MIC Members Develop Improved Leadership and Management Skills
    - <u>MIC Retreats</u>:
        - Challenges and accomplishments are shared.
        - Members break into groups and develop goals and objectives around a particular challenge, to work on turning the challenge into a success.
        - There are facilitated sessions on specific organizational capacity needs (e.g., fundraising, collaborations, communications, etc.) and conservation capacity needs (e.g., alternative income-generating activities, CAP, Socioeconomic Monitoring, etc.). These sessions are discussed in brief, giving members an overview of the process or tool and its benefits. If they want to explore a session more fully, then a technical assistance exchange or a learning exchange is provided at a later time.
    - <u>Learning Exchange</u>
        - *Purpose of Learning Exchanges*
            - To facilitate opportunities for MIC Members and their organizations to learn from innovative organizations and experts identified for excellence in their fields.
            - To help Members and their organizations achieve self-directed learning goals.
        - *What is a Learning Exchange?*
            - MIC defines learning exchanges broadly to include:
                - Visits by Members to other organizations or individuals with programs relevant to their learning goals
                - Coaching, training, or technical assistance visits to the Member's program by a person with experience or expertise needed to advance the Member's learning goal
                - Exchanges of key staff to "apprentice" at another organization and return with skills essential to achieve the learning goal
            - In general, MIC learning exchanges do not include attending conferences or formal training programs. However, these may be considered if they are key to meeting the Member's specific learning goals.
            - Learning exchanges are <u>optional but highly encouraged.</u>
        - *Who identifies the Learning Exchange?*
            - Each MIC Member (or "Mentee") can identify the "Mentor" person or organization that will help the Member achieve his/her goals, or can ask the MIC coordinator to provide a few options to choose from.
        - *What is MIC's role?*

- MIC's role in these exchanges is to help make it easy for a Mentee to connect with a Mentor organization that can help with his/her goals and to support travel to bring them together.
- Members are encouraged to arrange learning exchanges for themselves or their staff without MIC support.

▪ *What makes a successful learning exchange?*
- Clear, specific learning goals
- Good match between Mentor and Mentee (person or organization)
- Joint planning of goals and itinerary for exchange by Mentor and Mentee
- Time committed to learning and reflecting during exchange
- Mentee identifying specific actions to incorporate learning into day-to-day work
- Mentee sharing written and verbal reports on the exchange with his/her organization's staff and Board, and with other MIC members whenever possible

Fourth Blue Bubble: MIC Members' Staff Develop Skills and Capabilities

- Self-Directed Learning—the network's activities and agenda are determined by the individual and shared needs of the participants.
  - All learning is tied to actual organizational and programmatic priorities.
  - Emphasis is on demand-driven assistance rather than formal curricula.
- Peer Learning— widely recognized as one of the most powerful tools for personal, professional, and organizational development. MIC's activities are designed to:
  - Rapidly share successes and lessons learned
  - Identify and address shared needs for technical assistance, training, and other support
  - Promote learning exchanges with successful organizations rather than traditional training
  - Facilitate collaboration on local, national, and regional issues.
- Learning by Doing—MIC brings the most cost-effective tools to its members:
  - Facilitated organizational self-assessments and action plans
  - Peer coaching (one-on-one and retreats)
  - Targeted learning exchanges for specific goals
  - Demand-driven technical assistance designed for specific needs
  - Shared indicators for monitoring and adaptive management

  The idea is that if you make use of all these activities, you will help build the leadership skills of heads of organizations and their staff, as well as enhance successful conservation organizations.

Fourth set of Blue Bubbles in Grey: if the above happens successfully, then several things are expected to happen; conservation leaders are enabled to:

- Rapidly share successes and lessons learned;
- Identify and address shared needs for technical assistance, training, and other support;
- Work together on local, national, and regional issues; and
- Take ownership of their own learning.

▪ 1st bubble: Innovation Spreads More Rapidly
- As a result of the network, people are able to share new ideas with others across the region.

▪ 2nd bubble: Coordinated Response to Threats Developed and Implemented
- Often threats to the environment do not happen in isolation; problems that occur in one area of Micronesia will be a problem for another (e.g.,

brown tree snake of Guam is a concern for every island in Micronesia, especially since the expansion of the U.S. military).

