

2024 IMPACT REPORT

Vibrant Reefs,
Thriving Communities

OneReef



Our Mission

To ensure healthy ocean ecosystems and thriving coastal communities across the Pacific Islands.

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A YEAR OF IMPACT AND INNOVATION

79,500

People reached (directly and indirectly) by our work. Equal 1:1 ratio of females and males, including youth and people with disabilities

916,700

Approx Acres (1,432 square miles) of Marine Managed Areas of partnering organizations and communities supported by OneReef and MiCOAST

44

Communities supported directly under an agreement or project, or indirectly by resourcing partner organizations via different financial mechanisms

5

Countries and Territories: Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, French Polynesia, Fiji

At OneReef, we regard the ocean as far more than a resource—it is a source of life, woven into identity, culture, and human connections.

But this life source is now under growing threat. Rising temperatures, collapsing fisheries, and accelerating climate impacts are unraveling ocean systems. What we do in the next few decades will determine the future of these places—and of the people who depend on them.

For over a decade, we have worked alongside Pacific communities, recognizing ancestral wisdom and science to forge solutions. Together, we are protecting coral reefs, restoring fisheries, sustaining ecosystems, advocating for climate action, and strengthening island societies.

In 2024, we expanded our alliances and amplified our reach. We are now advancing the Oceania Collective—a powerful Pacific alliance of community stewards who recognize and embrace their collective responsibility for ocean space across seven nations.

The stakes are enormous. Yet there is hope—rooted in partnership, respect, and action. Pacific communities are on the frontlines and at the helm of these efforts. Their leadership, knowledge, and determination are key to regenerating our ocean.

Thank you for standing with us. Together, we can honor tradition and drive innovation.



Chris LaFranchi
Chief Executive Officer

OUR MODEL AND APPROACH



TRADITIONAL GOVERNANCE

Building on and reinforcing traditional leadership systems to guide sustainable resource use and management



TRADITIONAL LEARNING

Reinforcing the tradition of intergenerational knowledge sharing to build resilience among community members



