



Pacific Islands Fishery News

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Newsletter of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

COUNCIL EXPLORES MEASURES TO PROVIDE RELIEF TO AMERICAN SAMOA FISHERMEN

At its 159th meeting held in March 2014, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council began the process to temporarily open the Large Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA) in American Samoa. This measure is one of several the Council is exploring to provide relief to American Samoa longline fishermen faced with the economic collapse of the South Pacific albacore fishery.

The start of 2014 saw American Samoa longline vessels tying up rather than fishing because catches were insufficient to cover expenses. The fishery, which reeled in more than 300,000 fish or about 6,000 metric tons (mt) in 2002, had declined to a low of 117,000 fish or about 2,000 mt in 2013. Vessels returned from trips of greater than one-month duration with their fish holds only half full, according to fishermen.

In early February 2014, Council staff met with American Samoa longline fishermen and representatives of the American Samoa government, Starkist Samoa, TriMarine, Samoa Tuna Processors and other fishery participants in Pago Pago to explore solutions to the collapsed fishery. Discussions focused on opening the LVPA, diversifying beyond albacore for the tuna canneries and re-examining the American Samoa longline limited entry program. However, these measures would not solve the immediate problems of low albacore price and catch rates across the central South Pacific (see sidebar on page 3).

At the meeting, alia (small catamaran) fishermen and the Pago Gamefishing Club opposed opening the LVPA, especially around the southern islands of American Samoa.

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AMENDMENT 7 APPROVED, US TERRITORIES TO BENEFIT

On March 28, 2014, Amendment 7 to the Pelagic Fisheries Ecosystem Plan (FEP) was approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Regional Administrator Michael Tosatto. The amendment, which took several years to develop, authorizes US Pacific Island Territories to enter into agreements to transfer limited amount of bigeye quota to eligible US longline fishermen, consistent with the conservation needs of the stock.

"It was a long process, but the approval is recognition of a strict management regime recommended by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and the ability of NMFS to closely monitor the Hawai'i and US Territory longline fisheries," said Kitty Simonds, the Council's executive director.

Under the Amendment 7 management framework established by Amendment 7,

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Ecosystem-based Management of Fisheries in the US Pacific Islands

The Council was established by Congress in 1976 to manage marine resources and maintain opportunities for sustainable domestic fishing in the US exclusive economic zone waters and high seas around Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the eight US Pacific remote island areas.

www.wpcouncil.org

American Samoa longline vessels tied up due to economic collapse of the South Pacific albacore fishery.



AMERICAN SAMOA FISHERMEN

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The LVPA encompasses about 33,000 square nautical miles (nmi) of the 118,354 square nmi (about 24 percent) of the EEZ around American Samoa. It is closed to all pelagic fishing vessels larger than 50 feet in length overall (LOA). While the longline fishery takes mostly albacore, the fishery also takes marlin, wahoo, mahimahi and other tuna important to the alia fishery and sports fishermen.

The LVPA was initially established to support small-boat fisheries, such as the alia fleet. These vessels are powered by outboard motors and longline using hand cranked reels. Once thriving, the alia fleet now includes one or two vessels operating out of Pago Pago and none from Swains Island.

At its March meeting, the Council directed its staff to draft a measure that would modify the LVPA and identify options to reduce the LVPA boundaries for one year. The preliminary preferred alternative would shrink the northern boundary around Tutuila, Manu'a and Rose to 25 nmi and the LVPA around Swains to 12 nmi. In preparing the draft measure, Council staff will consider public testimonies from a hearing on the LVPA held on May 3, 2014, in Pago Pago, as well as the recommendations of its advisory bodies including the American Samoa Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committee, which convened on May 5, in Tafuna, American Samoa. The Council members will consider, and may take action, on the draft measure at its 160th meeting to be held June 24 to 27, 2014, in Honolulu.

Another avenue the Council is pursuing to provide relief to the American Samoa longline fishery is a fishery diversification program. Council funds would be used to help offset trip expenditures for vessels targeting fish for the fresh fish market or demonstrating more efficient fishing operations.

In line with this program, some fishermen are currently experimenting with fishing on un-anchored purse-seine fish aggregation devices (FADs) that drift into the EEZ around American Samoa. A small group of longline fishery participants use handline gear to target large yellowfin and bigeye around these FADs. The fishermen base their operations on the time of day and moon phases when fish are believed to be present around the FADs. Depending on the success of the trials, participants may use this method to land fresh yellowfin and bigeye for export markets, which could reduce economic impacts during periods of low catches of albacore for the tuna canneries.

Vessels larger than 50 feet are currently conducting these fishing operations outside of the American Samoa LVPA. An application for an Experimental Fishing Permit (EFP) that would allow a small number of large vessels to use the hook-and-line gear within the LVPA has been sent to NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO). Once the appropriate level of information is provided, NMFS will bring the application to the Council for its consideration.

Longline boat for sale in American Samoa due to collapsing fishery.

AMENDMENT 7 APPROVED

Continued from page 1

A third approach the Council has taken to address the collapsed American Samoa longline fishery was to reexamine the fishery's limited entry program. The program now includes vessel limits within four size classes (Class A less than 40 feet LOA, 12 permits; Class B 40.1 to 50 feet LOA, 1 permit; Class C 50.1 to 70 feet LOA, 12 permits; Class D greater than 70 feet LOA or greater, 27 permits). The intent of the limited entry permit program was to maximize American Samoa participation in the longline fishery.

An amendment to the Pelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) recommended by the Council, but not yet transmitted for approval by the Secretary of Commerce, would simplify the program by combining the four vessel size classes into two: Class A for vessels smaller than 50 feet LOA and Class B for vessels greater than 50 feet LOA. The amendment would also reduce the minimum landing requirement for Class A vessels from 1,000 pounds to 500 pounds per three-year period and would remove the requirement for documented history in the fishery (i.e., US citizens and nationals would be eligible for the permits, with no other qualifying criteria). The prior history ranking system would be maintained if there were two or more applications for the same available permit.

On average, less than 30 of the 60 available permits have been utilized in the fishery since 2004 when the limited entry permit program began. Most of this under-utilization is due to the collapse of the small vessels fishery (Classes A and B), which had contracted to a single vessel in 2008.

At the February meeting, longline fishermen were asked if the permit program should be modified further, such as abolishing the permit size classes and the landing requirements and allowing the permits to be freely transferable in the same way the Hawai'i longline limited entry permits are. Alternatively, the limited entry program could be abolished altogether and have the fishery operate as before under the Western Pacific general longline permits. Longline fishermen were wary of opening up the American Samoa limited entry program.

The Council at its 159th meeting in March considered these findings and took no further action on the proposed Pelagic FEP amendment to the American Samoa longline permit program.

NMFS has approved the Council's proposed 2,000 metric ton (mt) annual catch limit of longline-caught bigeye tuna for each of the US Territories of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Through the framework, each US Territory can transfer up to 1,000 mt of its annual limit under agreements reviewed by the Council and approved by NMFS, to eligible US vessels permitted under the Pelagic FEP. The agreements are to include payments to the Western and Central Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund to support fisheries development in the territories.

Amendment 7 concluded that the 1,000 mt of transferable bigeye would not impede the objective of the conservation and management measure (CMM 2013-01) of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to end bigeye overfishing in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean by 2020. CMM 2013-01 does not establish an individual limit on the amount of bigeye tuna that may be harvested annually in the convention area by Small Island Developing States and Participating Territories, including American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI.

Among other factors, Amendment 7 also meets the objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). The amendment establishes a framework for allowing the limited transfer of available quota between the Territories and the US fisheries, subject to accountability measures to ensure sustainable management and the achievement of WCPFC conservation goals. The MSA recognizes the unique historical, cultural, legal, political and geographical circumstances of the US Pacific Islands that make fisheries resources important in sustaining economic growth. The MSA also states that one of the policies of Congress is to ensure that fishery resources adjacent to the US Pacific Islands (including highly migratory stocks) be explored, developed, conserved and managed for the benefit of the people of those islands and the United States.

South Pacific Albacore Crash Is Region-wide

The collapse of the albacore fishery is not confined to the American Samoa fleet. The longline fisheries of Pacific Islands countries (PICs) across the Central South Pacific from Fiji to the Cook Islands have suffered the same scale of fleet contraction, stemming from a mix of high costs of fuel and other operating expenses, low albacore prices and low longline catch rates.

The region-wide collapse is associated with a growing number of Chinese longline vessels. Chinese vessels receive substantial government subsidies on fuel, licensing, freight costs, vessel construction, exports, tax, loans and labor. The expansion of Chinese longliners south of the equator has led to a doubling of the albacore catch from around 40,000 metric ton (mt) in 1990 to more than 80,000 mt in 2012. This increase has added pressure on the adult resource and reduced the cannery price by about \$1,000 per mt.

A contributing factor may be that some PICs that operate domestic longline fleets have also granted access permits to Chinese fishing vessels. Most of the Chinese catch is taken in the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of PICs through charter arrangements and access agreements for foreign longline vessels.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) conservation and management measure (CMM) for albacore tuna currently applies only to catches south of 20 degrees S and clearly has not worked. A proposed measure to cap high seas catches of South Pacific albacore and catches of albacore in the EEZs was tabled at the WCPFC meeting in December 2013 due to objections by China and other countries such as Taiwan. China has indicated that it will increase its longline fleet from 250 to 400 vessels. If members of the WCPFC are serious about finding a solution to the collapsed fishery, the expansion of fishing fleets should be reconsidered.

NEW TUNA MEASURE NEGATIVELY IMPACTS US FISHERIES

The major accomplishment of the 10th regular session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC10) meeting in Cairns, Australia, Dec. 2-6, 2013, was the adoption of a multi-year replacement conservation and management measure (CMM) for tropical tuna. The last comprehensive measure was CMM 2008-01, which covered fishing from 2009-2011 and which was effectively rolled over in 2012 and 2013. A prominent feature of these WCPFC10 deliberations was the insistence by the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) through their representative organization, the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), that compliance with the CMM created a disproportionate burden for them. As such, they argued for compensation from the metropolitan distant water fishing nations (DWFNs).

The reductions in US high seas purse-seine catches will likely be around 800 to 1,000 fishing days, which is estimated to have a value of approximately \$50 million.

Ultimately, the Commission adopted a measure that is applicable from 2014 through 2017, but many of its provisions are dependent on further Commission decisions.

In 2014, purse-seine fleets will follow either a four-month FAD closure or specified limits on FAD sets. In 2015 and 2016, countries will have the choice of a five-month FAD closure (combined with a FAD set limit) or a specified FAD set limit, but only if the Commission agrees in 2014 to arrangements to avoid disproportionate burdens on Small Island Developing States (SIDSs). High seas purse-seine fishing effort will be capped at specified levels for each fleet. The US fleet cap is 1,270 fishing days per year. The Commission scientists did not recommend the reductions in high seas catches.

The reductions in US high seas purse-seine catches will likely be around 800 to 1,000 fishing days, which is estimated to have a value of approximately \$50 million. The American Samoa economy will feel this negative impact since most of the fish caught on the high seas is landed and processed in the territory's canneries.

