

# Pacific Islands Fishery News

Newsletter of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council

Summer 2003



Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds (2nd from left), Secretary of Commerce Don Evans (center) and NOAA Administrator Conrad Lautenbacher (2nd from right) dish up some tasty marlin at the NOAA Fish Fry booth shared by the Council and Oceanic Institute.

## Island Fish Featured at NOAA's Annual Fish Fry

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council and Oceanic Institute showcased four fish from the Western Pacific Region during the 2003 NOAA Fish Fry, June 18, 2003, in Washington DC. Chef Russell Siu, head chef at Honolulu's 3660 On The Rise, prepared the fish at the booth shared by the two organizations. Visitors to the booth were treated to the following scrumptious dishes and information about the fish species used to prepare them:

*Marlin Tempura with Seasoned Dashi with Shichimi*, prepared using marlin filet provided by the Hawaii Longline Association. Unlike the East Coast and California, the Western Pacific Region allows the sale of this species.

*and Green Onion Oil Drizzle*, prepared using high quality, high value ahi tuna filet provided by the Hawaii Longline Association. Despite the recent mercury-in-tuna media scare, this species caught in the Western Pacific Region is nothing but healthy.

*Ginger Crusted Opakapaka with Plum Chili Sauce*. Hawaii and Guam bottomfish fishermen provided several bottomfish species, coming from healthy and economically important fisheries in the Northwestern Hawaiian and Mariana Islands.

*Kahala Sashimi*. This dish featured Hawaii farm-raised kahala, which provides high quality raw and cooked seafood products. Wild stocks of this species are not targeted in Hawaii because of potential ciguatera toxin poison and parasite concerns.

*Continued on page 2*

## CNMI Busts Illegal Harvesters of Coral

Acting on a tip from an unidentified caller, Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Marine Conservation Officers rushed to a private residence on July 20, 2003, to find the biggest coral harvest in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) within the past three years. Responding officers Frank Rasa and Ray Cabrera, upon completing their investigation, cited two individuals from Tanapag village for illegally removing coral. Current CNMI fishing regulations prohibit individuals from harvesting coral in the CNMI waters, unless permitted by the DFW director.

"We need to protect our coral because they provide homes to the many different fishes that we eat and they protect our islands from wave surges during storms," said Joe Ruak, DFW aquatic educator. The two individuals could each face the maximum penalty of \$1,000 in fines.

According to Rasa, the coral was harvested to make  
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(l-r) DFW Marine Conservation Officers Ray Cabrera and Frank Rasa with a truckload of coral harvested illegally in the Saipan lagoon.

**NOAA's Annual Fish Fry** *continued from page 1*

Visitors were offered a variety of educational materials, including profiles of Hawaii's five major commercial bottom-fish species, recipe cards for pelagic fish and opakapaka, a kahala poster highlighting farm-raised fish and mercury fact packs.

The NOAA Fish Fry is an annual non-profit event that promotes fish as a healthy food choice. During its 28-year run, the event has been used to promote NOAA's mission, including wise stewardship and sustainability of fisheries. Guests include members of Congress and their staff; White House staff; NOAA and Department of Commerce leadership; representatives from private industry, non-profit organizations and trade associations; NOAA employees; other Federal agencies; and the general public. Attendance this year reached over 1,200.

**Council Advisory Member Wins CNMI Fishing Derby**



Triumphant but tired is probably the best observation one can make of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's Advisory Panel member Mike Fleming, who skippered the grand-prize winning *Bunita* during the annual fishing derby sponsored by the Saipan Sports Fishermen Association, July 5 and 6, 2003. His catch, with the help of his two anglers, was a Pacific blue marlin weighing 280 lbs; his prize, a hefty check worth \$3,000. This year's derby was the biggest ever with more than three hundred participants from Rota, Tinian, Saipan, Guam, Palau and Japan.

**Council, NOAA Fisheries Team Up with TV Fishing Show**

The producer of *Let's Go Fishing*, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Regional Office and the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council have reached an agreement to air weekly 30-second segments focusing on issues of importance to the fisheries. *Let's Go Fishing* is a popular Hawaii TV show viewed by approximately 56,000 households. Watch for the NMFS-Council segments beginning this fall.



The first-place marlin winners of the 8th Annual Guam Marianas International Fishing Derby from the fishing vessel *Fishing Paul Too* were (front, l-r) Capt. Paul Flores, Bruce Flores and Tom Quichocho. Also pictured are emcee Tim Perez (front, far right) and Derby Chairman Peter Kautz (in back).

