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Office of the President

President Remengesau declares April 16-22 as National Earth Week in observance of Earth Day 2018

April 22nd is recognized as Earth Day around the world, highlighting the urgent need to conserve the Earth's resources and protect our planetary environment. This year's global Earth Day theme, "End Plastic Pollution" highlights Plastic Pollution, the accumulation of plastic products, as one of the most significant environmental problems that the world is facing today, impacting the environment and our health and wellbeing.

Only ten percent of the 300 million tons of plastic that are produced each year is properly recycled and reused, and the rest ends up in landfills or as litter in our natural environment. Plastic Pollution is also a source of dangerous chemicals that not only impacts our waters and marine life, but also the food chain and our overall health. From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening Palau's precious marine and natural resources and the health of our people.

In response, the Republic of Palau is dedicating an entire week in observance of Earth Day 2018 with the theme of "*Our Environment, Our Health: Working Together to End Plastic Pollution*" to provide information and inspiration needed to fundamentally change human attitude and behavior about plastics. Palau's efforts during National Earth Week are fundamental in acting on its commitments to end Plastic Pollution and to United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals No. 12, 13, and 14: to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12), take urgent action to combat climate change impacts (SDG 13), and to conserve and sustainably use the Oceans, Seas, and marine resources for sustainable development (SDG14).

The Earth Day 2018 Committee, chaired by the Palau Environmental Quality Protection Board will be holding activities throughout Palau over the course of the week to educate and challenge our students and all Palauans on the adverse impacts of Plastic Pollution.

By Presidential Proclamation 18-23, President Remengesau encourages all of the people of Palau to partake in actions, as individuals, families, communities, and as a Nation, to take responsibility for the plastic pollution that each one of us generates and look for opportunities to reduce the use of plastics in order to safeguard our natural environment against the global challenge of ending Plastic Pollution.