

## EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 280

### *Establishing a National Program for Monitoring Forest and Coastal Birds*

**WHEREAS**, in 1999 the Republic of Palau ratified and became a party to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) thus formalizing work on protecting and preserving the biodiversity of Palau; and

**WHEREAS**, the CBD Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity calls on the parties to the Convention to establish efficient local, national and regional ecosystem *monitoring* programmes using an ecosystem approach; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2004 the Palau National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) was concluded, which reiterates the call for monitoring programs from the CBD Programme of Work for Island Biodiversity through NBSAP Action 2.1 to “develop management, recovery and *monitoring* plans for high priority species, including threatened and endangered species; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2002 a Palau National Implementation Strategy for climate change, which calls for activities to develop and implement research and *monitoring* of the impacts of climate change on fisheries, terrestrial ecosystems and human health, was concluded and published in the First National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and

**WHEREAS**, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) endorses Birdlife International recommendations to *monitor* population trends through regular surveys as an effective conservation measure for protecting bird species of concern such as the Micronesian Imperial-Pigeon; and

**WHEREAS**, the Belau National Museum (BNM) has developed a sustainable, efficient ecosystem approach to biodiversity *monitoring* (“monitoring program”) using indicator species such as the Palau Fruit-Dove and Micronesian Imperial-Pigeon to detect and measure changes that are a result of ecosystem stress from development, unsustainable land-use practices, unsustainable harvesting of plants or animal species, climate events and other sources; and

**WHEREAS**, a sustainable national monitoring program for forest and coastal birds relates to, intersects with, and will have a positive impact on high priority activities involving conservation, wildlife management, sustainable land management and climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, a national monitoring program for forest and coastal birds helps preserve Palauan culture by protecting iconic species from extinction including the Palau Fruit-Dove (*Biiib*) and the Micronesian Imperial-Pigeon, (*Belochel*), which are highly valued for the role they play in Palauan legends and tradition.

**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, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**1. Creation of a National Program for Monitoring Forest and Coastal Birds.**

There is hereby established a National Program for Monitoring Forest and Coastal birds (“rational Bird-Monitoring Program”).

**2. Composition.** The National Bird-Monitoring Program shall be modeled after the successful, sustainable monitoring program of the Belau National Museum.

**3. Program Activities.** The program activities of the National Bird-Monitoring Program shall include, but not be limited to:

- Designating permanent monitoring stations (“sentinel stations”) on Babeldaob Island for the monitoring of forest and coastal bird populations
- Monthly monitoring of forest and coastal bird populations, including the monitoring of indicator species such as the Palau Fruit-Dove and Micronesian Imperial-Pigeon, at designated sentinel stations to collect population and ecosystem data according to accepted scientific principles and methodologies.
- Analysis of scientific data obtained from the monthly monitoring activity for indications of ecosystem change, bird population trends and other information.
- Other ecosystem-based management activities as agreed to from time to time.

**4. Responsible Officials.** The Director of the Belau National Museum shall be responsible for directing and administering program activities. The Belau National Museum Board of Trustees shall exercise its normal oversight and review authority over the performance of program activities by the Museum Director and staff.

**5. Administrative Support.** The Belau National Museum shall provide basic administrative support for the National Bird-Monitoring Program and is officially empowered to solicit supplemental funding or other forms of support from appropriate sources in order to expand the monitoring program activities to include additional indicator species and monitoring sites.

**6. Reporting.**

- An annual written “*State of the Birds*” report of data analysis, trends, highlights, guidance and recommendations shall be prepared by the Belau National Museum for transmission to the Office of the President through the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs.
- The format and content of the annual “*State of the Birds*” reports shall be appropriate for distribution to other ministries, agencies, state governments, managers of protected areas, non-government organizations; mid the general public.
- The Research Library of the Belau National Museum shall maintain archival copies of all “*State of the Birds*” reports and related documents in perpetuity, and make them available to the public according to established Belau National Museum standard operating procedures.

**7. Duration.** The National Bird-Monitoring Program shall remain in existence until terminated by the President.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal on this 6<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2010.

/s/

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Johnson Toribiong  
President  
Republic of Palau