Longline fleets will take further bigeye tuna catch cuts from 2014 through 2017. Some countries will likely experience significant economic consequences due to the measure, including the United States. The limits for the US longline fishery will start in 2014 at the current level of 3,763 mt, followed by a reduction to 3,554 mt in 2015 and 2016, and 3,345 mt in 2017. In 2010, the Hawai'i longline fishery was closed for 40 days in November and December, a peak time for bigeye demand, with losses to the fishery of millions of dollars and impacts to more than 200 jobs in the local seafood industry.

Although some other countries' fleets will be affected by the 2013 tropical tuna measure, none will be negatively impacted to the same degree as US fisheries. One reason for this is the Commission has no mechanism to ensure compliance, and it is believed that many countries involved in the fisheries do not strictly follow the measures. However, US authorities are vigilant in enforcing the Commission's rules against US vessels, so the playing field is not level. Similarly, unlike catches by other countries, US catches of all fish are scrupulously monitored and reported. Many other longline fleets do not even provide the required reporting information to the Commission or its scientists.

In other matters, the Commission's CMM for sharks was revised to include non-retention of silky sharks, along with oceanic white-tip sharks.

The full report of the meeting is available at www.wcpfc.int/meetings/10th-regular-session-commission.

REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN TO IMPROVE FISHERY DATA COLLECTION

The members of the Technical Subcommittee of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee convened its inaugural meeting on April 14 to 16, 2014, at the Council office in Honolulu. The meeting was geared towards formulating the Regional Strategic Plan to improve fishery data collection as well as coordinating various fishery researches occurring across the Western Pacific Region.



The Technical Committee of the Council's Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee at its inaugural meeting, April 14-16, 2014, drafted a strategic plan to improve fishery management in the region through enhanced scientific information.

The meeting participants included representatives from the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, Guam Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Division of Fish and Wildlife, and Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources, Hawai'i Pacific University, University of Hawai'i (Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology), University of Guam (Marine Laboratory), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Regional Office and Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, and US Fish and Wildlife Service (Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program).

The strategic planning session was facilitated by Ann Weaver, Douglas Harper and Stephanie Bennett of the NOAA Coastal Resource Center.

The Western Pacific Regional Strategic Plan for Fishery Data Collection and Research is a pioneering attempt to guide the improvement efforts for fishery data collection programs in American Samoa, Guam, the CNMI and Hawai'i. This plan also aims to coordinate all fishery-related research in the region in order to attain the goal of improving fishery management through enhanced fishery scientific information. This coordinated and collaborative effort seeks to increase leverage in terms of funding support from various sources.

SCIENTISTS CONSIDER SPATIAL MANAGEMENT OF BIGEYE TUNA



David Itano of National Marine Fisheries Service surgically implants an archival tag into a bigeye tuna to obtain a daily record of its movements. Photo courtesy of Bruno Leroy, Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

At its October 2013 meeting, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) concluded that more data is needed regarding the geospatial origins of Hawai'i bigeye tuna in order to improve its management in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). The SSC noted that extensive tagging of bigeye tuna throughout the central and western Pacific suggests that bigeye do not move from the equatorial areas to northern central Pacific waters where the Hawai'i longline fishery operates.

The SSC also recommended that the bigeye otolith stable isotope study be completed and published. Similar studies helped resolve spatial distribution and connectivity of Hawai'i yellowfin tuna. Further, the bigeye study should be expanded to include sampling of otoliths from other locations not yet sampled (e.g., northwestern Pacific).

In response to the SSC recommendations, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council convened a Pacific Bigeye

Tuna Movement and Distribution Workshop on April 22 to 24, 2014, at the Council office in Honolulu. About 20 participants met to review what is known about bigeye spatial distribution and connectivity in the Pacific and to identify the research needed to fill knowledge gaps.

About 90 percent of Pacific bigeye is caught within the equatorial region of the Pacific in a band extending 10° N and 10° S of the equator. There are, however, high latitude fisheries above 20° N in Hawai'i and Japan and 20° S in Peru. The group discussed a range of techniques to answer questions regarding the origin of the bigeye caught in these high latitudes and whether they migrate away to other parts of the Pacific. These techniques include conventional and electronic tagging, genetics, stable isotope and otolith micro-constituent analyses and predictive models based on bigeye life-history, habitat and known movement patterns. The workshop identified knowledge gaps in these research areas and listed the research work that is needed to address these gaps.

This information has direct relevance to the international management of bigeye by the two tuna regional fisheries management organizations, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission. Both organizations have conservation measures for tuna and for longline and purse-seine fisheries, but have included spatial elements for purse-seine but not for longline fisheries. For example, in the WCPO, purse-seine measures apply only between 20° N and 20° S. In the Eastern Pacific Ocean, an area closure for skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin has been formed, inside which purse-seine fishing is prohibited between September 29 and October 29.

The Council would like to see more nuanced management measures for longline fisheries in the WCPO. These could include for example, latitudinal limits similar to purse seines, since 90 percent of the fishing mortality for bigeye tuna occurs within the equatorial waters between 10° N and 10° S. Stock assessments for all the tropical tunas are spatially disaggregated so why not craft management measures the same way?



Left: Participants of the Council's Pacific Bigeye Tuna Movement and Distribution Workshop. Right: Bigeye Tuna tagging. photo credit NOAA Fisheries.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDS CHANGE IN US BIGEYE LIMIT IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC

At its 159th meeting in March 2014, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council recommended that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prepare a proposal to increase the US longline bigeye limit in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO).

Catches in the EPO, including US longline catches, are subject to resolutions promulgated by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC).

Currently the Asian longline fleets are catching a third of their catch limits in the EPO (see figure 1). Most of this reduction has been driven by the Japanese fleet, which is now catching between one fifth and one quarter of its potential catch volume.

Country	Bigeye catch limit (mt)	2012 catch (mt)	% of catch limit
China	2,507	1,993	79.5
Japan	32,372	7,424	22.9
Korea	11,947	6,892	57.7
Chinese Taipei	7,555	2,937	38.9
Total	54,381	19,246	35.4

Figure 1: EPO annual bigeye catch limits for the Asian longline fleets. Source IATTC.

Expansion of a catch limit or removal of a catch limit for the Hawai'i longline fleet would not mean unfettered expansion of bigeye catches by the Hawai'i fleet. The Hawai'i longline program is limited to 164 permits, with a current fleet size of about 135 vessels. Expansion is finite unless the Council re-amends the Pelagic Fisheries Ecosystem Plan (FEP) to allow for more permits.

If the IATTC maintains the US bigeye allocation as at present, with a 500 mt limit for vessels greater than 24 meters and unlimited catch for vessels less than 24 meters, then this may prove inequitable for the larger longline vessels. They may have to retreat into the Western and



The darker blue area is under both WCPFC and IATTC jurisdiction. Orange dots represent jurisdiction of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

Central Pacific Ocean when good fishing conditions prevail in the EPO, while smaller vessels may continue fishing.

As shown in figure 2, catches by the Hawai'i fleet remained lower than 500 mt until 2005. However, between 2004 and 2006, the Hawai'i longline fleet was subject to a catch limit of 150 mt stemming from a IATTC 2004 resolution. From 2007 onwards the Hawai'i-based longline fleet has been subject to a 500 mt bigeye catch limit (IATTC 2006). This initially applied to all longline vessels, but in 2009 the catch limit was set for longline vessels greater than 24 meters, which comprise 15 percent of the US longline fleet based out of Hawai'i.

From 2005 onwards, the Hawai'i longline fleet has caught increasing amounts of bigeye tuna in the EPO, with catches exceeding 1,000 mt in 2008 and 2,000 mt in 2013. NMFS closed the fishery on Nov.

11, 2013, when it judged that the 500 mt limit had been reached by Hawai'i-based US longline vessels greater than 24 meters in length.

The most recent stock assessment indicates that the bigeye stock in the EPO is likely not overfished and that overfishing is not taking place. The current exploitation is close to the maximum sustainable yield target reference points, and interim limit reference points have not been exceeded under the current model.

The Council is exploring a range of options to modify the US longline bigeye allocation in the EPO. These options are not intended for amending the Council's Pelagic FEP, but for the United States to advocate for inclusion in the next IATTC Resolution for a Multiannual Program for the Conservation of Tuna in the EPO at the annual IATTC meeting in Lima, Peru, in July 2014.

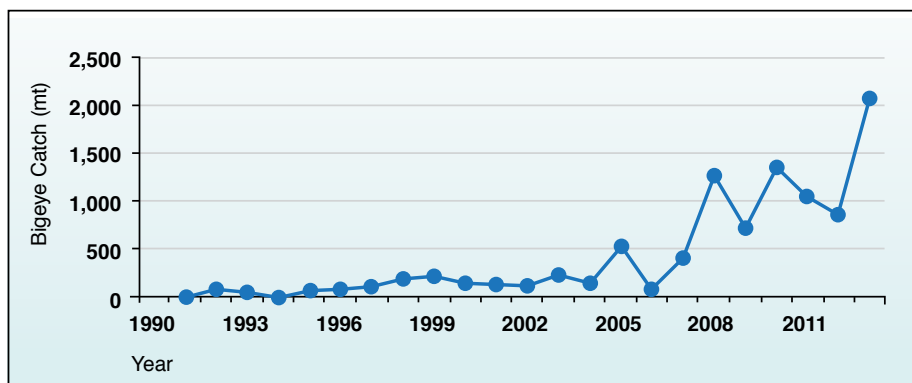


Figure 2: Time series of US bigeye tuna catches in the EPO between 1991 and 2012. Source IATTC and NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center unpublished data.

Noncommercial Fishing Receives Increased Attention



Capt. Carl Reyes (in hat) with anglers Steve Reyes and James Reyes showing off their winning 27.25-pounder caught aboard the Padre de Familia during the Mahi Derby on Saipan on March 22, 2014. Photo courtesy of Phyllisina Reyes

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council considers non-commercial fishing in the Western Pacific Region to include recreational, charter/for-hire, subsistence and sustenance. To address this large range of fishing types, the Council and its partner agencies have been working to improve understanding of these fisheries and increase communication opportunities with non-commercial fishermen.

Non-Commercial Fisheries Advisory Committee

The first meeting of the Council's Non-Commercial Fisheries Advisory Committee (NCFAC) in September 2013 opened dialogue on data collection initiatives, current issues such as protected species interactions and definitions, and provided priorities and issues in non-commercial fisheries for the Council's consideration. The NCFAC recommended improved and increased communication on non-commercial fisheries, an easier to understand definition of non-commercial fisheries and priorities for data collection improvements, the importance of billfish and fishery infrastructure.

The Council convened the NCFAC in 2009 to provide input on non-commercial fishery and data issues as the Council worked to address the 2006 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) mandates related to recreational fisheries. As the MSA mandates were met and non-commercial fishery issues changed, the Council identified a need to reorganize its NCFAC to suit current issues and priorities coming to light, largely data gaps and sector characterization.

