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(Music)

*Jennifer Stock:*

Hi. You're listening to Ocean Currents, a show where we talk about the blue part of our planet, the ocean. We talk about exploration, science, management, conservation, and ways for us land-based folks to be involved and help take care of it. My name is Jennifer Stock. Today's show shares some recordings from a special workshop I had the opportunity to be a part of in American Samoa in July 2010. The panel of speakers were convened to share stories of how indigenous cultures partake in conservation of ocean resources. Speakers were from American Samoa, Fiji, Hawaii, and the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State. I hope you enjoy and thanks for listening to Ocean Currents.

(Music)

*Male voice:*

...a forum has been convened to share, learn, network, and exchange dialogue of the importance of integrating cultural and traditional values and practices in resource management programs in the Pacific, across Hawaii, the US and, of course, here in American Samoa. I would like to recognize, acknowledge and welcome our speakers. I wanted to especially thank and recognize our keynote speaker for accepting our invite and to those who traveled from afar to be with us today. At this time, I would like to introduce our keynote speaker. He has 50 years of public service that included director of tourism, member of senate, members of the US congress, author of seven books, consultant to the governor on members of culture and traditions. Please welcome high talking chief...for his keynote remarks.

*Keynote Speaker:*

Welcome you all to American Samoa. I know you've been welcomed many, many times more appropriately during the course of this workshop, but I say it all to the sanctuaries of America, I know there's no such word as sanctuaries in our dictionary, in our language, I looked at Webster last night after I made this word up for you because I looked in Webster and I was moved by his first definition of the word "Sanctuary." He said..let me look at the quote...it's the holiest of a sacred place. So, I said to myself, "Gee. These people have come from 14 places. They must be guardians of some heavenly places down here." So, I fashioned this word sanctuaries. It sounds kind of holy and I think it's a good word.

Then Webster moved on lower and said, "Sanctuaries were actually asylums for people fleeing from arrest," and I said, "Gee, I hope these people are not fleeing from some problem," but in the third one, it's more appropriate. It says, "A sanctuary is an area in

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which animals or birds are protected from hunting or molestation." So, my final answer, you are sanctuaries...nice-sounding word.

My mission is to tell you folks from across the nation, visiting professionals, how we manage our indigenous resources through three and a half islands living. I can do that quite easily because history and culture is my forte. At the same time, I want to remind you of President Reagan's famous one-liner about his knowledge and his age. He said, "I can tell you what they did in those days, but you have to understand, I wasn't there." And then, I am asked to compare and relate our traditional knowledge, our (?) to modern techniques in conservation, preservation, and management of resources and suggest how they can be made part of modern planning. One of our standards, proverbial admonition, is (another language). The simpleton does not instruct a prince.

So, I leave the integration part to you, the princes and the princesses. In the end, some of you will wish that this talk was more into the philosophical areas of your science and you will consider this effort, perhaps too simplistic. I can't help then. You see, our ancestors lived simply. They had simple lives, pleased with their achievements and satisfied with the environment and what it offered them. I will cite, however, a few areas to show you that the resource management style and skills of our people was plain, simple, and practical. It met their needs and they didn't need too much to live happily down here. Everything was simple until graduate students started coming here and writing up these thesis's and make it sound so complicated so they can earn Masters and PHDs.

Samoans by nature are conservatives at heart and in action and perhaps we may be the most serious conservatives in this part of the world. One of our more colorful high chiefs, the late Olo Latooli, during his entertainer days in Hollywood nightclubs, he used to tell a story about the degree of conservatism of his people. He said, "When the Polynesians began leaving the cradle of their civilization in Manila, that's out east 60 miles, the dancers went to Tahiti, the warriors settled in Tamil, the artists sailed south to New Zealand, the fishermen discovered Hawaii and made their homes there, the conservatives whose specialty was archery remained in Samoa to argue and make more speeches about when and where to go. So, we're still here."

In defense of our ancestors, I say that they were not chiefs of procrastination, but chiefs who took their time deciding on important issues. That was the Samoan way of doing things. When

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uncertain, they chose to stay where they were and enjoy life in familiar surroundings. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. I guess they thought of that then there too. Our traditions are preserved in the wit and eloquence of our proverbial expressions, fashioned and conveyed through the ages by the guardians of our conservative traditions, the orators. You will hear a sprinkling of those proverbs in this talk cited to help illustrate our conservatism and the manner of our resource management.

Knowing when and how to conserve and preserve came naturally to us and past automatically from one generation to another. Of course, as they got more experienced, they added a few new methods here and there and dropped those that no longer served their purposes, but the base conservatism never changed. So, we say in Samoa (traditional language), means change, foundations remain and that is why you will find in Samoa a living culture today because our bases, our foundations are still here. Our ancestors fished the seas and planted the fields routinely and wisely. They were careful not to over plant or over fish.

