



Cultural Mapping– Republic of Palau



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**Cultural Mapping–
Republic of Palau**

By Ann Kloulechad-Singeo

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Urresel Orachel: Rock paintings of Orachel, possibly depicting the traditional political structure of Palau with the *btangch* or seat of a title holder at the bottom and a male and a female figure on either side of the canoe suggesting gender balance in the political structure (McKnight 1964). Palauan history attributes Orachel’s contribution to the creation of the Palauan political structure. Palaeoenvironmental work suggests human arrival in Western Micronesia may have occurred around 4500 BC (Clark 2004).

Foreword

Palau, in its effort to strengthen the practice and preservation of its culture, will develop a National Cultural Policy. The policy will help to ensure the protection and promotion of the culture of the culture.

This project is supported by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community through European Union funding, and administered and managed by the Bureau of Arts and Culture, under the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs.

The project has three phases. The first is cultural mapping, which is the focus of this report and leads to the second phase of cultural planning and then, as a result of both these activities, a national cultural policy will be developed in the third phase. The national policy will provide guidance for strengthening the cultural sector, which includes the government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, the traditional system, and the grassroots in our communities. As reflected in the following excerpts from our constitution, the nation's intent for its culture is clear:

... We renew our dedication
to preserve and enhance our traditional heritage,
our national identity and our respect for peace, freedom and justice for all mankind ...

Preamble

Statutes and traditional law shall be equally authoritative. In case of conflict between a statute and a traditional law, the statute shall prevail only to the extent it is not in conflict with the underlying principles of the traditional law.

Article V, Section 2

Palau's Constitution January 28 – April 2, 1979

Introduction

The purpose behind the research reported in this document was to assess and summarize Palau's cultural sector and its various dimensions. Palau's cultural stakeholders include the government, the private sector, civil society, traditional leaders and professionals, and community members. The focus was on mapping the current structure of the cultural sector and how the various stakeholders and dimensions within the structure fit together and interact and maintain the practice, preservation, and promotion of culture in Palau.

A range of interviews was conducted throughout Palau, including agency reviews, individual stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and literature reviews. The results were used to:

- provide a 'map' of available information;
- review the impact of social changes and challenges faced by the culture sector today;
- highlight where and how those changes came about; and
- provide recommendations to build up the cultural sector.

The cultural mapping was conducted from September to December 2010. It focused on three components of the cultural sector:

- I Palau's cultural structure
- II Palau's cultural history
- III Current challenges and recommendations

These three components are described in the three major sections that follow.

Component I: Palau's Cultural Structure

In order to understand the first component of the cultural mapping process, Palau's cultural structure, the research examined the following fundamental areas:

1. the **actors** – the stakeholders, programs, and the collaborations that contribute to Palau's culture structure today;
2. **funding** – sources available to the sustainability of funding for cultural programs and activities in Palau;
3. **continuity, comparability, and stability** – the resilience of culture in society; including preservation and promotion efforts in comparison with other Pacific Island countries, the stability of the cultural structure of Palau and its ability to maintain a strong influence in the lives of young Palauans;
4. **data collection and use** in the further development of cultural structure – types of cultural information being collected, how it is collected, for what purpose and how it is being used;
5. **relationship between public, private and community sectors** – what the relationship between the government and private sector looks like, how they collaborate in their cultural preservation efforts, how their efforts support one another; and
6. **policy** – current inventory of cultural policies, how policies have been created, the trends in the types of policies being created.

This section discusses each of these areas in turn.

1. Actors

As a result of the interviews with stakeholders, four functional categories were identified: political and legal; information depositories; research and education; and application. The various actors were categorized into one of the four main functions. Subsequently, the cultural mapping and planning followed the same function-based matrix in developing the overall framework. Using the function-based matrix allows a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various actors and can improve collaboration and partnerships, thereby eliminating redundancy and maximizing resources. Therefore the agencies or individual stakeholders, the common concerns, the goals and objectives were all grouped under the four functional categories based on the following criteria:

1. **political and legal structure** – the agencies or individual stakeholders responsible for developing policies for culture;
2. **information depositories** – the agencies or individual stakeholders responsible for collecting and managing cultural information of Palau;
3. **research and education** – the agencies or individual stakeholders responsible for the development of research and education of Palau's culture; and
4. **application** – the agencies or individual stakeholders who use Palauan culture in their livelihood and survival, economic purpose, program designs, form of education, religion, etc.

Diagram 1.0: Cultural Structure

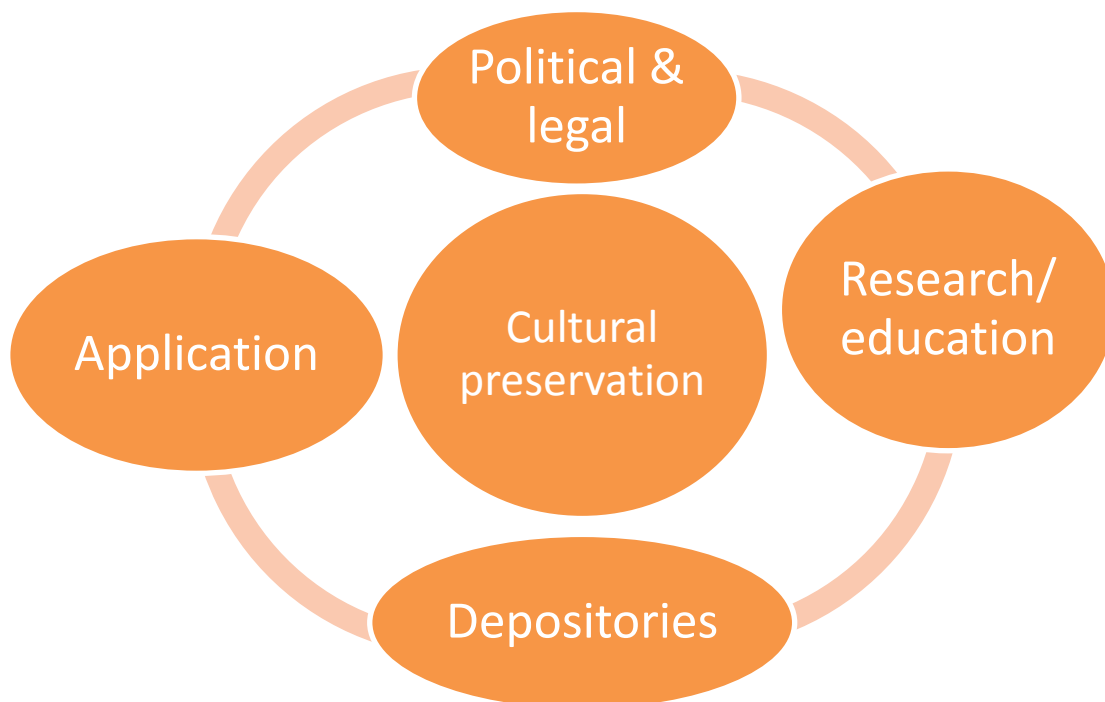


Diagram 1.0 above demonstrates clearly the structure of the cultural sector of Palau based on the four functional categories. This model also allows for a clearer understanding of the relationships between the contributors and their dependency on each other for effective preservation and promotion of culture. Diagram 1.0 displays the functional basis on which the various dimensions participate in the overall culture practice and preservation of Palau. Please refer to Appendix A for a matrix that details the major contributors to this sector.

Function 1: Political and Legal Structure

The following institutions are responsible for policy-making in Palau:

- The traditional system is made up of:
 - *Klobak* (male chiefs) and *Rubak el Dil* (female chiefs); and
 - male and female *Tamor* (chiefs) in the southwest islands of Sonsorol and Hatohobei.
- The national government is made up of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.
- The 16 state governments are each represented by the office of the Governor and the legislative body made up of elected officials and traditional leaders representing local hamlets and clans.

The traditional system has maintained its position in Palauan society through its leadership structure, from the time before foreign colonial rule in the 1800s through to the present day, where it is established within the constitutional government at executive level. The male traditional leadership has been represented in the governmental system as advisors to the president since 1980. As stated in the constitution (Article VIII, Section 6): **A Council of Chiefs composed of a traditional chief from each of the states shall advise the President on matters concerning traditional laws, customs and their relationship to this Constitution and the laws of Palau.**

Chiefs hold authority essentially within their individual state. This arrangement fits with the traditional design of the leadership system, where the chiefs are only empowered to govern their own state. The concept of a national Council of Chiefs came about under the Japanese administration and the body itself was created at that time. Due to its design, the council is most effective in its collaborative and cultural advisory role, and less so in policy-making at the national level (Nero 1987). Traditional leaders as members of the state legislatures are responsible for the state-level laws and the traditional temporary measures implemented and enforced by the leadership. Current temporary measures include fishing rights for Ngerchelong State; seasonal fishing and hunting for all Palau; minor curfew for Ollei, Ngerchelong; watershed protection for all Palau; and marine and land conservation for all Palau. These policies differ from state to state. *Rubak el Dil* or female chiefs do not have the authority to create laws, but will make recommendations to the male chiefs and the state leaders for appropriate or needed policies.

