



## SHIPWRECK REEFS CONTINUE TO ATTRACT NEW AND RETURNING DIVERS TO CHUUK LAGOON



The photo above was taken from a facebook post by Mr. Ben Lair. This is one of many spectacular photos taken on September 24 when Mr. Lair and some others were checking out the San Francisco Maru. Mr. Lair owns the Paragon Dive Group in Tucson, Arizona.

Reaching out to Mr. Lair via social media, CVB Executive Director learns that each year, the Paragon Dive Group organizes dive trips that often include up to a week of wreck diving in Chuuk Lagoon. This year, Mr. Lair and (12) others did (25) dives in depth that varies from 20 feet to over 150 feet on some of the world famous wrecks that beautify Chuuk's sea bottom...

Interestingly, in another social media exchange a man from Saipan shared that he has come across many divers who would relish about the wrecks that Chuuk Lagoon offers as simply the most wonderful dive in the world. To him, a former US Civic Action Team member who stationed in Chuuk in the 1990's highlighted his own experience of the diving sport and passion as "unmatched" anywhere in the world. Given his duty, this CAT personnel bragged of other war relics sites that still bear the marks of American bullets and bombs on their wall, such as the Sapuk Lighthouse, and afford scenic view of surrounding reefs, islands, and the mighty blue ocean.

It is safe to say that most Chuukese regard the ocean as fishing sphere and inter-island gateway with less appreciation of the stock the lagoon bottom holds and their value to global tourism. It is people like Ben Lair and others at home who remind us of the vast duty we have over the marine environment and its natural and economic potentials.

## FSM TOURISM ACTION PLAN UNDER REVIEW WITH TECHNICAL SUPPORT FROM THE PACIFIC NDC HUB IN SUVA, FIJI



A series of consultation meetings took place from September 22 to 24 among tourism stakeholders representatives from all of society, public sector officials, business community, civil society, and church leaders. Mr. Sagaitu Konusi from the Pacific NDC Hub, climate policy specialist, led the meetings. With logistical prearrangement handled by CVB, Mr. Konusi made use of the ability to directly interact with tourism stakeholder from a wide range of specialty and business focus. The FSM Government has solicited the support of the Pacific NDC Hub in Suva to help develop a Tourism Action Plan that takes into account and finds solution for carbon impact on the environment generated through tourism related activities and establishment. The acronym NDC stands for "nationally determined contribution". The FSM has an obligation as a member of the United Nations to be able to determine and report on its contribution to carbon pollution.

## PATA MICRONESIA CHAPTER HOLDS SECOND 2023 GATHERING IN MAJURO



PATA folks visited Likiep Atoll on September 28

As part of their second meeting of the year, members of the Pacific Asia Travel Association, Micronesia Chapter, grouped down to visit communities on Arno and Likiep atolls in the Marshall Island. Doing this not only afforded a fist hand experience of local life away from the city-island of Majuro. This goes to show tourism expansion possibilities that require coordination from accommodations, transport businesses, couture programs, etc throughout Micronesia to spread derivative socio-economic gains to wider communities. Thanks to PATA for its dynamic role among Micronesia tourism and commerce partners throughout the years.

**In their own words....** Thank you for your generous offer of assistance. As it turns out my daughter and I visited Chuuk and arrived on Sept. 20, departed Oct. 1. We had a really great visit, staying at the Blue Lagoon resort, where Felix was wonderful and we even got to Satawan and Ta on Lien Fanopi ship. We did some dives in Chuuk lagoon from the Dive shop at BLR. It was a dream come true, 50 years since I was last in Chuuk as a Peace Corps Volunteer. My daughter could see the locations her mother (also PCV) worked and lived, especially Satawan. My wife has passed RIP, and it was very meaningful to my daughter. The smiles of the people of Chuuk remain in my memory.



## CHUUK POLICE ACADEMY COMPLETES TRAINING



**T**HREE months ago, Chuuk State Police Academy 2023 began with seventy-four trainees that included officers from various municipal government police forces. On September 29, only nineteen trainees emerged having completed their training in various law enforcement tasks which includes: investigation, evidence management, combat medical training, hand to hand combat, and protection of individual rights under the constitution. Expert training assistance were provided by the Chuuk State Public Safety, FSM Anti-Human Trafficking Division, 1st Marines Logistic Group with Koa Mona 23 Task Force, the Naval Criminal Investigation Services, and the Chuuk Woman Council.

