EVENT SPOTLIGHT - Global Island Partnership at UNSIDS

The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (UNSIDS) in Apia, Samoa, focused attention on islands and the theme of partnerships in sustainable development. The Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), co-chaired by the Presidents of Seychelles and Palau as well as the Prime Minister of Grenada, coordinated a series of strategic events that recognized, strengthened and inspired island leadership and support for greater action globally at all scales.

Significant new leadership, as well as commitments and partnerships were made by countries and organizations that set a framework to build resilient and sustainable island communities through innovative partnerships toward 2020.

Outcomes

- Recognized, strengthened and inspired island leadership and support for greater action globally
- Catalyzed significant leadership from 11 countries and organizations as well as 6 new and strengthened partnerships towards conservation of island biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods
- 16 bright spots were identified and shared that demonstrate solutions and have the potential to be scaled and replicated

GLISPA contributed to supporting the Government of Samoa’s theme of genuine and durable partnerships including by sharing GLISPA’s successful partnership model and progress since it was launched at the Mauritius International Meeting in 2005.

“Let us work together to make this planet Earth sustainable!”
United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, 1 September 2014

“We are gathered tonight to celebrate GLISPA’s nine-year journey as a voluntary partnership, to be inspired by its success to date and be moved to act now to help ourselves.”
H.E. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi
Prime Minister of Samoa
GLISPA High Level Event “Leaders Inspiring Action”
GLISPA Events at UNSIDS

1 Sept
Arrival & Welcome of the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage
GLISPA Leaders Sail on Board the Hōkūle‘a in Celebration of International Year of SIDS

2 Sept
Island Bright Spot Exchange
GLISPA Strategy & Kava-Side Chat

3 Sept
GLISPA panelist during the Oceans, Seas and Biodiversity Partnership Dialogue

SIDS leading the Rio+20 Challenge: Boosting Inter-Partnership Dialogue for Implementation of the Rio Conventions

Leaders Inspiring Action: A celebration of commitments to build resilient and sustainable island communities through innovative partnerships

Top Right Photo: Nainoa Thompson (Master Navigator of Worldwide Voyage), Ban Ki-moon (UN Secretary General and Dr. Sylvia Earle (Mission Blue) and Mrs Ban on Board Hokulea

(Top Left & Lower Right) Photos: Dancers welcome the Worldwide Voyage during the traditional ceremony.
Left Photo: UN Secretary General sails on board Hokulea in celebration of International Year of SIDS
Hōkūle'a, the traditional voyaging canoe of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, and her sister vessel, Hikianalia, were welcomed to Samoa and the SIDS conference during a poignant traditional ceremony organized by Samoa Voyaging Society.

“This is a special moment in our history,” stated His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi, the Head of State of Samoa as the Patron of the Aiga Folau o Samoa (Samoan Voyaging Society) in welcoming the voyagers. “If we can restore our conversation with nature we will find the solution to the problems that we face today.”

Hōkūle’a and Hikianalia set sail from Hawai‘i in May 2014 as part of the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage – meaning “to care for our Island Earth.” These courageous navigators used only the signs of the waves, winds and stars to navigate to Samoa via French Polynesia, Cook Islands and American Samoa for the UNSIDS Conference.

The voyagers, led by Master Navigator Nainoa Thompson, arrived at the conference to inspire world leaders to take greater action for a sustainable future for our oceans and island Earth. The Polynesian Voyaging Society’s engagement in the UNSIDS conference was supported by the Global Island Partnership, United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UNOHRLLS), Samoa Voyaging Society, State of Hawai‘i, Hawai‘i Green Growth, Tuputupu-A‘e Education Trust, Conservation International, Sylvia Earle Alliance and Mission Blue.
GLISPA High Level Event, Apia Harbour

In a special celebration of the International Year of SIDS, the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his wife sailed aboard Hōkūle’ā with islands leaders in Apia Harbor.

His Excellency Ban Ki-moon presented Nainoa Thompson, President and Master Navigator of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, and the crew of the Worldwide Voyage with a handwritten message in a bottle, asking them to carry it with them as they circle the globe.

The message stated, “I am honored to be a part of Hokulea’s Worldwide Voyage. I am inspired by its global mission. As you tour the globe, I will work and rally more leaders to our common cause of ushering in a more sustainable future and a life of dignity for all.”

The Secretary General welcomed the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage to New York City in mid-2016. The Voyage, sponsored by Hawaiian Airlines, will cover 47,000 nautical miles, 85 ports and 26 countries, including 12 of UNESCO’s Marine World Heritage sites, through June 2017 on its return to Hawai’i.