The first steps in establishing the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs were taken in 1990 through an executive order by President Nakamura's administration (Executive Order 116). Then in 1995 legislation mandated the creation of the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs to oversee the coordination and management of the nation's cultural affairs (Palau National Code title 19; Historical and Cultural Preservation Act RPPL 1-48 1995).

The states play a significant role in developing local policies to protect cultural properties belonging to them. They also act as collaborating agencies with the community owners of knowledge and the national government in identifying and collecting information for the depositories and in organizing national and state cultural events. Recently state governments have begun to maintain and manage their historical sites as part of their tourism program development. All registered historical sites are to be protected within the state laws.

Policy-making functions and responsibilities, in general and in relation to the cultural sector, are shared between the traditional system and the government, at national, state, and community levels. Below is a brief description of how both systems function in creating policy:

- The traditional system was constituted by the *Klobak* (male chiefs) and the *Rubak el Dil* (female chiefs), who governed within the fundamental laws created before the introduction of foreign colonizing countries in the 1800s. Thereafter, moratoriums or temporary special measures known as *bul* have been developed, imposed and removed, according to social needs. They are implemented when a social issue arises requiring immediate control or restoration, and can apply over the short or long term depending on the nature of the social issue.
- Constitutional government can adopt a constitution, create a policy-making body, and adopt resolutions to address current issues.

Both systems are used interactively today to create laws relating to culture such as those in regard to fishing rights, fishing and hunting seasons, and conservation areas, and state laws.

The *Klobak* (a body of chiefs) is generally constituted of 10 males as the main traditional leadership body representing the state. The chiefdom or *Klobak* is designed in such a way that the individual titles and ranks serve a particular function within the traditional government, such as a prosecutor, a defender, a jury, a judge, a treasurer, or someone responsible for environmental protection enforcement, public works, or warfare. Additionally, each male title has a female chief counterpart who fulfills a governance role, and is responsible for appointing and removing a chief, policy guidance, and women's affairs. The Tamor chiefdom

consists of two males; and *Sonsorol* comprises four. The female chiefs are also referred to as *Tamor* and stand with individual titles, governing the affairs of women for the village.

Function 2: Information Depositories

The national government system has played a fundamental role in the creation of registries and depositories of cultural properties and other relevant information. Most cultural data are collected by the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs; others with a collection role include the Ministry of Education, the court system (particularly the Land Court), the Bureau of Marine Resources, and the Bureau of Agriculture. Other depositories include the Belau National Museum and its research library (a semi-autonomous agency), the Etpison Museum, the Peleliu World War II Museum, the Angaur historical and cultural interpretive center, and the local college research library.

The deposited information includes data on:

- historical sites and cultural sites (traditional stone platforms for houses, *bai* or traditional leaders meeting house, community bathing pools, stone faces, stone carvings, rock paintings, old abandoned villages, traditional dock and piers, traditional stone wall forts, monumental terraces, cave dwellings, war relics, and other colonial historical buildings and industrial evidence);
- oral histories;
- arts and crafts;
- cultural materials;
- finished materials in ethnography and archeology;
- land tenure for lineages and clans;
- local marine species;
- local land-based fauna and flora;
- birds of Palau;
- performance arts collections;
- major geographical information;
- maps and place names;
- endemic species;
- archived materials;
- newspapers and audio records;
- photographs; and

Detailed information on depositories is provided in Table 1 (see Section 4: Data Collection below).

Function 3: Research and Education

The responsibility for research and education is shared among the government, NGOs, and the informal sector. The Ministry of Education continues to maintain and strengthen its function in teaching the language and culture as part of the main curriculum and as a requirement for chartering of schools. The current curriculum for public schools includes a focus on Palauan language and culture. The language curriculum focuses on Palauan language only and does not include the language for the minority populations of *Sonsorol* and *Hatohobei* States which share the same dialect as those of the outer islands of Yap.

In elementary school, children learn the values and norms of Palauan culture. They begin with those practiced in the home and then move on to community-level roles and responsibilities as

the grades get higher. At the end of elementary school, children learn about family structures, lineages, and clans.

The language curriculum focuses on the writing and reading of the Palauan language following the Palauan orthography by Lewis Joseph. This is part of the core curriculum and is studied five days a week for one hour each day. At the Palau Community College, the Social Science Department teaches Palauan history and culture within the various courses of anthropology, archeology, and sociology. There are no formal courses, vocational training centers or schools centered on Palauan culture. Similarly, Palauan art is not included in any current curriculum.

The public education section of the Bureau of Arts and Culture regularly makes PowerPoint presentations to school children, in public forums, and elsewhere; provides guidance during field trips to historic and cultural sites; holds an annual symposium and intermittent workshops specifically dealing with cultural resource issues; distributes booklets and reports to school libraries and public libraries; and creates educational posters and banners. As part of Title 19's mandate for the Bureau to develop 'an ongoing program of historical, architectural, archaeological, anthropological and cultural research,' the Bureau reviews all archaeological and anthropological/cultural research through a request for permit process, as well as conducting and publishing annual research projects on Palau's archaeology, traditional lifestyles and cultures, oral history and ethnographic changes.

At least one NGO, Ebiil Society Inc., has provided a summer cultural camp for young people over the past six years. The camp is focused on increasing ethnic pride through cultural knowledge, and learning targets are taught within a cultural practice or ritual by the local community and participating research centers. The NGO is directed and managed by a Board of Directors and was legally established in 2005 for the purpose of preserving Palauan culture and nature. Since then it has created a strong partnership with agencies such as the Palau Conservation Society, the Palau International Coral Reef Center, the Bureau of Arts and Culture, the Belau National Museum, and the Bureau of Marine Resources. Elderly members of the community teach the children the indigenous knowledge and skills; the technical agencies or partners teach the scientific and research component of each area of study.

Other NGOs, such as the Palau Conservation Society and Palau International Coral Reef Center, provide opportunities for both research and education on natural science at community, school, and international levels. The Palau Conservation Society is a grassroots organization that assists communities to develop conservation plans and policies. It strongly recognizes the role of traditional resource management which is integrated into the policies and plans it develops. An example is the establishment of a protected areas network, where the conservation area is identified by the local communities and imposed by the traditional chiefs through a *bul* or traditional temporary measure. Later, when the *bul* is removed, legislation would be adopted to give the network statutory power. This strategy has proven very effective in developing conservation areas and continues to be practiced.

The Bureau of Arts and Culture also has a partnership with the Environmental Quality Protection Board. Under this partnership, part of the building permit process involves clearance from the historical sites registry as a way of preventing damage to the sites where building is being undertaken.

Research libraries and centers include the Belau National Museum Research Library, the Bureau of Arts and Culture Research Library, the Palau Community College's Micronesian

resource library, the Palau Community College's Land Grant Research Center, and the Bureau of Marine Resources. For details, see Table 1 (Section 4: Data Collection below).

Function 4: Application

The application of Palauan culture is evident in a wide range of activities among the Palauan people who, through these activities, are contributing to the continuity of Palau's culture, keeping it alive in their own communities. For example, people apply their culture in fishing and farming for subsistence living and economic purpose and through participating in the community market for local foods. The application of culture can also be seen with artists selling their products, the customary rituals of funerals, house buying, and the first child ceremony, the supermarkets or restaurants catering to the rituals, the transportation industry providing services to the customary events or rituals, Palauan religion, and in many other areas.

The application of culture continues to be strong at the grassroots or community level. It is within the Palauan communities that the cultural rituals and practices are applied to daily lives, to the economy, to education, to social events and rituals, to religion, and for survival. Men and women continue to participate in traditional agriculture, fishing, carving, weaving, crafting, and cooking for personal consumption or economic purposes. Villages continue to compete or entertain in traditional art performances, wear traditional attire, organize voluntary community projects, and assist in meeting customary obligations of individual families and clans. Traditional women's and men's groups still serve their own communities, whether it is for community clean-ups, funeral preparation, or infrastructure maintenance, and are often given the responsibility of passing on the life skills to the next generation.

It is by participating in the traditional social groups that young men and women learn life skills such as those involved in fishing, fish preparation, butchering, taro and other starch preparation like cooking, pounding, and wrapping, and firewood harnessing. This is the traditional concept of education: learning by participation. Based on the discussions and interviews conducted during the cultural mapping process, it is recommended that this cultural education be recognized and strengthened in the overall structure instead of trying to force it into the modern educational curriculum. It is through the application of culture that cultural knowledge is transferred to the younger generation.

The informal sector is another major area where the application of culture is sustained. Culture finds application in public marketplaces for both women and men in the areas of arts and crafts, books, food, performance art, music, language, agriculture, fishery, medicine and healing, and cultural practices and rituals. Appendix B lists various media of cultural transactions in the informal sector, which are just some of the places of business that encourage and support local artists and entrepreneurs in the local production and supply of goods. The ever-increasing number of tourists coming to Palau requires more cultural goods to be produced. With the right form of assistance, a greater economic benefit from this market can be realized.

The outlets selling ready-made food cater mostly to local customers on a daily basis, the bigger restaurants cater for events or local contracts such as schools, and the gift shops cater to the tourism industry. A common difficulty lies in distinguishing local crafts and carvings from those that are imported, as there are no legal requirements for labels to differentiate products in this way.

The Palau Poverty Analysis 2006 reports that 34 per cent of people in rural areas produce their own food compared with only 7 per cent of those in urban areas. Many of those in rural areas are the suppliers and producers in local food markets. The information below was collected from the largest buyers and sellers of products from the various media of transactions in the informal sector, most of whom are Palauans.

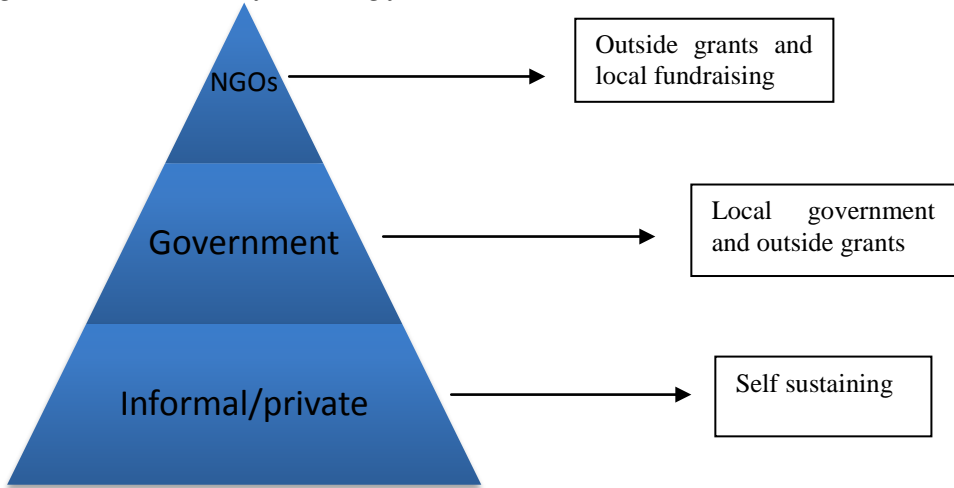
- Belau National Museum
Artists and crafters 176 individual suppliers
- Happy Fish Market
Estimated average of 4000 pounds of fish a month 50 individual suppliers
- Kings Catering
Local food suppliers 50 individuals
- Topside & Midtown Mobil Mart
Packed ready-made food to go
Number of producers 79 individuals
- Yano’s Market
Local food suppliers 2000 individuals
- Bengall Market
Local food suppliers 21 individuals

One of the recommendations from the actors consulted was to develop and establish programs to support individual artists, craftspeople and producers of cultural goods in order to realise the full potential in the cultural industry. In support of this goal, a cultural industry review is one of the recommendations to assist the overall development of cultural industry.

2. Funding

Diagram 2.0 illustrates the funding source(s) for each area of cultural activity and the importance of each source in the overall funding of the cultural sector.

Diagram 2.0: Sources of Funding for the Cultural Sector



Funding for the cultural sector comes from various sources: the national government, foreign aid, grants, private earnings, and donations. The government provides funding for the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs. As the lowest funded of all the Palauan ministries, the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs is receiving 2 per cent or USD955,893 of the executive budget for 2011, which totals over USD54 million. The

Ministry's budget has been reduced by 10 per cent over the past two years. At the moment 90 per cent of that budget goes to the payroll, leaving only 10 per cent for operations. For this reason many current projects are funded by small outside grants such as: the Government of Germany's grant of USD60,000 for the translation of the German Augustin Kramer's books on his encounter in Palau; USD8,000 from Taiwan/ROC for revival of Palauan pottery; USD217,000 from the Historic Preservation Fund, administered by the US National Park Service, for historic preservation activities; and USD10,000 from Australian small grants for a youth and culture development project. As a result, local funds tend to support administrative costs, while overseas assistance is usually sought for major infrastructural development, and small grants for initiating new programs or projects.

The government does not fund non-profit organizations. The main sources of funding for NGOs are local fundraising events and outside grants. A good example is the Taiwan/ROC government's grant of \$2.6 million to build what is now the new Belau National Museum. Similarly, a grant of \$2.5 million was made to Ngara Amayong, a nongovernmental organization for women from Koror State, to build what is now the Ngara Amayong Cultural Center. Both agencies received the grants as non-profit organizations. The Palau Conservation Society receives an estimated \$700,000 per year, entirely through outside grants. On a smaller scale, the Ebiil Society, whose focus is on educating young people on Palau's culture and environment, recently received overseas grants for an estimated total of \$40,000 to fund a study on Palau's architecture and the taro agro-culture.

As for the private industry, its funding is self-sustained. One of the only programs to gain some minimal support from the government is the Belau National Museum's gift shop, developed to support the local artists and crafters. The Belau National Museum is a semi-autonomous agency receiving support through the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs. The museum operates under the governance of an autonomous Board of Directors accountable for the governance of the museum.

The Palau Visitors' Authority, another semi-autonomous agency, receives part of its funding from the government and depends on philanthropic associations for additional funding support. The Palau Visitors' Authority helps to highlight the various cultural experiences available in Palau. It markets this information through its website, pamphlets, familiarization tours, and international expos, including the Friday Night Market which offers food sampling, art displays and performances, and sales.

There is only one private museum, the Etpison Museum, which opened in 1998 and showcases Palauan and other Micronesian culture and history. It was originally funded by NECO holdings, a family enterprise, and is sustained by the museum's gift shop and entry fee from patrons. The museum purchases directly from artists and crafters and sells the items in its gift shop. It provides free entry to all national citizens and has an ongoing educational awareness program with the local schools.

Peleliu State Museum was initiated by the Peleliu State government and the Palau-based US Civic Action Team, who joined forces and restored an old Japanese building for the purpose of a war relic museum. Belau National Museum provided assistance in its development.

Angaur State government has within its premises a historical and cultural interpretive center that displays a collection of artifacts of war, culture, and historical and cultural photographs of the local people of Angaur. With the exception of the Etpison Museum, where most of the

artifacts have been purchased, items for national and state collections are donated, loaned, or purchased.

The informal sector – which includes the customary contributions, community food markets, carving and weaving gift shops, and performing artists – contains the most revenue-generating activities. The 1995 report, *Informal Employment and Sustainable Livelihood (IESL)*, stated that the informal sector’s economic value was around USD5 million per year; however, there is a need for more recent data in this area. It is also important to note that monetary exchange within the informal sector includes both the US dollar and the traditional Palauan beads or *udoud er a Belau*. The estimated USD5 million does not include the value of the Palauan money even though a range of rituals involving Palauan custom takes place every week, at which cash and food contributions are exchanged.

Palau’s Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2006 estimated custom transactions as the fourth-highest source of income, totaling around USD3.7 million dollars per year. Customary financial support includes family and clan donations towards purchasing individual homes, wedding bonds provided by the male’s family, support of a firstborn ceremony given by the male’s family, funeral costs, taking care of women and children after the death of a husband, and paying fees as initiation into a chiefly title. For every customary event or ritual, the males in the families/clans are responsible for providing the food and the women are responsible for the monetary contribution. The strong position of Palauan women in society is based on this cultural practice where within clans and lineages women are the financial contributors.

The private sector recognizes the vital contribution that cultural rituals make to the Palauan economy and has developed services that help to meet the needs associated with these rituals. These services include food catering, transporting of families/clan members on both land and sea to customary rituals, bank loans for financial contributions, and flower arrangements for funerals. Social support through customary rituals, popularly referred to as ‘customs’, has been one of the driving forces in Palau’s economy, sustaining many local industries and it should be monitored and reported on regularly as part of national accounts. Currently the only information regarding ‘customs’ as an economic resource appears as part of 2006 Household Expenditures from the Office of Planning and Statistics.

3. Comparability, Continuity, and Stability

Palau’s cultural structure as a whole was primarily vested in the traditional leadership as policy-makers and guardians of its application, and the clan systems/families as owners, producers, and practitioners. It began to develop and be integrated into the government system during Palau’s time as a United Nations Trust Territory. Later developments saw the establishment of the Executive Branch by Executive Order 03, 1981, which created the Division of Cultural Affairs under the Bureau of Community Services, Department of Social Services; the creation of the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs during the Nakamura administration from 1990–1994; and finally the implementation of the current Title 19, Historical and Cultural Preservation Act RPPL 1-48 1995.

