



American Samoa Coral Reef MPA Network Strategy

**U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
Translating Traditional Knowledge Into Management
August 20, 2007**

Introducing the MPA Network Strategy

American Samoa Marine Protected Area Network Strategy

August, 2007



Prepared For
American Samoa Coral Reef Advisory Group

Prepared By
Chromis LLC



Includes collaborative activities addressing:

- ❖ Public involvement
- ❖ Incorporating traditional knowledge and management practices
- ❖ Capacity building and training
- ❖ Education and outreach
- ❖ Research and monitoring
- ❖ Performance evaluation, and
- ❖ Enforcement

MPA Network Strategy Goal:

To effectively coordinate existing and future MPAs to ensure the long-term health and sustainable use of the Territory's coral reef resources.

Brief History of the American Samoa MPA Network Strategy

Long process and many events leading up to the establishment of the MPA Network Program and Strategy

1999—CRAG workshop to create a 5-year for coral reef plan.

2000—U.S.C.R.T.F adopts National Action Plan with goal to protect as “no-take”, 20% of U.S. reefs.

2000—AS Governor Sunia calls for plan to protect coral reefs.

2002—CRAG workshop to develop plan for collaborative network:

2004—MPA Coordinator hired, several drafts of strategy produced

2007—Chromis selected as contractor to finalize Network Strategy

What Does the MPA Network Encompass?

MPAs: The Network encompasses all existing and future MPAs of many different types, in American Samoa, including:

- Territorial MPAs
- Federal MPAs

MPA Network Coordinator: The Network requires a new position to support and oversee implementation of the MPA Network Strategy

Agencies: The Network encompasses all agencies working to protect the marine resources, including:

- Primary Agencies
- Secondary Agencies



About the MPA Network Strategy

The MPA Network Strategy was developed using a consensus based collaborative process involving Interviews, workshops, and review.

The Strategy includes 5 individual *Action Plans*:

1. Education and Outreach
2. Research and Monitoring
3. Enforcement
4. Governance and Administration
5. MPA Designation and Support

Guiding Principles:

- ❖ Adaptive Management Approach
- ❖ Public Participation
- ❖ Sustainable Funding



Education and Outreach Action Plan

Goal: To conduct education based on traditional knowledge and scientific understanding that communicates the benefits of individual MPAs and the overall MPA Network, by utilizing and coordinating existing educational resources.

Objectives include:

- Strengthen/Enhance Integration Among Existing Education Programs
- Increase awareness of MPA agencies and types
- Better Communicate Research Findings for use in Education Efforts



Research and Monitoring Action Plan

Goal: *To evaluate, coordinate and strengthen research and monitoring efforts to ensure the health and sustainability of American Samoa's coral reef ecosystems.*

Objectives include:

- Better Coordinate and Strengthen Existing Research Activities in the Territory
- Improve Communication of Research Results for Use in Education Programs & Management
- Build Capacity Among American Samoa Research and Monitoring Programs

Enforcement Action Plan

Goal: Leverage and strengthen existing MPA enforcement efforts with local support to minimize actions that negatively impact marine resources.

Objectives include:

- Improve existing enforcement capabilities
- Pursue non-regulatory enforcement options
- Increase local buy in to enforcement



Governance and Administration Action Plan

This Action Plan contains numerous tasks aimed at increased information sharing, Cross training/capacity building opportunities, and public involvement.

A Few Relevant Highlights of this Action Plan include:

- Actively involve the general public in MPA management
- Develop protocols that improve collaborative working relationships
- Increased information sharing
- Identify, and pursue funding and non-monetary support opportunities
- Identify, prioritize and pursue training and capacity building
- Explore opportunities for sharing resources, and minimizing overlap
- Establish information sharing protocols for the MPA Network

MPA Designation and Support Action Plan

Goal: *Support entities in the development and management of culturally and ecologically defensible MPAs*

Some Relevant Highlights of this Action Plan include:

- Assessing/recommending international collaborative opportunities
- Participating in MPA program exchanges
- Ensuring integration/participation within *National System of MPAs*
- Adopting system to ensure communication with other off-island MPA managers
- Implementing the recommended next steps from this workshop
- Supporting grants and projects for integrating traditional knowledge into management, and
- Coordinating with other Pacific Island nations and territories in the pursuit of sharing and utilizing traditional knowledge and management techniques.

Conclusions

- The MPA Network Strategy offers promise in enhancing the protection of the Territory's Coral Reef Resources, and reaching our shared goal of protecting 20% of these ecosystems.
- It also will enhance information sharing within the Territory and Regionally, by providing protocols for information exchange and public participation.
- By working collectively, an ecological network spanning beyond the islands of American Samoa can be realized as a long-term goal

