SPREP
Pacific Environment Forum 2017

Use of data for effective conservation in the Republic of Marshall Islands
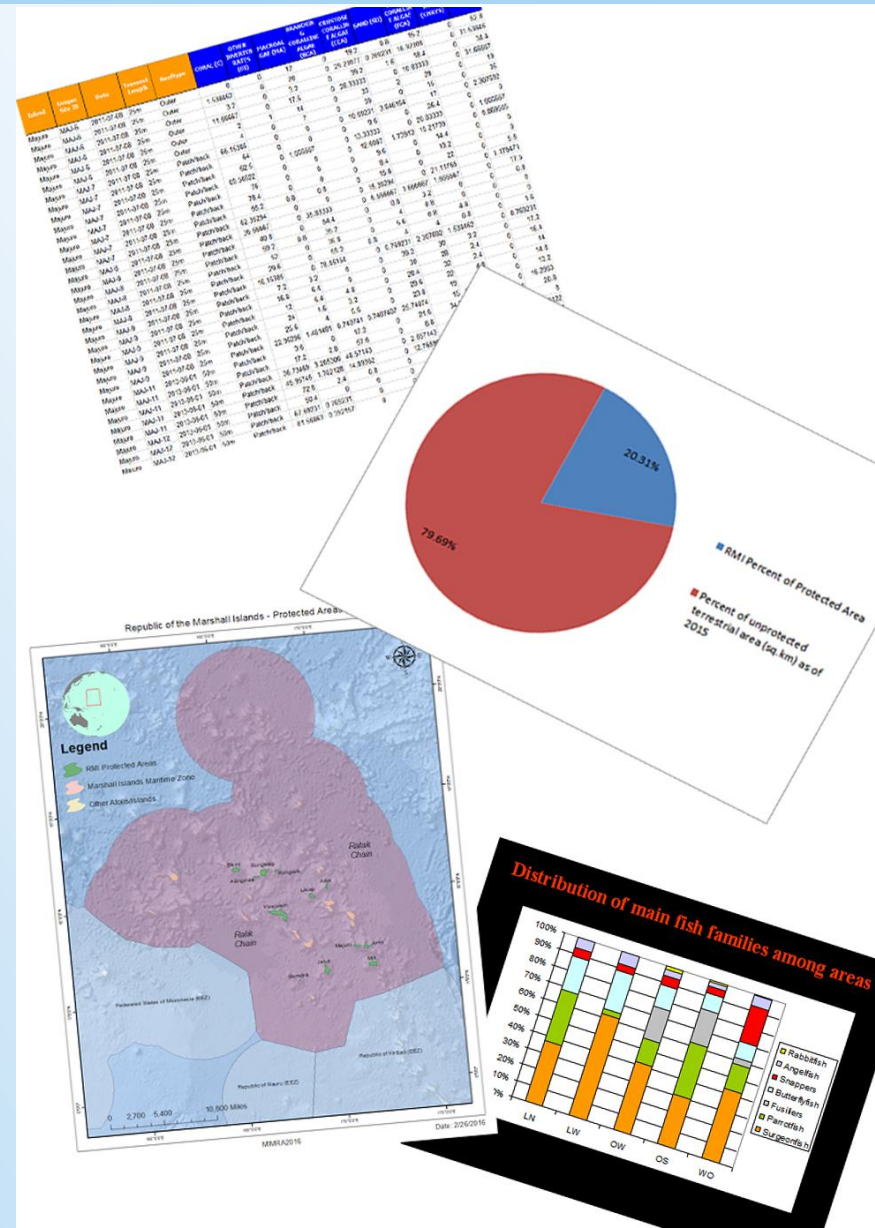
Tanoa Tusitala Hotel

Apia, Samoa

September 18, 2017

Why is data important for decision making?

- To inform decision makers to make sound judgements to sustainably use our environment and natural resources

- To help manage our resources

- Track status

- Plan change

Challenges using/accessing data and identified solutions

- In most cases, Pacific Island countries, like RMI, have limited existing infrastructure in place to house all the country's data

- Each governmental department manages its own database if it has one

- Sometimes, this information has not been managed properly

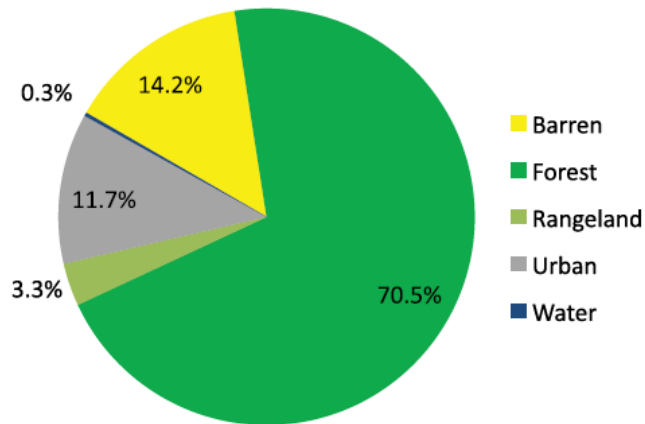- Issues include cost and technical capacity

