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Newsletter of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

Obama's Proclamation Bans US Commercial Fishing in 63% of the Pacific Remote Island Waters

A plan announced by President Obama on June 17, 2014, to expand the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) ninefold to include the entire US exclusive economic zone (EEZ) waters around them—and prohibit commercial fishing therein—was amended to accommodate economically vital fishing industries in Hawai'i and American Samoa. Following a West Wing meeting on Sept. 9, joining representatives of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and the Hawaii Longline Association with Counselor to the President John Podesta and White House Council on Environmental Quality Acting Chair Mike Boots, and in the wake of public criticism and media attention, the White House on Sept. 25 announced a revised plan for the PRIMNM expansion.

In the months since the June announcement, the Council; the governors of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI); the American Samoa and CNMI legislatures; US longline and purse-seine fishermen; tuna cannery representatives; marine science experts; mayors; chambers of commerce; indigenous groups/individuals; and many others voiced deep concerns about the shortcomings of the proposed expansion. They noted that the initial plan disregarded essential local fishing industries, provided negligible gains for conservation and lacked a decision-making process that was transparent and included proper representation and adequate environmental and public review.

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Ecosystem-based Management of Fisheries in the US Pacific Islands

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management 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.

Obama's Proclamation Bans US Commercial Fishing

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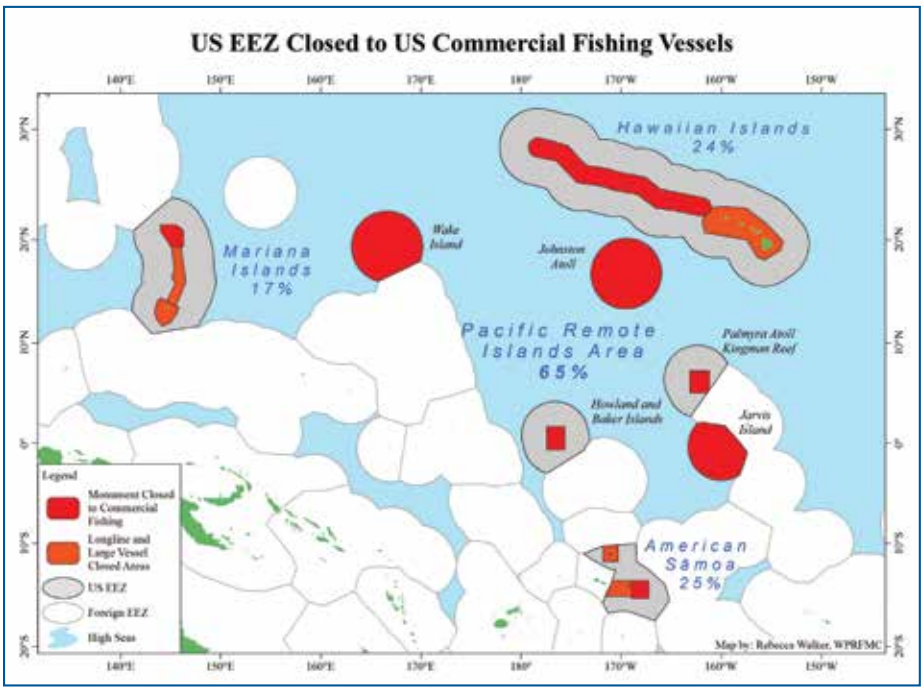

The revised plan expands the monument to include the 200-nautical-mile EEZ surrounding Johnston Atoll, Jarvis Island and Wake Island, but it does not expand the existing 50-nautical-mile prohibitions on fishing around Howland and Baker Islands and Palmyra Atoll and Kingman Reef.

The Council expressed appreciation to President Obama for considering the economic and cultural concerns of American citizens who will be most affected by the expansion. The revisions allow existing US commercial fisheries to continue operating within their traditional fishing grounds under existing regulations in 37 percent of the US EEZ around the US Pacific Remote Islands, but removes them completely from 63 percent of the US EEZ around these islands.

At its 161st meeting Oct. 21 to 23, 2014, in Honolulu, the Council is scheduled to take action to amend the existing Pelagic and Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIAs) Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs) to include the provisions of the monument proclamation. Fishing around the PRIAs, including those waters now contained within the extended monument, have been managed under the placed-based FEP since 2007 and under species based Fishery Management Plans since 1983.

Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Council has promulgated fishing regulations for all existing marine national monuments located in the US Pacific Islands.

While existing commercial fishing will now be banned in the waters, currently non-existing non-commercial fishing will be allowed. The accessibility of these waters to non-commercial fishermen is questionable. The closest island to populated areas is Johnston Atoll, which is 825 miles southwest of Hawai'i. Jarvis Island is about 2,500 miles from Honolulu and about 2,000 miles from Pago Pago, American Samoa, but only 380 miles from Christmas Island, Republic of Kiribati. Wake Island is about 2,300 miles from Honolulu, and 2,700 miles from Saipan, but only about 1,400 miles from Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, which has been in dispute with the United States over ownership of Wake.

"Our US Pacific Island fishermen already comply with the strictest regulations in the world," said Kitty Simonds, Council executive director. "We now look to see how this declaration will be achieved in practice, beyond paper and politics, and hope that the US Coast Guard will use additional enforcement funds to patrol US waters as a first priority." Currently, the US Coast Guard patrols the area once quarterly on average.