**Fishermen Co-Op Sponsors Guam Fishing Derby and Festival**

More than two hundred fishermen on 82 boats participated in the 8th Annual Guam Marianas International Fishing Derby on Aug. 9 and 10, 2003, sponsored by the Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association. The boats launched from the Agana Boat Basin and Agat Marina. Volunteers at both sites worked long hours to make sure the event ran smoothly. The Fishermen's Co-op stayed open to handle the fish being brought in and to provide service to the many customers attracted to the event.

The first day's activities included a Fishing Festival, where Paul Bartram and Western Pacific Fishery Management Council Advisory Panel member Manny Duenas prepared mouth-watering recipes that wowed the attendees. The recipes included Bonita Burgers, Marlin Kabobs, Smoked Fish, Smoked Fish Spread (w/crackers), Bacon-Wrapped Marlin Fingers, Fish Kelaguen, Chamorro-Style Poke and Marlin Chop, which was a beautifully seasoned and crusted marlin filet.

At the Festival's activity center, the Council's Guam Onsite Coordinator, John Calvo, presented Council posters, newsletters and brochures as well as Community Demonstration Project Program materials and educational materials for schools. The fish painting feature at the kid's activity center was a big hit with children of all ages as were the candy packs, cotton candy, face painting, coloring sheets and fish magnets. Bartram donated the extremely popular fish magnets, which came in a wide variety of fish species. Despite the intermittent rain showers, "fish, fun and food" were the words of the day.

The second and last day of the derby focused on the fierce competition among the fishermen. The winners were as follows:

Category	Weight (lbs)	Boat	Captain
Marlin	357.0	<i>Fishing Paul Too</i>	Paul Flores
Yellowfin tuna	113.2	<i>Kiwi</i>	Gary Hull
Wahoo	32.3	<i>Sea Angel</i>	Angel Barcenilla
Mahimahi	25.9	<i>Krystall Gail</i>	Dan Elliot
Bonita	19.1	<i>Amber Marie</i>	Dominic San Gil

## CNMI Busts Illegal Harvesters *continued from page 1*

afuk, a white substance that people use throughout Micronesia for chewing betel nut. He said one of the individuals was a repeat offender who had been cited three years earlier for removing coral.

The coral was returned to the ocean the following day.

"Some of the coral that might still be alive will probably die, but even then they will make good habitat for some species within our marine ecosystem," noted DFW biologist Kate Moots.

## Vessel Grounds in Northwestern Hawaiian Islands

**O**n Aug. 13, 2003, a 523-foot Panamanian container vessel grounded off Tern Island, French Frigate Shoals, in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI). The container vessel was responding to a distress signal from a 35-foot sailboat in the area.

The sailboat, which was out of fuel and had a broken mast, requested assistance from US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) personnel on Tern Island and permission to make an emergency landing on the island. After being directed by the USFWS to anchor away from Tern Island, the sailboat anchored 1.5 nautical miles northeast of the island and used its automated mutual-assistance vessel rescue system to contact the nearby container vessel.

The grounding incident occurred after the container vessel transferred fuel to the sailboat. The container vessel suffered two fractures to its hull, causing the large ship to take on water. Later on that day, both boats were reported to be safe and out of the reef area. The US Coast Guard conducted overflights of the container vessel as it transited back to Honolulu for repairs and did not observe any leakage of fuel, oil or cargo from the damaged vessel.

## Council Meeting to Discuss Conservation of Sea Turtles in Hawaii Longline Fishery

**T**he Western Pacific Fishery Management Council will hold its 119th meeting at noon (Hawaii-time) Sept. 23, 2003, by telephone conference call at the Council office. The Council will discuss and may take action on a recent court ruling that puts aside the 2002 Biological Opinion and the 2002 measures that amended the Western Pacific Region pelagics fishery management regulations.

During the meeting, Council members will review a range of alternatives for managing Hawaii's longline fishery. The Council will also consider and may take action on conservation measures intended to offset any potential harm that the Hawaii-based longline fishery could still pose to sea turtles.



A local dance group performs for participants of Ocean Fest 2003.