The Belau National Museum, on the other hand, was established in 1955 by a group of private individuals in response to the fear of loss of culture. The grassroots movement to establish the museum was born of fear of losing the Palauan identity after decades of colonization, which began under Spain in 1885 and ended with the departure of the Japanese in 1949. This notion of ethnocide or elimination of a culture for a group of people was perhaps one of the main driving forces behind the development of the many other cultural structures that stand in

Palau today as well. The Belau National Museum is one of the oldest and most developed museums in the Pacific region and is comparable with the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and the Jean-Marie Tjibaou Museum in New Caledonia. It contains a well-represented artifact collection, an oral history and ethnographic collection, natural history, and research center. Additionally it is well represented academically and, since its beginnings, has provided an avenue for university-level research. The Belau National Museum is well connected with internationally acclaimed institutions of culture like the British Museum and regularly participates in international exhibitions such as the Spanish Exhibition, Palau Spanish Cooperation Agreement 2004–2005.

The Bureau of Arts and Culture has a good reputation in the Pacific region with its vast collection of finished products in oral history and ethnography, and serves as a registration point for all research in related fields in Palau. The functions of the current Bureau of Arts and Culture were managed under the Trust Territorial offices in the Marianas which were later transferred and continued under the current Government of Palau and on to what is now the Bureau of Arts and Culture under the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs.

The public cultural institutions identified above were established and designed to be sustained by government. However, because governmental support is very limited, they need to seek outside grants and foreign aid to support any new development projects and to sustain programs. Programs such as those conducted to register and protect historical sites, which are funded by US federal government, are vulnerable if those funds are discontinued at any stage. Such programs require the national government to secure its own source of funding for culture; otherwise the cultural structure will remain fragile and sensitive to changes in foreign aid and policies from donor countries.

Although at face value Palau's culture seems stable, the various personal interviews conducted during this cultural mapping reveal an underlying impression of instability as a result of the weakening traditional leadership. The local perspective is that the dual governing system creates opposition between the traditional leaders and the elected officials, and deteriorates the quality of leadership and the unity of the people. Others feel that the cash economy, with the newly introduced monetary remuneration for chiefs, has created an unstable traditional system as the clans fight for money and prestige associated with the titles. Clan disagreements often result in more than one person claiming the same title and an unstable community.

4. Data Collection

Data collection and analysis and the generation of statistics vary between the various governmental agencies and non-profit organizations; while some may require complete development of an official registry, others may only need organizing and strengthening of information systems. Although data collection activities exist at various levels, analysis and interpretation of data is not systematic and requires development. For instance, the Bureau of Arts and Culture has registries of historical sites in an Excel spreadsheet that is only accessible from the field worker's desktop computer. There is no central system that can be accessed by any other personnel. In the Belau National Museum there are a number of individually managed registries for the various aspects of cultural information collected, but reporting capabilities are limited and require complete assessment of the raw data for any analysis. The government handles most of the documentation, registration, cataloging, and archiving of cultural information. Much of the identified information such as the land tenure, the marine resource, agricultural information, and maps and names of protected areas, were

not originally created with the intention of cultural preservation, but have eventually been recognized as important support information in sustaining Palauan culture.

The Bureau of Arts and Culture has registries for most of Palau’s historical sites and continues to identify and register new sites. Additionally it continues to identify and document oral history and culture of Palau. The Belau National Museum has an electronic catalogue that is used for querying documents or finished materials and various computer-based registries for the artifacts, plants, insects, birds, audio, and media on Palauan culture and nature. The Land Court, for instance, has a national registry on all land entitlements that link individuals to lineages and clans. These are just some of the data collection or information registries that can be used in maintaining cultural knowledge in Palau society. Table 1 describes the sources and nature of the data collected in more detail.

At the government level, dissemination of information and communication about culture are the responsibility of the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of State. At the community level these same functions are conducted within the traditional system of leadership, as well as by the state governments and the grassroots organizations. Current protocols place the state as the connecting medium between the traditional leadership and the national government for all community matters. The Ministry of State has the role of disseminating information for most matters requiring state and national coordination.

Table 1: Data collected and reporting capability of individual contributors

Contributor	Data Collected	Reporting Capability
1. Bureau of Arts and Culture	Archeology of all surveyed and registered historical sites Intangible heritage; oral history, individual elderly registry of traditional skills Photographs of Palau	Raw data Raw data Collection deposit
2. Bureau of Arts and Culture Research Library	Finished materials	Collection deposit
3. Belau National Museum	Computer-based registries for cultural artifacts, birds, insects, plants, audio, and media	Raw data
4. Belau National Museum Research Library	Finished materials Electronic catalogue	Reporting capabilities available
5. Peleliu Museum	Paper registry of display materials	Raw data
6. Angaur Museum	Paper Registry of display materials	Raw data
7. Archives	Computer-based registry	Raw data
8. Land Court	Computer-based registry for land ownership linked to lineage and clans of Palau Documents of cases tried and digest of published decisions	Reporting capability available Raw data
9. Palau Conservation Society	Computer-based registry Paper documentation and finished materials	Raw data and computer based reporting available

Contributor	Data Collected	Reporting Capability
10. Bureau of Marine Resources	Computer-based registry of Palau's fish, turtles, clams, trochus, and crocodiles GPS tracking for endangered endemic species	Raw data
11. Bureau of Agriculture	Computer-based registry for Palauan plant names	Raw data
12. Etpison Museum		
13. PALARIS	Computerized satellite maps of Palau down to village structures	Reporting capacity available

One of the recommendations from the individuals interviewed and consulted is to develop a research center that contains all the collected data and information in order to assist with education about culture.

5. Relationship between Public, Private and Community Sectors

The public cultural institutions are the main depository for most information on culture that has been collected over the years from private individuals, clans, communities, and states. Such information includes, for example, documentation on cultural rituals, land ownership linking to clans, cultural heritage sites, oral history, finished materials, fish of Palau, plants of Palau, birds and insects of Palau, performance art of Palau, games of Palau, and titles of Palau.

Communities, individuals, and grassroots organizations sustain the culture of Palau through their practices and by passing knowledge on to the younger generations. It is based on such private knowledge and practices that the public institutions conduct research, documentation, and data collection for the purpose of tracking and mapping Palau's culture.

Private businesses serve as the economic medium for individual artists, crafters, and producers of cultural goods. They recognize the economic opportunities in the industry and are increasingly expanding their businesses to include marketing and sales of cultural goods, as mentioned in Section 2 above regarding funding and the informal sector. Through their daily activities, private artists, crafters, knowledge holders, and producers of goods help to sustain the cultural practice and knowledge of Palau, while the public cultural institutions collect and document cultural knowledge through those private and individual practices. The public institutions also serves as coordinating bodies for any national or state cultural events to display or promote Palauan culture and their respective owners as an act of preservation. Table 2 identifies some of the major cultural events conducted regularly.

Table 2: Current national and state events

Event	Description	Coordinating Agency or Agencies
Annual Olchotel Belau Fair (ongoing)	Performance art staged, crafts, food, plants, etc.	Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, states, communities
Mechesil Belau Annual Conference (ongoing)	Current issues of Palau Society	Mechesil Belau, Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs
Festival of Pacific Arts	Four-yearly cultural event for all Pacific Island countries and territories	Ministry of Cultural Affairs, states, and others
Koror Friday Night Market	Cultural market once a month	Palau Visitors Authority
Constitutional Day	July 9 of every year	Ministry of Domestic Affairs, Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, states, local communities

Table 2 has listed just some of the cultural events conducted regularly at community, state, national, and regional levels, which range in frequency from monthly to once every four years. The events may be documented by their main organizing entities or by the Bureau of Arts and Culture as part of its activities in collecting cultural information. As well as cultural events, community-based programs are conducted in partnership with the local communities for the purpose of conserving and protecting Palau’s environment and culture. Such programs are described in Table 3.