The Council, in 2013, reconstituted its NCFAC to include regional boat-based fishing clubs. NCFAC membership includes the president of each club (or its representative) and is based upon the active small-boat organizations and not individuals. The repurposed committee establishes a group of active small-boat fishermen who have natural leadership and communication skills that the Council can vet fishery management and conservation issues to

get feed-back on potential small-boat fishery and community impacts.

The NCFAC meets as needed. Any small-boat fishing clubs that would like to participate on the NCFAC are welcome to apply by contacting Joshua DeMello at (808) 522-7493.

Talk Story Sessions

The National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) Pacific Islands Regional Office has recently begun monthly "talk story" sessions the second Thursday of every month to provide a venue for non-commercial fishermen to discuss issues that are relevant to non-commercial fisheries. The meetings are held from 6 to 8 p.m. at the NMFS Honolulu Service Center at Pier 38. Recent sessions have discussed monk seal interactions with fishermen, the 2014 National Recreational Fishing Summit and saltwater recreational fishing licenses. Other issues are welcome as time permits. For more information on the talk story sessions, contact David Itano at piro.recfish@noaa.gov.



The May 8th Talk Story on a possible Hawai'i saltwater non-commercial fishing license drew a lively crowd of participants.

Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) Working Group

At the December 2013 MAFAC meeting, the Recreational Fishing Working Group (RFWG) submitted a white paper on recommendations for MSA reauthorization as tasked by MAFAC. The white paper provides possible changes to the MSA and NOAA fishing regulations. In brief, the recommendations made were for flexibility in rebuilding stocks and setting annual catch limits, improved and expanded data, the inappropriateness of catch shares for recreational fisheries, regionally appropriate definitions for non-commercial fishing and the negative impacts of other statutes (e.g., Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act and National Marine Sanctuaries Act) on recreational fishing opportunities. Recommendations were divided between national and regional significance and provide a range of concerns and issues that face noncommercial fishermen. The concerns and issues of the Western Pacific Region were well represented by the regional members on

the RFWG: Craig Severance (Council Scientific and Statistical Committee member), Ed Watamura (Advisory Panel chair) and Jesse Rosario (Mariana Advisory Panel co-chair). The Recreational Fisheries White Paper can be found at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ocs/mafac/meetings/2013_12/index.htm

Second National Recreational Fishing Summit



Western Pacific delegation to the National Saltwater Recreational Fishing Summit.

The Council and the Western Pacific Region were well represented at the second Saltwater Recreational Fishing Summit on April 1 and 2, 2014, in Alexandria, Va., hosted by NOAA and provided the region's concerns including the definition of non-commercial fishing. The goal of the Summit was to provide "an ongoing conversation about improving the science, service and stewardship of America's saltwater recreational resources." Summit participants from across the nation provided input on issues and concerns that the National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) should consider in its management of recreational fisheries. The big announcement at the Summit, from Eileen Sobeck, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, is that NOAA will develop a national policy for recreational fisheries to guide agency actions in dealing with non-commercial fisheries and issues and to better integrate recreational fishing with NOAA's mission.

In attendance at the Summit to represent the Council and the Western Pacific Region were McGrew Rice (Council member), Kitty Simonds (Council executive director), Josh DeMello (Council staff member), Craig Severance (Council Scientific and Statistical Committee member), Ed Watamura (Advisory Panel chair), Jesse Rosario (Mariana Advisory Panel co-chair) and Gene Weaver (Noncommercial Fisheries Advisory Committee member). Also representing the Western Pacific Region were David Hanno, Hongguang Ma, Roy Morioka (former Council chair), Dean Sensui, Debbie Takayma and Michael Tosatto.

The agenda, briefing materials and reports can be found on the meeting's website at www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/2014_summit/index.html.

P* WORKING GROUP SPECIFIES OVERFISHING RISKS FOR CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM FISHERIES

The **P* Working Group** of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council has established a new system for determining risk of overfishing and its scientific uncertainty (P*) when specifying coral reef ecosystem annual catch limits (ACLs). Regional fishery management councils are required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to specify ACLs for all management unit species in their respective Fishery Management or Ecosystem Plans.



Process for specifying annual quotas includes scientific uncertainties as determined by the P* Working Group and management uncertainties as determined by the SEEM working group.

The Council's preliminary ACL specifications for most of the coral reef ecosystem management unit species were based on the 75th percentile of the entire catch time-series using creel survey data in American Samoa, Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the commercial marine license reports in Hawai'i. The results were underestimated catch limits as they were based only on catch information and included a reporting system that did not capture all of the fisheries' landings.

In an effort to improve the ACL estimates, the Council moved to a model-based approach to gauge maximum sustainable yield (MSY) based on a relative measure of species resilience, carrying capacity and total harvest estimates. This method was augmented by incorporating biomass from the National Marine Fisheries Service's Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center's stationary point count surveys in the Western Pacific Region. The augmented approach enhanced the model outputs because it no longer relied on catch trends in deriving standing stock biomass. Such reliance can be problematic especially when the catch is not tightly coupled with the productivity of the stock.

Seventy-two MSY estimates were generated covering all of the coral reef management unit species/species complex and the spiny lobsters in all jurisdictions. The MSY corresponds to the 50 percent risk of overfishing which, in turn, is equivalent to the overfishing limit (OFL).

The working group was formed to quantify uncertainties associated with the model used, stock status, and the productivity and susceptibility of the stock complexes. The P* Working Group met in May, June and December 2013. It recommended the following ranges of risk to overfishing in coral reef fisheries: 30.8 to 39.5 percent for American Samoa, 30.2 to 37.9 percent for Guam, 34.6 to 39.42 percent for CNMI and 32 to 42 percent for Hawai'i.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, ECOLOGICAL AND MANAGEMENT UNCERTAINTY FACTORED INTO ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS

The **Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's** annual catch limit (ACL) specification process, which was implemented in 2011, includes explicit consideration of social, economic, ecological and management uncertainty (SEEM) factors to strengthen the Council's ecosystem-based approach to managing fisheries and set ACLs.

While for some, the term "fishery" refers to a management unit of one or more fish stocks, others feel that in an ecosystem context, a fishery is a system that includes fish as well as harvesters and the rest of their support infrastructure and industry. To set ACLs in the region, the Council established a process that includes consideration of relevant SEEM factors. The purpose of this SEEM evaluation is to incorporate social, economic and ecological factors and management uncertainty in determining whether to set the ACL at the acceptable biological catch (ABC) or some level below. Thus far, the Council has convened two SEEM working groups. The first met in early 2011 to determine whether SEEM factors might warrant precaution when setting the main Hawaiian islands (MHI) bottomfish ACL. The second working group met in late February 2014 regarding the region's coral reef ACLs. Both groups chose to use a -2 to +2 scale and to score factors in the social and economic dimensions as positive, ecological factors as either positive or negative, and management uncertainty factors as negative. Thus, only negative ecological factors and any management uncertainty factors could be used as a basis to reduce catch from ABC.

The 2011 MHI bottomfish SEEM working group suggested a 6 percent reduction, while the February 2014 Coral Reef SEEM working group advised reducing coral reef ABC levels in the American Samoa, Hawai'i and the Mariana Archipelago by 5 percent, 5 percent and 3 percent, respectively. The Council, at its March 2014 meeting in the Mariana, chose to lower coral reef ACLs by 5 percent across the board in response to the SEEM Working Group's suggestion.

The SEEM process appears to be the only one of its kind in the regional fishery management council system and is helping to strengthen the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's ecosystem-based approach to managing fisheries in the US Insular Pacific.

2015-2018 Annual Catch Limit

FOR CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM FISHERIES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

Family Group	American Samoa ACLs (lbs)	Guam ACLs (lbs)	CNMI ACLs (lbs)	Hawai'i ACLs (lbs)
<i>Selar crumenophthalmus</i> – atule, atulai, akule or bigeye scad	37,400	50,200	77,400	988,000
Acanthuridae – surgeonfish	129,400	97,600	302,600	342,000
Carangidae – jacks ¹	19,900	29,300	44,900	161,200
Carcharhinidae – reef sharks ²	To come	To come	Not monitored	To come
Crustaceans – crabs	4,300	7,300	4,400	33,500
Holocentridae – squirrelfish	15,100	11,400	66,100	148,000
Kyphosidae – chubs/rudderfish	2,000	9,600	22,700	105,000
Labridae – wrasses ³	16,200	25,200	55,100	205,000
Lethrinidae – emperors	19,600	53,000	53,700	35,500
Lutjanidae – snappers ⁴	63,100	18,000	190,400	330,300
Mullidae – goatfish	11,900	15,300	28,400	165,000
Mugilidae – mullets	4,600	17,900	4,500	19,200
Mollusks – turbo snail; octopus; giant clams	18,400	23,800	9,800	35,700
Scaridae – parrotfish ⁵	272,000	71,600	144,000	239,000
Serranidae – groupers	25,300	22,500	86,900	128,400
Siganidae – rabbitfish ⁶	163	19,200	10,200	n/a
All other coral reef ecosystem (CRE) management unit species combined, i.e., other CRE finfish, other invertebrates and miscellaneous bottomfish, reef fish and shallow bottomfish	18,400	185,000	7,300	485,000
<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i> - humphead (Napoleon) wrasse ⁶	1,743	1,960	2,009	n/a
<i>Bolbometopon muricatum</i> - bumphead parrotfish ⁶	235	797	797	n/a
Algae	Not monitored	6,900	Not monitored	Not monitored
<i>Decapterus macarellus</i> - 'opelu or mackerel scad	Not monitored	Not monitored	Not monitored	438,000

¹ Carangidae in Hawai'i includes kahala (*Seriola dumerili*) since this species is not included in NMFS bottomfish stock assessments and is a reef associated species.

² The Scientific and Statistical Committee will address reef sharks at its next meeting as the analysis is not yet complete.

³ Family Labridae does not include *Cheilinus undulatus* (humphead or Napoleon wrasse).

⁴ Lutjanidae in Hawai'i includes ta'ape (*Lutjanus kasmira*) since this species is not included in NMFS bottomfish stock assessments and is a reef associated species

⁵ Family Scaridae does not include *Bolbometopon muricatum* (bumphead parrotfish).

⁶ Siganiidae – rabbitfish, *C. undulatus* and *B. muricatum* do not occur in Hawai'i.

COUNCIL CALLS FOR SHARK ASSESSMENT IN THE MARIANA ARCHIPELAGO

At its 158th meeting, October 2013 in Honolulu, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council directed its staff to work with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) and Mariana fishermen to conduct a shark assessment in the Mariana Archipelago. The action was in response to Mariana fishery participants' continued complaints of depredation of target catches when pelagic trolling and bottomfishing. The depredation is likely caused by a high shark population.

Observed shark species in the Mariana Archipelago include five species of coastal and reef sharks (blacktip, Galapagos, gray, tawny nurse and white-tip sharks) and 13 species of pelagic sharks (blacktip, blue, bluntnose sixgill, cookiecutter, great hammerhead, oceanic whitetip, pelagic thresher, scalloped hammerhead, shortfin mako, silky, silvertip, tiger and whale sharks).