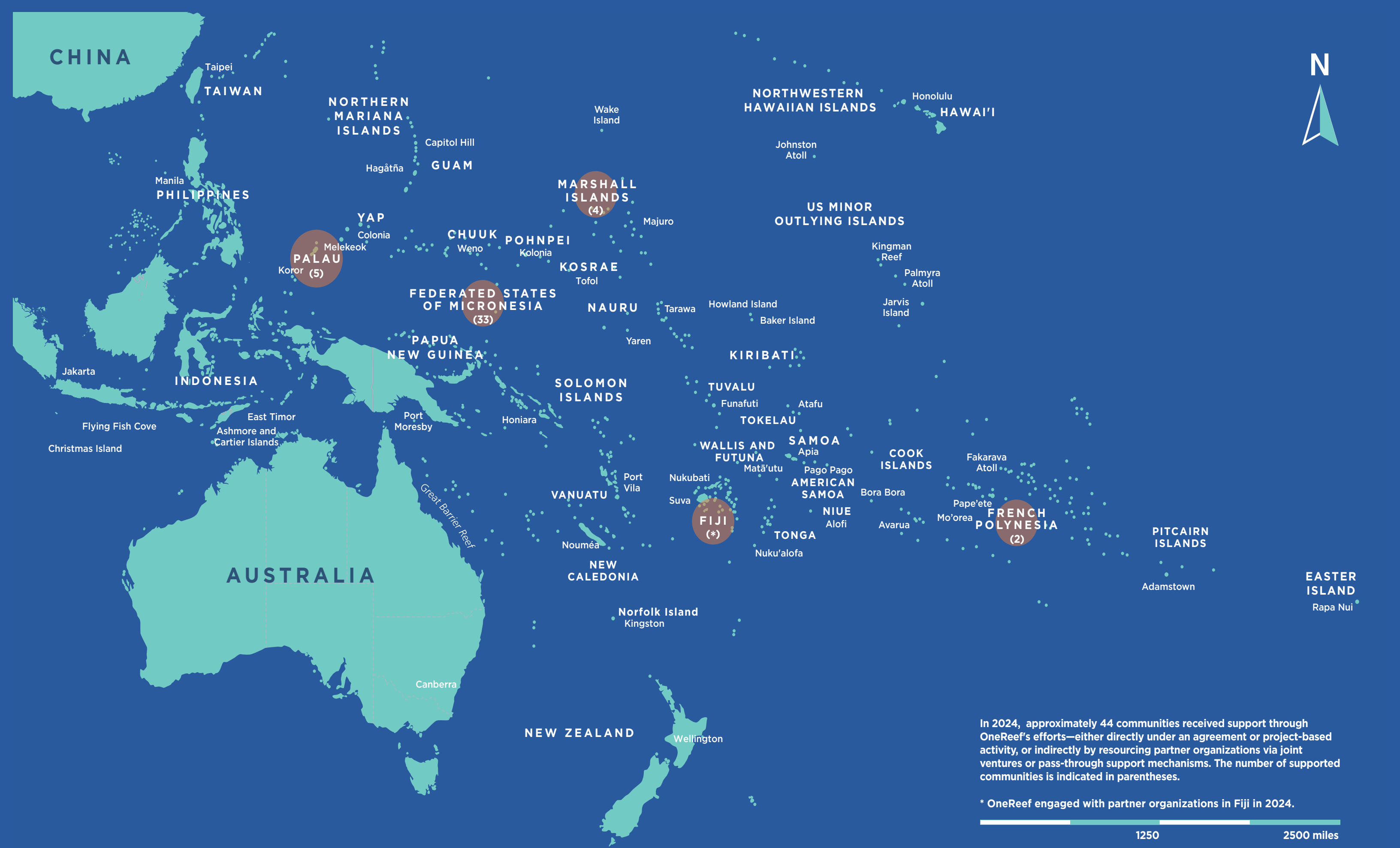
SURVEILLANCE & COMPLIANCE

Equipping communities with innovative tools and diverse strategies to promote sustainable resource use



IMPACT MONITORING

Using data - social and ecological - to assess resource use patterns and guide adaptive management



In 2024, approximately 44 communities received support through OneReef's efforts—either directly under an agreement or project-based activity, or indirectly by resourcing partner organizations via joint ventures or pass-through support mechanisms. The number of supported communities is indicated in parentheses.

* OneReef engaged with partner organizations in Fiji in 2024.

MiCOAST: A Collective Journey Toward Community-based Fisheries Management

OneReef is privileged to lead the regional MiCOAST project funded by the Kiwa Initiative with €4.9 million in funding over three years (2023–2026), in partnership with the Marshall Islands Conservation Society (MICS), Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), Marine Environmental Research Institute of Pohnpei (MERIP), Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization (KCSO), Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA), Rare, and cChange. This project places communities at the heart of fisheries management, fostering sustainable practices that strengthen local livelihoods and enhance resilience to climate change.

“In Pohnpei, MiCOAST intends to amplify the strengths of local stewards through diverse interventions such as fisheries management planning, enhancing surveillance and enforcement, supporting alternative livelihoods, and conducting behavior change campaigns.”

– CSP Director Eugene Joseph



MiCOAST
Micronesian Community-based
Fisheries Management as a Nature-based
Solution for Coastal Resilience

The project's achievements to date include:

- Engagement by KCSO of over 250 youth through educational programs, including outreach on coral reef ecosystems and herbivore fish, as well as hands-on experiences like mangrove planting, touring locally managed areas, and a giant clam farm visit to inspire sustainable practices.
- Training by MICS of four Local Resource Officers focused on marine resource monitoring and management. On Ujae Atoll, the community worked hand-in-hand with the MICS to update their Natural Resource Management Plan together with drafting a new ordinance for sustainable fishery management.
- Participation by MiCOAST partners to key events, such as a workshop to update the Micronesia Challenge goals for 2030 and initiatives led by the Pacific Community to amplify fishers' perspectives on Community-Based Fisheries Management and ensure that local knowledge shapes policies.



- Spanning 12 sites across Palau, Yap, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Nauru, and the Marshall Islands, MiCOAST intends to directly benefit 70,500 individuals by enhancing regional cohesion and driving transformative change. MiCOAST is more than a project—it is a collective movement powered by community-led solutions striving for a resilient Pacific region.





Participants and partners at the first stakeholder consultation workshop in April 2024. Two more workshops with different stakeholders were held in August and November 2024.