(Traditional language) Look ahead, was a short saying with a heavy meaning. They harvested conservatively, leaving in the ground what they did not need at that time. They say, let them be there for me tomorrow when I come back. Tomorrow is another day. (Traditional Language). They knew the limitations of maturity and the beginning of crop rots and how to scare the birds that loot their bananas. Conservation was using only what you needed and preserving what you did not need, but chose to keep. Plantation sizes were determined by family sizes. Increases were made only in anticipation of major family events like weddings or large group visits.

The old folks were experts at timing their harvests to their special needs. Wasting was against the principles of Samoan conservatism. (Traditional Language). Don't break more coconuts than you can scrape. It's a standard admonition to food preparers because once you break a coconut, it becomes spoiled if it wasn't used that same day. One more point about managing the (?) resources. They say, (traditional language). Pick first the fruits from the distant trees. You do not want them to fall to the ground unseen and unused or into someone else's basket without your permission, which, I might say, happens every now and then.

(Traditional Language). Save bananas for the bees, meaning save (?) and (?) during heavy breadfruit season. A significant lesson in resource conservation and management. Leave (?) in the ground

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while there's plenty of breadfruit. Hold them for when the season is over. Use first what you will lose fast-- a part of the management wisdom of our past. Our ancestors like yours were experts at counting and predicting seasons.

They forecasted by looking at the waves, feeling the winds, watching the colors of the sky, and even watching the birds fly. That intelligence helped them manage resources with much confidence. Production and preservation of food supplies from land and sea and management of the labor that went into the production were the main activities of life here in the islands. The principles of conservation and preservation used there were applied with equal success in other activities. Large guest houses required a great deal of resources, woods, rocks, thatches, and more. Local resources that were planted, preserved, and used with care.

It took miles of senet, that's the local string made of coconut fiber. It took miles of senet, for instance, to complete one large house and acres of sugarcanes to produce thatches for that same house. For such needs, you need careful, long-term planning and for the high chiefs wanting to build a new house, plan ahead, say three or four years ahead. Boat building, like house construction, required special trees. These trees were protected and preserved in the forest. If a family is not in a great rush to build a boat and a neighbor comes asking for the tree, give it. It's the nature of communal living.

For in the future, we may want to build a boat and the tree will...and their tree, the neighbor's tree, will be ready for us. It's just like money in the bank. That leads me to two other salient points about our resource management. Borrowing and sharing. Borrowing and sharing are two of the basic principles of communal living. In our culture, there is no room for the selfish, greedy, and individualistic people. We say that (traditional language). Today, you. Me, tomorrow, meaning you have a need today, I will have a need tomorrow and that is why I will lend you my tree today.

Sharing resources ensures future security. (Traditional Language). You will not be rich forever. Let your neighbor be your storage agent, saving your resources for a rainy day. The spirit of sharing permeates everything we Samoans do. At the end of the day, fishermen of a village will assemble to conduct what was called, and still called, (?), the sharing of the day's catch. No fishermen in a group is allowed to go home empty handed. Before cranes, cement mixers, and modern scaffolding, how did we build large

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houses and launch giant sized canoes? We pooled our resources and worked as one family.

(Traditional Language) Many hand make a job lighter. Our lands and our seas each produce half of the food resources that sustained us through millennia. With the better half coming from the oceans and the coral that fringe our islands. So, I close with an expression of sincere appreciation as an elder of this American community, to our local harvest department, to Mr. Paupau and the (?) here, to our NOAA office, and our Fagatele Bay, and others responsible for bringing this workshop to American Samoa. You have come to promote and dramatize a science that should be a priority in our education system and in the life of this territory. My friends, we have a final saying I want to share in parting.

(Traditional language). If there was trouble at the hunt, don't spread it on the roadways. Our weaknesses, shortcomings, and faults...please let them stay here. Take only what you may find to be pleasant and worthy of your sojourn in this remote, but wonderful part of our country. Have a nice trip back and say to all those great sancturians of America waiting for you, thank you.

(Applause)

*Male voice:*

Thank you so very much for (?) for those very insightful keynote remarks and I especially value the wisdom and the knowledge you have shared with us today. The purpose of this workshop started with an idea of showcasing two to three of the fourteen sanctuary sites across the sanctuary system to highlight the importance of special places. This went evolving to make the core focus to highlight the relevance of marine places and people to effectively implement resource protections. We are pleased to have assembled special people to be with us today to share values, practices, and their experience of cultural and traditions in applying this to special places they come from. We hope to highlight that resource protection has to be relevant and needs to be about the people of special places. After all, it is people and their activities that we have to manage.

We are delighted to have with us, presenting as panel speakers, especially here to provide their programs and activities from Lanai, Washington State, Fiji, and American Samoa.

*Female voice:*

We're very pleased to present an esteemed panel. This panel is about cultural knowledge and practices and resource management. To really look at the in depth how things are being applied in the

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village setting, programs that spread across from American Samoa, Hawaii, to Washington to Fiji. So, I want to welcome folks and thank them for accepting the invite. We are pleased to have someone close to home, five hours flight, maybe. Kepa Maly who is here. He's a cultural historian, resource specialist, and the executive director of the Lanai Cultural and Heritage Center. He's been raised in Oahu, Lanai. His strong cultural connections, we're very pleased to have Kepa.

