



WESTERN
PACIFIC
REGIONAL
FISHERY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL

Press Release

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Scientists Suggest 254,050 lbs for the 2009-2010 Main Hawaiian Islands Bottomfish Season

KAILUA-KONA (20 July 2009) The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)—chaired by Dr. Charles Daxboeck and meeting today at the King Kamehameha Beach Hotel in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii—recommended that the main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) bottomfish fishery be allowed to land 254,050 pounds of seven deepwater species in the 2009-2010 season, which begins on Sept. 1, 2009. The scientists made the same recommendation for 2008-2009. However, the Council decided upon a more conservative TAC of 241,000 pounds. Due to that TAC, the MHI bottomfish fishery was closed on July 6, 2009. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) bottomfish fishery is under a separate TAC and remains open.

Also today the SSC recommended extending the closure of the groundfish fishery at Hancock Seamount for another six years. The moratorium on this seamount in the northernmost part of the NWHI is slated to end in 2010. The SSC also supported research and international cooperation to recover the stock, which exists mostly outside of US waters.

The SSC continues its meeting tomorrow and Wednesday. The scientists will discuss tuna quota management and monitoring, non-longline pelagic fishing on seamounts and weather buoys, and protected species.

The SSC recommendations will be considered by the Council when it meets July 22 to 25, 2009, also at the King Kamehameha Beach Hotel in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. Fishermen and other interested members of the public are invited to attend the meeting and provide testimony. They are also invited to the Fishers Forum "Marlin on the Menu," 6:30 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, July 23. The Forum will cover the past, present and future of the marlin fishery in the US Pacific islands from multiple perspectives and seek recommendations on managing this fishery.

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council was established by the US Congress to manage fisheries in the exclusive economic zone around Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the US Pacific remote island areas. The management process is bottoms-up with recommendations from fishermen and other interested persons moving through advisory groups to the SSC and then to the Council. Decisions made by the Council are transmitted to the US Secretary of Commerce for final approval.

Complete agendas for these public meetings and additional information on the major items under consideration by the SSC and the Council may be found at the Council's website at www.wpcouncil.org or by contacting the Council by phone (808) 522-8220, fax (808) 522-8226 (fax), or email info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov.

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Scientific and Statistical Committee Members

Dr. Stewart Allen (NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center), Dr. Judith Amesbury (Micronesian Archeological Research Services), Dr. Brian Bowen (Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology), Dr. Paul Callaghan (University of Guam retired), Dr. Frank A. Camacho (Guam Community College), Dr. Milani Chaloupka (University of Queensland), Dr. Charles Daxboeck (BioDax Consulting Tahiti), Dr. Richard Deriso (Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission), Dr. John Hampton (Secretariat of the Pacific Community), Dr. Pierre Kleiber (NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center), Dr. Molly Lutcavage (University of New Hampshire), Dr. James Parrish (Hawaii Cooperative Fishery Research Unit retired), Dr. Dan Polhemus (Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources), Dr. Marlowe Sabater (American Samoa Marine & Wildlife Resources Department), Dr. Craig Severance (University of Hawaii at Hilo retired), Dr. John Sibert (Pelagic Fisheries Research Program), Dr. Robert Skillman (NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center retired) and Mr. Michael Trianni (Northern Mariana Islands Division of Fish & Wildlife).

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Members

Designated state officials: Ignacio Dela Cruz, CNMI Department of Land & Natural Resources; Joe Torres, Guam Department of Agriculture; Laura Thielen, Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources; and Ray Tulafono, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources. Designated federal officials: Bill Robinson, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office; Jerry Leinecke, U.S. Fish and Wildlife; RAdm Manson K. Brown, District Commander, U.S. Coast Guard 14th District; and Bill Gibbons-Fly, U.S. Department of State. Appointees by the Secretary of Commerce from nominees selected by Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa and CNMI governors: William Sword, recreational fisherman/civil engineer/manager (American Samoa); Stephen Haleck, business owner (hotel and gas station) (American Samoa) (Vice Chair); Manuel Duenas, Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association (Guam) (Vice Chair); Frederick Duerr, resort and hotel consultant (Hawaii) (Vice Chair); Peter Young, environmental consultant (Hawaii); David Itano, researcher (Hawaii); Sean Martin, Pacific Ocean Producers (Hawaii) (Chair); and Benigno Sablan, cultural practitioner (CNMI) (Vice Chair).