Table 3: Joint programs involving government and communities

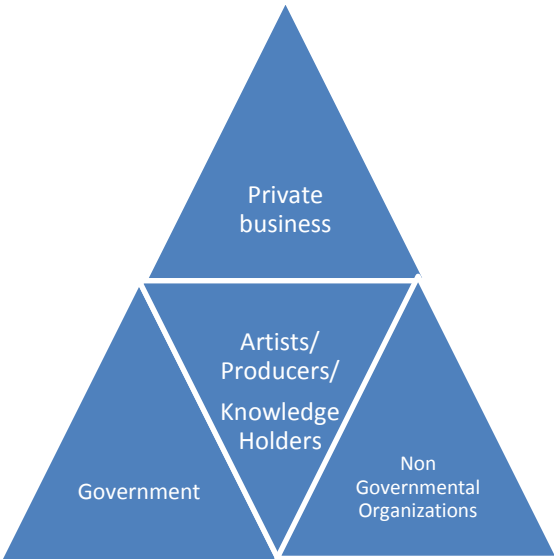
Program	Description	Coordinating Agencies
Palau Register of Historic Places (ongoing program)	Identifying and registering all important historical information	Bureau of Arts and Culture, states, communities
Belau Watershed Alliance (ongoing program)	Protection of traditional watersheds	States, local communities, The Nature Conservancy, Palau Conservation Society
Palau Protected Areas (ongoing program)	Identifying critical natural properties of Palau for conservation purposes	Palau Conservation Society, states, local communities
Archeological Survey and Inventory	Archeological surveys and documentation	Bureau of Arts and Culture, states, communities
Society of Historians – Oral History and Ethnography (ongoing program)	Preservation of oral history and culture through documentation	Bureau of Arts and Culture, states, communities
Belau National Museum (ongoing program)	National showcasing and preservation of culture	Belau National Museum-NGO, Ministry of Community & Cultural Affairs
Ebiil Summer Camp (ongoing program)	Summer camp, focusing on culture and the environment, for youth	Ebiil Society Inc.-NGO, local communities, Bureau of Arts and Culture, Palau Conservation Society, Belau National Museum

With the assistance of local communities, the ethnic knowledge important to the preservation of Palauan culture and its environment is identified, documented and protected through laws or policies initiated by the various actors mentioned in Table 3. Using the bottom-up planning strategy, these community-based programs employ community members’ knowledge and contributions to plan and implement effective measures to protect and promote cultural or natural properties. One of the recommendations from the individuals consulted was to develop strong support for community-based organizations as a strategy for appropriate and effective development of community programs.

Diagram 3.0 is used to demonstrate the current relationships among the various groupings within the cultural sector. It shows that cultural artists, producers, and knowledge holders – both individuals and communities – are central to these relationships. Private businesses contribute on one side by creating economic opportunities. From another side, the government documents and collects information from the local practitioners, creates policies for cultural protection, and provides avenues for research and education. Finally, nongovernmental organizations undertake research and collaborate with all other actors at the community level.

Diagram 3.0: Relationships within the cultural sector

All the responsible agencies, leadership, and cultural knowledge contributors need to recognize this relationship in order to allow for effective planning, collaboration, and support in maintaining and strengthening the culture of Palau.



Research is still very limited, as indicated in Section 4: Data Collection. For this reason, the capacity to inform Palauan society and the government on the current status of Palau’s cultural property and the types of laws to be developed is limited as well. Interpretation of data has not developed to the point where it is dictating actions or policies. Although a number of applied research projects in archeology are being

conducted in Palau, most of them are a response to the requirement for environmental impact assessments as part of the process of gaining permission to implement a project and are not necessarily influenced by policy or data.

Some institutional research has been carried out, most of which is conducted by nongovernmental organizations and focused on environmental issues. However, as the environment is integrated closely with culture, research needs to take it into account: steps taken to preserve the environment will indirectly help to preserve culture. The following institutions are carrying out research:

1. Belau National Museum – Nature Program
 - Birds of Palau
 - Insects of Palau

- Endemic plants of Palau
2. Palau Community College – Land Grant
Agricultural Research
 3. Bureau of Arts and Culture – cultural heritage
Archeological research on early settlement in Peleliu, in partnership with Aberdeen University in Scotland
 4. Palau Conservation Society – marine and forestry research
Monitoring of reefs, coastal areas and watersheds (ongoing programs)
 5. Palau International Coral Reef Center
Comprehensive Research on Palau’s Reefs (Ongoing)
 6. Palau Bureau of Marine Resources
Palau fish (research complete)
Palau giant clams (research complete)
Palau’s turtles (ongoing)
Palau’s crocodiles (ongoing)

6. Policy

Some success stories have come from the advocacy of the Palau Conservation Society, which has led to the development of policies to protect the environment and wildlife, such as through the establishment of fish sanctuaries, bird sanctuaries, watershed protection, coral sanctuaries, and other coastal sanctuaries. This is probably one area where data collection has been a strong tool for policy change in Palau.

The Micronesia Challenge is a project on conservation that encourages its member countries – the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, and Guam – to preserve the natural resources that are important to the continuation of their traditions, culture, and livelihood. The Micronesia Challenge Declaration 2006 calls for conservation of 30 per cent of nearshore marine resources and 20 per cent of terrestrial resources by its members. Palau is the only member to have achieved this national conservation threshold.

For its part, the Palau Conservation Society assists individual states to identify their important natural resources and assist them in developing appropriate laws or policies for protection. Table 4 details the protected areas developed for the various states with the assistance of Palau Conservation Society.

Table 4: Protected conservation areas developed by individual states

Name of Area	Focus of Protection	State	Date Established
Ngaruangel Reserve	Atoll island, reefs, lagoon	Kayangel	1996
Ebiil Conservation Area	Grouper spawning aggregations	Ngarchelong	1999
Ileakelbeluu	Patch reef	Ngardmau	2005
Ngermasech Conservation Area	Mangrove, reef flat, seagrass bed	Ngardmau	1998
Ngaraard Beach Conservation Area	Beach, reef flat, seagrass bed	Ngaraard	1990
Ngaraard Mangroves Conservation Area	Mangrove	Ngaraard	1994
Bkulabeluu	North side of channel	Ngaremlengui	2006
Bkulengriil Conservation Area	Mangrove, sea grass bed	Ngaremlengui	2006
Ngatpang Crab Conservation Area	Mangrove	Ngatpang	2003
Ngatpang Fish Conservation Area	Mangrove, sea grass bed	Ngatpang	2003
Ngaremeduu Conservation Area	Estuary, mangroves	Ngaremlengui, Aimeliik, Ngatpang	1999
Melekeok nearshore waters	Reef flat	Melekeok	1997
Melekeok reef flat	Giant clams	Melekeok	1998
Ngelukes Conservation Area	Patch reef	Ngchesar	2002
Ngerchebal	Island, reef flat	Aimeliik	2006
Imul Mangrove Conservation Area	Mangrove	Aimeliik	2002
Ngchesechang Mangrove Conservation Area	Mangrove	Airai	1994
Oikull Mangrove Conservation Area	Mangrove	Airai	2002
Airai Reef Conservation Area	seagrass bed	Airai	2006
Ngeream Conservation Area	Mangrove	Airai	1997
Ngerkebesang Conservation Zone	Reef flat	Koror	2002

Name of Area	Focus of Protection	State	Date Established
Ngederrak Reef	Seagrass bed, reef flat	Koror	2001
Ngerumekaol Spawning Area	Grouper spawning aggregations	Koror	1976
Ngkisaol Sardine Sanctuary	Mangrove, sardine aggregation	Koror	1999
Ngerukuid Islands Wildlife Preserve	Islands, reefs, lagoon	Koror	1956
Ngemelis Island Complex	Islands, reef, dive sites	Koror	1995
Teluleu Conservation Area	Seagrass bed, reef flat	Peleliu	2001
Angaur Conservation Area	Seagrass, reef flat	Angaur	2006
Helen Reef Reserve	Atoll island, reefs, lagoon	Hatohobei	2001
Ngemai Conservation Area	Reef flat	Ngiwal	1997
Rock Islands Southern Lagoon Management Area	Rock Islands, lagoon, barrier reefs	Koror	1997

Table 5 identifies the watershed protected areas in various states. The Belau Watershed Alliance is a community-based planning team with the Palau Conservation Society as its coordinating agency. Its main purpose is to develop policies to protect important watersheds for all of Palau, with the community traditional experts contributing through advisory and working groups.

Table 5: Watershed conservation areas of Palau

Name of Area	Location	State	Date Established
Ngerchelchhus	Forest	Ngardmau	2005
Ngardmau Waterfall (Taki)	Waterfall	Ngardmau	2005
Ngardok Nature Reserve	Lake, wetlands	Melekeok	1999
Mesekelat Conservation Area	Watershed, forest	Ngchesar	2002
Fana Island Important Bird Area	Island	Sonsorol	2006
Ngermeskang Nature Reserve	Upper watershed	Ngaremlengui	2008
Ngermeskang Bird Sanctuary	Swamp forest	Ngaremlengui	2008
Osolkosol Waterfall, Ngerbekuu River Nature Reserve	River	Ngiwal	2009

Source: Palau Conservation Society 2009

Efforts to protect and promote culture in Palau are ongoing as new threats and challenges are encountered by the various contributors to cultural preservation and practice. The following statutes on culture are currently in force or their implementation is pending:

1. Constitution, Article V, Traditional Rights
 - a.1. Government shall take no action to revoke the role or functions of traditional leaders
...
a.2. Statutes and traditional law shall be equally authoritative.
2. Title 19 – Historical and Cultural Preservation Act RPPL 1–48 1995
This Act provides for the legal establishment of the following governmental agencies, along with the rules, regulations, and operational structures they require to function properly:
 - Division of Cultural Affairs;
 - Belau National Museum;
 - Palau Historical and Cultural Advisory Board; and
 - National Archive.It also provides for:
 - cultural and historical preservation activities of the states;
 - historical sites and tangible cultural properties;
 - Palau Lagoon Monument;
 - environmental protection; and
 - wildlife protection.Additionally the Act calls for the development of the following functions within each governmental agency identified above.
 - administration, protection and development;
 - permits to examine;
 - rules and regulations; and
 - penalties.
3. Copyright Act – RPPL No. 6-38 Jan 2001
This Act provides copyright protection of original works, protects performers’ rights; and works for other related purposes.
4. Language Commission – RPPL No 8-53 Apr 2009
This law established the Palau Language Commission to provide for the preservation and development of Palauan language; and for other related purposes.
5. State-level laws
These laws govern under Title 19 for the role of states in historical and cultural preservation. All identified and registered historical sites are protected under state laws (see Table 6).

