

“PARTNERS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL”

The Executive Director of the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), Patterson K. Shed, did not mince words when he was asked about the work of CSP. The quote below reflects a man obsessed with a desire to achieve nothing but the best for the people of the state.

The CSP was established from humble beginnings with an overall vision of people living in a safe and clean environment where cultural pride and natural resources are protected, preserved and balanced with sustainable development. With that in mind, we strive to ensure that this vision is achieved for the people of our state.

In July this year, I was in Pohnpei to carry out a preliminary assessment for the establishment of a Coastal Fisheries Management Programme for Pohnpei State in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The assessment was in response to a request from the

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Pohnpei State Office of Economic Affairs (through FSM’s Department of Foreign Affairs) for advice in developing viable programmes and fisheries management plans that promote the sustainable management and use of coastal fisheries resources.

My assignment in Pohnpei was carried out mainly through a simple desk study and literature review, and wider consultations with relevant stakeholders that included meetings with the Marine Resources Development Section (MRDS) staff, NGOs, state government agencies, staff of the Land Grant Programme of the College of Micronesia, the State Attorney General’s Office, municipal authorities, and representatives from island communities.



Pohnpei is blessed with beautiful scenery and resources in its coastal areas

Through these consultations, I discovered a unique partnership between the CSP (the premier conservation NGO in FSM) and the MRDS (state government fisheries authority) that I would like to share with *Fisheries Newsletter* readers.

Mandates, vision and responsibilities

Like any other fisheries authority (be it a Ministry, Department, Division or Section), MRDS is mandated to spearhead the conservation and management of Pohnpei’s marine resources through the formulation of marine resource and coastal zone plans, policies and management framework; development and implementation of experimental trials for commercially viable ventures; provision of information and technical assistance to fishers and aquaculture farmers; and development of effective extension systems that are capable of providing advice at the municipal government level and development entities in an effort to improve economic opportunities for inshore operators.

CSP on the other hand, was founded in 1998 by a group of local individuals concerned about and motivated by the need to preserve Pohnpei’s natural heritage. CSP has an impressive mission to preserve and enhance the natural heritage of Pohnpei State by promoting community-led resource management and compatible economic development.

In simple terms, CSP aims to increase community involvement in the conservation and management of Pohnpei’s natural resources, build local capacity through public and private partnerships, develop alternatives to unsustainable practices, and promote laws and policies that support these objectives.

Over the past nine years, CSP has grown to become one of the

region’s best known conservation groups, leading the way in Pohnpei’s environmental movement through a myriad of partnership projects with local communities, government agencies and organisations.

As a followup to the preliminary assessment, we implemented a workshop for community facilitators in Pohnpei from 24–28 September. There, I once again witnessed that CSP lives up to its mission and vision of fostering working relationships with its partners.

Partners at work

It takes collaboration and dedicated partnerships to effect positive change. CSP is committed to building unique partnerships — one of its cornerstone goals of its local conservation mission. Today, over 30 international organisations and foundations have provided valuable funding and technical support to CSP’s work. The NGO has come a long way in building the local partnerships, understanding that one of its major roles is to complement the Pohnpei State Government in the state’s quest for effective conservation of its natural treasures and biodiversity. As an NGO, CSP plays a unique and critical link to alter-

native support options that are not available to government. The NGO pursues those options and today, receives over USD 500,000 in funding assistance.

After nine years of service the organisation has established partnerships with all state resource managers through the established Pohnpei Resource Management Committee (PRMC), which brings together government and NGOs to collaborate and manage state resources more effectively. PRMC works to attain goals of the state Biodiversity and Strategy Action Plan and advocate sound management. As a PRMC partner, CSP has worked closely with Pohnpei State Department of Land and Natural Resources on watershed and valuable wetlands and mangrove issues and conservation, the state Department of Education for the implementation of innovative education awareness programmes such as Green Road Show and Youth to Youth programme to name a few. CSP has also contributed to the establishment of the state’s marine protected areas network.

With regards to the conservation and management of coastal fisheries resources, CSP develops its work plan in accordance with MRDS’s goals and objec-

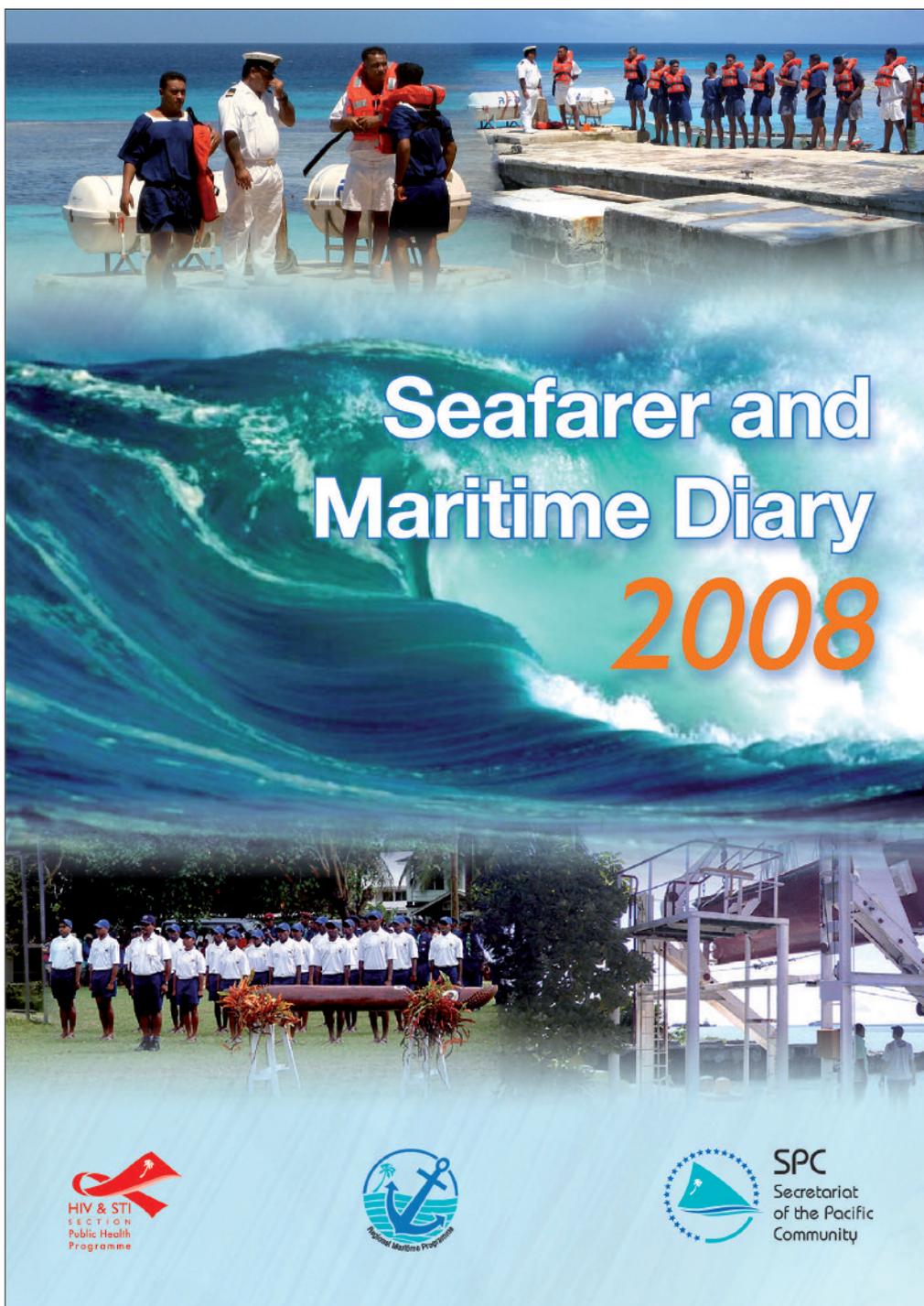
tives. MRDS’s Chief Fisheries Officer, Donald David, acknowledges this partnership as the reasons behind conservation goals. “MRDS, with its current capacity and financial constraints, is not able by itself to achieve the goals and objectives set by the state. But with CSP’s support and partnership, through sharing personnel, expertise and resources, MRDS is able to fulfil its mandate. CSP is like another section of MRDS, and whenever I need assistance, they are always around to lend a helping hand”, says David.

Through this unique partnership with CSP, MRDS and the communities of Pohnpei, the state has led FSM in the management and protection of its resources. The accomplishments thus far are encouraging, however there are calls for even closer collaboration and increased efforts to meet Pohnpei’s conservation challenges. We owe it to our children to muster the will to work together to provide a brighter future with healthy environment.

This article is dedicated to Patterson Shed, Executive Director of CSP, and his hardworking staff, Chief Fisheries Officer Donald David and staff, the Administrator of the Office of Economic Affairs, and the local communities of Pohnpei State for a fruitful partnership.



A common fishing method in Pohnpei. Spearfishing on the reef and outer reef slopes. The diver drags an esky behind to keep the day’s catch.



Pacific Island Seafarer and Maritime Diary now available

A Seafarer and Maritime Diary has been developed for the Pacific Islands region. The diary provides essential information that contributes to the health and well-being of seafarers. The diary is a collaborative initiative between SPC's HIV/STI Section and the Regional Maritime Programme, with funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Asian Development Bank. The diary was developed as part of SPC's work in providing information, education and communication materials to seafarers, with a particular focus on reducing risk and vulnerability of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.

The Seafarer and Maritime Diary 2008 is available from maritime training schools, maritime administrations, crewing agents, shipping companies and direct from SPC. For more information contact spc@spc.int or maritime@spc.int