

Mr. Leonard Sigrah, Chair
Regional Invasive Species Council
P.O. Box 51 Lelu, Kosrae, FM 96944



Douglas W. Domenech
Assistant Secretary Insular and International Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Mail-Stop 3119
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Assistant Secretary Domenech,


As Chair of the Regional Invasive Species Council for the Western Pacific, a standing committee of the Micronesia Islands Forum's nine jurisdictions, I am pleased to submit a letter of support for Dr. Moore's grant proposal entitled *Establishment of Self-sustaining Biological Control of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Biotype G in Micronesia*.

In virtually every travel destination across Micronesia, *Cocos nucifera* (coconut tree) is synonymous with the island's image and community identity. The tree is ecologically resilient, culturally valued, and a daily part of the economy and vitality of island life. Unfortunately, this plant has recently undergone dramatic mortality in the region.

The effect this new wave of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle infestations has created is felt on every island jurisdiction today, from the Marshall Islands to Palau. To illustrate the extreme, Fuana (a small, uninhabited atoll island in Palau's southwest districts) is now devoid of *C. nucifera*, while anecdotal and documented evidence throughout the region reveal extensive damage and mortality to both farmed and natural tree populations.

We have reviewed Dr. Moore's proposal, applaud his commitment, and fully support the University and our Partner's request for assistance. At this juncture, we believe that his research will progress towards an ecologically-sound method of long-term coastal forest recovery and resilience in the region, and urge your office to fund his proposal.

Respectfully yours,


Leonard Sigrah, Invasive Species Coordinator