

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**Awareness and application of long-term monitoring data in the Pacific Islands**  
**OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX**

**INTRODUCTION**

This request is for a new information collection is to better understand the awareness, application and gaps of existing socioeconomic data in the US-affiliated Pacific island region. This data collection may be repeated every four to five years in order to provide updated relevant information.

The Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP), developed under the authority of the [Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000](#) (P.L. 106-562; 16 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.), launched the National Coral Reef Monitoring Program (NCRMP) in 2012. The goal of the NCRMP is to track socioeconomic<sup>1</sup> and biophysical changes to better coral reef management. NRCMP monitors island level changes among the US-affiliated islands in the Pacific, including Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas, and American Samoa. Additionally, over the past 20 years, numerous socioeconomic surveys and assessments have been conducted in the West Pacific. These include monitoring of regional fisheries by NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) and site-based socioeconomic assessments supported by the CRCP-supported Socioeconomic Monitoring for Coastal Management in the Pacific Island Region (SEM-Pasifika), the Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community (PIMPAC) and conservation and resource management partners. Recently efforts have been made to find ways to integrate social and biophysical monitoring to better inform ecosystem-based management decisions and to safeguard the ecological and social systems of island communities. This data collection will help synthesize the disparate data collection efforts to make recommendations for a coordinated long-term socioeconomic monitoring program.

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

Long-term monitoring can help provide information that is useful for management. The island-wide NCRMP socioeconomic monitoring examines among jurisdictional residents the relationships of coastal populations with coral reef resources; and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of coral reefs and coral reef management. CRCP works with local partners in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to reduce key threats to coral reefs, including climate change, land based sources of pollution, and impacts from fishing. While the NRCMP focuses on data relevant to reef management at island level, other state- and site-based long-term monitoring generate various data types relevant to fisheries management and coastal

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<sup>1</sup> The term *socioeconomic* in this document is used to include economic, socio-cultural, and other human dimensions of resource management.

management. Today little is known about data awareness, about common uses of data, and about data gaps relevant to managing reefs, fisheries, and other coastal and marine resources. At the same time there is a recognized and growing need to integrate biophysical and social monitoring for more comprehensive information on the interactions of biophysical and social systems to support an ecosystem approach to fisheries, marine and coastal resource management. The proposed information collection will help inform the CRCP NCRMP, the PIFSC, the PIMPAC, and other partners in coastal and marine resource management and conservation about the types of data that are important for their monitoring programs, that can help fill data gaps, and that can improve integrated monitoring.

A main objective of this data collection is to obtain information from possible users of long-term monitoring data and from those who are involved in designing and implementing the monitoring themselves. We seek to understand the awareness of the availability of the different types of data, how data is being applied, perceptions regarding the level of importance assigned to different kinds of data, the reasons and obstacles for accessing and applying the data, needs for any additional types of data considered useful for management, and possibilities to better integrate biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring. The goal of the data collection is to generate information that will help ensure that monitoring programs are designed appropriately with useful indicators and are effectively implemented, and that will help bring about conditions that are optimized for users to apply data effectively in their work and to better integrate biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring in ecosystem approaches for fisheries, coastal and marine management.

**2. 1 Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. 1 If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.**

The survey design, including questionnaire (Appendix A) and focus group guide (Appendix B), were developed by the PIFSC Ecosystem Sciences Division (ESD) staff. Purposive sampling will be used to recruit the target participants (i.e. possible users of socioeconomic and biophysical data and people who are involved in monitoring design and implementation). We will start to identify the target participants by consulting with known users, such as key administrators of the PIRO, Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council (WESTPAC), resource management agencies, and conservation organizations. The data users are expected to come from fisheries and coastal management agencies, conservation organizations and community groups (such as staff from PIRO and PIFSC, State of Hawaii Department of Aquatic Resources, WESTPAC, The Nature Conservancy, and Kai Kuleana). For those who are involved in monitoring, we will start with leads for physical and biological monitoring teams (such as fish teams, coral and benthic team, and ocean and climate change team) at the PIFSC Ecosystem Sciences Division, the NCRMP tool developers and data analysts, research partners (such as University of Guam and University of Hawaii, and

researchers from conservation organizations), key individuals involved in socioeconomic monitoring efforts in the Pacific island and other regions (such as PIFSC Socioeconomic and Human Dimension team staff, NOS Hollings Lab socioeconomic team members, socioeconomic monitoring (SocMon/SEM-Pasifika) regional coordinators and island points of contacts, Micronesia Challenge technical and monitoring advisors, and other partners involved in biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring).

The survey has 2 parts. Section A is in Part 1 and is to be filled out by all participants. There are 3 sections (B, C, and D) in Part 2, and each respondent will be asked to complete only one section that is most relevant to their work. The information collected in all sections are to help inform those in coastal and marine resource management and conservation about the types of data that are important for their monitoring programs, that can help fill data gaps, and that can improve integrated monitoring. Details of the sections are as follows.