## American Samoa Hosts All Islands CZM Meeting and Ocean Fest

**T**he week of Aug. 3, 2003, was a busy one for American Samoa, with several overseas participants on island for the All Islands Coastal Zone Management (CZM) meeting and Ocean Fest 2003.

During the CZM meeting, participants developed recommendations and resolutions regarding identification of grant programs, management of coral ecosystems, the need for technical assistance and training, and the need for federal entities to coordinate with island panels. The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's American Samoa On-Site Coordinator Fini Aitaoto participated in the CZM meeting as a member of the High Seas Advisory Panel, which advises American Samoa's Ocean Resource Management Council.

During the Ocean Fest 2003 celebration on Aug. 8, the Council provided a booth featuring brochures, newsletters and video and board presentations. Despite the rainy morning, many local residents enjoyed the displays, traditional dances, unveiling of the Ocean Fest 2003 poster and various contests.

In conjunction with the two events, a marine artist from Maui held a free workshop at the community college for children aged 9 to 13. The Council provided teacher workbooks on fish and fisheries for the participants.



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(Northern Mariana Islands)

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(American Samoa)

Executive Director

Kitty M. Simonds

## Council Approves Guam Bottomfish Area Restriction



During the 118th Council Meeting, Judith Guthertz (far right) was commended for her outstanding contributions to the Council over the past nine years. Manuel (Manny) Q. Cruz will serve as chair for the remainder of the year. Manny is the Director of Guam's Bureau of Statistics and Plans and was previously employed by the US Department of the Interior and Department of Energy in Washington, DC. Also pictured is Council Executive Director Kitty M. Simonds.

After much deliberation, the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council voted during its 118th meeting, June 10-13, 2003, in Honolulu, to close federal waters within 50 nautical miles of Guam to bottomfish fishing by vessels over 50 feet in length. Under this amendment to the Bottomfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Western Pacific Region, Guam-based bottomfish vessels 50 feet and larger operating within the exclusive economic zone surrounding Guam would be required to have a federal permit and keep logbooks. The amendment will go to the Secretary of Commerce for approval.

Because the amendment has the potential to displace larger fishing vessels from Guam, the Council will investigate whether similar management measures for federal waters surrounding the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) are appropriate.

The Council may in the future also consider limiting entry to the Guam and CNMI bottomfish fisheries. A control date of June 13, 2003, was set for this potential measure.

For the Hawaii bottomfish fishery, the Council approved the process to award two Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) Mau Zone bottomfish permits through the Community Development Program. This program aims to increase participation of indigenous communities in fisheries within the Council jurisdiction. Only 17 bottomfish permits are issued for the entire NWHI, 10 in the Mau and seven in the Hoomalu bottomfish zones.

On the pelagics front, the Council discussed a recent Pacific blue marlin stock assessment, which indicates that the stock is approaching maximum sustainable yield. The Council directed

staff to continue analyzing the impacts of a range of alternatives for managing Pacific blue marlin. It also recommended that the National Marine Fisheries Service and Council staff inform fishermen about the stock's status and provide education on the best practices for minimizing mortality in catch-and-release fisheries.

The Council also took initial action to consider modifying the Hawaii longline southern area closure. The Council staff was directed to continue preparations for a regulatory amendment to the Pelagics FMP and to provide a detailed analysis of a range of modifications to the southern area closure and the impacts of those alternatives on sea turtles, fisheries and the environment.

The 118th was the final meeting for Council Chair Judith Guthertz (Guam), Bryan Ho (Hawaii) and Aitofele Sunia (American Samoa). They will be replaced by Manny Duenas, Sean Martin and Stephen Haleck, respectively. Council Vice Chair Manuel Cruz of Guam will serve as chair for the remainder of the year.

In conjunction with the Council meeting, Dr. William Hogarth, Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries, convened special two-hour constituent sessions on June 10 and 11. The sessions aimed to gather public input on ways to improve the effectiveness of NOAA Fisheries and its management of living marine resources.

For more information about the 118th Council meeting, contact the Council at +1 808 522-8220 or at [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov) or visit [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org).

### New Council Member Profiles

**Manuel Paulino Duenas II:** Manny has been the chairman of the Board and president of the Guam Fishermen's Cooperative since 1995. Previously, he skippered the 34-foot F/V *Gerfy* and the 26-foot F/V *Marco Polo*, while holding an instructor's position at Guam Community College. He is a troller, bottomfish fisherman and spearfisher.

