

Pelagic Fisheries of the Western Pacific Region 1995 Annual Report Summary

August 1996

Prepared by the Pelagics Plan Team and Council Staff

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Introduction

Background

The Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Pelagic Fisheries of the Western Pacific Region was implemented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on 23 March 1987. The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (WPRFMC or Council) developed the FMP to manage the pelagic resources covered by the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 and occurring in the US Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) around American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, the Northern Mariana Islands, and other US possessions in the Western Pacific Region (Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef & Palmyra Island, Jarvis Island, Howland and Baker Islands, and Wake Island).

The objectives of the Pelagics FMP were revised in 1991. The abridged objectives are to:

- Manage fisheries for management unit species to achieve optimum yield. Promote domestic harvest of, and domestic fishery values associated with, Pacific pelagic management unit species, or PPMUS (e.g., by enhancing the opportunities for satisfying recreational fishing experience, continuation of traditional fishing practices, and domestic commercial fishermen to engage in profitable operations).
- Diminish gear conflicts in the EEZ, particularly in areas of concentrated domestic fishing.
- Improve the statistical base for conducting better stock assessments and fishery evaluations.
- Promote formation of regional/international arrangements for assessing and conserving PPMUS throughout their range.
- Preclude waste of PPMUS associated with longline, purse seine, pole-and-line or other fishing operations.
- To promote domestic marketing of PPMUS in American Samoa, Guam and Hawaii.

The Pacific pelagic management unit species (PPMUS) are:

English Common Name

Scientific Name

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Mahimahi (dolphinfishes) | <i>Coryphaena</i> spp. |
| Wahoo | <i>Acanthocybium solandri</i> |
| Blue and black marlins | <i>Makaira</i> spp. |
| Striped marlin and shortbill spearfish | <i>Tetrapturus</i> spp. |
| Swordfish | <i>Xiphias gladius</i> |
| Sailfish | <i>Istiophorus platypterus</i> |
| Requiem sharks (oceanic species) family | Carcharhinidae |
| Thresher sharks (oceanic species) family | Alopiidae |
| Mackerel sharks (oceanic species) family | Lamnidae |
| Hammerhead sharks (oceanic species) family | Sphyrnidae |
| Yellowfin, bigeye, albacore, and bluefin tunas | <i>Thunnus</i> spp. |
| Skipjack tuna | <i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i> |
| Kawakawa | <i>Euthynnus affinis</i> |
| Frigate and bullet tunas | <i>Auxis</i> spp. |
| Slender tuna | <i>Allothunnus fallai</i> |
| Dogtooth tuna | <i>Gymnosarda unicolor</i> |
| Mackerel | <i>Scomber</i> spp. |
| Moonfish | <i>Lampris</i> spp. |
| Oilfish family | Gempylidae |
| Pomfret (oceanic species) family | Bramidae |

Non-tuna PPMUS are sometimes referred to as "other PPMUS" in this report. This term is equivalent to the PMUS (Pelagic Management Unit Species) used in annual reports previous to 1992, before tunas were included in the management unit.

The PPMUS are caught in the troll, longline, handline, and pole-and-line (baitboat) fisheries. They are caught in oceanic as well as insular pelagic waters. Most of these species are considered to be epipelagic because they occupy the upper most layers of the pelagic zone. All are high-level predators in the trophic sense. Pelagic fisheries for PPMUS are among the most important, if not the dominant, Pacific island fisheries.

The FMP requires the Council's Pelagic Plan Team (Team) to prepare an annual report on the status of the pelagic fisheries taking place in each of the island areas served by the Council (American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, and Northern Mariana Islands), evaluate the effectiveness of the FMP in meeting its goals and objectives, and make recommendations for future management and administrative action.

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Report Content

This report contains fishery performance data from each of the four island groups through 1995, interpretations of trends or important events occurring in the fisheries, and recommendations. This report was prepared using reports submitted by the following agencies. The Hawaii report is an integration of State of Hawaii and NMFS summaries.

- Territory of American Samoa, Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources
- Territory of Guam, Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources
 - Territory of Guam, Department of Commerce

- State of Hawaii, Division of Aquatic Resources
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Division of Fish and Wildlife
- National Marine Fisheries Service, Southwest Region (including Southwest Fisheries Science Center Honolulu Laboratory, Pacific Area Office, and Office of Enforcement)
- US Coast Guard, District 14
- Pacific Fisheries Research Program, University of Hawaii

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Report Appraisal

Report content has not changed significantly from previous years.

