

DFWP asks community help on protection of dugongs

By JOHN A. CONCEPCION
Horizon News Staff

THE Division of Fish and Wildlife protection has urged the

It is probably the most endangered species here in Palau. Its population has decreased because of some individuals with cravings and appetite for dug-

port to protect the dugong in Palau," he said.

The DFWP he said has been conducting public awareness seminars on the protection and



DFWP officers Jefferson Matul and Uchel Ngingetrang use a dugong, which they earlier found dead, in carrying out their public awareness program

(contributed photo)

public to join the campaign to protect endangered terrestrial and marine wildlife species, particularly seacows or dugong.

DFWP chief Kammen Chin said that the number of dugongs in Palau has dramatically decreased through the years due to harvesting and a survey conducted way back in 1992 suggests that the dugong population is approximately 300 or even less.

"Dugong is an important and unique wildlife species in Palau,

and others who are just ignorant or non-law abiding citizens," said Bin.

Dugong meat is a delicacy in Palau, and its bones are used as jewelry and body ornaments.

He said that trying to protect or save the dugongs in Palau is not only a difficult task, but also "probably not possible based on the biological and unraveling behavior of the dugongs."

"That's why we are extending our request for public sup-

port to protect the dugong in Palau," he said. The DFWP he said has been conducting public awareness seminars on the protection and

conservation of Palau's marine and terrestrial species in schools all over the country. He said that emphasis on the protection of dugongs is one of the main topics in the information drive.

"Losing Palau's dugongs means losing our cultural and traditional resources. The extinction of Palau's dugongs is a bad news not only for Palau but worldwide as well, because it would be a loss of one of the rarest wildlife species in the world," he said.