At the 159th Council meeting held March 2014 in Guam, high school students protested for a shark sanctuary in the Territory's waters, while fishermen complained about increasing depredation of their catches by sharks.

The establishment of pelagic longline fishery within the archipelago to harvest sharks, tunas and billfish species may provide relief for fishermen losing catch to sharks. Reduced levels of top predators may also provide some balancing effects on the ecosystem.

Fisheries in the Mariana Archipelago occasionally land sharks, but no directed fisheries for sharks currently exist

locally and sharks tend to be discarded. The Guam troll fishery in the period 1996-2004 annually caught 2.5 metric tons (mt) on average comprised primarily of silky, Galapagos and oceanic whitetips. While in 2011, 238 lbs (0.1mt) of pelagic shark were landed in Guam. In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), shark bycatch is negligible and landings are unknown.

Currently in CNMI and Guam, the possession, sale, trade and distribution of shark fins is prohibited. In Guam, an exception is when a person is in possession of shark for subsistence, traditional and cultural sharing purposes. In the CNMI, exceptions are for persons in possession of shark for subsistence purposes or with a valid license from the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources for research. On the other hand, a proposed rule by NMFS to implement the provisions of the Shark Conservation Act of 2010 would require all sharks caught by US vessels to be landed with fins naturally attached.

At its 159th meeting in Guam and the CNMI, the Council discussed the conflicting local and federal shark management regulations (i.e., the federal requirement to land sharks with fins and the local prohibition from possessing fins) and directed its staff to facilitate resolution of the conflict.



Depredation of targeted species by sharks has been documented in the Mariana Archipelago as early as the 1940s. According to Guam and CNMI fishermen at the 159th Council meeting, the depredation problem is increasing and impacting all fisheries. Pictured above are a few samples of the species and fisheries being impacted: top (l-r) wahoo / pelagic; dog tooth tuna / bottom-pelagic; gindai / deep bottom; top (l-r) mafute / reef; bonita tuna and wahoo / pelagic; and barracuda / near shore-reef. Photos courtesy of the Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association.



Sharks in Pacific Island Culture

Sharks have been and continue to be important in Pacific island culture. Across the Pacific sharks have been both revered and hunted. In many parts of the Pacific, sharks had spiritual importance and chants were recited to call upon them for protection. Navigators, voyagers, and fishermen have commonly worn tattoos of dolphins to ward off shark attacks.

Sharks in the Mariana Archipelago were traditionally fished by hooks and harpoons as a food source, and skins and teeth were used for various purposes including tools and weapons.

Evidence connecting sharks and people in the Mariana Archipelago has recently been unearthed. The burial, which dates to the Pre-Latte Phase (prior to AD 1000), of a woman at Tumon Bay, Guam, contained 12 drilled tiger shark teeth. Two other burials from the same site date to the Latte Phase (approximately AD 1000-1521) each contained one drilled shark tooth. Four drilled shark teeth, as well as 14 smaller, non-perforated teeth, were recovered from the excavation of Pagat, Guam.



COUNCIL CONSIDERS AMENDING BOTTOMFISH CLOSED AREA AROUND CNMI

CNMI

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council scheduled public informational scoping meetings on April 28 and 30, 2014, on Rota and Tinian, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), to solicit comments on the management of the bottomfish fishery in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) surrounding the CNMI. These scoping meetings aim to describe existing federal management rules for bottomfish species, examine the current performance of the fishery and consider the need for potential rule changes, among other things. Results of the meetings will be presented for consideration and potential action at the 160th Council meeting to be held June 24 to 27, 2014, in Honolulu.

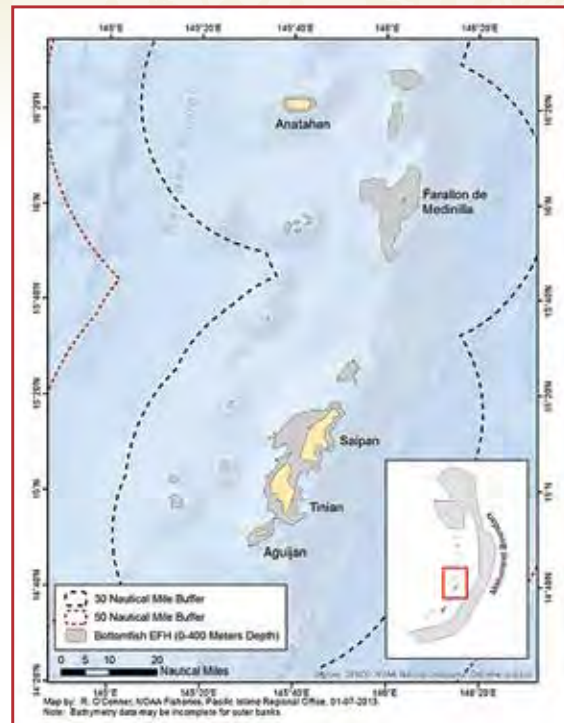
In 2009, federal fishing rules were put in place to manage bottomfishing in the waters around CNMI's southern islands. The rules included a 50-mile closure area for vessels larger than 40 feet from fishing for bottomfish management unit species (BMUS) around the islands of Rota, Saipan, Tinian and Farallon de Medinilla and a 10-mile closure around the island of Alamagan. The regulations were established to address concerns that larger vessels would enter

into the fishery, compete with small boat local fishermen and impact the stock. Other rules include federal permit and trip reporting and the use of a vessel monitoring system for fishermen harvesting BMUS in waters around CNMI.

Federal BMUS include amberjack, ambon emperor, black trevally, blacktip grouper, blueline snapper, ehu, giant trevally, gindai, kalekale, lehi, lunartail, onaga, opakapaka, redgill emperor, uku, yelloweye opakapaka and yellowtail snapper.

Given the healthy state of the stock, the impacts of the regulations on the local fishing industry and concerns about the future of the local fishery, the Council at its 159th meeting, held March 18-21, 2014, in CNMI and Guam, recommended that as preferred preliminary alternatives that the bottomfish area closures around the Southern Islands and around the northern island of Alamagan be removed.

Other options to be discussed at the April public scoping meetings include a closure reduction from 50 miles to 30 miles around the Southern Islands and the retention of the 10-mile closure around Alamagan.



Reduction of closure from 50 to 30 miles would open no additional bottomfishing grounds to fishermen around the southern island of CNMI.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS ON CNMI MILITARY BUILDUP EXPECTED IN THE FALL



Council member Richard Seman at scoping meeting conducted by the military to solicit public comment for developing the EIS/OEIS on the military buildup in the CNMI.

Representatives of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council were interviewed by military representatives as part of the data collection process for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Joint Military Training (CJMT) draft

Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS). The status of the military buildup in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is dependent on these statements. According to Greg Cing, coordinator, CNMI Military Integration Management Committee Office, the completion of the draft CJMT EIS/OEIS is set for between September and November of this year.

The US Marine Corps is spearheading the EIS and has been conducting interviews in the CNMI to assist in the CJMT EIS/OEIS social economic study data collection. According to Craig Whelden, executive director, US Marine Corps Forces Pacific, the effort involves several teams collecting data through 2014.

Several Council representatives on Saipan took part in this data collection via interviews, including Council member Richard Seman; John Gourley, chair of the Council

Mariana Archipelago Plan Team; Todd Miller, member of the Scientific and Statistical Committee; and Council Onsite Coordinator Jack Ogumoro. They were joined by Lt. Governor's Legal Counsel, Wesley Bogdan. Among other issues, they discussed the Council's roles and responsibilities, offshore fishing areas, on-shore fishing areas and the importance of fish and subsistence fishing to the island community.

The CJMT involves developing live-fire ranges and training areas on the islands of Tinian and Pagan. There are three alternatives involving live-fire ranges on Tinian and two on Pagan. Each of the alternatives represents different training capabilities and capacities. In addition, the CJMT also proposed special air and sea space to support these alternatives, as well as to provide safe separation between military and civilian air and sea activities during military training.

“We do not own the land and ocean around our islands, we belong to it.”

Genevieve S. Cabera,
CNMI resident and
member of Guardians of Gani

Submerged lands around US military leases on the island of Tinian (5 & 6) and Farallon de Medinilla (7) will be transferred from the federal government to the CNMI upon an agreement that “ensures protection of military training with the excepted area,” according to the Presidential Proclamation..



CNMI Gov. Eloy Inos (left) and Council Chair/CNMI Secretary of Lands and Natural Resources Arnold Palacios voice their strong disappointment in federal actions to retain the submerged lands around five of the 14 islands of the Commonwealth.

PRESIDENT WITHHOLDS CNMI CONTROL OF SOME SUBMERGED LANDS

Less than 120 days after the enactment of US Public Law 113-34, which conveyed title to the submerged lands within three miles around the 14 Northern Mariana Islands to the government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), President Obama issued a proclamation that exempted transfers to the CNMI of submerged lands around five of the islands. Similarly, submerged lands around US military leases on the islands of Tinian and Farallon de Medinilla (FDM) will be transferred upon an agreement that “ensures protection of military training within the excepted area,” the Proclamation says.

CNMI Gov. Eloy S. Inos opened the 159th meeting of Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council in March 20, 2014, noting the withholding transference of the submerged lands from these islands

was a key concern for the Commonwealth. Inos said it is possible for NOAA and US Fish and Wildlife Service to continually disapprove any management agreement so they can retain control over the submerged lands within the monument. He asked the Council to support Commonwealth efforts to have the submerged lands “presently being held hostage by the US Departments of Commerce and the Interior returned to their rightful owners.”

Arnold Palacios, Council chair and Secretary of the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR) said, “CNMI got jacked. They gave us the submerged lands and then they took it back I don’t think they [Departments of Commerce and the Interior] are interested in co-manage-ment. The Antiquities Act [used to create the monument] doesn’t allow the co-management that was promised to us by the White House envoy.”



From left: 1. Farallon de Pajaros (Uracas) an uninhabited volcanic island, the northernmost island in the Northern Mariana Islands chain; **2.** The Maug Islands (from the Chamorro name, Ma’ok, meaning “steadfast” or “everlasting”) consists of a group of three small uninhabited islands in the Northern Mariana Islands; **3.** Asuncion, in the Northern Mariana Islands; and **4.** Tinian. Source: Government satellite photos.



Submerged lands around US military leases on the islands of Tinian (5 & 6) and Farallon de Medinilla (7) will be transferred upon an agreement that "ensures protection of military training within the excepted area," according to the Proclamation.

"It is encroachment," noted Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds, referring to FDM. A prime bottomfish fishing ground that is accessible to Saipan residents, FDM was occasionally closed to fishing by the military out to 3 miles for live-fire training, then 7 miles and now 10 miles with talk of permanent closures out to 12 miles.

Local residents shared their thoughts at the Council meeting and associated Fishers Forum.