The Police Academy 2023 was enabled by Compact sector grants funds from the United States.

## TWO AWAITING TRIAL FOR VERY BAD VANDALISM AT CHUUK AIRPORT RUNWAY EARLIER THIS MONTH

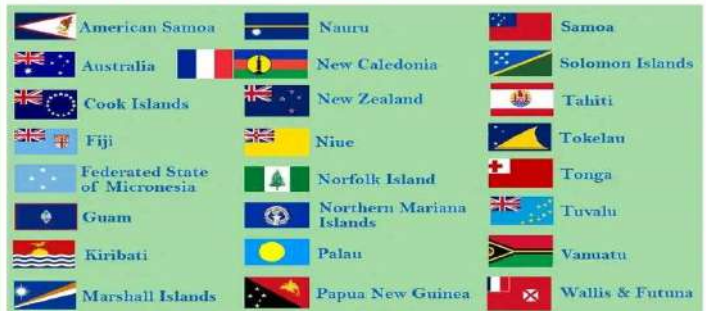
**A**n upsetting event took place on or around the night of September 21 when two men vandalized a number of lights at the north end of the Chuuk Airport runway, resulting in the cancellation of night flight on the 23rd of September.

Fortunately, according to the Chuuk Airport Management office, the lights have been repaired and are fully functional, thanks to the Federal Aviation technicians for their quick assistance.

Chuuk Public Safety officers undertook successful investigation and arrested two men from the northern part of Weno Island on September 25, in connection with the crime. These men were detained and are charged with "trespassing and malicious mischief", according to Mr. Bia Nanoto, Director of the Department of Public Safety. They are awaiting trial.

## 2023 PACIFIC GAMES PARTICIPATING ISLANDS AND TERRITORIES

### PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES



## CPUC RECOGNIZED FOR GENDER BALANCE IN PACIFIC, OTHER CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING AT HOME

**T**he Chuuk Public Utilities Corporation has been recognized more than ones by the Pacific Water and Waterworks Association for demonstrating gender-balanced values in its workforce in recent years. In fact, CPUC has highest number of female employees on its workforce ratio-wise compare to its utility peers in the Pacific. The latter part of September, capacity building training on Weno Island was done for the linemen, solar technicians, and meter technicians, as a follow up to a training done a couple of months ago, as reported on the CPUC Facebook wall.

CPUC has had a number of "positives stories" the last decade after the years of "off-on-off-on". Having reliable power generation and distribution is a critical enabling condition for businesses, public services, and home-users.

## Lt. Governor calls for proactive communication from DHS

**T**he Honorable Mekioshy William, Lt. Governor of Chuuk State, held a sit-down with Dr. Bosco Buliche, director of the Department of Health Services, along with the Chief of Medical Staff, Dr. Yoster Ichiro, and other officials from the department on September 26, 2023 at the Governor's Office Conference Room. Lt. Governor William pointed to recent social media exposures that come from a doctor at the department, and asked solutions. He also emphasized the need for proactive communication between the department and the Governor's Office.

There have been recent setbacks and shortcomings highlighted via social media, including lack of qualified staff for critical posts, for instance at the medical laboratory. There has been also mention of shortage of staff, shortage of medical supplies, and incidence of staff resigning and leaving the hospital.

The DHS team assured that they have taken steps to correct the issues. They said a laboratory specialist has been recruited now awaiting US transit visa to come to Chuuk. They also pointed out that staffing issues are also addressed in the FY24 budget to start October 1.

Other Executive Department officials at the meeting acknowledged that the Department of Health Services is the most complex entity in the entire State. Therefore, it is also the most challenging as it must care for and safe people's life in the highest standard possible.

## GREEN CLIMATE FUNDS TO BOOST CAPACITY FOR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS IN FSM



L-R: Loyd, SPC, Krisketina Marar, EPA, Clarice Graham, CCS

October 3: CVB participated at a meeting at the L5 led by Mr. Loyd Robinson of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). The organization, and the

FSM Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management are assisting municipal governments in relation to a Grant that will boost capacity for accessing climate finance to address their various issue relating to food and water security as well as community health. From our stand point, this type of assistance will also boost capacity for community based tourism and visitors' safety.