**Stephen Haleck:** Stephen is the *Lauvao* (High Talking Chief) of the Village of Aunu'u, in the county of Sa'ole, American Samoa. He is also general manager of the Airport Way Service Station and a recreational and subsistence fisherman.

**Sean Martin:** Sean has been president of the Hawaii Longline Association since 1999 and president of the fishing gear supply business Pacific Ocean Producers since 1984. He has served on various advisory panels for the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council since 1988.

## Hawaii Fishermen Provide Comments on Future Fishery Management Needs

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, along with the Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources, conducted a series of meetings throughout the state this summer to seek public input on the five issues below that may require management measures in the near future. The meetings were held July 30 on Kauai, Aug. 1 in Hilo, Aug. 2 and 19 in Kona and Aug. 7 on Maui. Another meeting will be held Oct. 21 on Oahu. The comments from 59 individuals (not including staff members) who attended the meetings to date are summarized below.

### HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES AND SMALL BOAT FISHERMEN

*Background:* Last March, new regulations for Atlantic recreational anglers and charter boat operators who target highly migratory species (HMS, i.e., tunas, sharks, swordfish and billfish) went into effect. The regulations require a recreational retention limit for swordfish; a permit to fish for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, shark and billfish; and a reporting system to monitor landings of swordfish and billfish.

*Public comments:* Fishermen would strongly oppose a recreational fishing permit in Hawaii, but it would be more acceptable if the fees went to improving fisheries. Subsistence fishermen would be most impacted by the permit fees. As for reporting, fishermen might fill out logbooks; however, if the motivation is future allocation, they might over-report. Options could be to work through fishing clubs; send out voluntary logbooks to recreational fishermen; send catch survey forms with annual vessel registration renewal forms; have a box at each boat ramp where fishermen could deposit their trip report (like hunters do at check-in stations); or use public service announcements to encourage fishermen to complete the forms.

### PRIVATE FADS

*Background:* Pelagic handline fishermen deploy privately owned fish aggregation devices (FADs) off the main Hawaiian Islands to aggregate primarily bigeye tuna when they come near the coast during the winter months (October–March). The deployment of these FADs is a relatively new fishery development that has been accompanied by other initiatives such as the use of radio transponders and sonar fish finders suspended beneath the FADs to estimate fish biomass. The Council has received a number of complaints regarding private FADs deployed by fishermen off the Big Island, including impacts on the resource and interactions between FAD owners and other fishermen. FAD deployment has also been reported off Kauai. Understanding this fishery is difficult as fishermen keep the number and location of private FADs a secret and, if found by others, often relocate them elsewhere. Moreover, some of the operators deploying private FADs have unilaterally asserted the right to the fish aggregating around the FADs, which has created social tensions and legal problems.

Questions have been raised concerning the reporting of catches from these FADs and whether or not the FADs are intercepting fish that would otherwise be available to smaller handline vessels.

*Public comments:* The state should deploy more public FADs. The collapse of the Hilo nearshore *ika-shibi* (tuna handline) fishery has driven more small vessel operators to try to locate the private FADs as a way to improve fish catches. Private FAD deployment occurs during the winter months and has created interactions with the Hawaii-based longline fishery, which has led to tangling and breaking of FAD moorings. The value of *ahi* has been reduced markedly, and the State should look into restricting the use of the term “*ahi*” to the marketing of Hawaii-caught yellowfin tuna.

### BLUE MARLIN

*Background:* A recent stock assessment indicates that Pacific-wide harvests of blue marlin are approaching their maximum sustainable levels. There are currently no federal regulations in place designed specifically to manage blue marlin in Hawaii’s fisheries. Options discussed to date include limiting the retention of blue marlin by some or all Hawaii-based fishery sectors, regulations on allowable gear types such as circle hooks or live baiting, time or area closures, and education of fishery participants through public outreach.

*Public comments:* Small blue marlins are worth more per pound than bigger ones. Unlike the US mainland, blue marlin is a common food in Hawaii. Individuals that are caught are sold, eaten, given away or otherwise used. Some charter vessels practice catch and release. This marlin season has been the best in years.

### BOTTOMFISH RESTRICTED FISHING AREAS

*Background:* In general, the key bottomfish species are healthy in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. However, two of these species are considered locally depleted in the main Hawaiian Islands. In response, the State of Hawaii created a series of area closures in 1998 throughout the main Hawaiian Islands to help rebuild these stressed resources. The State is initiating a five-year review of its bottomfish area closures and recreational bag limits and is seeking input from the public to help determine the scope of the review.

