



# The American Samoa Community-Based Fisheries Management Program

Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources,  
Pago Pago, American Samoa



Continental US

Hawaii

← Samoan  
archipelago

- Tutuila Island, 4,200 km south of Hawaii ,
- American Samoa (6 islands, one atoll), Samoa (2 islands, 8 islets)
- island/atolls formed by Samoa hotspot except for Rose and Swains.

Google

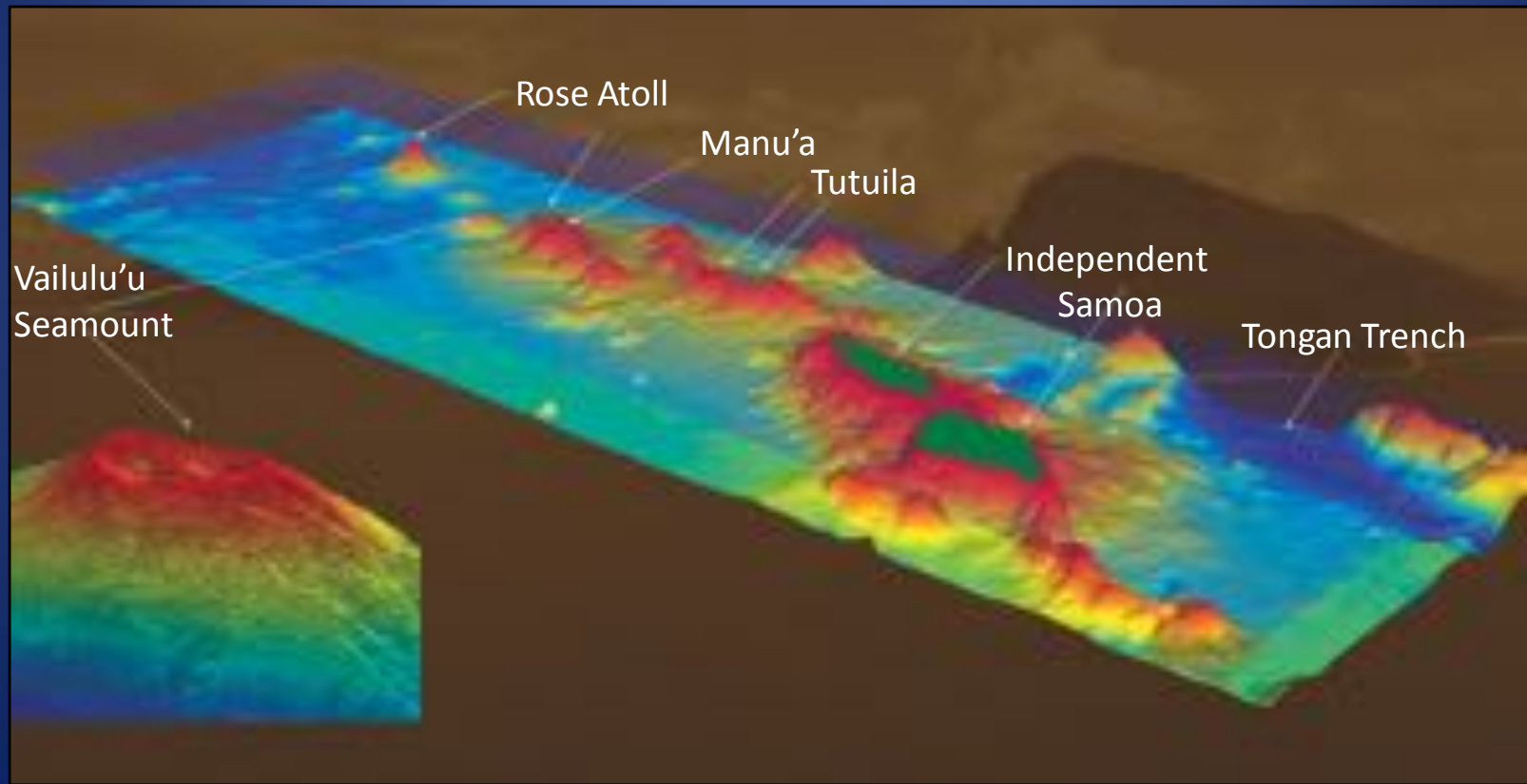
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8°10'28.97" N 120°44'25.47" W elev: 10181 ft

Eye alt: 6025.70 m

# The Samoan Archipelago



# Fa'asamoa ~ Samoan Way of Life



Village *Fono* or Council

Village

Aiga

Aiga

Aiga



# The American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources

Mission: To manage, preserve and perpetuate marine and wildlife resources.



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graph TD; Coordination --- Fisheries; Coordination --- Wildlife; Coordination --- Enforcement; Coordination --- Outreach
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Coordination

Fisheries Division

Wildlife Division

Enforcement Division

Education and Outreach  
Division

# DMWR Fisheries Division

- Community-Based Fisheries Management Program
- Fisheries Creel Surveys
- Key Reef Species Program
- Fish Aggregation Device Program
- Coral Reef Monitoring Program
- Habitat Rehabilitation Program

# History of CFMP

- Established in 2001
- Adopted from Western Samoa
- Bottoms-up approach to resources management
- Co-management of fisheries resources
- 11 participating villages

# Importance of community-based management strategy

- Community buy-in is important
- Centralized management ineffective in many cases
- Community develops culturally relevant regulations
- Community as government partner
- Improves compliance
- Renewed recognition of traditional knowledge and customary laws



# The CFMP Implementation Process

Initial Contact

Introduction of CFMP

Series of meetings with various village groups

Cooperative Agreement

Fishery Advisory and Management Committee

Village Fishery Management Plan

Monitoring and Enforcement Committee

# Village Responsibilities

- Villagers work with the program in a voluntary basis
- Villagers need to be available during program activities, meetings
- Develop village by-laws using program management options
- Designate a village marine protected area
- Provide public notice of village by-laws as required by territorial laws
- Notify DMWR of changes in MPA options

# Program Management Options

- Banning fishing
- Restricting some fishing methods
- Declaring open/closed areas and seasons
- Restricting fishing time
- Banning night fishing
- Imposing catch and size limits
- Species prohibitions
- Banning commercial fishing
- Trash/waste regulation and dumping

# Afioaga i totonu o le porokalama 2013



# FA'ATULAGAINA O OGASAMI FA'ASAO





# Matafaioi o le porokalama

- Fa'atautaia fonotaga

Fonotaga muamua i le nofoaga fa'aila



Konferensi i le nofoaga fa'aila







# ● Fa'amamaina o le gataifale

- To improve the quality of marine habitat by removing marine debris







# Strengths

- Enhances community participation
- Emphasizes co-management
- Program provides legislation for village plans
- Village can avail of DMWR technical expertise, services
- Provides educational opportunities on marine conservation issues
- Villagers are deputized to enforce policies



# Challenges

- Short attention span of villagers
- Unclear objectives of MPAs
- Village 'wants'
- Some villages are too dependent on government
- Staff has to work around village schedule
- Enforcement challenges
- Define program role on community conflicts
- Traditional hierarchical leadership is still a challenge

# Future program plans

- Revisit management plans, clarify MPA objectives
- Revisit MPA designations
- Identify model MPAs, villages
- Recognize VMPA champions and leaders
- Improve education and outreach
- Develop a communication plan
- Regular formalized evaluation of VMPA effectiveness
- Socio-economic and biological analyses
- Enhance capacity for community-led biological monitoring.

# IA MANATUA

## O OU AAU AMU



## O OU TAMAOAIGA

## O LOU LUMANA'I LEA