



REPUBLIC OF PALAU
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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Executive Order No. 476

*To establish coordinating mechanisms for the implementation of
Marine Spatial Planning for the Blue Prosperity Plan*

WHEREAS, the Eleventh Olbiil Era Kelulau passed the FY22 Supplemental Budget, RPPL 11-23, and included provisions to establish a Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process to study Palau's exclusive economic zone and domestic fishing market; and

WHEREAS, the MSP legislation complemented a grant agreement reached between the Republic of Palau and The Nature Conservancy which provided three years of funding for the Marine Spatial Planning work which would be undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment; and

WHEREAS, the opportunity to perform comprehensive Marine Spatial Planning by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment is properly done by the Ministry as the entity that is responsible for the management of the Palau National Marine Sanctuary and Exclusive Economic Zone; and

WHEREAS, high level coordination is necessary to implement the multi-year research and planning efforts that will produce recommendations for a balanced approach to conservation and sustainable use of Palau's pristine marine resources; and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure that the highest quality research and planning are undertaken, this Executive Order will create a tiered approach to stakeholder engagement; and

WHEREAS, the MSP process will provide a science driven, stakeholder led, inclusive, and transparent process to define the appropriate use and conservation of Palau's marine resources that contribute to sustainable domestic fisheries and long-term conservation of marine biodiversity; and

WHEREAS, stakeholders from the private and public sector, as well as outside expertise from The Nature Conservancy, Forum Fisheries Agency, The Pacific Community (SPC), and others will provide technical assistance and inform the work of local stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of the MSP process, stakeholders will deliver a sustainable ocean plan and recommendations with priority zones for domestic fisheries, conservation, and tourism, including recommendations to guide appropriate policies and management frameworks;



NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the Republic of Palau, pursuant to the Constitution and applicable laws of the Republic, I hereby authorize and establish the coordinating mechanisms for implementation of the Marine Spatial Planning process as follows:

1. Establishment of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is hereby established. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the following members or their designees:

- a) President Surangel S. Whipps, Jr.;
- b) Vice President and Minister of Justice J. Uduch Sengebau Senior, for direction regarding maritime security and surveillance;
- c) Minister Steven Victor, for direction on fisheries, conservation, and climate action;
- d) Minister Charles I. Obichang, for direction on navigation and infrastructure;
- e) Minister Ngirabelas Tmetuchl, for direction on tourism use;
- f) A representative from Palau International Coral Reef Center, for direction on conservation and research matters.

The following are invited to participate as members of the Executive Committee:

- g) A representative designated by the Senate President
- h) A representative designated by the Speaker of the House of Delegates;;
- i) A representative from the Council of Chiefs, for direction on traditional matters, resource use, and conservation;
- j) A representative from the Governors' Association, for direction on state level interests in fisheries and conservation; and

2. Executive Committee functions.

- a) The Executive Committee shall be the body responsible for review and finalization of all policy recommendations pertaining to the MSP.
- b) The Executive Committee shall ensure that the Working Group complies with all applicable grant requirements and maintains steady progress to conclude the work within all deadlines established under the law and applicable grants.



- c) The Executive Committee shall meet at least quarterly to review the progress of the Working Group.
- d) The Executive Committee may designate additional members of both the Steering Committee and the Working Group as necessary.

3. Establishment of the Steering Committee on Science, Conservation, and Technical Matters (SCT). The Steering Committee on Science, Conservation, and Technical Matters is hereby established to provide technical guidance on science with respect to resource valuation, use, conservation and sustainability. The SCT shall report to the Executive Committee and provide advice to the working group. The SCT's efforts shall be coordinated by MAFE and be comprised of the following members or their designee:

- a) representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and the Environment (MAFE) to lead and provide overall coordination on the MSP as the entity responsible for management of the Palau National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS) and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ);
- b) a representative of Palau International Coral Reef Center, education and community engagement, as well as marine science and monitoring support, recognizing their role in conducting research in the PNMS and providing recommendations to MAFE regarding the management of the PNMS and EEZ; and
- c) a representative of The Nature Conservancy, for MSP expertise, sustainable fisheries recommendations, and conversation matters and to lead the coordinating support for the planning process.

The following are invited to participate as full members of the Steering Committee:

- d) a representative of the Secretariat of Pacific Committee, for fisheries science and resource mapping;
- e) a representative of the Forum Fisheries Agency, for fisheries economics, policy and MCS;
- f) a representative of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program, for environmental mapping and MSP expertise;



- g) a representative of Conservation International, for sustainable fisheries recommendations and conservation matters;
- h) a representative of Blue Nature Alliance, for sustainable fisheries and conservation matters;
- i) a representative of Palau Conservation Society, for community engagement, education, and community engagement;
- j) a representative of Nia Tero, for community-led conservation expertise;
- k) Mr. Enric Sala for research expedition, cost benefit analysis, and management interventions advising;
- l) a representative of the Waitt Institute for expertise on marine spatial planning procedures;
- m) a representative of the Global Fishing Watch, for fisheries data sharing and compliance matters.
- n) a representative Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, for policy research on blue economy development; and
- o) a representative of the Center for Ocean Solution of Stanford University, for research on socio-economic benefits of conservation and fisheries.

4. Establishment of the Working Group for MSP Implementation. The Working Group for MSP Implementation (“Working Group”) is hereby established to provide implementation of education and awareness measures, engagement with stakeholders, including the SCT, to share information and solicit feedback, facilitate meetings, and draft and distribute reports to the SCT and Executive Committee. The Working Group shall be comprised of the following members or their designees:

- a) representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment;
- b) a representative from the Division of Marine Law and Fish and Wildlife;
- c) a representative from the Division of Transportation;
- d) a representative from the Bureau of Cultural and Historical Preservation;
- e) a representative from the Bureau of Tourism;
- f) a representative from the Palau Visitors Authority;
- g) a representative from the Palau International Coral Reef Center;




The following are invited to participate as members of the working group

- h) a representative from the Palau Conservation Society;
- i) a representative from The Nature Conservancy;
- j) a representative from the Northern Reef Fisheries Cooperative;
- k) a representative from the Belau Offshore Fisheries Inc.;
- l) a representative from the FRIENDS of PNMS; and
- m) a representative from the Ebiil Society.

5. Cooperation of the Executive Branch Ministries and Agencies. The coordinating mechanisms established herein shall receive the full cooperation of all appropriate Executive Branch Ministries and agencies and are encouraged to call upon said agencies for any assistance they may provide. MAFE will provide overall coordinating support

6. Term. This Executive Order shall be in effect from the signing of this Executive Order until October 31, 2024.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 25th day of September 2022, in Koror, Republic of Palau.



Surangel S. Whipps, Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau