

**Abstract:**

In this master's thesis, I propose to study coral reef management systems in Palau. Literature cited below suggests that an essential factor is the interaction between the traditional management system and the modern management system. Therefore, I designed my research to investigate and analyze how the two management systems are working at the village level. The data collection will use site visits and interviewing, and the analysis uses a simplified version of the grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1988). In more specific terms, this case study attempts to find the contextual dynamics of reef management system in Palau firstly from two perspectives; the traditional management system and the modern management system, and secondly from socio-economic, socio-political, legal and cultural perspectives that, combined, situate the two management systems. To this end, I will conceptualize the concept of reef management system primarily with seven concepts, which will be broken down to variables that are actually measured during field data collection. Sampling will compare three villages; one where the traditional system seems to remain strong, one where the modern system seems strongest, and one where the two systems seem to co-exist. The three will be compared with "critical conditions" for successful common pool resource management (Agrawal, 2002). In addition, this design includes consultation with knowledgeable informants and key informants so that the findings would reflect the insider's view and produce relevant political implications for reef management in Palau.

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