1995 Plan Team Members

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>American Samoa:</i> Mr. Alan Kingsolving Mr. Fini Aitaoto Dept. of Marine & Wildlife Resources P.O. Box 3730 Pago Pago, AS 96799 Tel: (684) 633-4456 Fax: (684) 633-5944 | <i>Hawaii (continued):</i> Mr. Gordon Leslie RR 1, Box 179 Captain Cook, HI 96704 Tel: (808) 328-9060 |
| <i>Guam:</i> Mr. Thomas Flores, Jr. Div. of Aquatic & Wildlife Resources Department of Agriculture 192 Dairy Road Mangilao, GU 96923 Tel: (671) 735-3955/56 Fax: (671) 734-6570 | Dr. John Kaneko Pacific Management Resources, Inc. 3615 Harding Ave. Honolulu, HI 96816 Tel: (808) 735-2602 |
| <i>Hawaii:</i> Dr. Robert Skillman Dr. Christofer Boggs Mr. David Hamm Dr. Samuel Pooley Dr. Jerry Wetherall Mr. Russell Ito (1996) Honolulu Laboratory National Marine Fisheries Service 2570 Dole St. Honolulu, HI 96822 Tel: (808) 943-1221 Fax: (808) 943-1290 | Mr. Robert Endreson Hawaii Fishermen's Foundation 305 Hahani St. #181 Kailua, HI 96734 Tel: (808) 262-2476 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Dr. Richard Brock University of Hawaii Sea Grant 1000 Pope Rd. Honolulu, HI 96822 Tel: (808) 956-8191 Fax: (808) 956-2858 | Mr. James Witten 1639 Kamole St. Honolulu, HI 96821 Tel: (808) 373-4229 |
| Mr. Walter Ikehara, Chair Division of Aquatic Resources Dept. of Land & Natural Resources 1151 Punchbowl Street #330 Honolulu, HI 96813 Tel: (808) 587-0096 Fax: (808) 587-0115 | <i>Northern Mariana Islands:</i> Mr. Michael Trianni Division of Fish & Wildlife Department of Natural Resources Saipan, MP 96950 Tel: (670) 322-9729 Fax: (670) 322-3386 |
| Dr. John Sibert SOEST/JIMAR University of Hawaii 1000 Pope Rd., MSB 312 Honolulu, HI 96822 Tel: (808) 956-4109 Fax: (808) 956-4104 | <i>Council Staff:</i> Dr. Robert Schroeder Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council 1164 Bishop St. #1405 Honolulu, HI 96813 Tel: (808) 522-8220 Fax: (808) 522-8226 |

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Table 1. Names of Pacific pelagic management unit species.

| Common | Scientific | Samoa or AS local | Hawaiian or HI local | Chamoru or Guam local | S. Carolina or NMI local | N. C NMI |
|------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| dolphinfish) | <i>Coryphaena</i> spp. | Masimasi | Mahimahi | Botague | Sopor | Hab |
| | <i>Acanthocybium solandri</i> | Paala | Ono | Toson | Ngaal | Nga |
| o blue marlin; n | <i>Makaira mazara</i> ; <i>M. indica</i> | Sa'ula | A'u, Kajiki | Batto' | Taghalaar | Tagh |
| rlin | <i>Tetrapterus audax</i> | | Nairagi | | | |
| earfish | <i>T. angustirostris</i> | Sa'ula | Hebi | Spearfish | | |
| | <i>Istiophorus platypterus</i> | Sa'ula | A'u lepe | Guihan layak | Taghalaar | Tagh |
| | <i>Xiphias gladius</i> | Sa'ula malie | A'u k_, Broadbill, Shutome | Swordfish | Taghalaar | Tagh |
| | <i>Lampris</i> spp. | Koko | Opah | | Ligherigher | Ligh |
| | <i>Ruvettus pretiosus</i> ; <i>Lepidocybium flavobrunneum</i> | Palu-talatala | Walu, Escolar | | Tekineepek | Tekir |

| | | | | | | |
|------------|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| | Bramidae | Manifi moana | Monchong | | | |
| arks | Alopiidae; Carcharinidae; Lamnidae; Sphyrnidae | Malie | Mano | Halu'u | Paaw | Paav |
| | <i>Thunnus alalunga</i> | Apakoa | 'Ahi palaha, Tombo | Albacore | Angaraap | Hang |
| a | <i>T. obesus</i> | Asiasi, To'uo | 'Ahi po'onui, Mebachi | Bigeye tuna | Toghu, Sangir | Togh |
| ina | <i>T. albacares</i> | Asiasi, To'uo | 'Ahi, Shibi | Yellowfin tuna | Toghu | Togh |
| uefin tuna | <i>T. thynnus</i> | | Maguro | | | |
| na | <i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i> | Atu, Faolua, Ga'oga | Aku | Bunita | Arangaap | Hang |
| | <i>Euthynnus affinis</i> | Atualo, Kavalau | Kawakawa | Kawakawa | Asillay | Hailu |
| ina | <i>Gymnosarda unicolor</i> | Tagi | Hagatsuo | Dogtooth or White tuna | Ayul | Owe |
| relatives | <i>Auxis</i> spp.; <i>Scomber</i> spp.; <i>Allothunnus</i> spp. | (various) | Ke'o ke'o, Saba (various) | (various) | (various) | (various) |

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Table 2. Total 1995 pelagic landings in western Pacific region.

| Species | American Samoa | Guam | Hawaii | Northern Marianas | TOTAL |
|----------------|----------------|---------|-----------|-------------------|------------------|
| Mahimahi | 12,122 | 321,014 | 1,000,000 | 18,576 | 1,351,712 |
| Mahoo | 12,796 | 78,530 | 600,000 | 4,555 | 695,881 |
| Blue marlin | 25,120 | 101,359 | 1,900,000 | 5,295 | 2,031,774 |
| Black marlin* | | | | | 0 |
| Striped marlin | | | 1,300,000 | | 1,300,000 |
| Spearfish* | | 738 | | | 738 |
| Sailfish* | 6,184 | 1,242 | | 78 | 7,504 |
| Swordfish | | | 5,900,000 | | 5,900,000 |
| Misc. billfish | | | 500,000 | | 500,000 |
| Yellowfin tuna | 60,920 | 78,021 | 4,600,000 | 16,128 | 4,755,069 |

| | | | | | |
|----------|--------|--|-----------|--|------------------|
| 3igeye | 5,171 | | 4,600,000 | | 4,605,171 |
| Albacore | 54,902 | | | | |