Table 6: State-level laws for historical and cultural protection

State	Purpose	Title and Number
Ngarchelong	To create Ngarchelong State Board of Historical and Cultural Preservation, Office of Historical and Cultural Affairs, and for other purposes	NSGPL No. 89 (2000)
Melekeok	To create a Melekeok State Board of Historical and Cultural Preservation, Office of Historical and Cultural Affairs, to prescribe certain functions and duties of the Office, and for other purposes	Melekeok State Bill No. 15 (1985)
Ngeremlengui	To create a State Board of Historical and Cultural Preservation, Office of Historical and Cultural Affairs, to prescribe certain functions and duties of the Office, and for other purposes	Public Law No. 21-89 (1989)
Angaur	To create an Angaur State Board of Historical and Cultural Preservation, to prescribe its powers, functions and duties, and for other purposes	APL No. 13-03 (2007)
Ngchesar	Elmo omekdubech ra Ngchesar Historic Sites Commission; e omechobeche a ngerchelel ma sekining er ngii; mo omekdubech ra Obis ra State el Obis ra Historical Sites ma Antiquities, ma kuk di ngodech lobengkel tegoi	Ngchesar State Public Law No. 34 (1986)
Hatohobei	To create a Hatohobei State Board of Historical and Cultural Preservation, to prescribe its functions and duties, and for other related purposes	HSPL No. 6-55-06 (2006)
Aimeliik	Relating to historical sites and antiquities, and for other purposes	ASPL No. 3-18 (1989)
Airai	To create an Airai State Advisory Board of Historical and Cultural Preservation, Office of Historical and Cultural Affairs, and for other purposes	ASPL No. A-2-27-97 (1997)
Peleliu	To prohibit the taking or removal of artifacts, relics, human remains or the ashes of human remains, and other historical property in the State of Peleliu, to provide for penalties, and for related purposes	Peleliu State Public Law No. 09-83 (1983)
Ngaraard	To create the Ngaraard Historic Sites Commission, to prescribe its duties and responsibilities, to establish the State Office of Historic Sites and Antiquities, and for other purposes	NSPL No. 2-15 (1987)

Source: Compiled by Sunny Ngirmang © Oct 2009, Palau Register of Historic Places, Bureau of Arts and Culture

The following proposed policies are yet to be passed into law:

1. Proposed Bill on the protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture (Jan 2005) is a proposed legislation designed to establish a system of protecting and promoting traditional knowledge and expressions of culture from commercial exploitation through inaccurate and inappropriate representation.
2. The Orthography Bill (Senate Bill No 7-79) aims to recognize and formalize Palauan orthography and to require educational institutions in Palau to teach Palauan orthography in classrooms, as well as having other related purposes.

Component II: Cultural History

The following discussion of cultural history, as the second component of the cultural sector, is based on literature reviews undertaken to identify the social changes that have resulted from the presence of the various colonial powers in Palau – beginning with Spain, moving on to Germany and then Japan, and finally the USA – and from the current system of government. How did the social changes affect Palau’s culture and the social challenges facing Palauans? The literature review findings are then compared with the common concerns about culture that Palauans express, based on the interviews and consultations undertaken for this research. Social change and its effect on Palau’s political and social structure are best illustrated by Dr. Karen Nero (1987).

The sections that follow list the major social changes in chronological order, beginning with the influence of Spain in 1886.

1. Spanish Rule: 1886–1899

As the Palau Community Action Agency (1977) reports, Spanish rule began with a confirmation by Pope Leo XIII on October 22, 1885 for Spain to establish an administration in the Caroline Islands and to introduce and strengthen Christianity there. Additionally Germany was given the rights to establish a naval station, plantations, and agriculture projects. Although traders, whalers, and shipwrecked sailors had visited Palau before, this was the first time that foreigners came with the intention of changing the lives of the Palauan people. The main events during the period of Spanish rule that left behind a traceable imprint in Palauan culture are as follows:

- Missionaries: ‘Unfurling our flags, we work not only so that these natives may convert to the Catholic Faith, but also that the Palaus can become truly a Spanish people’ (de Valencia 1892:430),Nero 1987
- The Spanish introduced Spanish food, the concept of Devil, and Calebus, Spanish word for jail (Nero 1987).
- The Spiritual House (Ulangang) was destroyed with the presence of a competing religious authority (Nero 1987).
- *Klomengelungel* – women’s practice of organized courting of chiefs, which controls interdistrict transfer of wealth and maintains the power of the women – was abolished (Nero 1987).
 - Before the introduction of Christianity, women contributed significantly to their state’s economic status. Through the practice of *Klomengelungel* the elite women travelled in organized congregations representing their village to another village to participate in an organized, formal courting interaction with the male chiefs in order to bring back material wealth to their village. The wealth ranged from bead money to land to building structures, thus giving status to those women who participated, along with their family, clan, and village. These women were revered and would participate in many political negotiations when the task was too great for the men. The practice ensured economic and political stability and the circulation of the national currency. It also provided a safety net for Palauan women if they were mistreated by their husband: they could take up residence within the *Klomengelungel* or women’s house and the husband could not touch them. If the husband wanted to remedy the relationship he had to pay a penalty to the *Klomengelungel* house and the family of the women. If he did not, the woman was free to choose a new husband. The practice was eliminated during the Spanish administration due to the introduction to Christianity

(Nero 1987:320, 433), without any thought for an alternative practice to take its place. As a result, villages lost their means of gaining economic resources on which the male chiefs depended for taking care of the needs of their community, and women became more vulnerable to abuse and neglect from husbands. Thus the chiefdom was weakened, and the chief's authority will continue to be challenged without clear designation of authority and position within the constitutional government as they continue to fulfill the role given them from the foreign ruling colonies.

– *Klomengelungel* was later labeled as prostitution or concubinage by outsiders and Palauans themselves.

- The sacredness of the chiefdom declined.
- After Spain lost a war against the USA, it lost its power in the Pacific and sued for peace. It secretly sold its control of the Caroline Islands for 25 million pesetas, 18,000,000 marks or USD 4.5 million (Palau Community Action Agency 1977).

2. German Rule: 1899–1914

The Spanish occupation in Palau was brief compared with that of the later colonial powers in Palau. Germany's presence in Palau, as mentioned above, began during the Spanish administration through its involvement in a naval station, agricultural projects, and plantations. As the colonial power, Germany's foreign policy for the islands set economic development as its major goal, and with that it began to rule the islands with the aim of gaining control over the local labor (Palau Community Action Agency 1977). To gain this control, Germany made further changes to the traditional political structure. As the German administration began to influence local labor, they directly and at times indirectly impacted on the traditional political and societal structures of Palau. The main events and changes have been identified below:

- A local police force was created, with officers from Melekeok and Koror. First schools for Palauans is introduced at the request of the local chiefs
- Administration ordered labor for coconut plantations and mining in Angaur creating competition with local Chiefs order for community organized labor. The system of *Ureor Beluu* (community-organized labor) was eroded as it had to compete with the administration-ordered labor (Nero 1987).
- The local religion was destroyed through:
 - tearing *down of spiritual houses*;
 - fining locals for building such facilities; and
 - arresting and exiling local spiritual leaders (Gibbons Journal, Nero 1987).
- The population of Koror fell from 3748 to 511 (Nero 1987).
- Any crimes committed were to be judged by the German administration; the chiefs no longer had this responsibility (Vidich 1980).
- A head tax for all male adults was introduced (Vidich 1980).
- Rubekul Belau was created (Vidich 1980) as a body of chiefs representing the different states. It met in Madalaii Bai as required by Bingkelang to implement the administration's orders.
- Trochus harvesting for cash created reef boundary arguments between villagers and the Germans introduced Reef boundaries to resolve the issue (Nero 1987).
- Chiefs and outsiders competed for control of local labor: 'I was completely satisfied and all the natives now feared me, for they knew that an offence against me would be punished exactly as if I were Chief of Koror' (Kubary 1873:189, commenting on a servant).

