For Official Release
PR 001-10262023
Office of the Governor
Utulei, American Samoa
October 26, 2023

Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga Joins the USVI Site Visit- Lessons Learned from Virgin Islands (Coral Conservation & Preparations)

"American Samoa stands with coral reef scientists and managers convening to identify effective solutions on challenges to their coastal reefs. We advocate for and continue to participate in initiatives aimed at conserving and protecting the reefs."

On October 25, 2023, Honorable Governor P. S. Mauga participated in one of the activities leading up to the U.S Coral Reef Task Force Meeting in St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands (USVI). These planned activities allow the opportunities for members of the task force to witness the challenges coral reefs face with climate change, land-based activities and develop resolutions that will assist in addressing these challenges.

The USVI experiences unique challenges as they continue to combat the impacts of climate change coupled with the aftermath of the Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD). This event provided valuable insight into the current state of the Virgin Islands' reefs. Understanding and addressing these challenges is crucial for the long-term protection and conservation of the Virgin Islands reefs. Furthermore, collaboration among agencies and stakeholders is essential in implementing effective measures to mitigate threats and ensure the resilience of coral reef ecosystems.

Nonetheless, through diligent efforts, the USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources has strived to identify innovative solutions and effectively implement measures to mitigate the ongoing threats. While this particular danger has yet to manifest itself in the Pacific waters, it remains vital that the Pacific jurisdictions including American Samoa remain steadfast and continue to understand the mechanisms crucial to develop preventative measures to protect its fragile coral reef ecosystems.

Accompanying Governor Lemanu was Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) Deputy Director Selaina Tuimavave and staff.

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(Left-Right:Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs & Chairwoman of U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Carmen G. Cantor, Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga, USVI Governor Albert Bryan Jr., Assistant Administrator, NOAA's National Ocean Service & Vice Chairman of U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Nicole R. LeBoeuf).

(Governor P. S. Lemanu greets Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs & Chairwoman of U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Carmen G. Cantor before boarding.)

(Left-Right: NOAA's National Ocean Service & Vice Chairman of U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Nicole R. LeBoeuf, Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga, International Lead for NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program Mike Lameier, HI Division of Aquatic Resources Administrator Brian Nielsen).

(Honorable Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga initial meet up with the Honorable Governor Governor Albert Bryan Jr.)