Honoring Heritage, Advancing Science: Palau’s Offshore Cultural Protocols

In 2015, Palau established the Palau National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS), protecting 80% of its Exclusive Economic Zone as a no-take marine protected area. This bold initiative revitalized the traditional bul, a temporary moratorium, that allows time for reflection, investigation, or resolution of issues.

By 2024, the PNMS became the foundation for a groundbreaking milestone: the development of cultural protocols for offshore scientific expeditions. This effort was spearheaded by the Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC), working closely with OneReef, the Bureau of Cultural and Historic Preservation, and the Ocean Exploration Trust (OET). The effort was guided by Rubekul Belau (Palau’s Council of Chiefs), ensuring that traditional leadership played a central role in shaping the process

Finalized and endorsed in December 2024, the protocols were first implemented during the November expedition of the E/V Nautilus, aptly named Lebuu’s Voyage in honor of Palau’s legendary first explorer. This 17-day mission mapped and explored Palau’s ocean habitats, deploying advanced robotic tools to study biodiversity, ocean dynamics, and productivity. Each voyage included a cultural liaison to ensure adherence to protocols and provide outreach in the Palauan language. “We are not just protecting our ocean; we are preserving our identity, our culture, and our future,” reflected Miss Elany Joseph of OneReef who served as the cultural liaison on the first voyage. Palau’s initiative redefines conservation, proving sustainability thrives when tradition and innovation unite.



E/V Nautilus Lebuu Voyage team meets with Palau traditional leadership



OneReef facilitating breakout group dialogues

DEFENDERS OF THE REEF

*Featured in National Geographic “Indigenous Futures”
July 2024 Special Issue*

Hotsarihie or Helen Reef, one of OneReef’s first partners, 375 miles from Palau’s main island of Koror, is the cornerstone of the Southwest Islands and Palau’s National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS), which prohibits fishing in 80% of the country’s 230,000-square-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The remote and ecologically significant reef is protected by a single ranger station on a narrow sandbar. Helen Island is home to just four rangers tasked with deterring Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing by foreign vessels. Despite resource constraints, the sense of duty and perseverance of the people of Hatohobei continues to demonstrate their enduring commitment to safeguard Helen Reef’s unique biodiversity.

Rangers Hercules Emilio (captain), Petra Tkel (front), and Tony Chayam (back right) patrolling Helen Reef Island.



MAINTAINING NATURAL AND SOCIAL BALANCE IN YAP STATE, FSM

In Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), communities embrace a holistic approach to resource management by prioritizing a balance between economic, social, and environmental wellbeing. This ensures their island ecosystems continue to thrive while supporting livelihoods. Traditional practices rooted in conservation and sustainable practices demonstrate the interconnectedness of social, ecological, and cultural resilience.



TRADITIONAL GOVERNANCE

Cultural frameworks provide a foundation for social cohesion, collective responsibility, and equitable resource management.



UPHOLDS CULTURAL VALUES

Reinforces ancestral principles of respect, reciprocity, and sustainability in resource use and management



ENVIRONMENTAL KINSHIP

Recognizes the deep interdependence between communities' ways of life and their natural environment



ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Co-designing strategies blending tradition and innovation to address contemporary issues like climate change, economic shifts, and migration

Ant Atoll – A Beacon of Traditional Governance and Conservation Success

Ant Atoll in Pohnpei, in the Federated States of Micronesia, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and long-standing partner of OneReef, stands as a shining example of how traditional governance can drive transformative conservation and community outcomes. At the heart of its success is Rohsa William Hawley, the high chief and dedicated custodian of Ant Atoll.

Under the Rohsa's visionary leadership, Ant Atoll has implemented a comprehensive management approach of its reefs and fisheries that includes no-take zones, community-led enforcement, and ecological monitoring. The results have been nothing short of extraordinary: between 2016 and 2018, fish biomass increased by 15%, and populations of critical top predators, such as sharks, surged by over 200%—a stark contrast to control sites, which faced alarming declines during the same period. These successes have strengthened food security and livelihoods, and preserved intergenerational conservation and stewardship knowledge.

Ant Atoll is a testament to what communities can accomplish together when guided by strong leadership rooted in respect for nature and tradition. OneReef actively supports traditional leadership throughout the Pacific, and in 2024 sponsored a convening of many Pacific leaders to promote collaboration for the benefit of the communities they serve. OneReef is honored to partner with leaders throughout the Pacific such as Rohsa William Hawley, and is grateful for their enduring commitment to the Pacific and its peoples.



