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Resilient Babeldaob: integrating watershed management and NbS for community resilience in Palau

Project coordinator : Palau Conservation Society

IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

August 2025 – March 2027

AMOUNT OF FUNDING

€ 400,000

The escalating impacts of climate change in Palau—marked by intensified rainfall, erosion, and sedimentation—threaten freshwater and coastal ecosystems, highlighting the urgent need for stronger governance, climate adaptation strategies, and community-driven Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to safeguard the environment and build resilience of local communities.

The project aims to enhance climate resilience and environmental sustainability of Babeldaob island, through a comprehensive strategy that combines legal frameworks, state-led adaptation initiatives, and community-driven NbS to address climate-related challenges.

Specific objectives:

- Strengthened legal and policy framework for NbS;
- Increased institutional and financial capacity for NbS;
- Demonstrated community-led implementation of NbS pilot projects;
- Knowledge management, visibility, and learning systems strengthened.

Theme

Integrated Watershed Management

Main co-benefits, in addition to climate change adaptation

- Food security
- Socio-economic resilience
- Biodiversity conservation
- Water resource availability and quality

Lake Ngardok, Babeldaod Island, a project site
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Subregion: ☐ Melanesia/Timor-Leste ■ Micronesia ☐ Polynesia

Palau

The project is implemented across all 10 states of Babeldaob Island, Palau, with a focus on priority watershed corridors representing about 2,500–3,000 hectares.

Direct beneficiaries:

- At least 1,000 individuals will directly benefit from participation in trainings and coaching on planning, policy, and knowledge sharing; and additionally in the implementation of pilot activities ;

Indirect beneficiaries:

- 5698 people live on the island of Babeldaob, comprised of 2,896 females and 664 youth (aged 15-24)

Key results to date:

Partnerships formed

- PCS successfully signed an agreement with the Palau Governors Association, and a Working group was established with members from all 10 Babeldaob states.

Workshops conducted

- An inception workshop was held and project objectives shared with state and national partners to support planned project activities. PCS conducted policy consultations with state governments and relevant agencies in Ngaraard and Ngarchelong.

Official launch of the Governors Association

- The project reached a critical turning point when PCS and the Governors Association united to officially launch the "Resilient Babeldaob" project. This collaboration ensures that conservation and resilience efforts are integrated directly into state-level leadership and community planning. Following the initial partnership, a high-level launch event was held to signal that the initiative is now fully operational. This event received significant media coverage across newspapers and social media platforms, emphasizing the project's importance to Palau's national environmental goals.

Knowledge management, visibility, and learning systems strengthened

- A project banner was produced in October, coinciding with the high-level launch to mark the organisations physical presence in the community. Deployed posters and TV displays at a national event introduced Nature-based Solutions as vital tools for pacific island people in the face of climate change.

Nature-based Solutions implemented and how they benefit to communities

- The project generates long-term societal benefits, including improved food and water security through better soil health and water flow stabilization. It supports livelihoods and gender equity by preserving fisheries vital to women and cultural practices, while promoting sustainable agricultural practices that can be scaled nationally. Additionally, integrating Nature-based Solutions into state planning strengthens governance and ensures that sustainable practices are institutionalized for future development. Overall, the project creates a model where ecosystem restoration, social equity, and cultural identity are mutually reinforced over time.

DATA UNDER IUCN-ORO VALIDATION

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