



PRESS RELEASE

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Make your voice heard: Join the Guam Habitat Conservation Plan meeting

The University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability, in collaboration with the Guam Department of Agriculture and other partners, invites the community to a public meeting regarding the Guam Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

This meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 17, 2023, from 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm and will be held at the UOG Jesus and Eugenia Leon Guerrero School of Business and Public Administration Building.

The purpose of this public meeting is to discuss the progress made in developing the Guam HCP, address questions from the community, and gather valuable feedback.

The Guam HCP is a long-term strategy aimed at safeguarding endangered species and their habitats, preserving Guam's unique biological and cultural heritage for future generations, and promoting sustainable economic development and streamlined regulations.

This plan will play a crucial role in shaping future land use planning and supporting the sustainable implementation of existing land use plans.

"This meeting is a testament to UOG's dedication to fostering community engagement and collaborative efforts," UOG President Anita Borja Enriquez said. "By supporting the Guam Habitat Conservation Plan discussion, we affirm our commitment to preserving

our island's rich biodiversity, ensuring a sustainable future for both our community and the environment we call home."

Dr. Austin Shelton, Director, UOG Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant, said, "Caring for our island environment is not just a responsibility; it's a shared vision we must all support. By coming together, sharing knowledge, and empowering one another, we pave the way for a greener, more sustainable tomorrow for us and generations to come."

Over the past two years, Dr. Else Demeulenaere, Associate Director at the UOG Center for Island Sustainability, and her team at CIS and Sea Grant, have collaborated with local and federal agencies to develop the Guam HCP.

"We initiated our collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Guam Department of Agriculture, and the consulting firm ICF, renowned for their expertise in HCP development, during the summer of 2021," said Demeulenaere. "This project has been complex, with many moving parts, and we are eager to engage with stakeholders and the public."

Guam and the Mariana Islands are home to several endemic species found nowhere else in the world. However, due to their small populations, they are at risk of extinction in the face of changing land use. In 2015, the United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) listed 23 species on Guam under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)

As Guam's population continues to grow, the demand for places to live, work, and enjoy recreation, along with necessary infrastructure like roads, schools, restaurants, and housing, increases. This growth can lead to conflicts over land use.

Governments have the responsibility to balance the use of natural resources with the promotion of economic growth. The Guam HCP aims to help the Government of Guam find a middle ground. It strives to protect Guam's unique species while facilitating responsible development and ensuring the enduring preservation of endangered species' habitats.

At the meeting, Demeulenaere and her team will present their vision for conserving endangered species and their cultural significance while promoting sustainable economic development through this plan.

For more information about the meeting, please visit guamhcp.com or contact Caley Chargualaf via email at chargualafc10679@triton.uog.edu or call 671-797-5985.

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Photo caption:

Dr. Else Demeulenaere, Associate Director at the UOG Center for Island Sustainability, and her team at CIS and Sea Grant, and other partners are inviting the community to a meeting for the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) on Tuesday, October 17, 2023, from

4:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the UOG Jesus and Eugenia Leon Guerrero School of Business and Public Administration Building.