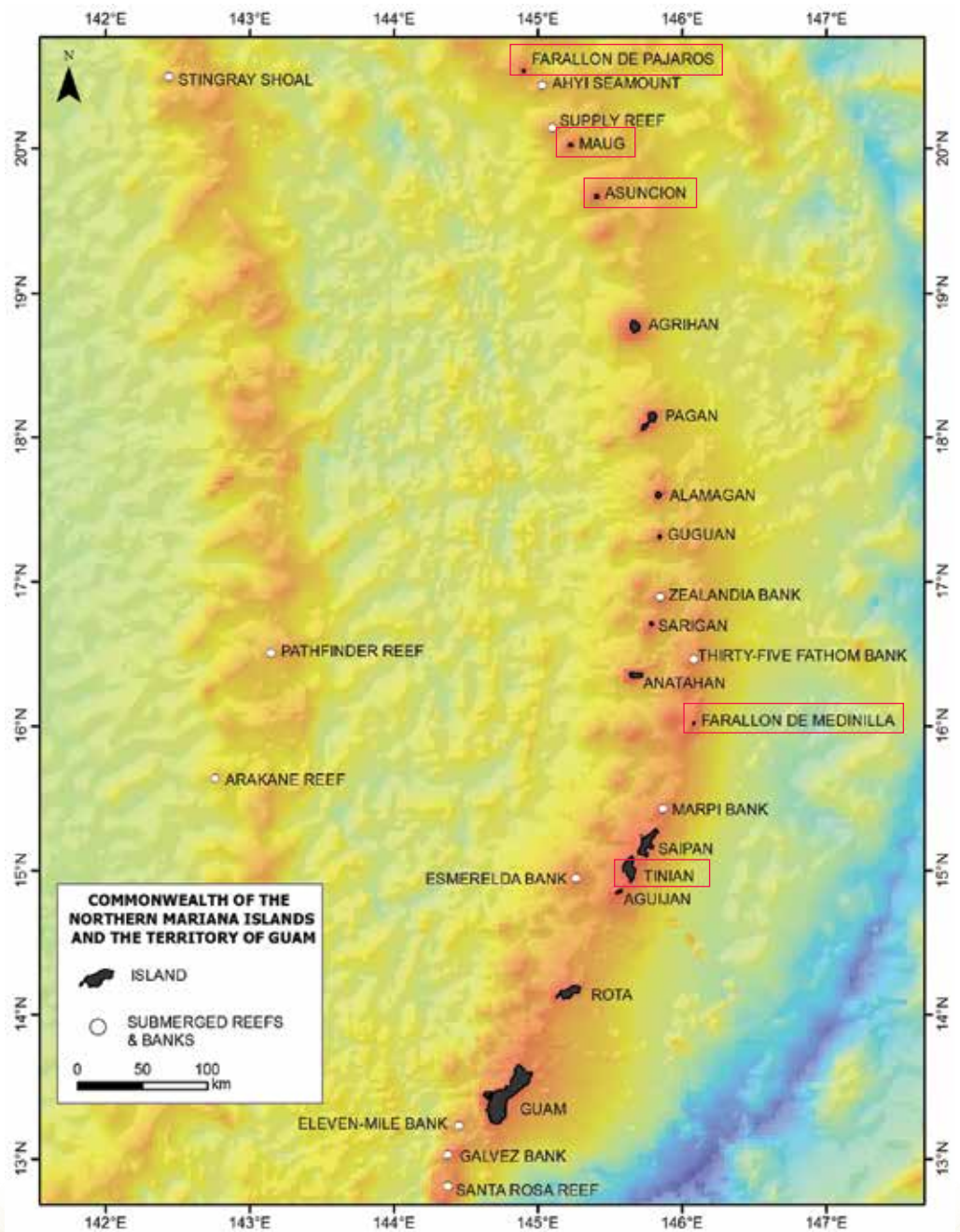
"We do not own the land and ocean around our islands, we belong to it," said Genevieve S. Cabera, a CNMI resident and member of the Guardians of Gani. Gani is a Chamorro term for the CNMI islands north of Saipan, including FDM, Pagan (another island the military has been considering for training use) and the other northern islands, including the three contained in the monument. "The primary concern now is militarization ... the military pushing the envelope," she said.

CNMI resident Gary Sword noted that the militarized waters around Guam and Tinian take away huge fishing areas. He said the average annual income per family in CNMI is \$23,000. "We are not rich," he noted. He also pointed out that residents cannot fish within 500 yards around Naval ships that utilize 11 prepositioning sites offshore Saipan. He said the heavy chains and anchors are killing the reefs, which are habitat for the fish. "Our fishing industry is dying because we don't have anywhere to go fish," he said.

The Council will work with the CNMI government in its efforts regarding the submerged lands restricted by the President's proclamation. The Council will also request that the Departments of Defense (DOD) and the Interior provide maps to the CNMI showing specifically the placement of CNMI's 3-nautical mile

boundary and CNMI submerged lands throughout the archipelago. The Council will also continue monitoring DOD activities in relation to fishing access regarding potential closures around FDM, Tinian and Guam and

request that the DOD and other entities provide financial support to the Marianas Integrated Management Committee, established to facilitate communication between the military and communities.



Right: Map of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. Photo courtesy of the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology at the University of Hawaii.

GUAM CELEBRATES 6TH ANNUAL CHAMORRO LUNAR CALENDAR FESTIVAL

Guam



Culture starts at an early age as demonstrated at the Chamorro Lunar Calendar Festival.

Left: The Council exhibit and (from left) Coordinator Carl Dela Cruz, Lt. Governor Ray Tenorio, Peter Perez and George Washington High School student volunteers Maria Procalla and Ferdinand Rondilla. Photo courtesy of P. Perez. Center: The Chamorro theme of the calendar art contest was "Tini'laikan Klema yan Inrensian Lugat: Direcho yan Opbligasion" (Climate Change and Traditional Places: Rights and Responsibilities).

The Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association hosted the 6th Annual *Gupot Fanha'aniyan Pulan CHamoru* (Chamorro Lunar Calendar Festival) on Jan. 26, 2014, on its grounds near the Marina and Boat Basin next to the Chamorro Village in Hagåtña. The event was supported by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, Department of Chamorro Affairs, Farmers Cooperative Association of Guam, Guam Hotel & Restaurant Association, Guam Visitors Bureau and Mayor's Council of Guam. Event sponsors included *GUALÁFFON* level sponsors Ambros Inc., Atkins Kroll/AC Delco and Pacific Daily News; *PULAN* level sponsors BankPacific, Coast 360, and Southern Pacific Petroleum Corporation; and *SINAH* level sponsors Guam Premium

Outlets and Nissan Motors. The free event was open to the public.

The festival featured exhibits, displays, demonstrations and entertainment utilizing the Chamorro language and practices. Local artisans provided demonstrations of their crafts and culturally crafted items for sale. Cultural dance groups provided continuous visual stimulation and entertainment through chants, song and movement. Local farmers and fishermen showcased their talents with produce and foods for taste and sale.

A major highlight of the event was the *chinahan*, an ancient Chamorro method of cooking underground. The public was



invited to observe the preparation of the *CHâhan* (underground oven) where fish and starch crops such as taro, yams, breadfruit, tapioca and sweet potatoes are placed in the earthen oven. The *chinahan* was ceremoniously opened with a procession of food to the feast tables. In the spirit of the Chamorro culture, the feast was shared with those in attendance.

The Council distributed the 2014 *Fanha'aniyan Pulan CHamoru* (Chamorro Lunar Calendar), which features the moon phases in the Chamorro language, the Guam tide charts and fishing seasons. The calendar showcased beautiful art work from local students who were recognized at the opening ceremony. The art contest prizes were provided by Fish Eye Marine Park, Guam Tropical Dive Station, McDonalds of Guam and UnderWater World.



The winners whose art is featured in the 2014 Guam lunar calendar were presented with prizes and certificates of recognition by Council Chair Arnold Palacios (back row, right) during the Council's 159th meeting on Guam in March.

HARVESTING OF BECHE-LE-MER BANNED FOR SIX MONTHS IN AMERICAN SAMOA

On Dec. 4, 2013, Gov. Lolo M. Moliga signed an Executive Order enacting a ban on the harvesting of beche-le-mer (sea cucumber) in the Territory of American Samoa for a period of six months. This ban was in response to concerns raised by the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR). The DMWR Director Ruth Matagi-Tofiga and her staff reported increases in the beche-le-mer fishing activities in the Territory in the months prior to the signing of the Executive Order. Local fishermen brought to the attention of the department the decrease in certain species of beche-le-mer. While over-harvesting of the beche-le-mer has not been an issue in American Samoa, it has long been a problem in neighboring Pacific Islands.

DMWR acted swiftly to avoid the complete loss of the beche-le-mer. Upon the recommendation made by Matagi-Tofiga and her team, the Governor ordered the six-month ban while the department staff conducts a survey of the local populations and puts their findings into recommendations. The DMWR staff has been busy conducting the survey work.

According to Alice Lawrence of the DMWR staff, a rapid assessment survey was conducted in December 2013 to understand the broad distribution of sea cucumber populations around the main island of Tutuila. The results clearly showed that some village reef flats are supporting healthy populations while others showed signs of overfishing. Following the rapid assessment a fine-scale survey was initiated for Tutuila and

Right: Sea cucumbers, or beche-le-mer, are important resources for coastal livelihoods and ecosystems. Below: Harvesting beche-le-mer in American Samoa. Photos courtesy of American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources.

Manu'a, which involved timed swims on the reef flat areas and surveying abundances and lengths of different sea cucumber species with associated benthic habitat. These surveys involved using a towed GPS unit to enable estimation of population densities and size class structures at each site. These techniques and analysis methods have been extracted from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and SciCoFish 2014 manual "Assessing Tropical Marine Invertebrates," which is also being used for planning and assessment purposes. The surveys will be completed and the data analyzed before the end of May 2014 and a report with recommendations will be presented to the Governor in June.

Last month at its 159th meeting, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council recommended that the National Marine Fisheries Service assist the DMWR staff in its efforts to assess the beche-le-mer issue in American Samoa and ensure Gov. Moliga has all the necessary information before he makes a decision on lifting the ban and/or strengthening regulations in the Territory to protect the beche-le-mer stocks.



Beche-le-mer flesh can be boiled, dried, and smoked, and is commonly used to make soups. Photo credit American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources.



Hawai'i

'AHA MOKU O KEAWE MAKES ORGANIZATIONAL HEADWAY



Participants of the 'Aha Moku Leadership Workshop in Hilo.

For more than 10 centuries, the Hawaiian system of natural resource management has been handed down in oral tradition and practice based on the concepts of ahupua'a and moku, the traditional land and ocean tenure system of Hawai'i. In 2008, the State of Hawai'i established an 'Aha Kiole Advisory Committee to identify the best practices of this system, and in 2012, the State officially recognized the system and established an 'Aha Moku Advisory Committee within the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Concurrent to these government actions, island communities have been establishing 'Aha Moku Councils or their counterparts, on several of the main Hawaiian Islands, e.g., 'Aha Moku o Maui, 'Aha Moku o O'ahu and 'Aha Kiole o Moloka'i. Similar efforts are underway on the other main Hawaiian Islands.