TRADITIONAL LEARNING

Intergenerational knowledge sharing, cross-cultural exchange, and immersive learning are vital for resilience and sustainability, preserving traditions, blending practices, and deepening stewardship adaptability in today's rapidly evolving world.

Ms. Moiwai Andreas giving a local chant to start the World's Mangrove Day activities



Sonsorol Summer Camp



Sonsorol Traditional Summer Program, children learning how to carve a canoe



UACF Youth Camp (UACF member teaching youth on basic net casting)

Belau Modekngai School - Oremuul Learning Center

OneReef helped support the restoration of the Oremuul Learning Center at the Belau Modekngai High School (BMS). BMS was founded in 1974 as Palau's premier cultural immersion institution, and reached a new milestone with the restoration of the Oremuul Learning Center. This achievement underscores the school's enduring mission to integrate academic, vocational, and cultural education. The Oremuul Center stands as a beacon of Palauan heritage preservation and sustainable resource management.

This newly restored center aligns seamlessly with BMS's holistic approach to education, which combines academic learning with hands-on vocational training rooted in traditional stewardship practices. As a boarding school, BMS embraces a subsistence lifestyle, where students actively engage in fishing and farming. The IOM project resulted in an upgraded agriculture area with a nursery and additional raised bed farming and integrated livestock farming. Recent projects, such as the integration of livestock farming and the construction of a state-of-the-art gymnasium through the IOM project, further highlight the school's strides toward sustainability and progress.



Students, faculty, alumni, and the OneReef team join the School Board and Administration to celebrate the official ribbon-cutting ceremony of the newly restored Oremuul Learning Center, marking a new chapter in cultural and environmental stewardship education.

SURVEILLANCE & COMPLIANCE

Pohnpei Conservation Officer Reserve Program Launched

25 Reservist Conservation Officers completed Pohnpei's Conservation Officer Reserve Program, led by the Pohnpei State Government and Conservation Society of Pohnpei, with support from **Global Conservation** through OneReef. This collaboration exemplifies united efforts to protect Pohnpei's natural resources.



RESOURCE CO-MANAGEMENT

Collaborative frameworks that integrate traditional and legal governance to ensure sustainable resource use and shared accountability



TRAININGS & PROBLEM-SOLVING

Co-design innovative, context-driven solutions to complex resource management challenges in a changing world



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inclusive approaches that foster co-monitoring efforts, strengthen compliance, and build trust between communities and governance

Launch of the Pohnpei Conservation Officer Reserve Program

In 2024, a powerful new initiative was launched in Pohnpei to safeguard the ocean and its resources. The Pohnpei Conservation Officer Reserve Program, developed by the Pohnpei State Government and the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), is spearheaded by the Pohnpei Department of Public Safety (DPS) and its Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). This groundbreaking program empowers local communities to play an even greater role in protecting their reefs and fisheries.

Supported in part by OneReef in partnership with Global Conservation, the program delivered intensive training focused on critical skills, including police tactics, firearm use, and vehicle halts. By the program's conclusion, 25 officers, including community conservation officers, had earned certification and are now fully equipped to enforce community derived resource management plans effectively and responsibly.

Pohnpei Governor Stevenson A. Joseph lauded the initiative, emphasizing its transformative potential to enhance resource management to ensure the sustainability of marine ecosystems for current and future generations.

OneReef echoes the sentiments of Governor Joseph and has supported similar enforcement programs in the Pacific since its inception, with a deep respect for the conservation officers who are fulfilling an ancestral responsibility and honored duty to safeguard the ocean.



IMPACT MONITORING

Integrates community insights to enable timely, informed decisions while ensuring immediate responses to environmental changes. User-friendly data supports adaptive management by demonstrating the effectiveness of strategies, making resource management both sustainable and inclusive. Scientific monitoring complements these efforts but must be consistently interpreted and tailored for community accessibility and action.



CORAL REEF HEALTH:

Imaging Coral Reef Growth



MARINE SPECIES HEALTH:

Hatohobei Youth Intercession Camp, participants measuring turtle sizes



ECOSYSTEM HEALTH:

Helen Reef Summer Program

Empowering Pacific Communities with Cutting-Edge Reef Monitoring Technology

OneReef, in partnership with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, equips many of our community partners across the Pacific with cutting edge technology to monitor reef health, enabling them to use data to guide their conservation efforts and measure the impact of their conservation programs .

