

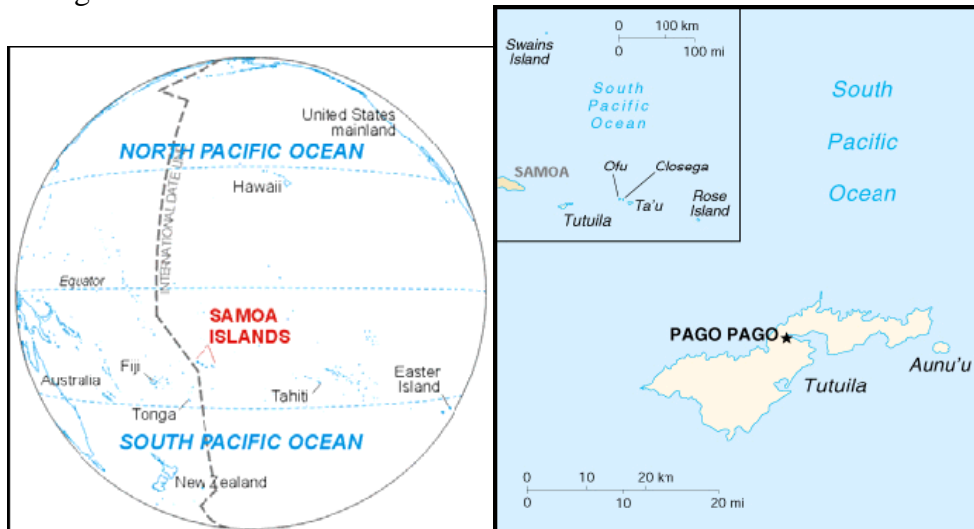
2008-2010 Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program

American Samoa

Statement of Work

Project Location

American Samoa, located some 2,600 miles southwest of Hawaii, consists of a group of five volcanic islands and two coral atolls that total 76 square miles and are inhabited by approximately 66,000 people. The Samoan way of life, called Fa'a Samoa, defines the basic structure of local communities and is based on family, tradition, and respect. The traditional way of life promotes village welfare over that of an individual. Extended families, or aigas, own lands extending from the mountaintop to the outer edge of the coral reef communally. Ninety-two percent of lands in American Samoa are still owned by aigas. All resource management activities in American Samoa must be adaptive to the existing cultural framework.



Program/Agency Background

American Samoa coordinates all its coral reef management activities through the Governor's Coral Reef Advisory Group (CRAG). This group is comprised of territorial and federal agencies, including the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency, American Samoa Community College, the National Park of American Samoa, and the American Samoa Department of Commerce, which houses the American Samoa Coastal Management Program (ASCMP) and Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary. These agencies collaborate to plan and implement actions related to the management of American Samoa's estimated 296 square kilometers of coral reefs.

Interagency management efforts have been focused more clearly through Local Action Strategy (LAS) development and implementation. CRAG has identified four primary threats to American Samoa's coral reefs: global climate change, land-based sources of

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pollution, overfishing, and population pressure. The LAS for each of these threats remain living documents and include steps to address the problems and a timeline for implementation. Many of the threats to coral reefs here are due to ignorance of the fragility and importance of coral reefs. CRAG believes that many of these threats could be eliminated or minimized with better public and governmental understanding. CRAG plans to continue to build capacity for its coral reef efforts by funding ongoing projects, as well as new ones.

Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of this fellowship project is to help implement the local action strategies for overfishing, land based sources of pollution, global climate change, and population pressure in American Samoa. Within these areas, CRAG expects issues such as capacity building, project management, education and outreach, general planning, and interagency activity coordination to be priorities.

Project Description

The fellow will be integrated into the Coral Reef Advisory Group and will network with partner organizations and agencies to complete this multifaceted fellowship. The fellow will be involved in each of these tasks, some of which will be accomplished concurrently.

Orientation (2 months)

The fellow will be introduced to the staff and management of CRAG and partner agencies. The fellow will review background information regarding American Samoa's Coral Reef Initiative. The fellow will participate in a management evaluation (i.e., gaps and needs) with program staff members, field visits, interagency meetings, and outreach activities. After participating in these activities, the fellow, with input from the mentor, will write a project work plan that will be reviewed and revised after the first year of the fellowship.

- Familiarity with staff, operations, and resources of CRAG and member agencies;
- Integration into CRAG and clarification of role in project;
- Conduct background research on the Coral Management Fellow's projects;
- Meet and interview CRAG staff and member agency staff involved in the Fellow's projects; and
- Develop a project work plan with objectives, deliverables, and a timeline.

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Remainder of fellowship:

The fellow will work closely with mentors and other agency personnel to complete projects and to further CRAG long-term goals in the following areas:

Capacity Building

Develop and coordinate CRAG's capacity building program. Tasks may include the following:

- Assess local resource management agencies' capacity and training needs;
- Investigate existing capacity building programs and package needed training schemes to address the needs and/or prioritize job training opportunities for the resource management agencies.
- Partner with the Pacific Island Center for Educational Development to involve local high school students in projects and events that CRAG participates in, or assumes leadership on. This may involve mentoring, helping with grants, and being a liaison to outside project managers to find suitable tasks for students to complete.
- Assist in the development of an internship program with CRAG and the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) Marine Science Program. This will involve planning meetings, program development, selection criteria development for interns, placement development, and project assistance and mentorship.