*Public comments:* Artificial reefs in the closed areas could help rebuild populations. The State could try stock enhancement through breeding programs. A tagging program could help locate where the fish migrate.

### BOTTOMFISH OVERFISHING DEFINITION

*Background:* The Council, which manages bottomfish resources in federal waters surrounding Hawaii through its Bottomfish and Seamount Groundfish FMP, is required to use a new assessment method to determine the status of fishery

stocks. Under this new method, the Hawaii bottomfish resource as a whole will likely be considered not overfished. However, it is likely that the “overfishing” index will be close to, if not exceed, the limit for this fishery. Therefore, the Council will need to devise a plan to reduce fishing mortality and effort in the fishery, particularly in the main Hawaiian Islands.

*Public comment:* There was no public comment on this issue although discussion did occur on recreational permitting.

If you would like more information on the above issues or would like to provide comments on them to the Council, please call +1 808 522-8220, e-mail [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov), or visit [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org). For your convenience, a comment card is enclosed in this issue of *Pacific Islands Fishery News*. For your comments to be considered, the completed card must be returned by Oct. 31, 2003.

## Side-Setting Minimizes Longline Interactions with Seabirds

Research on three seabird deterrent methods for the Hawaii longline fishery shows that the “side-setting” method is the most effective in avoiding seabird interactions while being affordable, enforceable, practical and conducive to fishing efficiency. This method entails setting baited hooks close to the side of the vessel’s hull where seabirds are unable or unwilling to attempt to pursue the hooks. By the time the bait reaches the stern, it has sunk to a depth where seabirds cannot locate it, nor dive deep enough to reach it. This method had the lowest mean seabird contact and capture rates when used on both Hawaii longline tuna and swordfish gear.

Less than three months after completing the research, six Hawaii longline vessels have voluntarily converted their vessels to side-setting, indicating the industry’s confidence in this method and their commitment to mitigate against seabird interactions.

The second method tested, the underwater-setting chute, releases baited hooks underwater, out of sight and reach of diving seabirds. It was relatively effective at reducing bird interactions but performed inconsistently and was inconvenient due to design problems.

The third deterrent, thawing and dying bait dark blue to attempt to reduce its visibility to seabirds, was less effective at avoiding bird interactions.

The research team included the Hawaii Longline Association, National Audubon Society, US National Marine Fisheries Service and Nigel Brothers, an Australian consultant. The final report, *Performance Assessment of Seabird Avoidance Methods in Hawaii Longline Fisheries*, prepared for the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, can be obtained by contacting the Council office at +1 808 522-8220 or at [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov).



Some Hawaii longline vessels are voluntarily converting their vessels to side-setting, indicating the industry’s confidence in this method and their commitment to reduce seabird interactions.

## Fishermen Have a Voice in Fishery Management Decisions

Fishing regulations can have dramatic impacts on fishermen, whether they fish to make money, have fun or feed the family. That is why the decision-making process for managing fisheries in federal waters of the Western Pacific Region (generally 3 to 200 miles offshore) includes ample opportunities for fishermen to voice their concerns and offer their expertise.

Fishermen can participate in the federal decision-making process at various levels. At the highest level, they can serve as a member of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council. Becoming a Council member is a selective process. Candidates are named by their respective governors and approved by the Secretary of Commerce.

But there are easier ways to become involved.

You can volunteer to serve on the Advisory Panel, which includes sub-panels on commercial, recreational, subsistence, and ecosystem and habitat. Each sub-panel has nine to 10 members, with two each from American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and Guam and three to four from Hawaii, which has a larger population base. Advisors serve for two years. These positions are voluntary, but members receive compensation for travel.

Fishermen can also serve on the Council’s other advisory panels, review boards and task forces. Currently, these include a panel to review projects that demonstrate traditional practices in fishing, fishery management and conservation in indigenous communities in the US Pacific islands; boards that review existing fishery management plans; and a task force investigating ways to improve the gathering and use of data on recreational fisheries under the Council’s jurisdiction.

Fishermen also participate on a less formal basis by sending comments directly to the Council or by contacting the Advisory Panel representatives in their island area.

Through your involvement, the Council can better protect and ensure sustainable use of marine resources for you, your family and your community.



