



Photo courtesy of Jez O'Hare

Micronesia Conservation Trust:

For land, sea, and people

Lisa Ranahan Andon
Deputy Executive Director

Both ENDS – WEDO Webinar
March 2018



VISION

Enduring partnerships that conserve our land and sea to improve quality of life for communities across Micronesia

MISSION

We build partnerships, raise and manage funds, make grants, influence policy, and provide conservation and financing expertise.

Fund ... at a glance

- Country: Federated States of Micronesia (Incorporated), Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, US Territory of Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- Governing body: Board of Trustees – 7 Regional Members, 3 International Members, 1 Honorary , Ex-Officio Member (Donor Representative)
- Legal status: MCT is a charitable and irrevocable corporation incorporated under the laws of the Federated States of Micronesia, 2002.
- 501(c)3 tax exempt status (US IRS)
- Capital: US\$21 million
- Beneficiaries: Micronesian conservation NGOs, local governments, local communities and technical partners.



Photo courtesy of Jez O'Hare

Experience – Funds and Services

- Endowments – Micronesia Challenge (~USD20.7M) and MCT Operational Endowment (~USD806K)
- Yela Conservation Easement Endowment Fund (520K)
- Advised Sinking Funds – Multiple Donors (Private Foundations, US Federal Agencies, Multilateral Facilities, 1.5 million in 2017)
- Re-Granting - supported work in over 150 sites across Micronesia
- Capacity-Building and network coordination (MIC and PIMPAC)





Experience – Accreditation

(Adaptation Fund - NIE)

Because MCT was accredited to the Green Climate Fund through the Fast Track mechanism, based on its accreditation to the Adaptation Fund, the “story” of our accreditation to AF is important.

- Application submitted in April 2012
- Revisions and improvements to organizational policies, 2012 to 2014
 - Strengthened procurement procedures
 - Anti-fraud policy
 - Whistleblower policy
- Comments from Accreditation Committee
 - Level of re-granting and grant management insufficient to demonstrate capacity to manage AF funding
 - Improve monitoring and evaluation and quality at entry
 - Stronger oversight from Board of Trustees
 - Need for internal audit function

Experience – NIE Accreditation

(continued)

- Alternative (streamlined) accreditation process approved by AF Board October 2014
- MCT Accredited in March 2015 with conditions
 - A monetary limit for projects (US\$1,000,000)
 - Specify procurement procedures for each project that would have significant procurement
 - Stronger oversight by MCT Board Committee on Investment, Audit and Finance



Why GCF accreditation?

- MCT serves three independent countries in Micronesia (RMI, FSM and ROP), all with different levels and sources of technical funding resources and funds like the Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund serve as common resources around which to build and support regional initiatives.
- Bring additional resources for the implementation of the Micronesia Challenge and related work and initiatives.
- Continue to raise Micronesia's profile on the international stage with a view to increasing attention and resources.
- Increase donor confidence in investing in Micronesian initiatives and organizations



Experience – AE Accreditation (GCF)

- Organizations accredited to the Adaptation Fund, GEF and Europe AID/EC, eligible for “fast track” accreditation to GCF
 - Only consider requirements outside the scope of other accreditations
 - Uncertainty about “streamlined” process accreditations and “fast track” process and whether MCT would qualify and if restrictions would carry over to GCF accreditation
- Accreditation gap assessment conducted by Price Waterhouse Cooper in March 2016
- Requested gap assessment be conducted for as if for regular accreditation - then assess whether to request “fast track”



Experience – AE Accreditation

(cont.)

- Gap Assessment results
 - Internal Audit still an issue (working with GCF Secretariat)
 - Updated TORs for Board Committees and Employees ✓
 - Some tweaks to financial management procedures ✓
 - Incorporation of Anti-Terrorism, Anti-Money Laundering, and Anti-Fraud language and procedures to organizational documents (policies & manuals) ✓
 - Environment and Social Risk mitigation policy ✓
 - Gender policy ✓
 - Communications policy (Readiness support)
 - Monitoring & Evaluation and Risk Assessment & Mitigation ✓



Accreditation Experience

Summary

Main Obstacles:

Inexperience

- That of the funds in terms of how to apply standards to small organizations and projects. The AF Board eventually adopted the streamlined approach. It took a lot of dialogue and push-back from MCT and advocates to make it happen.
- That of MCT in managing large projects and grants – this led to many of the challenges we faced in meeting the regular accreditation standards. This was a factor of limited absorption capacity in Micronesia and recognition of this on the part of the AF and GCF played a role in MCT's eventual success. Absorption capacity is increasing and GCF and AF both have programs to support continued capacity improvements.



Accreditation Experience

Summary

Success Factors:

- Support from Partners (technical support from TNC, endorsements and support from local governments and NGO/CSO partners).
- Engagement with Secretariats – the staff of both secretariats were helpful and willing to engage and committed to ensuring that their respective organizations were true to their commitments.
- GCF Board's declared priorities in accreditation for 2016/2017 for Direct Access and Asia Pacific AEs.
- NDA engaged and proactive in making nominations and garnering Readiness support. NDA Office supportive and committed to including AEs in consultations and relevant workshops and meetings.
- Participation in Structured Dialogues and attendance at Board meetings. Learned about the Fund and its policies and processes and met with Secretariat and expanded network.

Accreditation Experience

Lessons

- Persistence, Persistence, Persistence!
- Ask for help wherever and whenever available
- Accept all offers and make them meet your needs (i.e. gap assessments, readiness support, etc.)
- Be open to appropriate guidance and support from relevant entities
- Treat the accreditation process as a “self-assessment” – this way MCT was able to grow and learn from the process as well as become accredited
- Only make changes that make sense for your organization (i.e. the internal audit function issue and others raised during accreditation processes)
- Support from our Board of Trustees was invaluable and made for faster approvals and decisions





Thank You!