Ke'eaumoku Kapu of 'Aha Moku o Maui, Inc., and Timmy Bailey of Haleakala National Park at the 'Aha Moku Leadership Workshop on March 8, 2014.

Following these meetings, two 'Aha Moku leadership workshops were held to provide potential island leaders with the knowledge and tools needed to assist in organizing Moku o Keawe.

The first workshop was held in Kona on Feb. 1, 2014. Kona moku representative Phil Fernandes shared a welcoming address and introduced the participants and the organizing committee. Hawai'i Rep. Faye Hanohano gave a short presentation. Kaliko Chun, office

manager for Hawai'i Sen. Ing, presented on Act 288, the 'Aha Moku Advisory Committee within the DLNR.

On the Moku o Keawe (island of Hawai'i), nine meetings were conducted in the fall of 2013 to discuss the 'Aha Moku system with communities, identify leaders and gain understanding of the resource issues on the island.

Ke'eaumoku Kapu of the 'Aha Moku o Maui, Inc., presented a slide show of Maui actions, cultural history and past activity of the Ho'ohanohano i na Kupuna (Honor Our Ancestors) puwala series of conferences. He stressed the autonomy of the 'Aha Moku Councils of each island to organize as they see fit. He also noted that a five-day walk around Maui island helped to unify the 'Aha Moku initiative on Maui. He offered to do the walk around Hawai'i if Moku o Keawe chose this method of organizing.

Mac Poepoe, a previous chair of the resources committee of the Aha Ki'ole o Moloka'i, talked about the community-based subsistence fishery management area (CBSFMA) that was developed for Pala'au moku on Moloka'i, the steps it took to have a bill in the legislature to recognize the Pala'au CBSFMA and the structuring of the Aha Ki'ole o Moloka'i.

Ululani Beirne-Keawe presented her work with the Friends of Kahana and the Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club. She explained how the 'Aha Moku o O'ahu is assisting Kahana in achieving its objectives. She talked about the long history and difficulties of trying to exercise native and just equitable rights through the State. She said the 'Aha Moku system makes it possible for communities to have a voice in the management of their resources.

In a facilitated discussion with Blossom Feiteira, the participants learned about Aha Moku's "bottom up" approach to resource management. The discussion encouraged the group to think creatively as they organized. Palikapu Dedman and Terri Napeahi volunteered to organize the East side. The Kona representatives scheduled meetings to plan for the organization of the West side. Some of the representatives said they would engage with the 'Aha Moku Advisory Committee at DLNR.

At the request of the workshop participants, a second 'Aha Moku Leadership Workshop was conducted on the East side of Hawai'i on March 8 in Hilo. Presenters included Kapu, Beirne and Chun as well as Timmy Bailey from Haleakala National Park, and Charles Ka'ai'ai, indigenous coordinator for the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, who facilitated in the organizing process. Presenters shared their trial and error experiences in organizing island 'Aha Moku Councils, as well as what was codified in law from Act 212 and Act 288. During the facilitated discussion participants aired their beliefs and thoughts about the eligibility criteria to participate in the 'Aha Moku system of resource management.

Following the second workshop, Hilo representatives Dedman and Napeahi conducted a meeting on March 29, 2014, where they expanded their island contacts. Leaders have been identified and a full island council has been developed out of these workshops to assist in organizing the 'Aha Moku Moku o Keawe.

'Aha Moku Moku o Keawe

Co-Chairs: Palikapu Dedman—(808) 959-4930, and Jerome Marks—808black@gmail.com

Moku Representatives

Kohala to South Kona: Jerome Marks—808black@gmail.com

Kohala: Fred Cachola—(808) 753-8896, Jojo Tanimoto—homesteadlady001@yahoo.com

Kailapa: Kaleo Bertelmann—kaleobertelmann@gmail.com

Ho'okena: Charles Young—youngc042@hawaii.rr.com

Miloli'i: Kaimi Kaupiko—kkaupiko@gmail.com

Ka'u to Hamakua: Palikapu Dedman—(808) 959-4930

Ka'u: Darlyne Vierra—dpvierra@yahoo.com, Elizabeth "Liz" Kuluwaimaka—nawai1040@aol.com, Paul Makuakane—pmaku808@yahoo.com

Puna: Kaniu Kinimaka—Stocksdale—eta1hawaii@hawaiiantel.net, Julie Peleiholani—jpeleiholani@yahoo.com

Hilo: Terri Napeahi—tnapeahi@yahoo.com

Hamakua: Wesley Murakane—gotfish87@gmail.com, Jenno Enocencio—pointman_jeno@msn.com

'Aha Moku Advisory Committee Member Representing Moku o Keawe

Pi'ilani Ka'awaloa—punatita7@yahoo.com

Nainoa Thompson, president of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, pens his signature to the "Promise to the Pae'aina o Hawai'i."



COUNCIL JOINS OTHERS TO SUPPORT HOKULE'A'S GLOBAL VOYAGE

On April 23, 2014, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council joined other federal and state agencies and non-profit organizations aboard the traditional voyaging canoe *Hokule'a* at its homeport in Honolulu to sign the "Promise to the Pae'aina o Hawai'i." This document outlines collaborative environmental efforts that the signatories agree to undertake during the four years that the *Hokule'a* is underway on its Malama Honua (Care for our Earth) world-wide voyage.

The goal of *Hokule'a's* circumnavigation is to highlight diverse cultural and natural treasures and the importance of working together to protect them. Likewise, the three goals of the "Promise to the Pae'aina o Hawai'i" are to work in unison to 1) Effect immediate, significant and measurable change in our oceans, and the way we value them, at the ahupua'a level; 2) Implement regulatory and policy measures that ensure healthier, resilient and more effectively and sustainably managed oceans well into the future; and 3) Catalyze long-term, collaborative management of our oceans. Twenty objectives accompany these goals.

Each signatory of the Promise has identified specific activities it will undertake to reach these objectives. For example, to meet the seafood security objective under goal 1, the Council will be undertaking a 50 by 5 campaign. This campaign will strive to have 50 percent of Hawai'i's seafood sourced locally within the next five years. Currently, 63 percent of the Hawai'i's commercial seafood comes from non-local sources. Other projects the Council will undertake as part of the Promise are to help two communities (ahupua'a/moku) to become sustainable, i.e., self-sufficient, and to develop climate change adaptation plans.

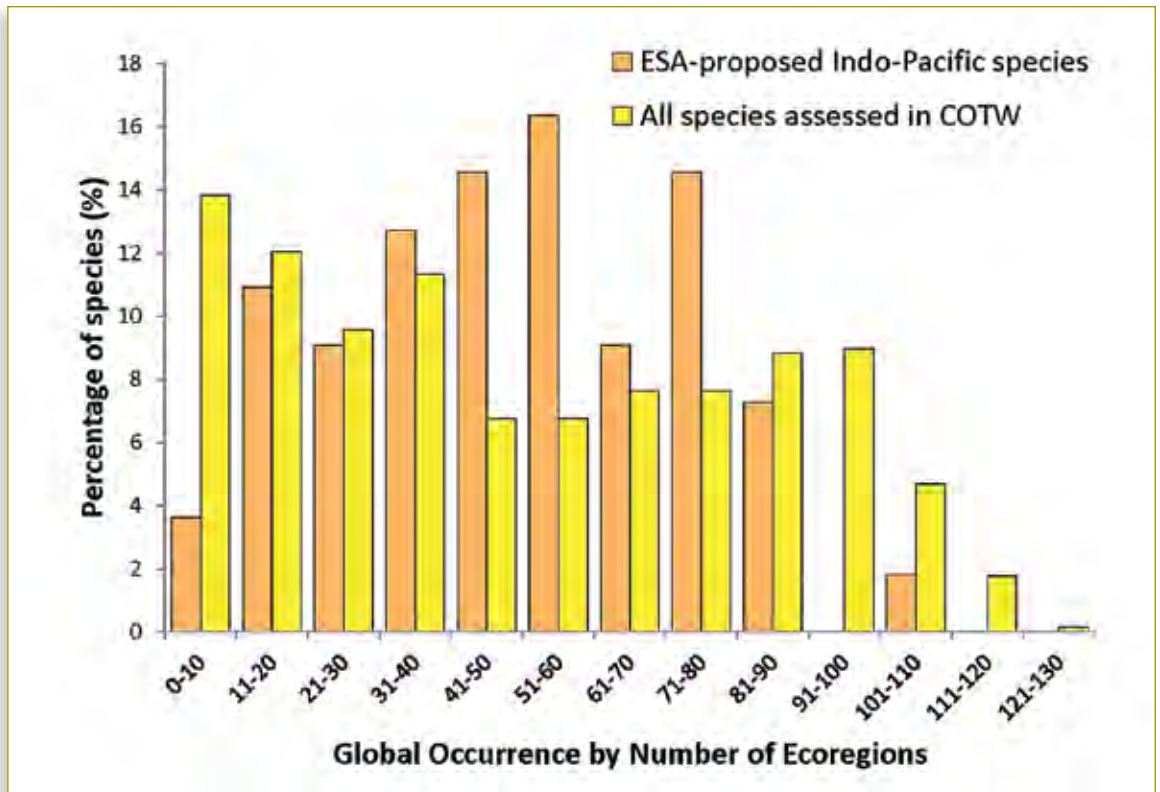
The Polynesian Voyaging Society's *Hokule'a* and escort canoe *Hikianalia* will depart Honolulu on May 17, 2014.



Left: Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds signs the "Promise to the Pae'aina o Hawai'i" aboard *Hokule'a*, assisted by Eric Co of the Hawaii Community Foundation. Co and the Foundation were instrumental in the development of the Promise and bringing together the many collaborators who will support the goal of *Hokule'a's* world-wide voyage by implementing it. **Right:** Signatories of the "Promise to the Pae'aina o Hawai'i" aboard the *Hokule'a* represent an array of state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations.

NEW SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION QUESTIONS PROPOSED LISTING OF CORAL SPECIES UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Previously unpublished scientific information by the world-renowned coral expert Dr. John “Charlie” Veron confirms that coral species proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) occur in large and diverse geographic areas, providing a buffer against climate change impacts. The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council worked in partnership with Veron and the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) to make available substantial scientific information not considered by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in its proposed rule to list 66 corals as threatened or endangered under the ESA. The information was submitted to NMFS on Feb. 11, 2014, for consideration in the final listing determination.