Advisory Panel members meet annually to provide the Council with recommendations on managing commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries and ecosystem and habitat in the Western Pacific Region. Pictured here is the 2003 Advisory Panel in front of the Council office in Honolulu.

## Study Exaggerates the Decline in World's Stocks of Large Open-Ocean Fish

Scientists are heatedly debating how much large open-ocean fish remains in the world. Ransom A. Myers and Boris Worm of Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada, in their article "Rapid worldwide depletion of predatory fish communities" (*Nature* 15 May 2003) argue that the size of these fish communities today is only 10 percent of what was available prior to the beginning of "industrial" fish harvesting in the 1950s.

Myers and Worm's conclusion is based on their examination of trawl surveys of codfish, flatfish, skates, rays and other large bottom-dwelling fish in the northwest Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Thailand and the Antarctic Ocean off South Georgia and of tuna, billfish and swordfish catch data recorded by the Japanese longline fishery from 1952 to 1999 in certain segments of the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans. According to the authors, this data suggests that industrial fisheries typically reduce the abundance of targeted species by 80 percent within the first 15 years of the fisheries' existence.

John Hampton (Ocean Fisheries Programme, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, New Caledonia), John R. Sibert (Pelagic Fisheries Research Program, University of Hawaii, Honolulu) and Pierre Kleiber (National Marine Fisheries Service, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, Honolulu) have provided a strong rebuttal to the study. They argue that Myers and Worm exaggerate the overall decline in the world's open-ocean fish stocks based on an analysis that is simplistic, erroneous and, in the case of tuna fisheries, "fundamentally flawed." Using available fisheries data in the Pacific and focusing on the western and central Pacific, Hampton et al. provide the following counterarguments among others:

Myers and Worm combine the catch rates for different large open-ocean fish species in a geographical area and interpret this combination as an indicator of the overall status of large open-ocean fish in that area. This is mathematically impossible unless the catch rate (e.g., amount harvested per 100 hooks) for all of the species is the same—which it is not.

Myers and Worm assume that the longline catch rates indicate the overall population level of a species. This is not correct because

longlines tend to catch the largest and oldest members of the population but not the smaller and younger members of the population.

Myers and Worm restrict their examination of the Japanese longline data to the areas 20°N to 45°S in the Atlantic Ocean, 15°N to 45°S in the Indian Ocean and 10°S to 45°S in the Pacific Ocean. They say this restriction is necessary because industrialized fishing was already underway in much of the Northern Hemisphere before 1952, when the Japanese longline fishery began to record catch rate data. This claim is grossly overstated as available information suggests that the longline fishing effort prior to 1952 in the equatorial area was very low and largely of an exploratory nature. The study should have included Pacific waters up to 15°N as they include the main core habitat of tropical tunas and billfish.

Myers and Worm fail to explain the significant differences in the decline in longline catch rates for the different fish species in the western and central Pacific. For example, there was no decline in the catch rate for bigeye tuna, and, in the temperate region, catch rate decline occurred only for bluefin tuna.

Myers and Worm fail to explain why catch rate declines mostly occurred during periods of relatively low catch for most of the species considered or why large catches were subsequently taken.

Myers and Worm fail to recognize how the catch rate for a particular species is affected when fishermen start targeting a different species.

In conclusion, Hampton et al. propose the use of species-specific models that take into account the size and the age of the fish and the fluctuations in the species' population as well as data from all significant fishing gears. Using this approach to analyze the Pacific yellowfin tuna population in the western and central Pacific, they show that the large initial decline in longline catch rate in the Myers and Worm study can be attributed to an unusual influx of this species in the 1950s-1960s in the restricted area studied by Myers and Worm.

For a copy of the Hampton et al. paper, "Comments on Myers & Worm, *Nature*, 423:280-283, 15 May 2003" contact the Council office at +1 808 522-8220.

## NOAA Fisheries to Host Coral Reef Management Workshop for Hawaii

NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office, in association with the US Coral Reef Task Force, will hold a coral reef fishery management workshop on Nov. 6 and 7 at the Koolau Golf Club, Kaneohe, Hawaii. The primary purpose of the workshop is to develop strategies for effective management and understanding of fisheries that depend upon coral reef ecosystems. For more information, contact Alan Everson at +1 808 973-2935 ext. 212.