The UN Secretary General was joined at the sail by the President of Palau, Tommy Remengesau Jr. as the Co-Chair of GLISPA. “The crossing of this very ocean by our ancestors centuries ago is an appropriate metaphor for the complex issues that we as Small Island Developing States continue to face,” said President Remengesau. “To sustainably develop our island countries, genuine and real partnerships are required to ensure that the pursuit of the conveniences of today do not come at the expense of the sustainability of tomorrow.”

The UN Secretary General was joined by William Aila, Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Worldwide Voyage crew and specialists such as Sylvia Earle of Mission Blue, artist Wyland, Blue Planet founder Henk Rogers, the Ulu of Tokelau and Andrew Yatilman from the Federated States of Micronesia delegation who is a relative of Mau Plaglug the original navigator of the Hokule’a.
Leaders Make Visionary Commitments
3 September

GLISPA High Level Dinner Event, Orator Hotel

Islands countries and countries with islands made bold commitments to build resilient and sustainable island communities through innovative partnerships during this GLISPA high level dinner event hosted by H.E. Tommy E. Remengesau Jr., President of Palau as Co-Chair of Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) alongside The Hon. Jean-Paul Adam, Minister of Foreign Affairs representing the President of Seychelles and The Honorable Alvin Dabreo, Minister of State representing the Prime Minister of Grenada.

Commitments:

President of Palau, H.E. Tommy E. Remengesau Jr.

Palau committed to advancing protection of oceans by announcing the Palau National Marine Sanctuary. This Sanctuary will establish a no-take that covers more than 80% of the Palau Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) including a highly regulated Fishing Zone that covers approximately 20% of the EEZ and a complete prohibition on purse seine fishing that covers 100% of the EEZ. In addition, Palau will establish a prohibition on fish exports and create a reformed modern domestic commercial long-line fishing fleet with observer oversight on 100% of its vessels.

President Remengesau recognized the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage, Master Navigator Nainoa Thompson and crew who arrived in Samoa for the UNSIDS conference for “undertaking their inspiring three and a half year round the world journey to train the next generation of navigators and to spread the message on the urgency of dealing with the threats to our oceans and islands.” He affirmed that GLISPA stands ready to support their efforts.
President of The Federated States of Micronesia, H.E. Manny Mori
The President of the Federated States of Micronesia announced that they will allocate USD2.4 million to advancing the Micronesia Challenge, a commitment made by the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam and Republic of the Marshall Islands in 2008 to conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020. The funding will be allocated toward reducing the threat of invasive species through implementation of the Micronesia Biosecurity Plan. “Any national economic development plan that does not give prominent recognition to the environment, is like a rich man with poor health,” stated President Mori.

President of The Republic of the Marshall Islands, H.E. Christopher Loeak
The Republic of the Marshall Islands provided an update on the Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership that has been adopted by 14 Pacific island countries plus Australia and New Zealand as Pacific Island Forum members. Since it was launched in 2013, the United States and State of Hawaii as well as the European Union, the United Kingdom, Mexico and Japan have signed onto the Declaration. “Whether it be biodiversity, sustainable livelihoods, or climate change we need the courage to work together and encourage others to do the same. As the spirit of the Hōkūle’a shows us all, any journey requires great vision,” said President Loeak.

Prime Minister of Samoa, H.E. Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi
The Prime Minister drew attention to the importance of strong partnerships with GLISPA as an example. “GLISPA in essence is a trademark of SIDS, a manifestation of the power of shared vision, nurtured and allowed to grow through encouragement and support at the highest political level,” stated the Prime Minister.

He further shared the vision of the joint partnership between Samoa and American Samoa, the Two Samoas’ Initiative. The initiative will ensure long-term sustainability of fish stocks, strengthen the resilience of communities and ecosystems to the effects of climate change, improve water quality and protect the two Samoas from the threat of invasive species.

The Prime Minister further issued a challenge to other countries and states in Polynesia to join them in a similar partnership to the other regional challenges, stating “I want to use the GLISPA model and our Two Samoa’s initiative to issue a challenge to the rest of Pacific Polynesian nations to follow with similar sub-regional cooperation in similar areas as identified in our Two-Samoa’s Strategy and to start reporting to the Polynesian Leaders Group on these issues.”

President of Seychelles, H.E. James A. Michel, delivered by The Hon. Jean-Paul Adam Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Republic of Seychelles was joined by Tanzania, Madagascar and Mauritius in launching the Western Indian Ocean Coastal Challenge (WIOCC) by announcing a series of national commitments supporting achievement of the WIOCC regional vision.

Seychelles, having already protected more than half its land territory as natural parks and reserves, announced that they would further conservation efforts by establishing marine protected areas covering 30 percent of its 1.4 million square kilometer Exclusive Economic Zone by 2020, half of which will be no-take zones. Seychelles also announced that they would continue to contribute financing toward the GLISPA coordination until 2016.