- Local High Chiefs with pro-Western views introduced new standards (Nero 1987) such as:
 - requiring men to cut their hair short;
 - requiring Palauans to wear western clothing
 - allowing all residents to enter Bai er a Meketii, Blai er a Idid, and other places that were traditionally inaccessible; and
 - requesting Spanish warships to chase *mengol* and ordering the abolition of the practice.
- District boundaries, both at sea and on the land (*beluu* and *daob*), were formalized.
- Kramer (1926) observed, ‘Our people, who had often seen canoes of this type in many other countries, thought those of the Palauans surpassed all those they had ever seen elsewhere in elegance and beauty.’
- On Palauan clothing, Kramer (1926) made these observations:
 - ‘Here at the end of this discussion on the elaborate skirts worn by the women with so much pride and grace, I would like to remark (and this applies to the houses and the canoes and the overall unique way of life of the people as a whole) that all possible attempts must be made to retain this in Palau.’
 - ‘Catholic missions have spoken out in favor of preserving this traditional native dress. This is stated in the journal of the 1908 missions, pg. 7: “As the islanders consider their grass skirts to be decent and beautiful, this should not pose an obstacle for proper missionary activity.” Page: 23
- Kubary (1871) mentions counterfeiting, as does Kramer in regard to the use of imported beads rather than the traditional Palauan beads, *udoud er a Belau*, demonstrating earlier counterfeiting similar to today’s counterfeit issues; Nero 1987

3. Japanese Rule: 1914–1944

In April 1921 Japan was given the control of the Shantung Peninsula and the Caroline, Marshall, and the Mariana Islands. Palau was Japan’s administrative headquarters during its occupation in the Pacific Island. The Japanese continued to exploit the natural resources of Palau, and established the first court rooms, public schools, and vocational training for laborers (Palau Community Action Agency 1977). The following events during 30 years under Japanese rule contributed to major changes in the Palauan culture .

- Rubekul Belau is introduced as an overall Palau governing system (body of High chiefs representing individual states of Palau) – So-Soncho
- Bekl Rubak (all other Chiefs) is also introduced which differs from the original political setup where its village has its own independent political system with allied villages as well as enemies – Soncho
- Colonizers only worked with the *Klobak* as long as the chiefs agreed with them. As a consequence, the *Klobak* became known as the ‘Uaisei Council’ or the ‘Yes Council’.
- Chiefs lost their role as the highest authority in Palau, and the Japanese banned the cultural rituals of *ocheraol*, *mur er a redil*, and *ocheraol bai*:
 - ‘A high chief conducted a mur in defiance, and the Japanese organized his impeachment with other rubak. He went to another village and a new and more agreeable rubak but of lesser ranking and a son of a male clan member would later on be recognized as High Chief although never installed or accepted by Idid, and this is the beginning of Dual Chieftaincy’ (Nero 1987).
 - The Japanese also impeached Reklai when he would not follow their orders and recognized the son of a male member for the position. This kind of Dual Chieftaincy (more than one individuals claiming the same title), where a Japanese-appointed chief

and a traditionally recognized chief would claim the same position, became an established practice (Nero 1987).

- Tochi Daicho (Japanes introduced land owners Registration) and individual land ownership were introduced.
- The practice of selling land began (Nero 1987):
 - The people who worked closely with the Japanese government were from high clans, but they had to be men in line with the Japanese patriarchal system (Nero 1987).
 - Japanese would buy the land for questionable values or overtake by eminent domain.
 - Palauan mediators were trained to work with Palauans and Japanese.
 - The Clerk of Court registered land ownership.
- The population comprised 50,000 Japanese and 6000 Palauans (Nero 1987) with a clear hierarchy:
 - first class citizens – Japanese;
 - second class citizens – Okinawans; and
 - third class citizens – Palauans, in their own land.
- During World War Two, after the USA invaded Palau in September 1944:
 - Japan ordered all canoes to be burnt to prevent local people from contacting the US military (Barnett 1949);
 - it was a time of great famine and destruction; and
 - Peleliu and Koror were bombed to rubble.

4. US Navy Rule, 1945, and UN Trust Territory, 1946–1979

After two years of hiding in the jungle, at the end of the war the Palauans come out from hiding to witness the coming of the US military and government. Palau entered the US Trusteeship Agreement for the next 35 years. This period witnessed the greatest migration to Koror as the US Navy recruited young Palauan men to rebuild Koror after its destruction in World War Two (Nero 1987). The following are historical events associated with US rule, first under the Navy and then under the trusteeship system:

- The US Navy brought lots of food (Barnett 1949) and ate with the Palauans.
- People were brought to Koror from the other states to rebuild the schools, hospitals, and other public buildings (Barnett 1949).
- There was the largest migration ever to Koror.
- When Palau became a United Nations Trust Territory, the US administration introduced American democracy, not realizing that *Klebelau* was already a sophisticated democratic system:
 - It introduced a Congress (Nero 1987).
 - *Klobak* could participate in discussion but could not vote. They urged the administration that they needed to be able to vote. People did not afford them the due respect anymore.
 - The Council of Chiefs was created as the other house, but any of its initiatives still needed approval from Congress.
 - Rubekul Belau felt powerless and wondered why the society was questioning their authority. They wondered if they should maintain their independence from this system in order to maintain the integrity of their house.

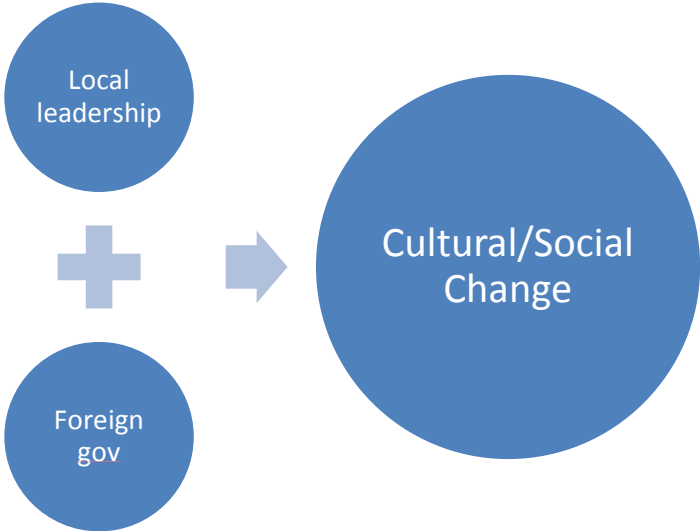
5. Republic of Palau: 1980 to Present

After many years of debate and negotiation, Palau decided through a vote of a simple majority to sail its own course of independence by becoming the Republic of Palau under a constitutional government.

- Palau became a republic in 1980 with two competing governing systems: the government and the traditional leaders. The changes are demonstrated as challenges under Component III: Challenges and Recommendations.

Ultimately, the social changes that impacted on Palau’s culture had two main causes: foreign influence over those with authoritative position in Palau’s traditional system; and the foreign government’s own agenda. The ruling government imposed changes based on its objectives – whether they were focused on Christianity, trade, military, mining or plantations. Diagram 4.0 below illustrates how these factors contributed to social change.

Diagram 4.0: Social change in Palau



Component III: Challenges and Recommendations

The third component of the cultural mapping process comprises an overview of the current challenges that the people of Palau face, along with recommendations for addressing them. The concerns raised are derived from the personal and group interviews conducted. They are also clearly related to the cultural changes in history: this link helps us better understand their effect on culture and how to develop policies that provide solutions and protective measures. They are discussed under the four functions within the cultural sector identified in Component I: political and legal structure, research and education, information depositories, and application.

The following areas of concern were reflected in the individual and group interviews.

1. Political and Legal Structure

In regard to the first function, the political and legal structure, respondents identified the following concerns:

- **Dual Chieftaincy**
One of the major concerns under current political system is that there are clan conflicts throughout Palau, with the result that two or more chiefs often represent one title. The perceived sources of the conflict include: the newly introduced remuneration for the title holders; chiefs who are less willing to interfere in clan conflict to determine a final title holder as part of their role in the whole process; and competition among women title holders wanting to appoint a closer kin member to hold a title instead of making a unanimous clan decision following the traditional process.
- **Counterfeiting**
Many Palauans are using imported beads in place of Palauan beads to fulfill cultural obligation. This practice causes distress in the lineages and clan relationships and is a threat to cultural heritage.
- **Palauan language as the main language**
Although Palauan and English are the two official languages of Palau, most official documents and other texts are in English. Because of the limited use of the Palauan language, people's knowledge of it and its recognized value in our society are deteriorating.
- **Traditional experts in court rooms for cases dealing with cultural matters**
Court rooms should have cultural experts to assist in listening to court room deliberations to help the judge make the right culture-based decision.
- **Place names**
There should be a law to promote the use of the correct Palauan place names in all published and official documents.
- **Percentage of public funds dedicated to Palauan design, symbols, or art in public buildings**
Publicly funded buildings must include local icons or design.

2. Research and Education

The respondents identified the following concerns in the area of research and education, which they felt should be addressed if Palau is to improve and strengthen the cultural education for the young Palauans.

