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GOVERNOR

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AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT
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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 007 - 2020

**EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING
THE GOVERNOR'S BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION OFFICE**

Section 1: Authority

This Executive Order is issued under the authority granted to the Governor in Article IV, Section 6 and Section 7, American Samoa Revised Constitution and the American Samoa Code Annotated, §4.0111.

Section 2: Purpose

The purpose of this Executive Order is to create the Governor's Biodiversity Conservation Office (GBCO) to restore, protect, and preserve rainforest and coral reef ecosystems and Samoan culture. American Samoa is home to unique native wildlife that requires a coordinated effort to maintain. The creation of this office is to ensure such coordination takes place for the benefit of our islands now and in the years to come.

Section 3: Creation of the Governor's Biodiversity Conservation Office

There is created within the Executive Branch, under the Office of the Governor, the Governor's Biodiversity Conservation Office (GBCO). The GBCO shall collaborate with the American Samoa Soil and Water Conservation District (AS-SWCD) established in ASCA § 24.0901 et seq.

Section 4: GBCO Duties and Responsibilities

- 1) Assist and collaborate with the AS-SWCD in accordance with ASCA § 24.0901 et seq. and ensure its mission is fulfilled.
- 2) Oversee and manage the Eradication Projects of the Tamaligi Tree and the Myna & Bulbul birds in American Samoa Territories in accordance with local and federal guidelines and ensure these missions are fulfilled. The GBCO is also responsible for carrying out on the ground management of other current and future projects for Invasive Species management.
- 3) Develop a budget to be submitted to the Governor annually accounting for all operations of the office in accordance with ASG's regular budgetary process.

4) Apply for and manage grants from federal or private sources. The GBCO is to ensure compliance with all grant requirements for existing and future grants that come under its purview.

5) Conduct habitat restoration projects to assist with:

a) Recovery of American Samoa's rare and endangered species populations (under the US Fish and Wildlife Services Endangered Species Act); and

b) Rehabilitate damaged and disturbed special ecological ecosystems including but not limited to the Samoan rainforest, coral reefs, estuaries, wetlands, tropical freshwater streams, Mt. Lata cloud rainforest, Pe'a or fruit bat roost, and ancient bat caves.

6) Conduct scientific research in conservation and wildlife biology, climate change, and other areas related to biodiversity.

7) In coordination with other interested agencies, improve water quality by removing and controlling populations of feral mammals and restore and clean up freshwater streams and streambanks.

8) Collaborate with the University of Hawaii, other higher learning institutions, and teachers to develop place-based curriculums and STEM lesson plans utilizing results of conservation projects and research conducted in American Samoa and other similar locations.

9) Establish youth training and development programs to ensure that Samoan cultural practices, ecosystem management, and proper stewardship are fostered among future generations and provide avenues for career and leadership opportunities for American Samoa's youth in land management, policy, and science.

10) Carry out other related projects as directed by the Governor.

Section 5: Organizational Relationship and Director

The GBCO shall be managed as an agency under the auspices of the Governor's Office. A Director/Executive Officer appointed by the Governor shall head the Office. The Director shall prepare a budget, hire personnel, and procure necessary equipment and supplies to effectively manage the Office and ensure that the duties and responsibilities of the Office are carried out.

Section 6: Effective Date

This order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect until further Executive Order.

Dated: *SEPTEMBER 2, 2020*



LOLO M. MOLIGA
Governor of American Samoa