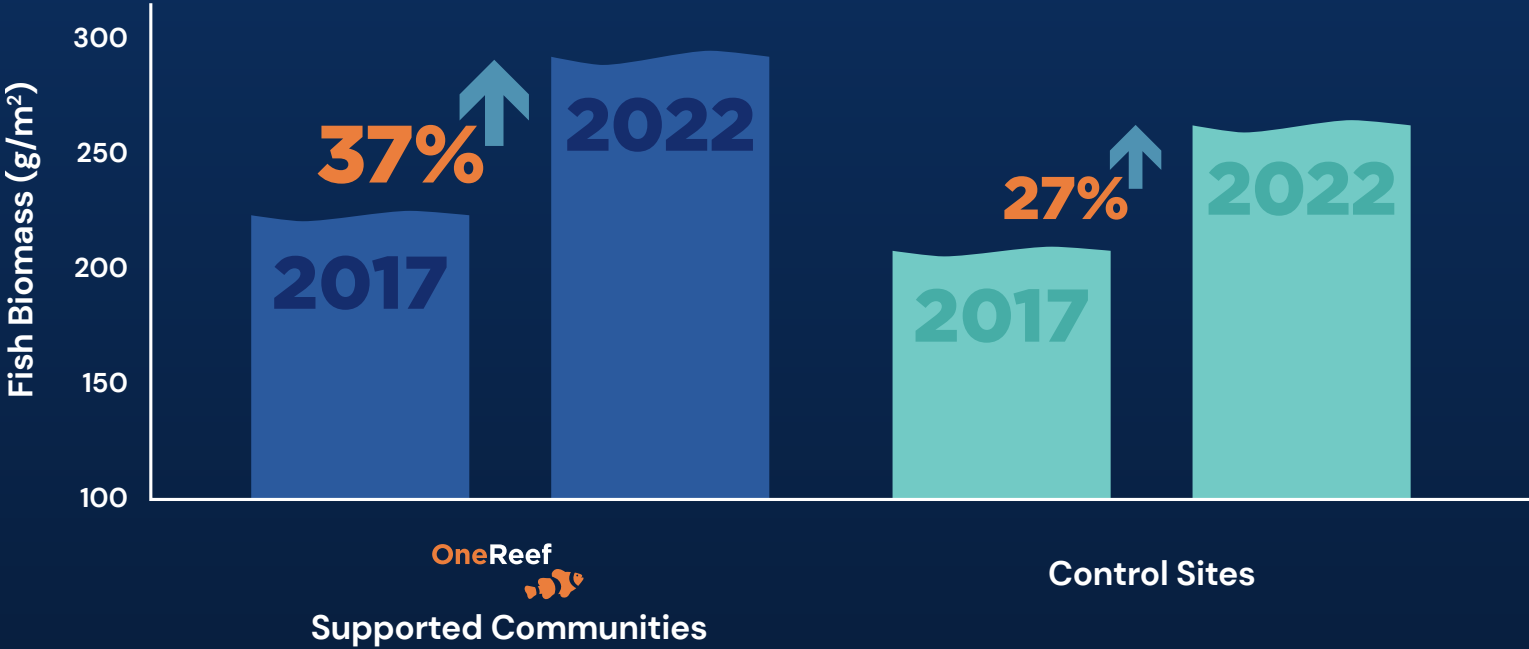
This past September, OneReef's Impact Director Nicole Yamase, Impact Coordinator Colin Hyatt, and two experts from the Sandin Lab at Scripps traveled to Pohnpei and Yap to lead hands-on training sessions with local community members. Over three days in Pohnpei, seven community partners honed their skills, while six community partners participated in a two-day session in Yap.

Participants learned to collect high-resolution digital images of their reefs, which are then stitched together to create detailed 3D models. These models allow communities to monitor reef health over time and track the effectiveness of their conservation initiatives.