- Education should reinforce culture learning and preservation.

- Resources should be provided to strengthen cultural education.
- Homes should provide early discipline, values, and a sense of responsibility as preparation for school entry.
- Hands-on training to reinforce classroom education on culture should be developed.
- Museums and interpretation centers should develop and become more accessible for education purposes.
- Community programs should revive cultural knowledge of general and specialty fields.
- *Klechibelau* (way of doing things) should be strengthened through educational reinforcement.
- Culture should be taught through practice, such as by:
 - using historical sites to complement social studies;
 - strengthening and supporting community programs to revive cultural knowledge of general and specialty fields; and
 - reviving natural science knowledge (Moon, tides, forests, birds, fish, applying natural science in architecture and engineering, etc.).
- Palauan history should be taught in the classroom.
- Palauan orthography should have official status.

3. Information Depositories

The respondents felt that the vast amount of cultural information collected can be made accessible to the public and be used for various purposes that help to strengthen Palauan culture.

- An authenticity review process should be established and followed for:
 - Palauan carvings;
 - documents interpreting aspects of culture and the environment;
 - Palauan food;
 - Palauan arts;
 - Palauan crafts;
 - performance arts; and
 - Palauan traditional wear.
- Research centers should be developed and integrated with local education at all levels.
- Museums and interpretation centers should develop and improve their educational programs.
- Data collected should be used to advocate for policies that will strengthen Palauan culture.

4. Application

There is a shared concern among Palauans that Palauan knowledge, values, and principles are being threatened by various local and foreign influences that, if not appropriately addressed, will eventually destroy the integrity of Palauan culture. The following concerns in particular were raised by the respondents.

- There should be an authenticity mark for authentic:
 - Palauan carvings;
 - documents interpreting aspects of culture and the environment;
 - Palauan food;
 - Palauan arts;
 - Palauan crafts;
 - performance arts; and
 - Palauan traditional wear.

- Development or assistance programs should be created to promote economic opportunities in relation to Palauan arts, craft, food, etc.
- Community programs on carving, weaving, canoe building, performance art, history, etc. should be developed.
- Traditional sports should be promoted.
- The original Palauan art and industry should be revived through community programs.
- Child rearing practices should be strengthened.
- There is a need to differentiate child abuse laws from discipline education

Most of the cultural concerns that respondents raised can be traced to the earliest time of change within the cultural history of Palau. Therefore, much of the core foundation of the Palauan culture was greatly impacted by foreign rule: together the foreign powers in Palau forever changed traditional practices, challenging the cultural integrity of Palau's society as it is felt today.

Appendix A: Contributors to Palau's Cultural Sector

<i>Name of Contributor</i>	<i>Legal Status</i>			<i>Function</i> (H = High, M = Moderate, L = Low contribution)					<i>Matrix</i>
	<i>Gov</i>	<i>NGO</i>	<i>Informal Sector</i>	<i>Political/Legal</i>	<i>Deposit-ories</i>	<i>Research/Education</i>	<i>Application</i>		
Rubekul Belau	x	x	x	H	H	M	H	PxDxExA	
Mechesil Belau		x	x	H	H	M	H	PxDxExA	
Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs	x			M	H	H	L	PxDxExA	
Ministry of Education	x			L	M	H	L	PxDxExA	
Bureau of Marine Resources	x			M	H	L		PxDxE	
Division of Fish and Wildlife	x			H	L			PxD	
Division of Marine Law	x			H	L			PxD	
Omengull me a Okurulel a Klechad	x			M			M	PxA	
Bureau of Agriculture	x			L	H	L		PxDxE	
Land Court	x			H	H		H	PxDxA	
Supreme Court	x			H	H		H	PxDxA	
Belau National Museum Board of Directors	x	x			H	H	M	DxExA	
Peleliu WWII Museum	x				H	L		DxE	
Angaur Museum	x				H	L		DxE	
Palau Visitors Authority	x	x			M	M	L	DxExA	
Olbiil er a Kelulau State Governments	x			H	M		M		
Palau Conservation Society		x			M	H	L	H	
Ebiil Society Inc.		x				H	H	M	
Society of Historians			x			H	H		
Palau Historical and Cultural Advisory Board			x			H	H		
Belau Modekngel School		x				M	H		
Traditional Gender Groups		x	x				H	L	

Appendix B: Media of Cultural Transactions

Bengall Market in Ngerchelong

Mengellang Market in Ngerchelong

Fish Market in Ngaraard

Ngeremlengui Fishing Coop.

Imekang Market in Ngial

Ungil Mood Market in Melekeok

Ngchesar Market in Ngchesar

Blue House Market

Happy Fish Market in Koror

Farmers Market in Koror

BM Store in Koror

Individual fishers and seafood gatherers

Etpison Museum Gift Shop in Koror

Belau National Museum Gift Shop in Koror

Western Caroline Trading Company Gift Shop in Koror

Hotel gift shops in Koror – at the Pacific Resort, Royal Palauan, Palacia Hotel, Sea Passion, Papago, Cliff Side

Duty free shops within Palau Pacific Resort, Palacia Hotel, and at the airport

Tebang carvers in Koror

Koror Jail carvers

Yolt Gift Shop in Koror

Willy Watanabe Gift Shop in Koror

Day Dream Gift Shop in Koror

Penthouse Restaurant in Koror

Carp Restaurant in Koror

Kings Catering in Koror

Belau Boat Operators Association in Koror

Surangel & Sons Supermarket in Koror

Western Caroline Trading Company Supermarket in Koror

Yano's Market in Koror

All the gas stations selling ready-made local food – Topside and Midtown Mobil Mart, Neco Shell, KB-Shell, PRA Shell

Franco's Market in Koror

Palau Community College Book Store in Koror

Appendix C: Research Methodology

1. Stakeholder Interviews

Guidelines in Mark Shuster's Informing Cultural Policy, 2002, The Research and Information Infrastructure, Research Questions, 4–5.

The interviews began with Minister Faustina Rehuher-Marugg, current Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs; it is in his Ministry that this project is housed. From each interview, names of other stakeholders were identified and listed as additional sources of information. The initial objective to this assessment is to identify the culture infrastructure in total by identifying the contributors and their roles and functions in developing and sustaining Palau's culture. The information gathered will be utilized for the purpose of informing the future cultural policy of Palau. The interviews targeted participants in the cultural sector from the national and state governments, the traditional leadership, grassroots/community organizations, NGOs and private business entrepreneurs.

I have had the privilege of interviewing so many resourceful people about their knowledge on Palau as a society and the culture engine that fuels the system. I recognize the reality of access to information, particularly on Palau's culture as information on an oral culture is not as easy to access, and sometimes may be even secret or sacred. The resulting report is based on the individual knowledge, finished materials, and data collections that were covered in this research.

The names of individuals and groups who participated in the interviews are listed below in the sequence in which the interviews were conducted:

Minister Faustina Rehuher-Marugg; High Chief Reklai Bao Ngirmang; Olympia Morei, Belau National Museum Director; Maked Besebes, Belau National Museum; Demei Otobed, Retired Entomologist and Chairman, Belau National Museum; Masa Aki Emesiochel, Minister of Education; Kelly Marshe, Bureau of Arts and Culture Director; Dwight Alexander, Bureau of Arts and Culture; Sandy Fernandez, Belau National Museum Research Librarian; Belau National Museum Board of Directors (Chairperson Demei Otobed); Scott Yano, Director, Koror State Community/Cultural Department; Ebodei Iyar, private businessperson; Yuki Schmull, private businessperson; Eriko Singeo; Gillian Johannes, environmentalist; Lydia Hubert, faith organization; Roberta Louch, private businessperson; Bernie Gildermer, private consultant; Cultural Advisory Group (Riosang Salvador, retired educator; Sariang Tmatk, traditional healer; Christina Kadoi, retired teacher; Martha Iechad; Ngircheungel Ngirngesechei; Kuiuroi Arurang; Andrew Shiro; Anannias Bultedaob, carver/artist); Quay Polloi, Land Court Senior Judge; Obak Isao Singeo, Peleliu State Chief; Susong Smau and Dongesang Smau, Peleliu State, Obak er a Mengellang; Talobechad Yuriko Luis, Angaur State; Tiffany Rengulbai, Angaur State Elementary School Principal; Bilung Gloria Salii; Carlos Salii; Mandy Etpison, Etpison Museum; Beouch Sakashiro Demk, Ngirkebai, Aichi Kumangai; Paula Holm, Korang fisher; Ngiraklang, Blau Skebong, and Kalistus Wasisang, Modekngai Church Leader (Palauan religion)

2. National Consultancy

A public forum was held on October 20, 2010. A total of 136 people registered for the forum. The forum was an effort to gain views and comments on the cultural mapping from the public. The common concerns were reviewed and added to for use in strategic planning by the planning committee in developing what will become the cultural policy.

3. Literature Review

See the References section for a list of the works consulted during this research.

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