“An overall objective is for us to take effective ownership of our ocean spaces and of our Blue Economy by inspiring leadership and facilitating collaboration in the islands and coastal states of the Western Indian Ocean,” said Minister Jean Paul.
President of Zanzibar, H.E. Ali Mohamed Shein on behalf of the United Republic of Tanzania

The President of Zanzibar, representing the United Republic of Tanzania, formally joined the WIOCC. “We consider the WIOCC as an important vessel for our countries in the promotion of sustainable development,” stated President Shein. “Our challenges are identical and it is only proper that we combine efforts to address them.”

In joining the WIOCC, Zanzibar has set targets to declare more than 15% of its coastal and marine ecosystems as marine protected areas and 25% of mangrove under protected forest reserves by 2020 to advance the regional vision. The Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Commission Mr. Jean Claude de l’Estrac indicated that the IOC would support the WIOCC through projects that will contribute to the regional vision.

The State of Hawai’i, United States of America, Mr. William Aila, Chair of the Hawai’i Department of Land and Natural Resources

The State of Hawai’i, with the U.S. Government, announced the launch of the Aloha+ Challenge, a joint leadership commitment to sustainability for the State of Hawai’i led by Governor Neil Abercrombie, Hawai’i’s four county mayors, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA).

The Aloha+ Challenge sets 2030 targets for clean energy transformation, local food production, natural resource management, waste reduction, smart growth, climate resilience, green job creation and education. The Aloha+ Challenge is Hawai’i’s commitment of collaborative action to sustain their oceans, islands and peoples through an integrated approach.

“We are grateful to GLISPA and other island leaders for inspiring us to make a commitment to conservation and sustainable livelihoods,” said William Aila Jr., Chair of the Hawai’i Department of Land and Natural Resources. “We couldn’t imagine a better venue than the UNSIDS Conference to internationally launch Hawaii’s Aloha+ Challenge.”

Dr. John Holdren, Assistant to President Obama for Science and Technology, U.S. Government supported the Aloha+ Challenge stating, “The United States is proud that our island State of Hawai’i joined this partnership and launched the Aloha+ Challenge as its ambitious commitment to island sustainability and resilience. We look forward to continued collaboration with our U.S. islands and Small Island Developing States as we work to solve shared challenges, such as climate change, the health of our oceans, and energy security.”
Italy, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, The Hon. Lapo Pistelli

Italy, currently the President of the European Union, announced their continued interest in working together to renew and strengthen EU’s championship on island issues. To support this, Italy announced its intention to host an island meeting during the Milan EXPO in 2015 as a “unique opportunity for stocktaking on progress made by SIDS and Donors on the outcomes of Samoa’s Conference, to monitor the commitments made in Samoa and to connect them to the themes of the EXPO.”

Grenada, Minister of State for ICT, The Hon. Alvin Dabreo

Grenada internationally announced Phase 2 of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative a commitment of The Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to conserve and protect at least 20 percent of the Caribbean’s marine and coastal environment by 2020 and to create National Conservation Trust Funds, endowed by sustainable finance mechanisms solely dedicated to funding protected area management.

Minister Dabreo stated on behalf of the Prime Minister, “Grenada has demonstrated that partnerships are an imperative, requiring active collaboration with a shared vision of outcomes to benefit our people, driven by the strength of our collective efforts. That’s what makes GLISPA the model of partnership, and that is why we have come this far to stand up with my co-chairs and my distinguished colleagues of the Pacific.”

The Bahamas, Minister of the Environment and Housing, The Hon. Kenred Dorsett

The Bahamas announced that they are on track to exceed the Caribbean Challenge Initiative 20% target in advance of the 2020 deadline, and have already established more than 10% of their near-shore coastal areas as protected. In addition, the Bahamas announced the formal passage of the Bahamas Protected Area Fund (BPAF) legislation and made a commitment of USD2 million to the BPAF as an endowment.

GLISPA Showcased as a Successful Partnership Model

GLISPA contributed to supporting the Government of Samoa’s focus on genuine and durable partnerships by:

- Sharing the successes and lessons of GLISPA’s partnership model since it emerged from the Mauritius International Meeting in 2005 in the Oceans, Seas and Biodiversity Partnership Dialogue. UN WebTV Coverage.
- Ambassador Jumeau joined the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biodiversity and the Government of Italy in demonstrating how SIDS have contributed to advancement of the three Rio Conventions through GLISPA during the side event “SIDS leading the Rio+20 Challenge: Boosting Inter-Partnership Dialogue for the Synergistic Implementation of the three Rio Conventions.”

