

Declaration of Commitment: 'The Micronesia Challenge'

Recognizing that human economic and development activity has altered, and in many instances degraded, ecosystems more rapidly and extensively in the last 50 years than at any other period in the history of our planet;

Recognizing the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals and the agreement by the global community during the World Summit on Sustainable Development to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010;

Recalling the targets and timetables agreed to under the Convention on Biological Diversity to establish comprehensive systems of protected areas by 2010 for terrestrial and 2012 for marine habitats;

Reiterating the 2005 Forum Leaders' vision for the Pacific that calls for the sustainable management of the region's resources and the 2005 Pacific Plan that encourages the development and implementation of national and regional conservation and management measures for the sustainable utilisation of resources;

Recognizing that the future economic, cultural and political health of the Micronesian Islands depends upon the conservation of our marine and terrestrial environments;

Acknowledging the need to work on a regional basis to address the environmental and sustainable development issues confronting the Micronesian region in the New Millennium, and in this context:

- ▶ The significance of healthy marine and forest resources to the future of Micronesia;
- ▶ The growing capacity to sustainably manage marine and forest resources across Micronesia; and
- ▶ The significant financial and technical support still required to meet this challenge;

Understanding that modern efforts to sustain the Micronesian 'Way of Life' and to ensure the health, prosperity and cultures of our people are unlikely to succeed if the ecosystem services on which our islands and humanity rely continue to be degraded; and

Recognizing that the Eighth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will adopt a global **Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity**;

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We the Chief Executives of Micronesia, in order to:

- Sustain our unique island biodiversity;
- Ensure a healthy future for our island people;
- Protect our unique island cultures;
- Guard the foundations of our future development, our pristine island environments;
- Sustain the livelihoods of our island communities;
- Contribute to global targets set out in the Millennium Development Goals, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Mauritius Strategy for Small Island Developing States and the relevant Programmes of Work of the Convention on Biological Diversity; and
- Expand our commitment to preserve our marine and terrestrial environments,

Agree to “effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine and 20% of the forest resources across Micronesia by 2020.”

In order to implement this Micronesia Challenge, we further agree to:


- Undertake and follow through on local, national, regional and international conservation strategies and plans, including National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs);
- Establish and expand local partnerships between Government agencies and NGOs engaged in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- Expand communication and interaction with local communities and traditional leadership;
- Share experience, tools and techniques among Micronesian officials, conservation practitioners and community leaders;
- Establishment sustainable financing mechanisms for the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity;
- Engage the region’s development and trading partners as well as NGOs and private foundations in appropriate financial and technical support to ensure the effective implementation of the Micronesia Challenge, including through a Regional Financing Mechanism;
- Further engage Pacific Island programs and facilities, such as the Pacific Island Forum and associated organizations such as the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to optimize regional coordination and financing; and
- Agree to review progress to achieve the Micronesia Challenge on a biennial basis at head of government/chief executive level.

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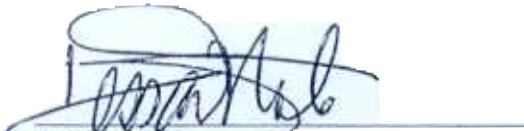
Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President
The Republic of Palau

1/17/06
Date




Felix Perez Camacho
Governor
The Territory of Guam

01/17/06
Date



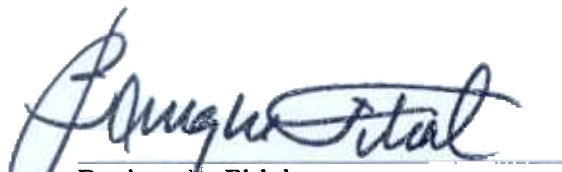
Kessai Note
President
The Republic of the Marshall Islands

03/14/06
Date



Joseph Urusemal
President
The Federated States of Micronesia

March 01, 2006
Date



Benigno R. Fitial
Governor
The Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands

Date