- 3rd bubble: MIC Members Collectively and Individually are Able to Access More and Bigger Opportunities
  - MIC also gives its members exposure to donors.
  - MIC showcases the work of the network as a whole.
  - MIC presents the work of individual organizations and communities internationally.
  - MIC exposes members and their organizations to different types of tools developed and implemented in other parts of the world.
- 4th bubble: Big Joint Visions and Dreams Created (or Emerging)

Fifth Blue Bubble (below blue bubble in grey box): Capacity Exists to Act on Joint Vision and Dreams

- If MIC members improve communication among themselves and across borders, develop personal connections with each other, improve leadership and management skills; and develop along with their staffs better skills and capabilities, then MIC members and their staffs will have the capacity to accomplish cooperative visions and dreams.

Sixth Blue Bubble (next to grey box): MIC Members Communicate and Strategize with Big International NGOs

- If what is in the grey box is accomplished, then the MIC members will have the capacity to work with organizations such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Conservation International (CI) on large regional initiatives such as the Micronesia Challenge.
- The success of a wide-scale regional initiative, such as the Micronesia Challenge, depends on the ability of local Micronesian NGOs and government agencies to implement and carry out the work; implementation at the ground level cannot happen unless there are resources and capacity to execute the projects or initiatives.
- Large NGOs are needed to help provide financial and technical resources.
- Local NGOs are needed to apply those innovative tools on the ground as well as liaise between local governments and communities.
- Large NGOs can connect smaller governments and NGOs to large donors (private or public)
- Large NGOs have the capacity to market and publicize work that is happening on the ground.
- Local NGOs can implement innovative ideas at a smaller scale to test theories. If they are successful, large NGOs can take the pioneering idea to scale (e.g., the Caribbean Challenge and the Coral Triangle Initiative were inspired by the Micronesia Challenge, and the following were inspired by MIC: Pacific Invasive Learning Network, Pacific Islands Managed Protected Area Community, and the Global Island Partnership).

Seventh Blue Bubble: MIC Members Lobby Effectively for Vision (yellow bubble below clarifies this statement, explaining that MIC members provided the analysis illustrating that conservation on a large scale could occur, and other members of MIC lobbied their governments to support an initiative such as the Micronesia Challenge).

- If members of MIC had a joint vision or dream, they would be able to collectively persuade their governments to support a region-wide initiative.

Eighth Blue Bubbles in Grey Box: Opportunity Arises (and Created)

- 1st blue bubble: Big Funding Available to Implement Vision
    - United Nations conventions regarding conservation work (biodiversity, climate change, food security, etc.) become more accessible to local NGOs and governments through relations with their national governments and large NGOs.
    - Large funding opportunities also motivate NGOs and government agencies to work on a collective vision.
- 2nd blue bubble: Big International Stage (CoP 8)
    - Allows innovative ideas to be presented to a large international audience
- 3rd blue bubble: Conservation-oriented Head of State Elected Within Region
    - Having a conservation-minded government official elected into office presents a great opportunity to have novel proposals executed and presents opportunities to have policies created.
    - Heads of countries can also invite and inspire other heads of countries to support and join ground-breaking conservation ideas.
- These three things would not matter if MIC members could not effectively lobby their government officials; therefore, it is believed that if we can effectively lobby officials and work with big international NGOs with the above factors in place, we then can…

Ninth Blue Bubble: Conservation Head of Country (HoC) Persuaded and Takes Ownership of Vision

- Once HoC has been persuaded and takes ownership, he will then…

Tenth Blue Bubble: HoC Persuades Peer HoC (other countries to join)

- Once this happens, a group of HoC will then…

Eleventh Blue Bubble: Dramatic Conservation Goal Agreed Upon and Announced

- Once this happens, then…

Twelfth Blue Bubble: Plan of Action Developed, Adopted, Funded, and Implemented

- If this takes place, then it is believed that what is identified in the pink bubbles in the grey box will also take place.

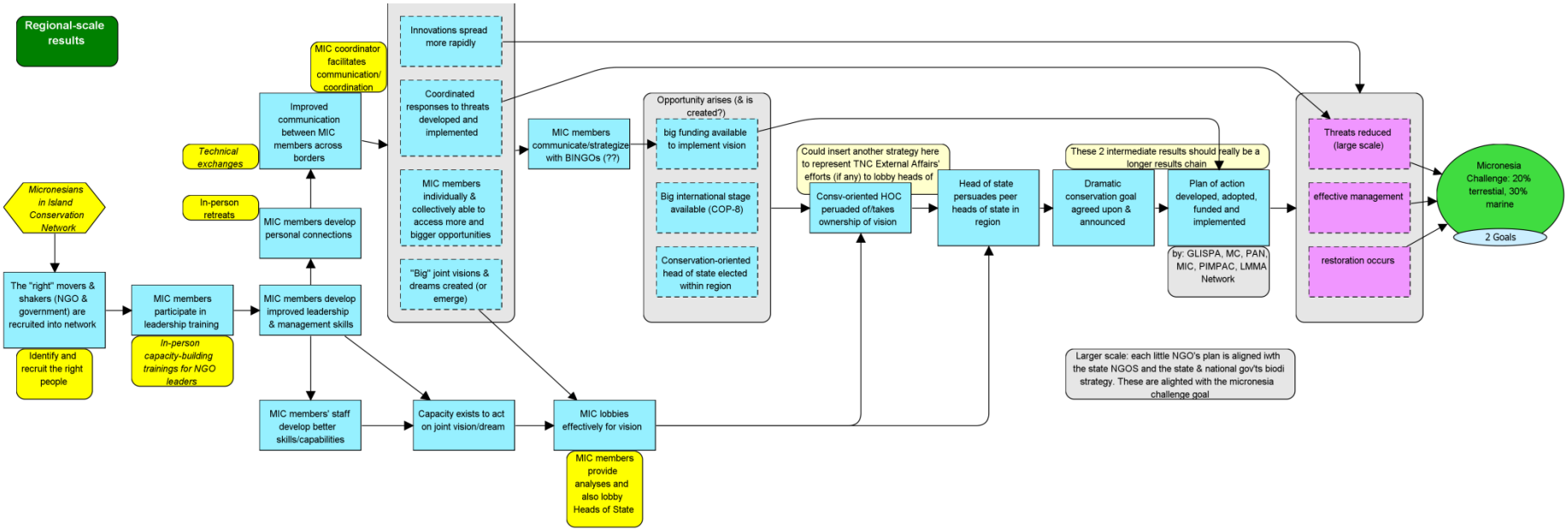
Grey Box with Pink Bubbles: Threats abated; Effective management; Restoration Occurs

- If this happens, then the goal will be accomplished, which is represented in the Green Circle.

Green Circle: Micronesia Challenge 20% Terrestrial and 30% Marine

Keep in mind that we all realized there were probably many other things that needed to happen in between some of the steps represented and that other results chains would and should be created to support this particular results chain. The purpose of this exercise was to discover certain chain reactions that occurred after the network was created and conservation leaders were adequately mentored, inspired, and trained.

Often results chains are hypothetical; they are “if-then” statements. This results chain is a snapshot looking back in time.


Regional-scale results
Micronesians in Island Conservation Network
The "right" movers & shakers (NGO & government) are recruited into network
Identify and recruit the right people
MIC members participate in leadership training
In-person capacity-building trainings for NGO leaders
MIC members develop improved leadership & management skills
MIC members develop personal connections
In-person retreats
Improved communication between MIC members across borders
Technical exchanges
MIC coordinator facilitates communication/ coordination
MIC members' staff develop better skills/capabilities
Capacity exists to act on joint vision/dream
Innovations spread more rapidly
Coordinated responses to threats developed and implemented
MIC members individually & collectively able to access more and bigger opportunities
"Big" joint visions & dreams created (or emerge)
MIC members communicate/strategize with BINGOs (??)
MIC lobbies effectively for vision
MIC members provide analyses and also lobby Heads of State
Opportunity arises (& is created?)
big funding available to implement vision
Big international stage available (COP-8)
Conservation-oriented head of state elected within region
Could insert another strategy here to represent TNC External Affairs' efforts (if any) to lobby heads of
Consv-oriented HOC peruaded of/takes ownership of vision
Head of state persuades peer heads of state in region
These 2 intermediate results should really be a longer results chain
Dramatic conservation goal agreed upon & announced
Plan of action developed, adopted, funded and implemented
by: GLISPA, MC, PAN, MIC, PIMPAC, LMMA Network
Threats reduced (large scale)
effective management
restoration occurs
Micronesia Challenge: 20% terrestial, 30% marine
2 Goals
Larger scale: each little NGO's plan is aligned iwth the state NGOS and the state & national gov'ts biodi strategy. These are alighted with the micronesia challenge goal
Local level results
Micronesians in Island Conservation Network
NGO leader participates in MIC
In-person capacity-building
leadership strengthened
Internal capabilities improve (leaders train staff/managers)
Technical exchanges
More effective organizations
Better external marketing and communications skills
improved ability to communicate with communities
CAPs or other strategic plans for their geography in place
Ongoing internal assessments/adaptive management internally
Strategic and budget planning skills developed
communities have desire to protect local resources
Communities are mobilized, skilled and ready to take action
MIC members' organizations provide effective trainings to community members
Organization collaborates in implementing actions (and they effectively collaborate)
Effective conservation actions taken
Local Protected Areas created
Restorations projects implemented
LPAs are effective
threats abated
attributes restored
Successful protection of critical ecosystems at local to national level

APPENDIX 10: DETAILED TIMELINE

Date	Event
2000-00	FSM government, TNC and CSP include Environment Sector Grants in the Compact of Free Association
2001-00	FSM and Palau Ecoregional Assessments to identify areas of biological significance.
2001-06	MIC start-up grant from Packard Foundation (18 months)
2001-09	First MIC scoping trip
2001-12	Second MIC scoping trip
2002-00	Micronesia Conservation Trust launched to help sustainably finance FSM conservation projects.
2002-06	First MIC Coordinator hired
2002-09	Retreat 1 in Pohnpei, with 10 conservation leaders as founding members
2002-11	First MIC Plan
2003-00	Chuuk joins MIC KCSO hires its first executive director
2003-03	Retreat 2 in Palau
2003-09	Retreat 3 in Kosrae
2003-09	Noah Idechong, Delegate, house of Representatives, Palau, went to Kosrae to share experience on community participation and effective environmental legislation. Focused on Utwe-Walung Conservation Area and Marine Park, Yela Ka Forest (invited by governor)
2004-00	CNMI joins MIC
2004-03	Retreat 4 in Yap
2004-08	Kathryn hired as 2nd MIC Coordinator
2004-09	Retreat 5 Chuuk
2005-00	a. TNC and CSP help CNMI create Mariana Island Nature Alliance b. Marshall Islands seeks assistance from CSP through MIC on how to start an NGO
2005-00	PICRC receives Just in time grant for consultant to increase fundraising capacity
2005-01	Learning Exchange: Willy Koska traveled to Chuuk to advise on starting a new NGO
2005-03	National/State Milestones and Member responsibilities added to MIC Plan
2005-04	Susi hired as MIC Coordinator
2005-04	Retreat 6 on Pohnpei

2005-09	MIC received TNC outstanding Partnership Award October
2005-12	Retreat 7 in Palau
2006-00	Guam and the Marshalls join MIC
2006-01	MIC Review began
2006-08	Retreat 8 in Saipan, CNMI. MIC Review presented to members. Guests from Caribbean, Australia, Mongolia. Steering Committee established.
2007-02	Mae hired as Coordinator
2007-06	Retreat 9 in RMI. Guests from Caribbean
2008-00	CCS hires its first executive director
2008-01	Measures Meeting, Pohnpei
2008-04	Retreat 10 in Guam Guest from Kiribati Members start funding their own travel
2009-00	MCT “officially” takes over MIC
2009-01	Retreat 11 in Pohnpei
2009-08	Frank hired as Coordinator
2009-08	Transition to MCT
2010-01	Retreat 12 in Palau

APPENDIX 11: LINKS AND RESOURCES

Built to Change: Catalytic Capacity-Building in Nonprofit Organizations | A. Newman
www.austincc.edu/npo/library/documents/Built%20to%20Change.pdf

Conservation Action Planning
www.conservationgateway.org/topic/guidance-and-resources

Conservation Partnership Center | The Nature Conservancy
www.conservationpartnerships.org

Eureka Fellows | Eureka Leadership Program
eurekaleadership.org

Fieldstone Alliance
www.fieldstonealliance.org/client/tools.cf

Institutional Self Assessment (aka facilitated organizational self-assessment)| The Nature Conservancy
www.parksinperil.org/howwework/methods/isa.html

Learning to Fly | C. Collison and G. Parcell
www.chriscollison.com/l2f

Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network
http://www/lmmanetwork.org

Micronesia Challenge
micronesiachallenge.org

Micronesians in Island Conservation Blog
mic-network.blogspot.com

The Nature Conservancy Micronesia Program
www.nature.org/micronesia

The Nature Conservancy MIC Web Page
www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/asiaandthepacific/micronesia/howwework/micronesians-in-island-conservation.xml

Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN)
mic-network.blogspot.com

Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community (PIMPAC)
pimpac.org

Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool | WWF / World Bank Alliance
www.parksinperil.org/howwework/methods/isa.html

Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory
wilderresearch.org/tools/cfi/index.php