Photo: Olai Uludong (Chief Negotiator for Aosis), H.E. Tommy Remenegesau Jr. of Palau and Kate Brown (GLISPA Coordinator) during Leadership Inspiring Action™
GLISPA Side Event

Opened by The Hon. Umiich Sengebau, Minister for Environment, Palau, this event engaged more than 60 delegates in participatory exchanges of island solutions in leadership and innovative partnerships around priority areas for SIDS.

The Minister recognized Grand-Sable Women Planters Farmers Association of Mauritius represented by Mrs. Geraldine Fine Aristide as the winner of the Island Bright Spot Award for their successful projects focused on the use of seaweeds and other plants for alternative and diversified livelihoods. Mrs. Aristide’s engagement in the UNSIDS meeting was the prize that was created in recognition of the International Year of SIDS as part of the 2013 Solution Search focused on climate change adaptation run by The Nature Conservancy and Rare.

Participants joined small groups to share new and emerging island bright spots, identify success factors as well as leaders behind the bright spots. A selection of the Bright Spots shared include:

Food security & invasive species:
- Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMA) as a participatory community based approach to establishing marine protected areas
- Pacific Invasive Initiative provides a holistic approach to food security and invasive species
- ELI Africa use of social networking to engage and educate the community on food security issues.

Oceans & Voyaging:
- The Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage and the Polynesian Voyaging Society to inspire communities to world leaders to act to protect island Earth
- The Samoan Voyaging Society and the impact of the Gaualofa (the Samoa voyaging canoe) in inspiring Samoan youth and communities to have pride in traditional knowledge and histories.

Leadership in blue/green growth:
- Hawaii’s leadership through the Aloha+ Challenge and Hawaii Green Growth
- Blue Planet Foundation supporting Hawaii targets by developing an environmental report card
- Seychelles leadership in the blue economy through pursuing innovative financing mechanisms including debt for nature swaps
- Aruba leadership in shifting to 70% renewable energy in partnership with Korea
- British Virgin Islands leadership in putting in place legislation to protect sharks and rays as well as through the Caribbean Challenge Initiative.

Innovative financing:
- The Micronesia Conservation Trust as a regional financing mechanism to support the Micronesia Challenge Sustainable island communities.

Coverage

Watch Oiwi TV Coverage
Island Bright Spots in Conservation and Sustainability Booklet
Sustainable island communities

- Grand-Sable Women Planters Farmers Entrepreneurs Association community based agriculture project focused on the cultivation of crops such as seaweeds, vetiver and other plants to create soaps, bags and other alternative and diversified livelihoods opportunities.
- Palau Protected Area Network has engaged community toward improved conservation.
- World Indigenous Network (WIN) related to the Equator Prize and focused on bringing together local community land and sea managers.
- Seychelles rainwater harvesting facilities in schools and communities.
- Seychelles education and community engagement programs from parades to tree planting in recognition of the International Year of SIDS.

The Island Bright Spot Exchange was followed by an informal Kava Side Chat at the Tradition Resort. This event was an opportunity to engage GLISPA participants in a discussion around priorities toward 2016. Participants were invited to raise topics that they wanted to engage the partnership in. These included: support to the Worldwide Voyage and NYC arrival, World Parks Congress and sharing of

"I would like to thank all of those who have taken the idea of GLISPA and converted it into a movement."

H.E. Tommy E. Remengesau Jr., President of Palau and Co-Chair of GLISPA.

Next Steps

GLISPA will support the governments and organizations that made commitments through the GLISPA events at UNSIDS by showcasing the commitments on the international stage to inspire leadership, catalyzing resources and facilitating collaboration. The following events will be prioritized to mobilize action and support.

- CBD COP12, October, Korea. www.cbd.int/cop
- Milan Expo Island Event (supported by Govt of Italy) including the GLISPA Steering Committee, tbc May - Oct 2015, Italy. http://www.expo2015.org/en
- Worldwide Voyage arrival in New York City, mid-2016, USA. www.hokulea.org
- Ten Year Anniversary of GLISPA in 2016

Supporters

GLISPA is a voluntary partnership open to any entity committed to taking significant action to achieve its vision. It has engaged more than 30 countries and 60 organizations in advancing island action.

GLISPA @ UNSIDS Event Supporters

GLISPA thanks the following institutions for their financial supporter to GLISPA Events at UNSIDS: European Union funding through the Indian Ocean Commission ISLANDS Project, Hawaii Green Growth, IUCN, Micronesia Conservation Trust, Rare, GEF Small Grants Programme implemented by UNDP, Taiwan, Agenda To Action (Michele Frank), The Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC).