Pacific Basin Biocontrol Consortium Conference Call

September 18, 2014

Agenda, Meeting Notes and Action Items:

Participants

* + Darcy Oishi, HI Dept. of Agriculture, Plant Pest Control
  + Mach Fukada, HI Dept. of Agriculture, Plant Pest Control
  + Lynley Hayes Landcare Research NZ
  + Cynthia King, HI Dept. of Land & Nat. Resources, Div. of Forestry and Wildlife
  + Rob Hauff, HI Dept. of Land & Nat. Resources, Div. of Forestry and Wildlife
  + Tracy Johnson, USDA Forest Service
  + Phil Andreozzi, National Invasive Species Council, US Dept. of Interior
  + Randy Bartlett, Hawaii Invasive Species Council
  + Mark Fox, The Nature Conservancy, Hawaii Program

Background:

* + Pacific collaboration on biocontrol
  + NZ meeting in 2009; agreement to form a steering committee;
    - Regional breakouts, e.g.,HI, Am Samoa, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands
  + Anne Marie, Tracy, Lynley have had some occasional communications
  + Lynley, Darcy and others met in Waikoloa informally during Weed Conference
  + Challenges with communications, tough to get momentum going, scheduling, etc.
  + Brief meeting in S. Africa at Int’l Biocontrol Meeting.
  + A lot of informal communication going on but not structured.
  + No detailed strategy but a desire to look into some of the more difficult challenges that could be tackled.
  + Phil A. would like to help facilitate bringing biocontrol experts in the Pacific to come together.
    - Bilateral effort between US and NZ.
    - Pacific Invasives Partnership to show off the work that is going on and enhance collaboration.
    - Pacific Biocontrol Strategy – highlight things that are “shovel-ready”
    - Opportunity to use bi-lateral agreements that US is engaged with as a venue to highlight invasive species issues, including biocontrol, and get at money.
* **What would the priorities be?**
  + Dream was that everyone in Pacific working on biocontrol:
    - Knew each other,
    - How to contact each other,
    - How to collaborate on projects, e.g., collaboration on host testing.
  + Ability to meet more regularly than once every 3-4 years
  + Learn and share techniques amongst peers and colleagues
  + Mentorship Program
  + Hawaii needs better local coordination amongst practitioners and stakeholders
* **What might be achievable, given what has worked/failed previously?** 
  + Consider how big or small this should be. Issues with coordinating Pacific-wide participation. Technology limitations in more remote locations.
  + Have a web presence where goals, strategies, ongoing collaborations, successes are documented so people can plug in when convenient?
    - A place that people can go to and be updated on what’s going on.
    - Action Item: Biocontrol page on the Hawaii Invasive Species Council webpage. Hawaii projects, but also links or pages with other biocontrol information, progress, successes. Randy Bartlett’s goal to get this up and running by Fall 2015 (or sooner).
      * Action item: Cynthia look for former Hawaii Biocontrol Working Group list serve to see if it still exists and could be useful, e.g., connecting it to future HISC biocontrol webpage
  + Maintain energy via specific projects that encounter success and those are emulated in other places. E.g.,
    - Cook Islands project.
    - Melanesian Weed Biocontrol Project:
      * Michael Day (Biosecurity Queensland) running it
      * Another one where, similar to Cook Islands project, variety of weed targets
      * Short, mid and long term projects and broken down regionally.
      * Australian Center for Internationale for Agricultural Research – funding source.
      * Action item: Darcy has preliminary report and will follow up with Michael and share back with group.
    - Miconia – Tracy anticipates Pacific collaboration on Miconia biocontrol in future.
  + Opportunities to connect at upcoming conferences/meetings:
    - PILN meeting will be held in Hawaii next year. Darcy **(*in his free time)*** has volunteered to help Posa organize the meeting.
      * Get something in PILN soundbites regularly
      * Action item: Darcy discussing with Posa on possibility for the biocontrol agenda item or biocontrol theme at PILN. Also to talk to Posa about what other meetings might be appropriate. Respond back to the group.
    - Pacific Entomology Conference April 1-3, 2015 in Hawaii
      * There will be entomology and biocontrol tracks
      * Darcy organizing.
    - EMAPi Conference September 20-24, 2015 in Waikoloa Marriott, Hawaii – invasive species conference focusing on weeds. Tracy helping to organize. Johnny Hoffman guest speaker. Some biocontrol focus
    - Pacific Island Forestry Committee meeting usually in February. Was in Am. Samoa last year. USDA Forest Service funds and biocontrol could be prioritized.
    - NZ has some money for NZ scientists to travel to US for meetings.
  + Do we need a paid facilitator? Someone whose job it is to bring people together.
  + NZ has a National Biocontrol Collective – pools money and votes on national biocontrol priorities. Something to emulate.
* **What funding might be available?** 
  + Pacific American Climate Fund – Explicit language saying that invasive species is an important component. Need proposals submitted.
    - USAID funding - not available to US affiliated locations but can go to other Pacific island locations.
    - Action item: Darcy and Phil follow up later on this possible funding opportunity.
* **Who else needs to be involved**?
  + Posa Skelton
  + Michael Day
  + SPREP and SPC (Dave Moverley, Josua Wainiqolo) representatives – get help from Posa
* **Next steps:**
  + Action item: After Darcy has talks Michael and Posa, regroup to discuss next meeting date and action item progress.