State of the resource, i.e. mule, and issues to be addressed

- Only land bird left in the RMI
- Was wiped out from the islands where it used to be found (only two islands were Majuro and Mili)
- Mule project from 2007-2011 in Majuro successfully grew the number of birds from less than 20 to over 80
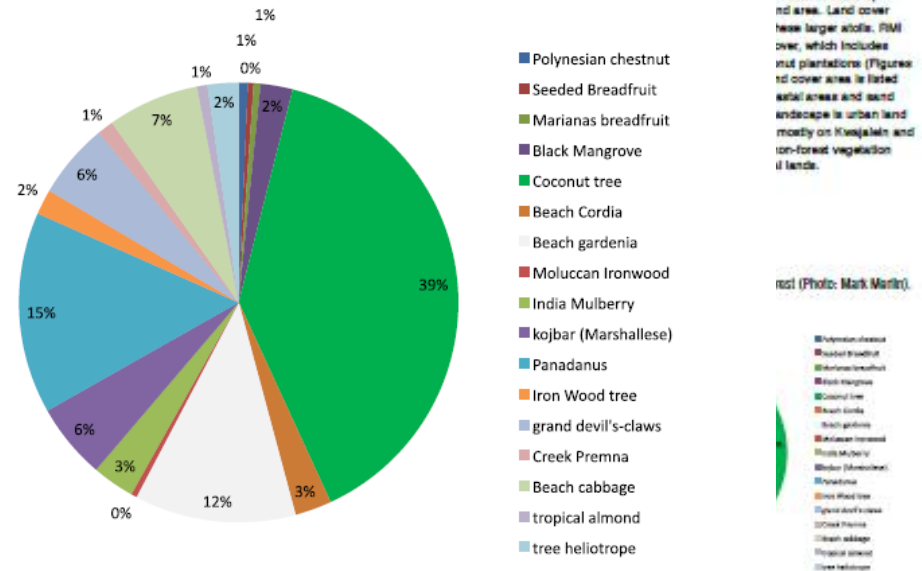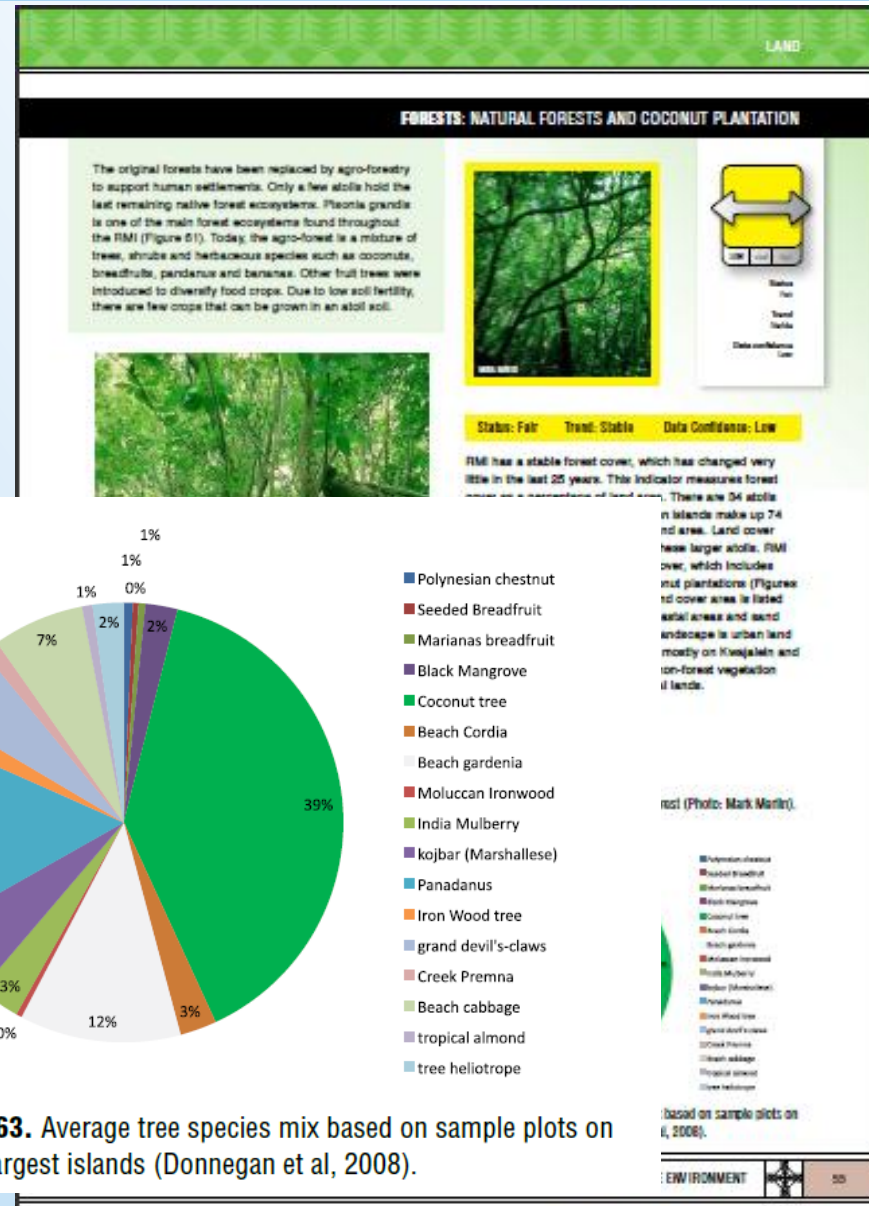
How data are used and analysed to better manage the resource

