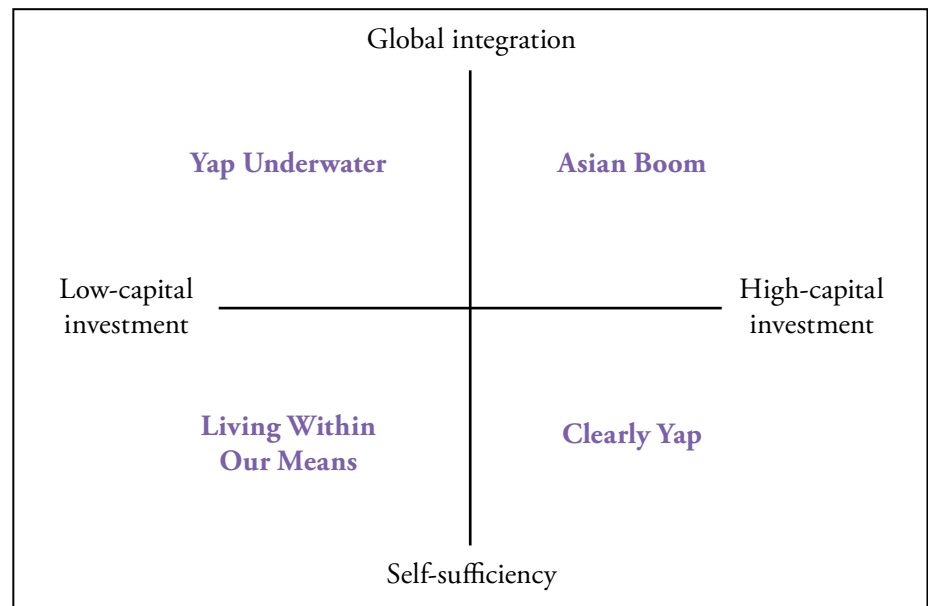


CREATING A SHARED VISION FOR YAP

Yap is one of four states in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and lies in the Pacific Ocean, close to Guam and Palau. Yap has some of the strongest cultural traditions and healthiest marine environments in the Pacific, and is struggling to identify a development pathway that maintains these significant assets. In partnership with the Yap Chamber of Commerce, CSF held a workshop to help Yapese plan for their future against a backdrop of uncertain economic, environmental and social change. The workshop used scenarios, or sets of contrasting stories about how the future might be, to consider uncertain influences, and how best to respond to change. Below we describe four possible scenarios for Yap, based on two key aspects of development pathways: 1) Yap's connection to the region and the rest of the world; and 2) Yap's capital investment (roads, telecommunications, et.). The graph below shows the four quadrants formed by different levels of these features, with each quadrant representing a scenario.



1. Asian boom

In the year 2025, a new flight started from Manila to Yap. Tourism increased and a large foreign-owned resort was built, employing some Yapese as desk staff and cleaners. Yapese and foreigners opened new shops, restaurants, and bars. Food, materials, and labor were imported, and local prices began rising. More Yapese began studying nursing and construction in the Philippines. The exposure to outside workers and tourists changed Yapese traditions but also increased the market for some local products. The number of people on the island created pressure on natural resources. The landfill reached capacity and there was conflict over where to build a new one. Then a recession in Asia caused the demand for air travel to decrease, so the flight was cancelled. Many Yapese became unemployed when hotels, restaurants, and shops went out of business. Some left for the U.S. and others relied on their families to support them as they looked for work.

2. Clearly Yap

In the year 2025, FSM decided to nationalize transportation, and flights became less frequent and more expensive. This created challenges for economic growth, and Yapese focused on developing more self-sufficient energy options such as solar and biodiesel. Yap also decided to form an agreement with Palau and create stronger regional ties. This enabled Yap to develop more high-end cultural tourism with

CONSERVATION POLICY IN BRIEF

AUGUST 2013 | N^o.18
conservation-strategy.org

AUTHORS:

HEIDI GJERTSEN
BERNA GORONG
KIM BONINE
NICHOLAS CONNER

PHOTOS:

KIM BONINE
LEONARDO C. FLECK



CONSERVATION
STRATEGY FUND

locally-made products and tourist home-stays. They also established a research station based on traditional Yapese knowledge. As a result, Yap experienced a revitalization of culture and traditions. This pleased many people, but others wanted more access to modern educational opportunities and health care. Two Chinese universities began exploring the potential value of Yap flora for medicinal purposes. Commercialization began for a plant with potential as an appetite suppressant. Careful negotiations meant that Yap State retained the rights to the genetic material, and could earn valuable foreign income from licensing.

3. Living Within our Means

In the year 2025, the government realized that Yap was living beyond its means and decided to focus on reducing expenditures, and improving people's welfare. The government taxed luxury items to fund literacy, health care and employment programs for the whole population. It also focused on maintaining physical infrastructure, encouraging local food production, and conserving biodiversity. Instead of reducing the size of the public sector, staff were retrained to encourage adoption of these cost saving measures. There was little tourism activity. The private sector focused on local markets and more labor-intensive work. Many entrepreneurs emigrated for more intellectually rewarding and interesting lives overseas. This, coupled with the limited number of employment opportunities outside the public sector and the reduction in Compact Funding from the U.S., meant that Yap ceased to have a sufficient tax base to support the public services. Eventually many of these programs were cut.

4. Yap Underwater

In the year 2025, the Outer Islands of Yap began to experience sea level rise as a result of climate change, and residents migrated to the main island of Yap. The state government had to provide



shelter, creating land conflicts with traditional leaders. Pressure increased on the food supply and services such as waste disposal, healthcare, and schools. Many educated Yapese left for work elsewhere, which relieved some of the population pressure but also decreased local capacity. There were innovations in combining traditional skills with modern technology, such as a traditional boat-building and navigation school with programs in marine equipment repair. Recognizing the strategic importance of Yap, the U.S. Government leased an area for a small naval supply base. The lease payments provided a revenue source for the government and employment for some Yapese. The area near the base changed dramatically and most Yapese did not venture there, apart from those attracted to the action.

These stories provide insight into some of the tradeoffs that Yapese will face as they make decisions about their pathway to development. For example, mass tourism can create local employment and revenue, but may not be resilient to global economic cycles. Small-scale businesses avoid some of these challenges, but may not achieve comparable economic gain.

In addition to the scenarios process, the workshop provided training in economic impact analysis and cost benefit analysis to help people evaluate tradeoffs and make decisions to move towards their desired future. The workshop gave participants important new tools – ones that they hope to bring to government leaders and communities throughout the state.



Margaret A. Cargill Foundation



All CSF publications and policy briefs are available at conservation-strategy.org/en/reports



CONSERVATION STRATEGY FUND

7151 Wilton Avenue, Suite 203
Sebastopol, CA 95472
T: 707.829.1802
F: 707.829.1806

www.conservation-strategy.org