



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Republic of Palau
Telephone: 587-2920/2990
Fax: 587-2911

Press Release

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International Partnership Expands Shark Research in Palau

An international team of researchers, conservationists, commercial dive operators, and government agencies has joined together to deploy and operate an array of acoustic devices to monitor the movement of sharks in the waters of Palau. This array, the first of its kind in the waters of Micronesia, supports Palau's world-leading effort to conserve and protect sharks within the whole of their Exclusive Economic Zone.

Initially established by the Micronesian Shark Foundation, the Save Our Seas Foundation, and the Australian Institute of Marine Science, the 14-station array has recently undergone an expansion with funding from the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), through the Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS). The PacIOOS investment is targeted at increasing the density and geographic range of stations—providing a more precise and complete picture of shark movement in the Palauan archipelago.

"Sharks are a sentinel species in the global ocean and are important for ensuring the health of all ocean species in the future," said PacIOOS Director, Chris E. Ostrander. "Sharks populations worldwide are threatened by increasing illegal fin fishing and a shifting climate. The Government of Palau's dedication to conserving shark populations in their waters is an extraordinary step to helping shark populations recover and we are pleased to be able to assist, with our partners, in providing necessary information on shark movement, migration, and mating."

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PacIOOS is the Pacific Islands regional component of the United States Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) and is charged with providing timely, reliable, and accurate information on the coastal and open ocean waters of the Pacific Islands to residents and visitors alike. If you'd like more information about this topic please call Chris Ostrander at 808-956-5902 or e-mail Chris at chriso@hawaii.edu.