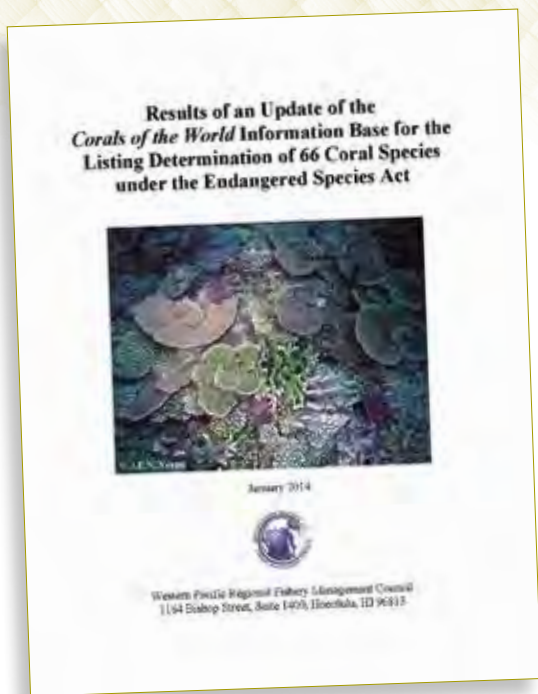
Comparison of global distribution between ESA-proposed and 680 Indo-Pacific coral species contained in the *Corals of the World (COTW)* database. Veron’s distribution data are reported in the number of ecoregions in which each species occurs out of 133 Indo-Pacific ecoregions. Source Veron 2014 Appendix E.

Veron’s updated data are compiled primarily from extensive fieldwork conducted by himself and co-authors since the publication of the three-volume book *Corals of the World* in 2000. The data are part of a larger-scale effort to compile all available coral information into an open-access website, which will significantly advance the scientific information base for conducting vulnerability assessments of coral species around the world. Of the vast amount of data destined for the website, Veron made available distribution and abundance data for 66 species for which ESA listing is pending.

Veron’s dataset focuses on species-specific distribution and abundance, as these attributes combined provide an informative measure in examining species vulnerability and resilience against extinction risk. NMFS’ proposed rule was determined in large part by perceived vulnerability to climate change impacts

at the genus- or family-level and failed to adequately consider species-specific data such as distribution and abundance. As a result, species of certain genus including *Acropora* and *Montipora* were all proposed for listing regardless of their geographic distribution and abundance.

In general, species are most vulnerable to extinction when they have restricted distributions and are rare. Corals are no exception. Veron’s data show that most of the Indo-Pacific coral species proposed for ESA listing are widely distributed and few on the list are considered to have limited distributions. It is most striking when the data are compared to all 680 coral species in the unpublished database. Nearly 14 percent, or more than 90 species of all Indo-Pacific coral species have restricted distributions (occurring in less than 10 eco-regions out of the 133 Indo-Pacific eco-regions), while only two of the proposed species have similarly



FALSE KILLER WHALE ANALYSES INSUFFICIENT FOR PURPOSES USED, SSC SUBCOMMITTEE DETERMINES

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council is questioning the reliability of the abundance estimates used in the December 2012 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) listing of the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) insular false killer whales as endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

False killer whales are found around the world in tropical and temperate waters and are not considered to be endangered anywhere else. NMFS designated the MHI insular population of false killer whales as a distinct population segment (DPS) based on genetic and movement data that suggest the population does not interbreed with other false killer whales in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) or pelagic populations. Two major factors contributed to NMFS' listing decision for the MHI insular false killer whales: a small population estimated at about 150 animals and suspected fishery interactions.

Much of the information that NMFS relied upon for the listing decision, including the abundance estimate, comes from photographs of false killer whales collected during small-boat surveys conducted on leeward sides of the MHI and opportunistic sightings from various sources including tour boats. As a result of near-shore surveys conducted over the last 15 years, the MHI insular false killer whales are undoubtedly one of the most studied populations of the species in the world.

However, a recent review of the photo-identification data analysis by a subcommittee of the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) revealed significant limitations to the study, especially in estimating the number of animals belonging to the MHI insular population.

The subcommittee found that the near-shore surveys around the MHI are not conducted using a systematic sampling design, which is a standard survey approach used to estimate abundance. If a systematic design is not possible, the statistical model must account for possible biases in the study. However, the analysis conducted on the photo-identification data to date have not sufficiently accounted for these biases. The subcommittee determined that the analyses and results of the study, earlier versions of which have been used in NMFS' decision-making that impacts fishery management, should not be considered reliable in the context of the scientific standards for the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Given that a rigorous review of the full photo-identification dataset has not been conducted to date, the SSC and the Council endorsed the subcommittee's report and recommended that NMFS obtain the full dataset for review and to prioritize systematic surveys around the MHI to establish a dataset suitable for estimating abundance.

restricted distributions (see Figure). Even those two species with the most restricted distributions out of the proposed species occupy substantial latitudinal or longitudinal ranges spanning several thousand miles.

NMFS' proposed list of coral species was driven by the original list of 83 species petitioned for listing. The petitioners indicated that they selected these species based on their designation by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as threatened with extinction and their occurrence in US waters and "thus stand to benefit most from listing." The petitioner's list, and consequently NMFS' list of proposed corals, could not be farther from this intent in light of the new information.

Veron's data verify that 13 of the 59 Indo-Pacific species proposed for listing do not occur in US waters. Two species on the proposed list with the most restricted distribution and rarest abundance occur exclusively in the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, those species proposed for listing and confirmed to occur in US waters are widely distributed species with most of their ranges occurring outside of US waters, providing a substantial buffer against various threats compared to species with limited geographic distributions. Thus, any benefit the ESA can provide under its federal protection in US waters would only amount to an insignificant, if any, contribution to the species as a whole in preventing extinction.

NMFS faces a final determination deadline of June 7, 2014.

To download the submission packet visit the Council's news and events page at www.wpcouncil.org/category/news_and_events.

Veron's report along with the Council's letter of submission is available for download at www.wpcouncil.org/2014/02/11/coral-information-submission/

Reference: Veron, J.E.N. 2014. Results of an update of the *Corals of the World* Information Base for the Listing Determination of 66 Coral Species under the Endangered Species Act. Report to the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. 11pp. + Appendices.

MOU

AGREEMENT REACHED TO BUILD TERRITORY, COMMONWEALTH FISHERY MANAGEMENT CAPACITY



At its 159th meeting in March 2014, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) aimed at building the capacity of the Territories and Commonwealth to manage their fisheries and fishery-related resources. The MOU also aims to bolster the capacity of institutions in Hawai'i to provide the needed fishery science and management education. The MOU was drafted by the Education Committee established by the Council at its 156th meeting in March 2013.

The Education Committee members and signatories to the MOU represent the Council, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Regional Office, NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), US Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program, University of Hawai'i at Manoa (UHM) Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB), University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UHH), Hawaii Pacific University (HPU), American Samoa Community College (ASCC), University of Guam (UOG), Northern Marianas College (NMC), American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, Guam Department of Agriculture, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

By signing the MOU, the parties agree to work together to achieve the following goals:

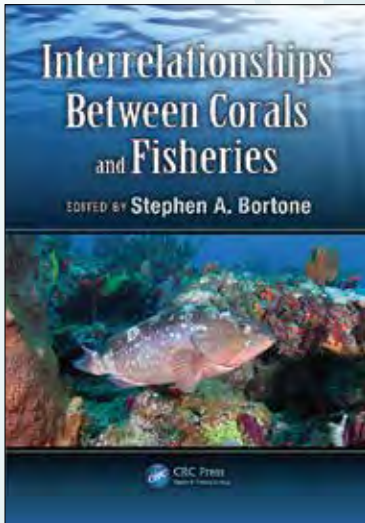
- Identify and recruit students from the Territories/Commonwealth who are interested in a career in fishery science and/or management and who will commit to being employed at a fishery-related local agency in the Territories/Commonwealth, as well as employees in the local fishery agencies who need or desire to enhance their education and training in fishery science/management.
- Assist such students/employees to be successful in their undergraduate and/or graduate educational endeavors by a) supporting and improving articulation of fishery-related courses among ASCC, NMC, UOG, UHH, UHM and HPU; b) helping to address tuition and other education-related financial needs through existing financial assistance and established federal education programs and by exploring the development of a fellowship/scholarship program that requires a commitment from the student recipient to work in a fisheries-related agency in the Territories or Commonwealth; and c) ensuring effective, ongoing advising and mentoring from

both the college/university and the home Territory/Commonwealth, so as to identify and rectify educational deficiencies and address potential communication issues arising from cultural or other factors that might impede academic success.

- Support and encourage the development of curricula, permanent courses, programs and faculty positions for fisheries at the undergraduate and/or graduate level at UHH, UHM, HPU and UOG; online fishery trainings; and internships at the Council, NMFS PIFSC, UHM HIMB, UHH, HPU or local Territory/Commonwealth fishery-related agencies.
- Assist, support and encourage local fishery-related agencies to employ these students in the Territories/Commonwealth.

The MOU is not legally binding or enforceable, but is rather an aspirational document expressing goals and principles. It is intended to assist the parties in working toward a genuine partnership to build the capacity of the US Pacific Island Territories/Commonwealth to manage their fisheries and related resources through the employment of their own people.

New Outreach Materials



Interrelationships between Corals and Fisheries

The Council's marine ecosystem scientist, Marlowe Sabater, along with Scientific and Statistical Committee member Pierre Kleiber contributed a chapter entitled "Augmented Catch-MSY Approach to Fishery Management in Coral-Associated Fisheries" in a new book exploring the relationship between coral reefs and fisheries. This chapter describes the technical details and

applicability of a model that uses biomass-augmented catch and maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for the data-poor coral reef fisheries. The book, *Interrelationships between Corals and Fisheries*, is written by a team of notable authorities in coral reef research and fisheries management and edited by Stephen A. Bortone. It examines the short- and long-term consequences of trends in coral health for fisheries concerns and factors such as global warming, coral disease and pollution and then concludes with suggestions for managing for the future. Its inclusive coverage makes this book an important resource for coral reef specialists, fishery scientists and managers, marine and conservation biologists, zoologists, ecologists, environmental planners and students. It will be available for purchase in July at barnesandnoble.com.

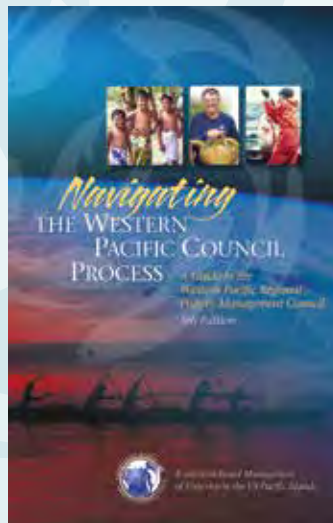


2014 Traditional Lunar Calendars

For the eighth consecutive year, traditional lunar calendars featuring American Samoa, CNMI, Guam and Hawai'i have been produced

by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council in partnership with local committees, schools, individuals and organizations throughout the Western Pacific Region. The

Council produces lunar calendars to promote ecosystem-based management of marine resources, support traditional fishing and management practices, and raise awareness about climate change. Copies of the lunar calendars can be downloaded from the Council's website at www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/lunar-calendars.



Navigating the Western Pacific Council Process: A Guide to the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, 5th Edition

Want to learn more about the council and fisheries management? Check out our newest edition of *Navigating the Western Pacific Council Process: A Guide to the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council*. This guide is designed for both those who are familiar and unfamiliar with fisheries management. The brochure

is available at www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/educational-brochures.