1. Section A is to understand the background of the survey respondents, awareness of monitoring data availability, their use, and perceived importance of each data types for management. It also examines the participants' opinion on the usefulness for management the new types of biophysical and social data that are suggested by literature and relevant scientific experts.
2. Section B is only for the survey participants who are involved in biophysical monitoring. It examines their main role in monitoring, the purpose of their biophysical monitoring, their level of working across disciplines or collaborating with social scientists and resource managers, their opinion on the usefulness for management decision of the existing data from long-term biophysical monitoring programs *in general* and the programs *they are involved with*, and lastly the most important types of biophysical data that would be most useful for sociocultural and economic monitoring, and vice versa.
3. Section C is to be completed only by the survey participants who are involved in sociocultural and economic monitoring. It examines their main role in monitoring, the purpose of their sociocultural and economic monitoring, their level of working across disciplines or collaborating with biophysical scientists and resource managers, their opinion on the usefulness for management decision of the existing data from long-term sociocultural and economic monitoring programs *in general* and the programs *they are involved with*, and lastly the most important types of sociocultural and economic data that would be most useful for biophysical monitoring, and vice versa.
4. Section D is for the survey participants who are involved in management and in all other types of work except biophysical and sociocultural and economic monitoring. The purpose of this section is to examine their opinion on the following: overall usefulness of the existing data from long-term monitoring programs for informing management decision making, their level of work with those who design or implement long-term monitoring to make sure the data meet management needs, importance of collaboration across social and natural scientific

disciplines, and the types of existing and additional data that would be most useful for their work.

There will be a summary report of the key results. The report will be distributed back to participants and teams they work with, who represent the key generators and users of the data, so they can work results into monitoring/management plans.

Participation in this project is voluntary and the identities of the participants in this data collection will remain protected. Very limited personal data are collected and they are work-related (see response to Question 10) in order to allow for analysis of sub-groups. Data collected will not be disseminated to the public in ways which could potentially reveal personally identifiable information (PII). ESD will maintain the data in accordance with the highest standards of information security and will keep PII data only as long as is absolutely necessary to complete the survey. The survey will be conducted only once in the next 3 years.

NOAA will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to [Section 515 of Public Law 106-554](#).

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.**

The survey will be administered through on-line Survey Monkey and by phone or in person where internet is problematic. We are planning on conducting focus groups in meetings where main data users and monitoring team leads are present.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

Several monitoring team leads and potential data users have been contacted regarding this data collection and none have indicated that such a survey has been conducted in the past or is currently planned in the Pacific Islands region.

**5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.**

Not applicable.

**6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.**

This is the first time this data collection will take place. One of the main objectives of this collection is to assist the CRCP to fulfill its mission of enhancing the conservation of coral reefs and for PIFSC, PIRO, and their partners to understand the levels of awareness and use of long-term monitoring data for ecosystem-based management and to help understand the data types that are considered useful in future monitoring. Not conducting this investigation could undermine the efforts to monitor the type of information that is useful to management and could delay the integration of biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring that yields more holistic understandings of how social-ecological systems interact and how best to implement ecosystem approaches to management.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.**

No special circumstances are anticipated. The collection will be conducted in accordance with OMB guidelines.

**8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

A Federal Register Notice was published on August 14, 2018 (80 FR 40232). No comments were received.

The list of available data types for the survey questions was developed in multiple consultations with leads of different biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring programs.

**9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payments or gifts are provided to respondents.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

Survey respondents are being advised that any information provided will be considered private. The only personal data collected will be title, program, and office name, education, areas of professional expertise, and number of working years. This information will be viewed only by the ESD research team compiling the data and used for analyses of sub-groups. The data will be destroyed at the end of the information collection and not be retrieved using personal identifying information. This process will maintain the anonymity of the responses received. Results will be aggregated, so that no responses can be attributable to individuals.

All data will be placed on a secure server and will be password protected. All computerized data will be maintained in a manner that is consistent with NOAA's IT Security Program. No data files will contain personal identifiers.

This information is covered by the Privacy Act System of Records Notice COMMERCE/NOAA-11, Contact Information for Members of the Public Requesting or Providing Information Related to NOAA's Mission.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

For this collection, no sensitive questions will be asked. However answers to all questions are completely voluntary, so if a respondent does perceive a particular question as sensitive, they will not be required to respond.

**12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.**

A variety of instruments and platforms will be used to collect information from respondents. These include a survey with up to 100 people and four 90-minute focus groups. The estimated periods of time needed for each of the proposed data collecting instruments are: 30 minutes per person for the survey (50 hours total) and 1.5 hours per focus group of 20 participants) (120 hours total). A total annual burden of 170 hours is estimated (See Table 1).

The questions are simple and require respondents to state their awareness, use of data, opinions and perspectives, and therefore will not require third party review.

We acknowledge that not all respondents contacted will be willing to participate in the survey. For these negative responses we estimate a non-response burden of 1 minute for the respondents to read the email instruction and decline.

**Table 1: Estimate of Burden Hours**

Survey Type	# of units	Responses Per Type	Total # of Responses	Response Time (in hours)	Total Burden (in hours)
Survey questionnaire	100	1	100	0.5	50
Focus Groups	4	20	60	1.5	120
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>170</b>

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).**

There will be no cost to respondents beyond burden hours.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.**

An estimated of 0.5 months total of 3 NOAA federal staff are requested for them to participate in planning and design activities for this data collection, and review to provide input on the data collecting instruments and summary report. At an average salary rate (with fringe benefits) of \$14,000 per month per person, the cost would be \$7,000.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.**

Not applicable. This is a new information collection request.

**16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.**

Results will be summarized in a report, with recommendations to fill data type gaps, how to make data more accessible and applicable for managers and to outline regional socioeconomic monitoring plan.

Depending on the results, member of the team may publish aspects of this assessment in peer-

reviewed academic journals. The agency may also receive requests to release some of its findings through congressional inquiries or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests. The PIFSC ESD and NOAA CRCP will disseminate the findings when appropriate, and strictly following NOAA's guidelines, and all applicable laws and regulations.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.**

Not applicable.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.**

Not applicable.