



OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS

**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov/oia
News Release

Date: October 1, 2015
Contact: Tanya Harris Joshua 202-208-6008
Tanya_Joshua@ios.doi.gov

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas

**Climate Change Adaptation a Strategic Priority for FY2016
Technical Assistance Funding through Interior's Office of
Insular Affairs**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 1, 2015) - Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina has announced that for fiscal year 2016, climate change adaptation planning, assessment, and implementation will receive the highest priority for technical assistance program (TAP) funding through the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA). This action by the Assistant Secretary follows through on a commitment made to insular area leaders on Guam at the U.S. Insular Areas Climate Change Stakeholder's meeting in June.

OIA will begin accepting TAP applications for FY 2016 funding on October 1, 2015, through the Grants.gov under CFDA # 15.875. Once OIA has received full year 2016 appropriations, TAP applications will be processed for funding on a first-come, first-served basis until program funds are exhausted. The deadline for applications will be March 1, 2016.

"We are prioritizing TAP funding to respond to the effects of climate change in the U.S. territories and freely associated states," said Assistant Secretary Kia'aina. "The island communities with whom we work continue to face extreme climate events, including typhoons and hurricanes, storm surges, high winds and king tides. These insular areas are already feeling the effects of slow, progressive climate-induced stresses, such as sea level rise, ocean acidification, coral bleaching, and saline intrusion into freshwater systems."

The call for action in combatting climate change as a strategic priority within OIA is based on the adverse impacts of climate change in the insular areas, scientific evidence, and urgent

requests by island leaders for U.S. assistance. It is also supported by a series of federal and department-level decrees on climate change.

Dating back to 2009, a series of Presidential Executive Orders and Interior Secretarial Orders have been adopted that call upon U.S. federal agencies to take actions to curb carbon emissions, and to adopt a more proactive posture in mainstreaming climate change across federal programs, and modernizing programs to support resilient federal investments. Most important among these is President Obama's Climate Action Plan, released in June 2013, followed in November by Executive Order 13653 - Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change.

A copy of the report from the U.S. Insular Areas Climate Change Stakeholder's meeting, June 4-5, 2015, is available on the Office of Insular Affairs website at www.doi.gov/oia.

The Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas carries out the administrative responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior in coordinating federal policy for the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and administering and overseeing U.S. federal assistance to the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau under the Compacts of Free Association. The Assistant Secretary executes these responsibilities through the Office of Insular Affairs.

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