

Three Socioeconomic Projects Underway In the U.S. Territories



Ongoing from fiscal year 2021

NOAA Office for Coastal Management

These projects are related, but are managed separately. Use this project summary sheet to better understand each one.

National Coral Reef Monitoring Program Socioeconomic Survey

This national-level survey is conducted regularly over time in each of the seven inhabited U.S. coral reef jurisdictions: Florida, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The survey examines how residents use coral reefs, and their knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions regarding this resource and its management.

The first socioeconomic monitoring cycle was conducted during 2014-2017. For the second socioeconomic monitoring cycle, surveys are being conducted in Puerto Rico from January through July of 2022, followed by Guam in 2023, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in 2024, and the U.S. Virgin Islands in 2025.

Using the Data

- Helps management understand the amount of public awareness and support for coral reef management strategies, as well as whether conservation efforts are having the desired impact
- Identifies and helps prioritize communication and outreach efforts
- Helps inform coral reef conservation programs at the local, regional, and national levels

To Learn More

NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program is leading this effort. Visit coris.noaa.gov/monitoring/socioeconomic.html or email project staff at Mary.Allen@noaa.gov for additional information.

Valuing Coral Reefs

The Coral Reef Ecosystem Goods and Services Valuation project is focused on providing updated economic values for U.S. coral reef ecosystem services in the following inhabited jurisdictions: Florida, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, Hawai'i, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Pacific Remote Island Area and Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary are also being considered. This is an update to the 2011 effort, which can be found here: coris.noaa.gov/activities/economic_summary.

For 2021, project scoping was the focus. The team gathered existing economic data and literature and identified the ecosystem services provided at each jurisdiction, data gaps, and appropriate methods for

data collection. This phase included efforts to better understand cultural and community values through workshops that included technical working groups and local experts.

For 2022-2023, an approach will be developed in collaboration with jurisdictional partners to incorporate cultural values alongside the economic values of ecosystem services and goods. Valuation will start in Florida and Guam, and continue beyond 2023 to obtain ecosystem service values for all coral reef jurisdictions. Final valuation of coral reef ecosystem goods and services in various project deliverables, such as tables, infographics, and story maps, are anticipated at the end of the project.

Using the Data

- Informs communications regarding the value of coral reefs to local communities, the U.S., and those who fund coral conservation efforts
- Provides information on the magnitude of benefits that potentially would be lost due to fewer conservation and restoration efforts, investments, and more

To Learn More

NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program is leading this effort. Visit coris.noaa.gov/activities/coral_esv_project/welcome.html or email project staff at Mary.Allen@noaa.gov for additional information.

Estimating the Marine Economy in U.S. Territories

NOAA's marine economy database (called ENOW, or Economics: National Ocean Watch) includes six ocean-dependent sectors: living resources, marine construction, marine transportation, offshore mineral resources, ship and boatbuilding, and tourism and recreation (additional sectors or industries may be added for the territories). Data for all 30 U.S. coastal and Great Lakes states are available from as far back as 2005, but similar data do not exist for the U.S. territories.

To meet this need, the 2021 federal appropriations bill funded a three-year data collection project. NOAA's Office for Coastal Management contracted with Eastern Research Group for this work, and will collaborate with federal and territorial agencies. Statistics collected for each sector include employment, establishments, wages, and gross domestic product. Data collection will likely not include surveys, but instead will rely on information collected by statistical agencies and other entities.

Using the Data

- Provides stakeholders with the data to advocate for additional resources and funding
- Highlights the importance of specific ports, regions, and industries within the territory
- Highlights the industries potentially at risk from sea level rise and other coastal hazards

To Learn More

NOAA's Office for Coastal Management is leading this effort. Visit coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/enow.html or email project staff at Kate.Quigley@noaa.gov for additional information.

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