“If it was up to me, I would say let’s go outside. Let’s go climb trees. That kind of relationship with the land is what makes people take care of it,” said Teacher Amanda Shiro, as she reflected on the way she was raised as a kid growing up in Ngarchelong State. Now a seventh grade teacher in her third year at Ngarchelong Elementary, Ms. Amanda is thriving in her role of educating young people. She is committed to ensuring that the Palauan culture of environmental stewardship is a part of what she brings to the classroom. (continued on next page)

Thank you for bringing hands-on learning to Teacher Amanda's classroom

Because of you, nearly all seventh graders in public schools engaged in plastic pollution science education.

We want to hike with you! Be on the look out for an upcoming members and donors-only hike!
This year, because of donors and supporters, Teacher Amanda was able to bring a new plastic pollution lesson plan to her class which included a fun, half-day activity where students collected, segregated, and analyzed plastic garbage that had washed up at Ollei Port. In total, 84% of public school 7th graders increased their knowledge about ocean ecosystems through the delivery of the lesson plan.

Plastic pollution is a growing problem for Palau and the world. It is estimated that 8 million tons of plastic waste enter the ocean each year on top of the 150 million tons of plastic already swirling around the ocean. In addition to being a threat to fish and other marine animals, plastics, especially microplastics, can be toxic to humans who consume these animals.

When asked about the plastic pollution activity, one student remarked, “We need more activities like this. We need to help the world.”

This project was made possible with support from members and donors, as well as the Ministry of Education and its teachers and educators who co-created the lesson plan.

Special thanks to all the teachers and students across Palau who engaged in this effort to fight marine plastic pollution.
With Palau’s culture and economy closely tied to marine biodiversity, this has set-off alarm bells among leaders, scientists, and fishermen alike. With the support of members and donors, PCS can continue to work with fisherman like Adolph Demei to find solutions to achieve sustainable fisheries management.

“I love fishing, said Adolph Demei, a 57-year-old business owner in the Republic of Palau. Mr. Demei has enjoyed fishing ever since he was a boy splashing on the reefs of Melekeok with his grandfather.

In the early 90s, Adolph’s career was focused on diving, catering to tourists in Palau’s pristine waters. In fact, he was one of the first people in Palau to earn his PADI Instructor Certification. Everything changed for Demei when he was introduced to the “catch and release” method of fishing in Okinawa.

Soon after, Mr. Demei opened a catch and release tour business in Palau and has been doing this ever since. He has a dream career fishing with tourists who come to Palau from around the world, but he also acknowledges many challenges.

“Back then, we would catch 10 to 15 giant trevallies (GTs) per day. These days, it’s two or three GTs if we have a good day. Back then, the sizes were big too.”

According to both fishermen and researchers, Palau’s reef fish stocks have been in decline for many years due to increased demand and other factors such as improved technology.

“It’s about protecting them for future generations,” says Demei. As a new Board Member of Palau Conservation Society, Adolph looks forward to working with supporters to assure that tomorrow's youth have the opportunity to fish with their grandfathers, just as he did.

Adolph Demei is a PCS Board Member. He also serves on the Board of Friends of the Palau National Marine Sanctuary, Palau Sports Fishing Assoc., and is a member of Belau Offshore Fishers Assoc.

With Palau’s culture and economy closely tied to marine biodiversity, this has set-off alarm bells among leaders, scientists, and fishermen alike.

With the support of members and donors, PCS can continue to work with fisherman like Adolph Demei to find solutions to achieve sustainable fisheries management.

“Back then, we would catch 10 to 15 giant trevallies per day. These days, it’s two or three GTs if we have a good day.”

“Back then, we would catch 10 to 15 giant trevallies (GTs) per day. These days, it’s two or three GTs if we have a good day. Back then, the sizes were big too.”

According to both fishermen and researchers, Palau’s reef fish stocks have been in decline for many years due to increased demand and other factors such as improved technology.
This invasive vine is threatening Palau's pristine forests

A protected areas site manager shares about the threat of kebeas to his community.

Smothering, strangling, aggressive – common words often used to describe the infamous vine, Merremia peltata, as it snakes up forest trees. Known locally as kebeas, this native species thrives in sunlight. As Babeldao has opened up over the past several years, especially with the compact road coming on line, forests once closed off to most people are now facing disturbances - new roads, farms, businesses, and housing. As a result, kebeas has found new pathways and has become invasive in many areas. With the ability to reach up to 20 meters in length, kebeas is a serious threat to Palau’s forests.

Omar Faustino is the Program Manager for Melekeok Conservation Network (MCN) on the east side of Babeldao island. He describes kebeas as a “heart-shaped leaf with vines that can cover the trunk and canopy of trees, strangling them.” The vine has been creeping in to Ngardok Nature Reserve, an MCN site, which houses Micronesia’s largest freshwater lake. Omar has noticed an impact on birds, trees, and the overall health of forest ecosystems within the protected area.

Thanks to members and donors, PCS has recently launched an initiative working in collaboration with managers like Omar to combat kebeas, especially in Palau’s protected areas. Activities will include mapping, community demonstrations on how to properly get rid of kebeas, and an animated film to be shared with schools and the general public.

Mr. Omar Faustino is a bi-weekly contributing member of Palau Conservation Society. “My message to you, is to do it.” What we contribute to PCS helps support and maintain conservation work in Palau.

Contact PCS

488-3993 OR 488-4716
ADMIN@PALAUCONSERVATION.ORG
WWW.PALAUCONSERVATION.ORG
FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

Palau Conservation Society

members and donors are amazing

Thank you for all you do. We look forward to achieving “Healthy Ecosystems for a Healthy Palau” with you.