Education and Outreach

- Provide support and technical advice to the Education Coordinator as part of a working group to develop and implement education and outreach activities with a focus on capacity building;
- Assist with the long-term planning and vision of the Education Plans for the LAS (e.g. continuation and support of the Rare Pride Campaign Format for Outreach and Behavior Change); and
- Participate in the implementation of the education and outreach plans targeting government, schools, and villages.

Marine Protected Area Network

Assist the MPA Network Coordinator with the implementation of the Marine Protected Area Network Plan implementation in regard to:

- Identifying capacity development needs and opportunities,
- Developing consistent education messages with the education and outreach working group,
- Assisting with collection and dissemination of information among the network, and
- Assisting with meetings and coordination, as needed.

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Plastic Bag Reduction Campaign

One of the most predominant threats from land-based sources of pollution is the excessive use and improper disposal of plastics, including shopping bags. Plastic bags, provided by most shops in American Samoa, are not biodegradable and will continue to pose an increasing threat of entanglement to the coral reefs and associated marine life unless an alternative is provided. The goals of the project are to increase public awareness of the negative impacts of plastic bag use on the coral reefs of American Samoa; decrease prevalence of non-reusable packaging and bags; and decrease the quantity of plastic bags and other solid waste washing onto the reefs.

Changing behavior and habits is often one of the most difficult challenges in gaining public support and participation in activities that improve the environment. To successfully reduce the use of plastic bags on island, education and outreach effort need to target behavior change. This will take innovative ideas and strategies. The Coral Management Fellow would be responsible for developing strategies to make this campaign successful. There will be opportunities to work with the local American Samoa Community College SEEDS club, who can provide assistance with implementing the campaign. At the time the new fellow will be working on this project, the initial pilot project should be completed. This initial project will lay the groundwork and will provide guidance on successful aspects of the pilot project as well as ineffective approaches to the campaign.

The second campaign will be spearheaded by the Fellow and will include the following:

- Use recommendations generated from the pilot program to expand the plastic bag reduction campaign;
- Work with local businesses to develop locally sponsored bags to sell for customers to purchase;
- Work with local businesses to develop incentives to the customers to use alternative bags;
- Work with the SEEDS club or other environmental groups to assist with the campaign;
- Develop strategies for on-going reduction of plastic bags for the territory. This will include exploring options such as:
 - Working with legislators to ban the use of plastic bags (case studies from Samoa as an example),
 - Identifying barriers to project success and make recommendations
 - Working with businesses on sustainable options to plastic bags, and
 - Recommendations on leaders who can implement the strategy.

Guide and coordinate the plastic bag reduction education and outreach campaign with the assistance from the CRI Education Coordinator.

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Support CRAG planning and reporting activities:

The fellow will work closely with mentors and other agency personnel to further CRAG long-term goals and to work on the following reporting and planning projects:

- Assist CRI Coordinator and CRAG Chair with participation in regional cooperation and policy initiatives;
- Provide comments and attend meetings, as necessary, on regional, national and international developments in the field of coastal zone and coral reef management and policy;
- Assist in tracking CRI-funded projects;
- Research funding and partnership opportunities; and
- Assist with other projects as needs arise.

Fellow Mentoring

The fellow will be mentored by the manager of the American Samoa Coastal Management Program and by the Coral Reef Initiative (CRI) Coordinator both housed at the Department of Commerce (DOC). The fellow will be located in the same office as CRAG/DOC staff. They will be the primary points of contact for administrative questions and project guidance.

The fellow will be considered staff of the Coral Reef Advisory Group and will be expected to attend staff meetings and participate in program discussions. He or she will be provided opportunities to join staff members on field visits and in internal and external meetings. The fellow will have ample opportunities to meet education and outreach staff members within all levels of government, nonprofit groups, and academic institutions. This project will provide an exciting opportunity to learn about a wide range of island resource management issues.

- The fellow will receive assistance in identifying key individuals with whom to meet and important sources of background information. He or she will be provided with the necessary resources to carry out the project.

Project Partners

CRAG actively works with other agency staff, community organizations, government agencies, universities, and nongovernmental organizations. Agency partners include but will not be limited to the following:

- Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources
- American Samoa Community College (Sea Grant/Land Grant)

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- American Samoa Department of Commerce
- National Park of American Samoa
- American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency
- American Samoa Coastal Management Program
- Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Resource Conservation Service

Eligibility Requirements

- Bachelor's degree in natural resource management or environmental-related fields with 4 to 6 years experience OR a master's degree in natural resource management or environmental-related fields with 2 years experience. Coastal or marine management experience preferred.
- Valid driver's license

Desired Background and Skill Sets

- Demonstrated oral, written, and interpersonal communication and leadership skills
- A proven ability to be well-organized and able to manage and prioritize multiple tasks
- Knowledge of education and outreach programs and development
- Public speaking, events planning, and meeting facilitation experience
- Ability to work independently
- Creative, flexible, and adaptable
- Experience living and working in another culture or in an island community
- Experience working with different user groups
- Knowledge of tropical marine ecosystems
- Desire to be involved with many aspects of coastal and marine resource management (e.g., fisheries, coral reef monitoring and management, nonpoint source pollution, vessel groundings, recreation, etc.)
- Project management experience
- Sense of humor