

ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS FOR THE HAWAII ARCHIPELAGO

What Is an Annual Catch Limit?

An annual catch limit (ACL) is the yearly harvest limit of a population or population complex that is established to prevent overfishing. If the ACL is met or exceeded, accountability measures are triggered.

What Is an Accountability Measure?

Accountability measures are management controls, such as a seasonal closure or quota closure, to prevent ACLs from being exceeded. These measures can also correct or mitigate occurrences of exceeding an ACL.

Why Do We Need ACLs?

To improve conservation of managed fishery resources, the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) of 2006 required Regional Fishery Management Councils to develop ACLs for each of their managed fisheries and to establish a mechanism for specifying a harvest level that prevents overfishing.

Do All Species Have ACLs?

The MSA provides limited exceptions to ACL requirements. ACLs and accountability measures are not required for species that have an annual life cycle with only one reproductive cycle (e.g., squid), species managed under international agreements (e.g., tuna and billfish in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean), and ecosystem component species, i.e., non-target species that are not overfished or likely to become subject to overfishing and are not generally kept for sale or personal use.

What Are the ACLs for the Hawaii Archipelago in 2012?

In 2011, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council specified the following ACLs for 2012 for fisheries operating in federal waters surrounding the Hawaii Archipelago.

FISHERY	FEDERALLY MANAGED SPECIES	ANNUAL CATCH LIMIT	
BOTTOMFISH	Non-Deep 7 Bottomfish	135,000 lbs (61,235 kg)	
	Deepwater Shrimp	250,773 lbs (113,749 kg)	
	Spiny Lobster	10,000 lbs (4,536 kg)	
	Slipper Lobster	280 lbs (127 kg)	
	Kona Crab	27,600 lbs (12,519 kg)	
PRECIOUS CORAL*	Auau Channel Black Coral	5,512 lbs (2,500 kg)	
	Pink/Bamboo Coral; Makapuu Bed	2,205/551 lbs (1,000/250 kg)	
	Pink/Bamboo Coral; 180 Fathom Bank	489/123 lbs (222/56 kg)	
	Pink/Bamboo Coral; Kaena Point Bed	148/37 lbs (67/17 kg)	
	Pink/Bamboo Coral; Keahole Bed	148/37 lbs (67/17 kg)	
	Precious Corals in the Hawaii Exploratory Bed	2,205 lbs (1,000 kg)	
	CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM	<i>Selar crumenoptalmus</i> -akule, bigeye scad	651,292 lbs (295,421 kg)
		<i>Decapterus macarellus</i> -opelu, mackerel scad	393,563 lbs (178,517 kg)
Carangidae-jacks		193,423 lbs (87,735 kg)	
Mullidae-goatfish		125,813 lbs (57,068 kg)	
Acanthuridae-surgeonfish		80,545 lbs (36,535 kg)	
Lutjanidae-snappers		65,201 lbs (29,530 kg)	
Holocentridae-squirrelfish		44,122 (20,013 kg)	
Mugilidae-mullet		44,112 lbs (18,648 kg)	
Mollusks-turbo snails, octopus, giant clams		28,765 lbs (13,048 kg)	
Scaridae-parrotfish		33,326 lbs (15,116 kg)	
Crustaceans-crabs		20,686 lbs (9,383 kg)	
Carcharhinidae-Reef sharks		111,566 lbs (50,605 kg)	
All Other CREMUS combined	142,282 lbs (64,538 kg)		

* There is a moratorium for gold coral harvests through June 30, 2013.

How Were the ACLs Calculated?

The analyses for the ACLs were done on the entire range of the stocks. The available catch information is incomplete and thus resulted in the low ACL limits.

What Will Happen If an ACL Is Exceeded?

If the post-season accounting of the 2012 catches shows that more fish were caught during the year for a species/species group than the 2012 ACL allowed, then the 2013 ACL for that species/species group will be reevaluated.

How Can You Help?

Fishermen and vendor participation in the catch reporting and creel surveys implemented by the fishery management agencies is crucial. Accurate estimates of the island-wide catches will reduce management uncertainty and increase catch limits.

For more information, go to www.wpcouncil.org or contact the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council at info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov.

About the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

In 1976, the US Congress through the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) established eight Regional Fishery Management Councils to manage the nation's fisheries in the US EEZ (generally 3-200 miles offshore). The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's jurisdiction includes the EEZ waters around the State of Hawaii; US Territories of American Samoa and Guam; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI); and the US Pacific remote island areas. This area of nearly 1.5 million square miles constitutes about half of the entire US EEZ. The Council prepares, monitors and amends management plans to support sustainable fisheries, mitigate interactions with protected species, and conserve marine habitat and ecosystems. The Council also fosters opportunities for indigenous island communities to participate in fishing and fishery resource management using their culture and traditional practices.

