



## Scientists, Fishery Managers to Set 2013 Annual Quotas for US Pacific Islands

HONOLULU (23 October 2012) The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) that advises the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council will convene tomorrow through Friday at the Council office, 1164 Bishop St., Suite 1400, Honolulu, to discuss federally managed fisheries in the Western Pacific Region. Federal fisheries operate seaward of the state/territorial waters of Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the remote US Pacific Island areas. The Council will review the recommendations of the SSC and other advisory bodies at its 155<sup>th</sup> meeting, Oct. 29 to Nov. 1, 2012, at the Laniakea YWCA-Fuller Hall, 1040 Richards St., Honolulu.

Among the key actions scheduled is the setting of the 2013 annual quotas. The SSC will determine the limit that can sustainably be removed from each fish stock, i.e., the acceptable biological catch (ABC). The Council will consider the ABCs along with social, economic, cultural and management uncertainty factors (such as data collection and monitoring) to set the annual catch limits (ACLs), which may not exceed the ABCs.

Species	2011 reported commercial catch (lbs)	2012 ACL (lbs)	2013 ACL under consideration
Main Hawaiian Islands non-Deep 7 bottomfish, e.g., uku (grey snapper/jobfish), ulua (trevally/jack), kalekale (yellow-tailed snapper)	131,391	135,000	135,000 or 140,000 lbs
American Samoa bottomfish	32,817	99,200	Biennial ACLs will be considered based on recent stock assessment by National Marine Fisheries Service.
CNMI bottomfish	25,110	182,500	
Guam bottomfish	16,050	48,200	Same as the 2012 ACL as no new scientific information available
Hawaii spiny lobster	10,569	10,000	
Hawaii slipper lobster	170	280	
Hawaii's Kona crab	11,049	27,600	
Hawaii deepwater shrimp	8,387	250,773	
Hawaii precious coral	Confidential data due to low fishery participation	Varies by species & location	
American Samoa spiny lobster	2,311	2,300	
American Samoa slipper lobster	0	30	
American Samoa Kona crab	0	3,200	
American Samoa deepwater shrimp	0	80,000	
American Samoa black coral	0	1,742	
American Samoa other precious coral	0	2,205	
CNMI spiny lobster	810	5,500	
CNMI slipper	0	60	
CNMI Kona crab	0	6,300	
CNMI deepwater shrimp	0	275,570	
CNMI black coral	0	2,100	
CNMI other precious coral	0	1,000	
Guam spiny lobster	1,980	2,700	
Guam slipper	0	20	
Guam Kona crab	0	1,900	
Guam deepwater shrimp	0	48,488	
Guam black coral	0	700	
Guam other precious coral	0	1,000	

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## 2013 Annual Catch Limits to Be Set 2-2-2-2

The 2013 quotas for the coral reef fisheries and the Deep 7 main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish have already been set. Internationally managed fisheries (e.g., highly migratory species such as tuna and billfish), non-targeted species that are considered ecosystem components and species whose lifespan is less than one year are exempted from the ACL requirement.

Congress through the 2006 reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act has required that federal fisheries be managed through ACLs beginning in 2012. Because available data covers only a limited amount of the total fishing mortality in the Western Pacific Region, the Council adopted a “precautionary approach” when specifying the 2012 ACLs.

Other major items on the SSC and/or Council agenda include, among other:

- Management of the gold coral fishery in the Western Pacific Region, which has been under a five-year moratorium that will expire on Sept. 11, 2013. New research indicates that gold coral growth is slower than previously estimated.
- Review of the Science Plan for the NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), which will guide decision-making within the agency and increase transparency. The Plan identifies core monitoring and research activities to be conducted under stringent budget scenarios.
- Review of research on the connectivity of main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish stocks.

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council was established by Congress to manage fisheries in offshore waters around Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, CNMI and the US Pacific remote island areas. Recommendations made by the Council are transmitted to the Secretary of Commerce for final approval. For more information or agendas, visit [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org) or contact the Council at [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov); phone (808) 522-8220, or fax (808) 522-8226.

**Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council:** Appointees by the Secretary of Commerce from nominees selected by American Samoa, CNMI, Guam and Hawaii governors:, Michael Duenas, Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association (Guam); Richard Seman, education and outreach specialist (CNMI); William Sword, recreational fisherman/civil engineer/manager (American Samoa) (Vice Chair); Edwin Ebisui, attorney (Hawaii); Julie Leialoha, environmentalist (Hawaii); and F. McGrew Rice, charter fisherman (Hawaii). Designated state officials: Arnold Palacios, CNMI Department of Land & Natural Resources (Vice Chair); Mariquita Taitague, Guam Department of Agriculture (Vice Chair); William Aila, Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources (Interim Chair); and Ray Tulafono, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources. Designated federal officials: Michael Tosatto, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office; Don Palawski, U.S. Fish and Wildlife; RAdm Charles Ray, U.S. Coast Guard 14th District; and Bill Gibbons-Fly, US Department of State.

**Scientific and Statistical Committee:** Dr. Charles Daxboeck, chair, (BioDax Consulting Tahiti); Dr. Stewart Allen (NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, PIFSC), 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. Richard Deriso (Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission), Dr. John Hampton (Secretariat of the Pacific Community), Mr. David Itano (NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office), Dr. Pierre Kleiber (NMFS PIFSC), Dr. Donald Kobayashi (NMFS PIFSC), Dr. Molly Lutcavage (University of New Hampshire), Mr. Jim Lynch (K & L Gates, Seattle), Dr. Domingo Ochavillo (American Samoa Dept. of Marine & Wildlife Resources), Mr. Francis Oishi (Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources), Dr. Minling Pan (NMFS PIFSC), Dr. Craig Severance (University of Hawaii retired), Dr. John Sibert (Pelagic Fisheries Research Program retired), Dr. Robert Skillman (NMFS PIFSC retired) and Mr. Todd Miller (Northern Mariana Islands Division of Fish & Wildlife).