

# Federal States of Micronesia

## Utwe

**Declaration date:** 2005

**Surface area:** 1,773 ha

**Administrative division:** Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization, reporting to Utwe Municipal Government, Kosrae State Legislature, Kosrae State Marine Resources, and Office of the Governor

### Human activities:

The people living in Utwe use the transition area for agricultural activities, tourism, fishing and harvesting of natural resources, and settlements. It is to a great extent protected from destructive activities by the 'Land Use Plan' and sustainable development programs are promoted here.

### Contact information:

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### Ecological characteristics:

The Utwe Biosphere Reserve is located on the south-west of Kosrae, a small mountainous volcanic island in the South Pacific. The Biosphere Reserve is located on the relatively flat and narrow coastal plain extending from the foothills to the shore. Most of the interior of the island is rough and rugged. Mangrove swamps and coral reefs surround most of the island. According to the Division of Fisheries, over 335 species of fish have been recorded as well as 180 coral species (13 soft coral and over 150 hard coral species). Other ecosystem types in the Biosphere Reserve include tropical rain forest, wetland forest, sea grass beds and marine lakes. The wetland forest has different kinds of green ferns, and also harbours the only remaining stand of Ka trees (*Terminalia carolinensis*) in the world. Isolated by more than 300 nautical miles from its nearest neighbour, Kosrae has been little influenced by modern development and industry. However, as any other States within the Federated States of Micronesia, Kosrae's marine resources are being depleted and some marine species such as turtles, lobsters, corals, and giant clams are endangered. The core area, which is mainly composed of mangrove and marine areas, has been designated with the main objective to protect the area thus prohibiting any human activities including harvesting of natural resources. The terrestrial buffer zone protects the core area against external pressures and the marine buffer zone is protected as a no-take zone.



\* Details found on this information sheet are derived directly from the UNESCO website and are not a communication from the biosphere reserve.