FORESTS: NATURAL FORESTS AND COCONUT PLANTATION

The original forests have been replaced by agro-forestry to support human settlements. Only a few atolls hold the last remaining native forest ecosystems. Pisonia grandis is one of the main forest ecosystems found throughout the RMI (Figure 61). Today, the agro-forest is a mixture of trees, shrubs and herbaceous species such as coconuts, breadfruits, pandanus and bananas. Other fruit trees were introduced to diversify food crops. Due to low soil fertility, there are few crops that can be grown in an atoll soil.

Status: Fair   Trend: Stable   Data Confidence: Low

RMI has a stable forest cover, which has changed very little in the last 25 years. This indicator measures forest

FIGURE 62. The graph represents the ten largest islands, 70 percent of which is estimated to be forested in a mixture of agro-forest and native species. Urban lands account for twelve percent of the land cover (Donnegan et al, 2008).

FIGURE 63. Average tree species mix based on sample plots on the ten largest islands (Donnegan et al, 2008).
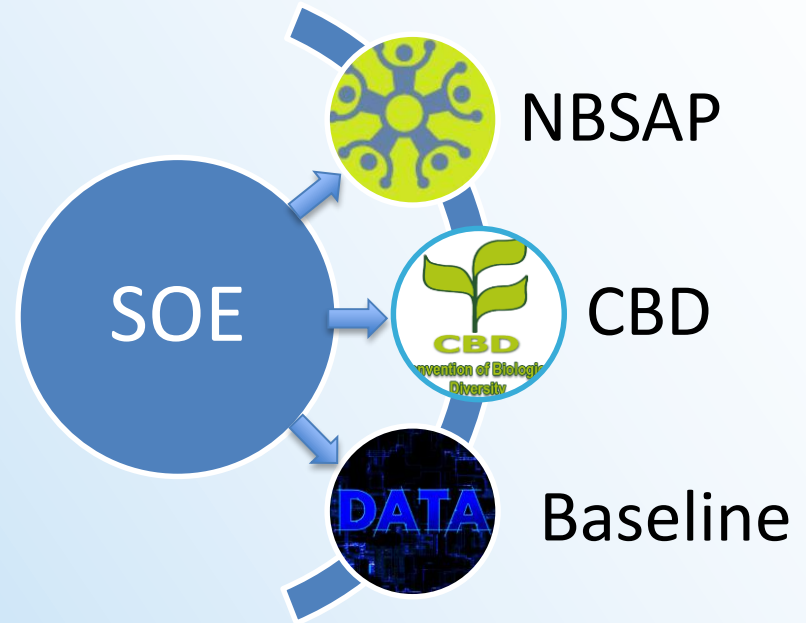
How data are used and analysed to better manage the resource (continued)

- The information can also be used to record trends concerning the state of the environment over time

- Can be used as a reference source

- Can be used for grant writing

How is the State of Environment Report useful in this process?

- Planning

- Baseline for tracking change, helps with next SoE

- Basis for funding proposals

o Helps identify gaps and the information can serve as the jumping off point for proposal writing

o GAP- environmental database to manage datasets over time

SOE

NBSAP

CBD

Baseline

Kommol Tata (Thank You)