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Over the course of this week, we have been reminded not only of the importance of recognizing traditional knowledge and practices in resource management, but the profound value added to MPA effectiveness in incorporating traditional knowledge into management regimes. The stories we have heard from American Samoa, Western Samoa, Hawai'i, and the Marshall Islands and beyond tell a compelling story of the urgent for resource managers to not just give a nod to traditional practices and ways of knowing, but to proactively seek out local knowledge systems and being the process of dialogue and synthesis.

We also heard about the critical importance of investing in education and awareness building at an early age. From local educators and village leaders, we heard an all too familiar complaint that curriculum and other teacher resources are sadly lacking in regionally relevant environmental science content. Either the texts are inadequate or teachers lack opportunities for professional development to build core pedagogic competencies.

While the repeated call for resources for the development of curricula has been heard this week, I want to call the Task Force's attention to networks and professional education associations already established which may present valuable opportunities for exciting synergies with and in support of state and territory local action strategies.

First, the National Marine Educators Association is a professional association of both formal and informal ocean science educators with regional chapters throughout the states and territories. The Pacific Island chapter, Oceania, is based in Hawai'i and is comprised of teachers, graduate schools of education, curriculum developers and museum and aquarium educators who have already begun the process of creating effective, pedagogically and developmentally appropriate, and national science standards based curriculum for building ocean science literacy. A subgroup, the International Pacific Marine Educators Network, is a new initiative to reach out beyond states and territories to link teachers to quality curriculum and best practices. This group is also committed to the inclusion of traditional knowledge in ocean curriculum as well.

Lastly, I'm certain many of the Task Force members are familiar with the NSF network of COSEE's (Centers for Ocean Science Education Excellence) strategically located throughout the United States. The mission of COSEE is to create greater linkages between ocean scientists and public understanding of ocean science and exploration. A number of COSEE's have already been developing outstanding curriculum, some focused on regionally relevant tropical and subtropical ecosystems and conservation, that can serve as templates and exemplars (or wholly adopted as is) by educators where such content and resources are needed.

Where resources are scarce and duplication of efforts is certainly not the best use to those limited resources I encourage Task Force members to explore these existing opportunities

and synergies within your jurisdictions. Your leadership and vision ensure that no child is left behind in regionally appropriate ocean literacy. Thank you.