### Attention Fishermen:

Come to the Fishermen's Forum at the Fishermen's Wharf, 1009 Ala Moana Blvd., 6-9 p.m. on Oct. 21, 2003. Enjoy interesting presentations, food, drink and prizes. You'll also have an opportunity to provide your comments on future fishery management needs in federal waters around Hawaii and to participate in a scoping session on the Pelagics Fishery Management Plan supplemental environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. For more information, contact the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council at +1 808 522-8220 or at [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov).

## Fishery Management Plans Available

Copies of the Bottomfish, Coral Reef Ecosystems, Crustaceans, Pelagics and Precious Coral Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) for the Western Pacific Region can be downloaded from the Council website at [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org). For hard copies, contact the Council at +1 808 522-8220.

## COUNCIL CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

- 23 119th Council Meeting, Council office, Honolulu
- 24 Bottomfish Scoping meeting, Tinian and Saipan
- 25 National Marine Sanctuary Interagency Zoning for Fishing meeting, Honolulu
- 25 Bottomfish Scoping meeting, Rota
- 26 Bottomfish Scoping meeting, Guam
- 29-Oct. 3 Western and Central Pacific Fishery Management Commission, PrepCon, Rarotonga
- 29 US Coral Reef Task Force and Coral Reef Initiative, All Islands Committee Meeting, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- 30-Oct. 2 US Coral Reef Task Force Pacific Region Subcommittee Meeting, CNMI

### OCTOBER

- 1-2 New Council Members Orientation, Silver Spring, Maryland

- 2 National Marine Sanctuary Bottomfish and Pelagic Fishing meeting, Honolulu
- 3-7 US Coral Reef Task Force meetings and field trip, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam
- 8-9 Pacific Region Coral Reef Fisheries Management Workshop, Guam
- 14-15 Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council meeting, Hawaii Kai, Hawaii
- 14-16 84th Scientific and Statistical Committee meeting, Council office, Honolulu
- 20-23 120th Council Meeting, Honolulu
- 22-25 21st Wakefield Fisheries Symposium, Anchorage, Alaska
- 23-24 2003 National Fishery Law Symposium, Seattle, Washington
- 27-31 North Pacific Anadromous Fisheries Commission, Honolulu

### NOVEMBER

- 1-5 National Fisheries Institute meeting and International West Coast Seafood Show, Los Angeles

- 5 National Marine Sanctuary Interagency Zoning for Subsistence, Recreational and Precious Corals meeting
- 6-7 Hawaii Pacific Coral Reef Fisheries Workshop, Kaneohe, Hawaii
- 10-14 Regional Fishery Management Council Conference, Washington, DC
- 13 Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting, Honolulu
- 13 National Marine Sanctuary Bottomfish and Pelagic Fishing meeting, Honolulu


- 17-22 Sea Turtle Conservation and Management, Bellagio, Italy
- 20-23 Fish Expo Workboat Northwest, Seattle, Washington
- 26-29 Deep Sea 2003 pre-conference meetings, Dunedin, New Zealand

### DECEMBER

- 1-5 Deep Sea 2003, Queenstown, New Zealand
- 8 Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, New York, NY
- 8-14 2nd Sea Turtle Tagging Database Meeting, Australia

## Western Pacific Recipe

### BLUE MARLIN TEMPURA



**Seasoned Dashi with Shichimi**

**Serves 4 people**

12	each	2 ounce portion of marlin
1	cup	tempura flour
1/2	cup	ice water (may need more to get desired consistency)
1/4	cup	flour
		salt and pepper to taste
1	quart	fry oil (heated to 350 degrees)

**Method:**  
Season marlin with salt and pepper. Dredge in flour and shake off excess. In a non reactive bowl, add tempura flour. Whisk in water slowly till batter has a consistency of thick maple syrup. Place floured fish into batter and coat evenly. Place in fryer for about 3 to 4 minutes.

**Seasoned dashi with shichimi**

2	cups	dashi (Japanese soup stock)
1/4	cup	teriyaki sauce
3	tbsp	ponzu
1	tbsp	ginger, finely grated
2	tbsp	green onions, chopped
1/2	tsp	shichimi

**Texture & Flavor:**  
Moderate flavor with firm texture

In a sauce pot add the ingredients and mix well.

**Plating:**  
Ladle about 3 to 4 ounces of seasoned dashi onto bottom of a pasta bowl. Place 3 fillets of marlin atop sauce. Garnish with cilantro and black sesame seeds.



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