



Republic of Palau
Office of the President

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President

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August 12, 2015
Serial No. 15-3105

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 the people of the Republic of Palau, I wish to express my strong support for your 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 strengthen the partnership of PacIOOS and Palau to promote a safe, healthy, productive ocean, and resilient coastal zone.

In Palau, we rely heavily upon our ocean resources for cultural significance, subsistence fishing, providing the foundation of our world-class ecotourism industry, and more. We recently declared our entire Exclusive Economic Zone as a marine sanctuary in order to protect these treasured resources from being over-exploited so that they are sustained for our future generations.

By providing valuable real-time and forecasted ocean information, PacIOOS currently supports Palau's efforts to make informed decisions to efficiently and effectively manage our ocean resources and respond to changing ocean conditions. For instance, the PacIOOS six-day high sea level forecast tool at Malakal, Koror State, provides local residents with easy-to-understand information about the changing near-term conditions of the coastal waters so that they are able to plan for flooding events along the shoreline. The necessity of this tool is only going to increase as sea levels continue to rise. I applaud PacIOOS for continuing to refine and improve the tool based on user feedback and ground-truthing from partners at the Palau Community College and elsewhere.

By promoting outreach, education, and extension of ocean information, PacIOOS is helping to build capacity in our islands for ocean observing. The manner in which PacIOOS serves ocean data and information that they collect from their instruments as well as from partners across the region—including our locally-based scientists—is user-friendly and accessible to the public so that residents and visitors to Palau can make informed decisions regarding ocean conditions.



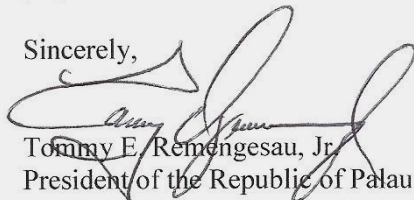
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Continuing and enhancing the efforts and capacity of PacIOOS to deliver timely, relevant, and accurate information on the open and coastal ocean will assist our national efforts to conserve our protected species, unique habitats, and biological diversity; assist businesses and developers to minimize adverse environmental impacts from their operations; encourage cutting edge and appropriate ocean science and technology; and build local ocean observing capacity through training and extension.

I am especially encouraged by the proposed purchase and deployment of a PacIOOS wave buoy in between Palau and Yap. I am aware that this location will cover northwest, north, and northeast and east swells that affect both Palau and Yap. The location prioritized by the National Weather Service (NWS) will also provide predictive value to the NWS forecasters for Palau, enabling us to better prepare for large swell events.

I am pleased by the commitment of PacIOOS and their Governing Council to address the needs of a diversity of ocean stakeholders, including the citizens of the Republic of Palau, by collecting and disseminating ocean data and information in a timely fashion and in formats that are easy to access and understand. I openly support and strongly recommend favorable consideration of this project for continued and enhanced funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.", is written over the typed name and title.

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

Cc: Dr. Patrick Tellei, President, Palau Community College
Ms. Maria Ngemaes, Meteorologist in Charge, NOAA NWS WSO Koror