



Marshall Islands

Integrated Water and Land Management for the Sustainable Use of the Laura Water Lens, Majuro Atoll

Progress Snapshot

Project Objective

Strengthen national and local coordination for water resource management with a focus on reducing stress on and planning the longer-term sustainable use of the Laura Water Lens



Project Contact
Julius Lucky
National Project Manager
Environmental Protection Authority
tupaclolo@hotmail.com

Process

✓ Multi-sectoral APEX body in place

RMI's National IWRM Task Force was established by Executive Order and includes membership of all relevant community and traditional leaders, national government departments, local governments, private sector and NGOs. The Task Force is actively leading coordination, policy development, and planning.

✓ Best IWRM and WUE approaches defined

Through national consultation processes, involving communities and women's groups, priorities for and steps towards institutionalizing IWRM approaches in the RMI have been developed and endorsed by the National IWRM Task Force. A National Water and Sanitation Summit convened in March 2011 involving 300 participants, agreed to targets and priorities for the development of national policy and an IWRM Plan. This facilitated the development of a National Water and Sanitation Policy and draft IWRM Plan.

✓ Increased community engagement with national government on water issues

A start-up committee for the IWRM Demonstration Project was first established in 2009 with members limited to traditional leaders, major landowners, and Council officials from the Local Government. Following establishment of the Project Management Unit In 2010, effort was made to revitalize and expand the membership of this group. Initially, traditional leaders and Laura residents were invited to consultations to re-introduce project goals, objectives, and to ensure all key traditional leaders were adequately represented in these discussions.

Establishment of the Laura Lens Committee has been effective in building relationships of government with traditional landowners and leaders. It has also been catalytic in influencing decision makers at the national level to provide support for the revitalization of the "National IWRM Task Force" to lead national IWRM policy and planning.

Regular engagement of traditional leaders, landowners, and Laura residents with government through the operation of the community-based Laura Lens Committee has assisted with developing a common understanding and trust between the community. On average twelve community leaders meet on a quarterly basis with government.



Lowell Alik
IWRM Focal Point
General Manager – EPA
lowellalik@gmail.com

Laura Lens Committee Members

Mr. Jorilek Tibon
Chairman

Ms. Ruth Harris
Joubon Kabua
Shirolynn Kawakami
Jina David
Maria Joash
Anta Elbon
Sepe Joash
Paul Rilang
Silash Malachi
Aki Samuel
Anthonio Rear
Ain Kabua
Royal Ceasar
Rondio Jormuly
Zebty Zebty Jr.



First Lady, Government Officials & WUTMI at the National Water Summit, 2011



Community members participate in National Water Summit, 2011

RMI Project Website
<http://www.laura-lens.org/>

RMI IWRM Demonstration Project Video
<http://www.pacific-iwrn.org/RMI-video.html>

Stress Reduction

- ✓ Reduction in sewage pollution in Laura community
- ✓ Reduction in pollution sources discharging into Laura groundwater

The Laura Lens Project aims to reduce stress on the Laura Water Lens via targeted actions addressing pollution from septic systems, piggeries, and domestic solid waste. These will be supported via introduction of a zoning scheme based on an assessment of Laura water lens vulnerability to land and water uses.

Key achievements to date include a survey of solid and septic waste management practices and needs for all Laura households, and development of a septic monitoring and pump-out programme. The survey of septic waste identified 117 broken and overloaded septics requiring immediate pump-out. To date around 4% of these septics have been remediated.

Pollution from pig waste has been identified as a major source of groundwater pollution. Preliminary work has been done to remediate a large broken pig waste septic at a commercial piggery and conversion of its operation to a dry litter system. Conversion of 15 household pig pens to a dry litter system from typical water intensive wash down pens is reducing waste from entering the water source.

An ECOSAN pilot activity is also underway in the Laura community, with 3 pilot systems constructed at prominent locations in Laura community. The national IWRM Plan for RMI is being developed and contains targeted actions for pig waste management and ECOSAN replication and scaling-up.



Transformation of a commercial piggery to a dry litter system



Transformation of a commercial piggery to a dry litter system



Current toilets being used at Laura

Replacement Eco-San toilets

Water Resource and Environmental Status

- ✓ Increase population with access to safe drinking water supply

IWRM in the Marshall Islands aims to contribute to an improved water resource status by increasing the proportion of population with access to safe drinking water supply and sanitation.

At the time of project implementation, there had been no water safety planning conducted for Majuro Atoll. The target of the project is to have the Majuro Water Safety Plan implemented. Drinking water safety has been addressed through the development of drinking water safety and IWRM planning that is underway for RMI. Planning incorporates the replication of this work on Ebeye.

To date water safety issues have been investigated and discussed with key water providers and businesses. A Water Safety Plan has been drafted and reviewed by the IWRM Task Force and is awaiting formal adoption.



Routine water quality monitoring as part of the Laura initiative