Last, but not least we're very pleased to have our cousin from Fiji, Lorraine who is a marine biologist who works directly in coordinating marine managed areas for Conservation International in Fiji.

(Applause)

*Male voice:*

I would like to talk to you, share with you some thoughts of resource management that were taught to me by (?) who were born in 1890 and 1892. Tutumama and tutu papa Hati and Daniel Okupuiki were the elder families of Ludnae where I was raised and so, this is where we speak from. In ancient Hawaii, there are many lessons for us to learn. The lessons began, I believe, here, for even in our traditions, we know of a great priest and a chief, who came from Samoa in around 1200 to settle Hawaii and to establish a new priest and chiefly lineage in the islands. That lineage is the basis of our families today. Lukupoona believed the nature about him, everything about them, was alive, from the heights of the heavens, the stars, the sky, were strung by the god Luno. Kanaekukanaluo. These gave breath and life to the people of Hawaii.

From the oceans to the tops of the mountains, every form of life was believed to be and remains in the heart of many people, even if they don't know to express it today because when you lose your language, you lose the spirit, the essence, of your kupuna of what connects you to place. Our kupuna greeted the Earth and sang its praise and acknowledged that they were a part of a family and if I may, I would like to share with you an example of one of the mele, one of the chants that had been handed down over time that speak of the relationship of people with the land and the ocean and the many resources therein.

The chant starts by calling on kalekuluno. They founded the earth, gave birth to the islands themselves, and there the ocean rose. The great sea of kane. The sea filled with many fishes, the great fishes, the little fishes, the manoa, the shark, then manuki, the great white

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shark, the whale, the hehemanu, the ray, afkane. These are the things that give life to the people of Hawaii.

(Chanting)

*Male voice:*

That's how tutu folks told us that their kapuna passed their history and stories down. It was the embodiment of resource management because you see the culture and nature were one in the same. This dynamic nature gave life to the people. Tutu taught us as our honored high talking chief spoke, they taught us about the use of your hands. Tutu folks said, (traditional language). When your hands do good work, the mouth eats good food. Another tutu said in a twist with that saying, (traditional language), and when the hands do dirty work or not such clean work, the mouth eats not very clean food. So, they learned quickly about living within the wealth and limitations of the resources about them.

We live on a small island, Lanae, which was always resource-stressed and particularly moreso after western contact. Things like sheep and goats and cattle were introduced to the islands and the forests were decimated. Our island dried up. The people became ill. They were forced to leave the island. In a few years time, in 50 years time, the population went from 3,000 to 600. By 1900, the population of Lanae was 125.

So, perhaps one lesson in resource management is that people perhaps, are also a part of that fragile ecosystem. There's some traditional knowledge there. Kapuna believed (traditional language) that our well being is in unity and so, we must work today in the modern context as resource managers by integrating and valuing and acknowledging the history that has been handed down to us. Who better to know the stories of the land, the moods of the sea, the voices of the wind, the reflections of the sky...who better to know them than the people who are of a place and for many years, I believe, in my experience, at least, in Hawaii, resource management has often divorced itself.

It's as if scientists looking through a microscope are detached from the resources where I know among the people of Hawaii, there was an expression, (traditional language). We are all one family from the uplands to the sea and from one border to the next and I believe that these lessons integrated into a modern concept as I see happening here among the NOAA people, it's so encouraging to see that this opportunity that's arising to bring life to a place by the traditions and by the knowledge of the people of old and integrate with good science. To think, sometimes though we need to think,

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how good is the science because when I hear terms coming out like maximum sustainable yield, it scares me because as our esteemed kupuna said, you learn to live within the wealth of your resources. You look at the land, you take what you need today to feed your family. Leave the rest for another day.

One of our kupuna taught me that in this modern economic context, everything became a commodity. We put rather than the exchange and the bartering, the sharing that naturally occurred as you banked your resources from the ocean to the mountains. What happens is that today, we bank our resources in the freezer box, but as tutu said, "Fish don't breed in the freezer." Right? So, then you wonder why when we take so much, nothing is left behind.

There are many lessons, I believe, that the kupuna have to share with us, the elders of this beautiful Samoa and in Hawaii and things that are applicable around the world, but first and foremost, we must remember that we are a unified people. If we work together, not to the exclusion, that's just old folk tales and so, you know, we know that the kupuna have amazing knowledge. What we need to do is integrate it into the modern context, into the modern management processes. If we don't, what happens? If it's another taking, if it's seen, if resource management, the beautiful word is sanctuary and sanctuaries, but if it is seen, if it is seen as an extraction, as an exclusion, making it kapu, forbidden, you no can go, you can't practice, it's not enough to practice your culture in a book, in a paper. You need to do it in the ocean, on the land.

So, what we need to do is remember this one saying, (traditional language). That not all knowledge is found in one school. Let us integrate these schools and bring the knowledge together that we will, in fact, have a well-being and culture and nature. So, my time is up. I wish to ask you (traditional language). That which is good, keep. That which is not good, set aside. Leave it where it belongs.

(Traditional Language).

(Applause)