VIDEOS

US Sub-committee on Oceans and Fisheries Hearing on the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Reauthorization, January 30, 2014

This hearing was the third in a series of Senate hearings to discuss the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act reauthorization. It focused on Pacific and West Coast fisheries. Highlights include testimony by Arnold Palacios, Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Chair and by Michael Goto, United Fishing Agency Ltd. The video is available at www.wpcouncil.org/educational-videos.

Good Habitat = Good Fishing

This video is the first in a series of commercials co-produced by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and Hawai'i Goes Fishing to educate the public about how protecting the habitat will protect local fisheries. The video is available at www.wpcouncil.org/educational-videos.

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Outreach Materials

Continued from page 21

Fishers Forum: Debunking Fishery Myths

The Fishers Forum “Debunking Fishery Myths” was held on Oct. 17, 2013, in Honolulu, as part of the 158th meeting of the Western Pacific



Regional Fishery Management Council.

The forum focused on

the myths surrounding longline, lay and surround net, spearfishing and aquarium fish collecting in the hopes that it will encourage fishermen to better understand each other’s fisheries and work together to solve issues facing all of Hawai’i fishermen. The video is available at www.wpcouncil.org/educational-videos.

Fishermen’s Code of Conduct

The Fishermen’s Code of Conduct is a campaign created by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery management Council and local fishery agencies to promote responsible behavior among local fishermen. The campaign includes posters and videos, in six languages: English, Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Refaluwasch and Chuukese. The videos are available at www.wpcouncil.org/educational-videos. Posters are available at www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/educational-posters/.

GRANT FUNDING PRIORITY SHOULD GO TO US TERRITORIES OVER THE FORMER TRUST TERRITORIES

For the first time in over a decade, NOAA will be awarding grants under the Saltonsall-Kennedy Grant Program (S-K) this year. According to the NOAA Fisheries S-K Grant Program website (http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/mb/financial_services/skhome.htm), the program provides financial assistance for research and development projects to benefit the US fishing industry. However, projects that primarily involve business start-up or infrastructure development are not eligible for funding under the S-K Program. The program’s statutory authority is the S-K Act, as amended (15 U.S.C. 713c-3). The S-K program is funded through annual transfers by the Secretary of Agriculture to the Secretary of Commerce for amounts equal to 30 percent of the gross receipts collected under the customs laws on imports of fish and fish products into the United States. Typically, this transfer is up \$100 million annually, with NOAA Fisheries using most of the funds for salaries and other internal programs.

In August of 2013, however, NOAA solicited proposals for approximately \$11 million available for the grant program. NOAA received hundreds of proposals from across the country, including proposals from the US Territories of American Samoa and Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Former Trust Territories of Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republics of Palau, and the Marshall Islands, which are eligible for the program, also sent in proposals. Although NOAA has not made formal public announcements of the grant awards, the Council has learned that only three projects were awarded from the Western Pacific Region: Guam, Hawai’i, and FSM. The Council has further learned NOAA awarded proposals based solely on merit scoring, and not based on regional review or prioritization. This is particularly alarming to the Council as a project from FSM ranked higher than projects submitted by American Samoa, CNMI and Hawai’i. In addition, the Former Trust Territories are able to access many more funds for fisheries development than American Samoa, Guam and CNMI. For example, the Former Trust Territories generate millions of dollars annually from foreign fishing access agreements including the South Pacific Tuna Treaty (Tuna Treaty) with the United States. Under the Tuna Treaty, the US pays \$63 million per year to the Forum Fisheries Agency, with \$21 million coming from US tax payers and \$41 million provided by the US purse-seine industry. The Tuna Treaty funds are dispersed to the Former Trust Territories and can be used on fisheries development. In addition, the Former Trust Territories can access the Japan Trust Fund, World Bank, and other international grant funding programs, as well as freely negotiate with countries like China, Australia, and the European Union for funding assistance. On the other hand, American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI do not receive any direct benefits from the Tuna Treaty, are ineligible for the Japan Trust Fund and World Bank grants, and are restricted in receiving funding assistance from non-US governments.

The Council does not see the logic in awarding grant funding to the Former Trust Territories when American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI are also in need of fisheries development funding assistance and are much more limited in terms of access to fisheries development funds than compared to the Former Trust Territories. Furthermore, according to the 2010 NOAA Fisheries S-K Program Report to Congress, the S-K Grant Program objective is to address the needs of fishing communities as defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) in optimizing economic benefits within the context of rebuilding and maintaining sustainable fisheries and in dealing with the impacts of conservation and management measures. Fisheries and fishing communities of the Former Trust Territories are not managed under the MSA. The Council will continue to monitor this issue and advocate for S-K funding priority to American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI over the Former Trust Territories.



In Memoriam



Billy Frank Jr. (front row, far right, circled) was the impetus of the American Indian and Indigenous US Pacific Islander Roundtable on Fishing and Other Native Rights, hosted by the Council at its office on Feb. 26, 2014. Billy dedicated his life to native fishing rights and was the longtime chair of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

Billy Frank Jr., chair of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC), passed away on May 5, 2014. Billy was the impetus for the American Indian and Indigenous US Pacific Islander Roundtable on Fishing and Other Native Rights, which the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council hosted on Feb. 26, 2014, at the Council office in Honolulu. The Roundtable was one of Billy's many efforts to form a coalition of American Indians, Native Alaskans and indigenous US Pacific Islanders. He said he did so to continue the legacy of Sen. Daniel K. Inouye in support of native peoples.

Billy was also a key figure in the inaugural First Stewards Symposium: Coastal Peoples Address Climate Change. The NWIFC continues to be a key player in the second First Stewards Symposium to be held this July in Washington, DC.

The NWIFC website (<http://nwifc.org/>) provides information on two funds that have been set up in Billy's name. The Council will continue to work with the NWIFC and others to form the coalition of indigenous communities that Billy envisioned.


COUNCIL FAMILY UPDATE

The **Social Science Planning Committee membership** is now comprised of the following members: **Dr. Craig Severance, Dr. Paul Callaghan, Dr. Judy Amesbury, Dr. Edward Glazier, Dr. Dawn Kotowicz, Justin Hospital, Dr. Christopher Lepczyk, Dr. David Loomis** and **Genevieve Cabrera**.

Newly appointed members of the American Samoa Archipelago Plan Team include **TeeJay Letalie** and **Afa Uikirifi**.

Nonu Tuisamoa and **Frank Villagomez** have been appointed to the Pelagic Plan Team.

Frank Villagomez is the new representative for the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife.



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Guam-Style Marlin Kelaguen

Courtesy of Chefs Eddie Mafnas and Jeffrey Sampson, Firehouse Food Truck and Mafnas Catering and Events. Serves 8.

Ingredients:

1 lb fresh marlin, ½ inch dice
½ cup fresh lemon juice
Salt, to taste
4 Tbsp lemon powder
2 Tbsp chili peppers, crushed
¼ cup onion, small dice
1 cup freshly grated coconut
3 Tbsp scallions, thinly sliced
Corn tortillas

Preparation: Combine marlin, lemon juice and salt. Let sit for 20 minutes in refrigerator. Drain lemon juice, and add remaining ingredients. Refrigerate for another 15 minutes. Serve with your favorite corn tortillas.



Photo courtesy of Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association.



2014 Council Calendar

May

19-24
World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education, Honolulu

29-30
Coastal Marine Spatial Planning Regional Planning Body, Hagatna, Guam

June

4-5
General Advisory Committee and Scientific Advisory Subcommittee of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, La Jolla, CA

10-12
Capitol Hill Ocean Week, Washington, DC

11
NOAA Fish Fry, Washington, DC

16
Social Science Planning Committee meeting, Honolulu

16
Marine Planning and Climate Change Committee meeting, Honolulu

17-19
116th meeting of the Scientific and Statistical Committee, Honolulu

19-20
Joint Advisory Panel meeting, Honolulu

21
Guam Department of Agriculture Kids Fishing Derby, Asan, Guam

21
Guam Department of Agriculture Kids Fishing Derby, Asan, Guam

23
Fishery Industry Advisory Committee meeting, Honolulu

24
Fishing Data Collection and Research Committee, Honolulu

24-27
160th meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, Honolulu

25
Fishers Forum on Non-Commercial Fisheries, Honolulu

July

10-16
International Pacific Marine Educators Network Conference, Tokyo and Iwate, Japan

14-18
86th meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, Lima, Peru

18-20
Living Earth Festival, Washington, DC

21-23
First Stewards Symposium, Washington, DC

Upcoming Events



The Council will hold a **Fishers Forum on Noncommercial Fisheries** from 6 to 9 p.m. on Wed., **June 25, 2014**, at the Harbor View Center (above Nico's at Pier 38), 1129 North Nimitz Hwy., Honolulu. One of the presenters will be Russell Dunn, national policy adviser for recreational fisheries, NOAA NMFS Office of the Assistant Administrator. He will conduct a listening session to help develop a national policy on recreational/noncommercial fishing. For more on the Forum, including the complete list of topics and presenters, go to www.wpcouncil.org/meetings or email info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov.



The fifth International Pacific Marine Educators Network (IPMEN) conference will be held **July 10-16, 2014**, in Tokyo and Iwate, Japan. An important aspect of the conference is bringing hope and pride to the area devastated by the 2011 tsunami. The conference will be conducted in English, Japanese and Spanish.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council convened the inaugural IPMEN conference in 2007, has been a sponsor of all subsequent IPMEN conferences and is organizing the Hawai'i node that will participate in the 2014 conference remotely.

IPMEN's mission is to foster collaborative relationships that will create the resources,

programs, training and leadership necessary to build ocean literacy at every level of society in the Pacific region. For more information and to register, go to <http://ipmen-2014-japan.jimdo.com/> or contact t-sasaki@kaiyodai.ac.jp or the IPMEN International Committee at ipmenemail@gmail.com. For more on the Hawai'i node, contact Sylvia Spalding at sylvia.spalding@noaa.gov.

FIRST STEWARDS

The First Stewards 2014 Symposium "United Indigenous Voices Address Sustainability: Climate Change & Traditional Places" will convene **July 21-23, 2014**, in Washington, DC. The symposium goals are to promote traditional ecological knowledge as a strong part of the climate change conversation, explore how indigenous peoples can unite to have a stronger voice as their communities will disproportionately feel the impacts of climate change, and plan how youth can be promoted to take the lead on this conversation in the future. The symposium themes include culture and food security, recognizing rights and responsibilities, traditional natural resource management practices, and cultural resource damage assessments.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council has conducted K-12 student art contests and high school photo-essay contests on the Symposium's rights and responsibilities theme. The winning 6th to 8th grade art from each island area will be displayed at the Symposium as well as at the Living Earth Festival at the National Museum of the American Indian. The winners of the photo-essay contest from each island area will participate in both events.

To learn more about Symposium, go to www.firststewards.org or email info@firststewards.org.

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