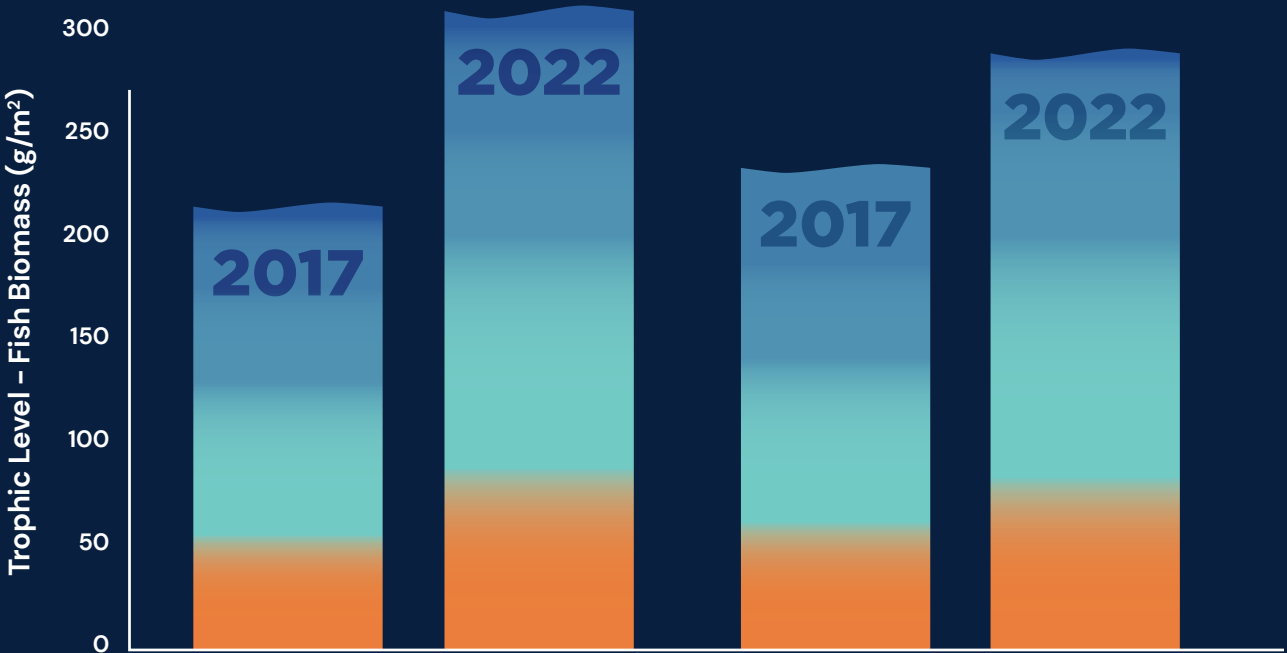
The results of this imaging to date by other communities have been remarkable, with clear evidence of the general success of their conservation efforts over time. With the addition of newly trained communities in Pohnpei and Yap, we are confident these regions will see similar success in safeguarding their reefs.



OneReef collaborates with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography to use scientific technology to measure reef health for many of our community partners. The graphs below reflect results for all our supported communities in Palau.



Total fish biomass (weight of fish) for OneReef supported communities increased by 37%, 10% more than the control sites. Increased fish biomass indicates better reef health and more food fish that our community members rely on.



	Herbivores	Planktivores	Mid-level Carnivores	Top Predators (bony fishes)	Top Predators (sharks)	TOTAL
% diff OR	47%	40%	15%	37%	151%	37%
% diff Control	41%	45%	48%	-44%	83%	27%

All fish: all trophic levels increased by 15% or greater in OneReef supported sites.

Top predators (sharks): are extremely important in reef ecosystems and are a proxy for reef health. OneReef community managed sites saw a 68% greater increase in sharks compared to the control sites.

Top predators (bony fish): make up a majority of the larger food fish that are often targeted by fishermen. At the control sites, bony fish decreased by 44%, while they increased by 37% at the OneReef supported community managed sites.

Herbivores: are very important in helping corals in the competition for space against algae and are important food fish to the Palauan people. Herbivores increased by 47% at the OneReef supported community managed sites, which was 6% greater than the control sites.





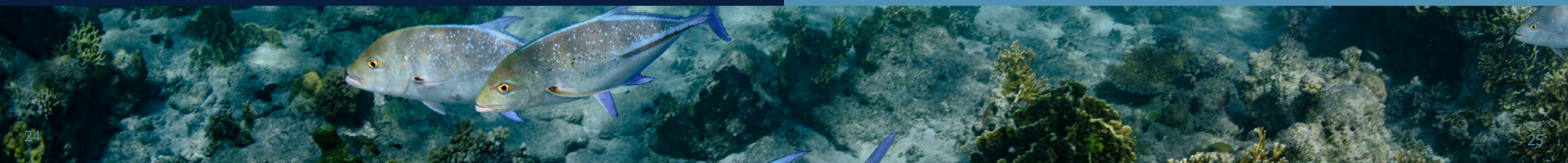
Loss Growth

By using photogrammetry, we are able to document the changes of coral reefs over time. This image illustrates the loss (red) and remarkable growth (blue) of corals in Sensorol over five years.



	Year	CCA	Hard Coral	= Reef Builders		CCA	Hard Coral	Reef Builders
OneReef Sites	2017	8%	42%	50%	Change OR	-0.3%	-2.2%	-2.5%
OneReef Sites	2022	7%	40%	47%				
Control Sites	2017	14%	48%	63%	Change Control	0.5%	-8.1%	-7.6%
Control Sites	2022	15%	40%	55%				

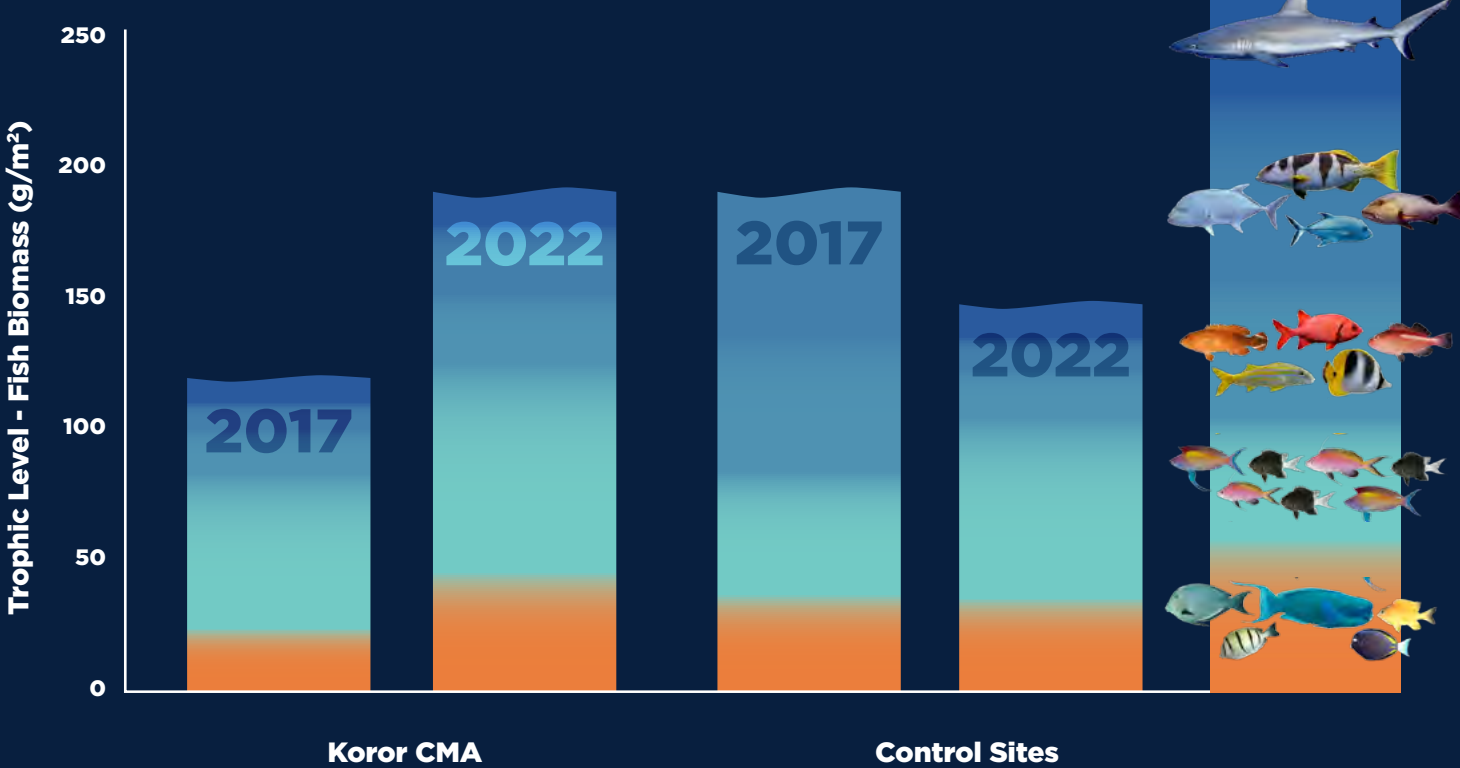
Although our community supported sites had less reef building organisms than the control sites in 2017, they showed more resilience over time. Resilience is key for survival in a world of increasing global stressors on coral reefs.



COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT



The community of Koror showed exemplary progress. Over five years, the fish biomass for the Koror Community Managed Areas (CMA) increased by 60%, while the control sites decreased by 22%.



On an amazingly positive note, all trophic levels in the Koror CMA increased by 30% or greater while the top predators and mid-level carnivores saw large decreases in the control sites.

Top predators are important food fish for local communities, indicators for reef health, and population regulators in the food web.

	Herbivores	Planktivores	Mid-level Carnivores	Top Predators (bony fishes)	Top Predators (sharks)	TOTAL
% diff OR	+100%	+30%	+57%	+129%	+92%	+82%
% diff Control	+2.4%	+41%	-47%	-73%	N/A	-19%

Herbivores help corals by keeping the algae population low and opening up space for coral growth.

KOROR STATE, PALAU INTEGRATING POLICY, PRACTICE, AND PEOPLE



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- No-Take Zones, Seasonal Closures, and Size Limits
- Earthmoving Regulations
- Tourism Regulations
- Marine Transportation rules

MONITORING, COMPLIANCE, AND SURVILLANCE (MCS)

Koror State has the most mature Conservation & Law Enforcement Programs in Palau with nearly forty rangers and conservation officers.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Tourism Best Practices
- Boat Safety Protocols
- Licensing and Permitting
- RISL World Heritage Site
- Multiple Fishers Networks

Governance Board and Science Advisory Board

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- Igor Korneitchouk
- Jeff Leppo
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collaborators, and partners for
supporting our conservation efforts in 2024.**

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- Anonymous

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The Kiwa Initiative - Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Climate Resilience aims to build the resilience of Pacific Island ecosystems, communities and economies to climate change through NbS by protecting, sustainably managing and restoring biodiversity. It is based on simplified access to funding for climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation actions for local and national governments, civil society and regional organisations in Pacific Island Countries and Territories. The Initiative is funded by the European Union, Agence française de développement (AFD), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). It has established partnerships with the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Oceania Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN - ORO). For more information: www.kiwainitiative.org

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Partners

- Blue Prosperity Micronesia
- Bureau of Historic and Cultural Preservation
- Conservation International
- Conservation Society of Pohnpei
- Create Belau
- Hasurr Faruh
- Hatohobei State Government
- Kayangel State Government
- Kitti Municipal Government
- Koror State Government
- Locally Managed Marine Area Network
- Madolenihmw Municipal Government
- Marcela Foundation
- Micronesia Challenge
- Micronesia Conservation Trust
- Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment, Republic of Palau
- Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourist and Development
- MLMDA Organization
- National Geographic Society
- Nett Municipal Government
- Ngardmau State Government
- Ngarchelong State Government
- Ngulu Atoll Resource Management Committee (Ngulu Marine Managed Area)
- Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community
- Palau Conservation Society
- Palau Council of Chiefs
- Palau International Coral Reef Center
- Palau Protected Areas Network and Fund
- Pohnpei State Department of Resources and Development
- Pohnpei State Division of Fish and Wildlife
- Pohnpei State Government
- Rāhui Forum and Resource Center
- Rohsa Macella Foundation
- Rteluul Community Regeneration Organization (Ngarchelong Forestry Group)
- Scripps Institution of Oceanography
- Sokehs Municipal Government
- The Nature Conservancy
- U Municipal Government
- Uchul A Chei Fishers
- US Department of Agriculture
- US Forest Service
- Weloy Municipality (Weloy Resource Management, Weloy Forestry Stewardship, Nimpal Marine Conservation)
- Yap State Marine Resource Management Division

OneReef



Our Mission

To ensure healthy ocean ecosystems and thriving coastal communities across the Pacific Islands

Join US!

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