

Frequently Asked Questions:

NCRMP Socioeconomic Monitoring for Coral Reef Jurisdictions

After an external review in 2007, NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) added a social science component to the National Coral Reef Monitoring Program (NCRMP). As part of this effort, CRCP and implementing partner (National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science) collect and monitor socioeconomic information, including human use of coral reef resources, knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of coral reefs and coral reef management, and demographics of the populations living in coral reef areas. The overall goal of the socioeconomic monitoring component is to track relevant information regarding each jurisdiction's population, social and economic structure, the benefits of coral reefs and related habitats, the perceived impacts of society on coral reefs, and the impacts of coral management on communities.

What is the NCRMP socioeconomic survey?

The survey instrument has one module of questions that is the same for all jurisdictions, as well as a few select questions that are specific to the local management needs in each jurisdiction. After each complete round of monitoring (when all jurisdictions have been surveyed), indicators are developed and revised, and the next monitoring cycle will begin.

What other information is included as part of the monitoring effort?

Existing socioeconomic data is compiled for each jurisdiction from secondary data sources such as the US Census Bureau and local government agencies.

Who was involved in determining what information would be collected?

The 2012 workshop, "Developing Social Science and Economic Indicators for Monitoring the US Coral Reef Jurisdictions," brought together a variety of partners and stakeholders to develop a set of core social and economic indicators that can be regularly measured over time in the inhabited regions of each of the coral reef jurisdictions. For more information, see [Workshop Report](#). The questions included in the survey are part of an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved question bank that was designed by NOAA social scientists for the social science component of NCRMP.

Where are the surveys conducted? Who is asked to take each survey?

Surveys are conducted in each of the inhabited US coral reef jurisdictions: South Florida, the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hawai'i, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Each survey targets a randomly selected sample of adult residents within each jurisdiction. The sample will be representative of the population in terms of demographics such as age, race, sex, and household income level. Due to high variation among jurisdictions, the size of each survey sample will be different. As resources allow, survey resolution will increase in an effort to collect sub-population data within each jurisdiction (i.e., island or county level).

Is participation in the surveys mandatory?

No, participation in each survey is voluntary.

Are responses confidential?

Yes, responses to each survey will remain confidential. For analysis and reporting purposes, all answers provided will be aggregated with the responses of others who participate in each survey.

Can I participate in the survey?

Due to our random sampling design, only those who are selected through the sampling process will be invited to take each survey. If you are contacted about one of the surveys in the mail, over the phone, or in person, we encourage you to complete it.

How long will each survey take?

We estimate that each survey will take between 15-20 minutes to complete.

Who will conduct these surveys?

Each survey is conducted by a contracted entity with experience conducting social surveys in the respective jurisdiction (for example, university survey centers or polling firms). The contractors will ensure that the survey is implemented in the primary languages of the jurisdiction and with the appropriate cultural sensitivity. The project team of NOAA social scientists is responsible for the survey design and guides decisions related to survey implementation.

How will each survey be conducted?

The survey mode will depend on the jurisdiction. Surveys may be conducted over the phone, via mail correspondence, in person, online, or through a combination of these modes.

What is the final product from each survey?

A report with summary data from the survey will be prepared for each jurisdiction. Visual representations of the responses to the survey questions will be integrated into the report. The summary data will be made available for presentations and other products as needed.

How else will the information be used by NOAA CRCP?

CRCP uses the information to improve the results of programs designed to protect coral reefs at local, regional, and national levels, as well as to inform continuing research and communication products. CRCP staff, along with educators and managers in the jurisdictions, use this information to monitor changes in coral reef dependent communities and jurisdictions, and ensure education programs are designed to achieve their goals. The first round of monitoring also provided a baseline for future program evaluation efforts.

Are there other resulting products?

In addition to jurisdictional summary reports and accompanying graphics, the collected data

will be used to inform the thirteen NCRMP socioeconomic indicators. These indicators combine survey data with other existing information, and indicator reports are updated at the completion of each monitoring cycle. Survey data are also integrated with the other NCRMP components, including biological and climate data streams. Jurisdictional and national coral reef status reports are periodically developed and published. For the first edition of status reports released between 2018 and 2020, socioeconomic data were used to represent human connections, and status was scored using thresholds set by managers in each jurisdiction.

When does each survey happen? When will the products be available?

Surveys of jurisdiction residents are completed every 5-7 years. The project team chooses the order of jurisdictions based on the original monitoring schedule and other environmental factors (e.g., severe tropical cyclones). NOAA aims to publish each survey’s findings within one year from the end of each survey contract. The project team coordinates key project dates with NOAA Coral and Fisheries Liaisons as they become available, and asks that these dates are shared with local partners, stakeholders, and residents.

Social and Economic Monitoring Geographies and Years

Jurisdiction	Inhabited Islands/Counties in Direct Proximity to Coral Reefs	First Monitoring Cycle	Second Monitoring Cycle (Proposed)
American Samoa	Islands of Tutuila, Ta’u, Olosega, Ofu, and Anu’u	2014	2021
Florida	Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe Counties	2014	2019
Hawai’i	Islands of Kauai, Maui, Moloka’i, O’ahu, Hawai’i, and Lana’i	2015	2020
Puerto Rico	Regions of Ponce, Aguadilla, Caguas, Mayaguez, Fajardo, Guayama, Arecibo, Bayamon, and San Juan	2014-2015	2022
Guam	Island of Guam	2016	2023
CNMI	Islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota	2016-2017	2024
USVI	Islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John	2017	2025

Who should I contact for more information?

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