

7 August 2015

Mr. Chris E Ostrander
Principal Investigator
Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS)
1680 East-West Road, POST 822
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear Mr. Ostrander,

On behalf of Conservation International Hawai'i, I wish to express my strong support for the proposal titled, *Enhancing and Sustaining the Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS)*, under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) program. The work PacIOOS proposes will continue to promote a safe, healthy, productive ocean and resilient coastal zone for the State of Hawai'i and the Pacific.

Founded in 1987, Conservation International (CI) works in more than 30 countries with over 900 employees and over 1,000 partners - to help move societies toward a healthier, more sustainable development path that values nature's role in human wellbeing. In 2011, CI created their Hawai'i program to *ho'i i ke kai momona* – return to an abundant ocean that will benefit Hawai'i's people for generations to come. The mission of CI Hawai'i is to restore ocean health, food security, and sustainable livelihoods, by engaging communities and stakeholders to protect their critical natural capital, foster effective governance, and promote sustainable ocean-based enterprise. CI Hawai'i has 9 staff members, strong working relationships with over 50 communities, organizations and partners across Hawai'i.

PacIOOS currently provides real-time and forecast ocean information, as well as outreach, education, and extension of ocean information through student participation in research, field studies, and school curriculum. Continuing and enhancing the efforts and capacity of PacIOOS to deliver timely, relevant, and accurate information on the open and coastal ocean will assist CI's efforts to conserve key habitats and populations; to assist businesses and developers to minimize adverse environmental impacts from their operations; and to encourage cutting edge and appropriate ocean science and technology. I specifically applaud the proposed expansion of PacIOOS' efforts to support place-based community stewardship efforts by monitoring water quality in Hawaiian fishponds, which represent unique cultural and biological resources that we are working to restore and transform into viable aquaculture enterprises that support the food security and livelihoods of local communities. Additionally, our partnership with PacIOOS has been instrumental in evaluating the efficacy of land-based stewardship efforts on the island of Lāna'i, including riparian restoration, sedimentation remediation, and land use management, in protecting the vitality of coral reefs and the benefits they provide to communities. PacIOOS has been an incredible partner for our program and we look forward to working together on these initiatives and others, in Hawai'i and the Pacific region.

The previous IOOS investment in the Pacific Islands region has resulted in the successful development of PacIOOS as an end-to-end network of observations, data management and delivery, data analysis and modeling, research, education and outreach, and organizational structure and management that links the needs of users to ocean observations throughout the region and beyond. Expanding upon this strong

foundation will benefit non-governmental organizations such as Conservation International Hawai'i as well as our partner communities, government agencies, industry, and the general public.

I support the commitment of PacIOOS and their Governing Council to address the needs of a diversity of ocean stakeholders, including the residents and visitors to the State of Hawai'i by collecting and disseminating ocean data and information in a timely fashion and in formats that are easy to access and understand. With this in mind, I wholeheartedly support and strongly recommend favorable consideration of this project for sustained and enhanced funding for PacIOOS.

Pūpūkahi i holomua e ho'okanaka a e ho'i i ke kai momona.
(Let's unite to better the human condition and return to an abundant ocean)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John N. Kittinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Kittinger" clearly distinguishable.

John N. (Jack) Kittinger, PhD
Director, Conservation International Hawai'i
Betty and Gordon Moore Center for Science and Oceans