

**If I have courage,
it is because I have
faith in the knowledge
of my ancestors.**

**—Mau Piailug,
Satawal, Federated
States of Micronesia**

In this *Natural Inquirer*, you have learned about the natural environment of diverse Pacific Islands. Because of their unique location on Earth, Pacific Islands' ecosystems themselves are unique on the planet. Now it is time to learn about a few cultures of the people who live on these Pacific Islands. We begin our exploration at a website created on the island of Guam. You learned about Guam's forests in the article beginning on page 95.

To introduce Guam's citizens to the richness and diversity of cultures found across all the Pacific Islands, Guampedia, an online encyclopedia, created a website called People of Pacific (PoP) Cultures (<https://www.guampedia.com/category/people-of-the-pacific-pop-cultures/>). In the spirit of this website, you will learn something interesting about a Pacific Islands culture in each of the five PoP Cultures essays.

As you know from reading this journal, the Pacific Islands are small land masses separated by vast areas of ocean. PoP cultures have evolved from customs and traditions that are based on a few important ideas: (1) A need to manage island lands and areas near the ocean

to protect them for the future while using their resources to support healthy communities today; (2) A necessity to understand and respect the oceans and to be skilled at ocean navigation and sailing; and (3) A desire to live in ways that honor the past by passing to the next generation traditional ways of living, but also to promote and support new ideas and resources for creating a **sustainable** future.

These three ideas are important across PoP cultures, even while they are expressed differently by different cultures across islands or island groups. One may see similarities in art, music, and dance across PoP cultures, yet many unique expressions are found across cultures.