"The US Pacific Islands came together as a united regional voice on this issue and that speaks to the anxiety at the prospect of an immense expansion of a Presidential monument with little-to-no local consultation," Simonds remarked. "Congress has curtailed further use of Presidential monument proclamation authority in Alaska and Wyoming, and Congress should similarly bar further national marine monument proclamations in Hawai'i and the US territories of American Samoa, CNMI, Guam and the US Pacific Remote Islands."

Representatives from the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and the Hawaii Longline Association (HLA) leave the West Wing after their Sept. 9, 2014, meeting with John Podesta, Counselor to the President, and the Council on Environmental Quality. The Council had repeatedly requested the meeting following the President's June 17 announcement. (l-r) Council Chair Arnold Palacios, HLA President Sean Martin, Council Member Claire Poumele (American Samoa), Council International Fishery Coordinator Eric Kingma, Council Senior Scientist Paul Dalzell, Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds, HLA Consultant Svein Fougner and Council Vice Chair Ed Ebisui Jr. (Hawai'i). Photo by Sylvia Spalding, Council communications officer.

Council Conducts Pacific Bigeye Tuna Movement and Distribution Workshop

Front row (l-r) John Hampton, Karen Evans, John Hall, David Itano, Kurt Schaefer, Keith Bigelow. Back row (l-r) Patrick Lehodey, Inna Sennina, Takeyuki Matsumoto, Simon Nicol, Kim Holland, John Sibert, David Wells, Robert Campbell, Paul Dalzell, Pierre Kleiber, Jay Rooker.

Twenty fisheries scientists from throughout the Pacific convened April 22 to 24, 2014, for the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Workshop on Pacific Bigeye Movement and Distribution. The workshop was held in response to a recommendation by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee with the objective to design a collaborative study of bigeye movement in the Pacific and the data requirements to support such a study. The agenda covered bigeye tuna life history and biology, tagging studies, otolith stable isotope and micro-constituent analyses, fisheries and climate change, and stock structure and genetic studies.

Participants were particularly interested in tagging studies from the Eastern and Central Pacific, Western Equatorial Pacific and Coral Sea as well as those conducted by Japan and Hawai'i fishery scientists.

The workshop noted the need for more bigeye tagging in higher latitudes to understand the connection between cooler water bigeye and bigeye in the equatorial and tropical latitudes. There is also a need to expand the size range of tagged bigeye and to develop further fishery-independent means to obtain movement information, such as otolith stable isotope and micro-constituent analyses and genetics.

The workshop also generated several other project ideas such as drifting research fish aggregation devices (FADs); otolith studies on a broader geographic scale, including samples from northwest, north and northeast of Hawai'i; couple otolith analysis with archival tags and genetic studies; collect otoliths from very large individuals; use commercial longline vessels to tag in higher latitudes; use Fukushima nuclear reactor signal to examine connectivity; and develop movement models that incorporate size, maturity, feeding, spawning and oceanographic and bathymetric features.

Although bigeye appear to be a single "stock" across the Pacific and are nominally a highly migratory species, fish from the far west and far east do not mix but both elements of the stock mix with fish in the Central Pacific. Movement can be influenced by both oceanographic conditions and bathymetric features. Participants noted that an understanding of the origin and exchange rates between regions and fisheries is still needed. For example, where do "Hawai'i" bigeye originate and where do they go? The meeting also identified the need to clarify the difference between "stock structure" and "population structure" and accommodate regional differences and characteristics within broad population descriptions. There is also a need to identify characteristics that influence movement and to improve area-based management.

Bigeye tuna live for about 16 years, making them a moderately long lived tuna in comparison with other tropical tunas like yellowfin and skipjack. They spawn in the tropics, in waters between 27 and 28 degrees Celsius and mature at about 3 to 3.5 years of age. Bigeye show variability in growth rate and size at maturity across the Pacific basin. In the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), west of 170° W, bigeye exhibit a larger maturity size than east of 170° W. Data gaps still remain for bigeye reproduction such as fully understanding seasonality, location of spawning and regional variation in size at maturity.

Bigeye tuna are being fished at about twice the maximum sustainable yield for the stock. Purse-seine fishing on FADs is having the largest impact on bigeye populations, but the effects of longline fishing on adults are also significant. The workshop noted the need for finer scale fishery spatial and operational data plus a great deal more data on FADs. These include FAD numbers per vessel in each region, movements and attributes, and trajectories and sonar data for research.

Fisheries catching bigeye tuna differ across the Pacific. In the EPO, longline effort for bigeye has decreased but purse-seine fishing effort (i.e., targeting yellowfin and skipjack tuna and catching bigeye incidentally) is increasing. In the Western and Central Pacific Ocean bigeye longline catch per unit effort (CPUE) continues to decline with higher purse-seine and longline CPUE east of 170° W. The majority of bigeye in Hawai'i is caught by the Hawai'i longline fishery, which catches a mix of sub-adults and adults over a wide range of ocean (i.e., from equatorial latitudes to the sub-tropics.)

The workshop proceedings are being drafted.

Photo courtesy of Wikicommons

Council to Address Overfished Status of Western and Central North Pacific Striped Marlin

A major action item for the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council at its 161st meeting to be held Oct. 20-23, 2014, in Honolulu will be the overfished condition of Western and Central North Pacific (WCNP) striped marlin. The Council will be concerned primarily with limiting catches by the Hawai'i longline fleet. However, if the status of the WCNP striped marlin stock continues to degrade, the Council might consider actions for small boat fisheries including commercial troll vessels and charter vessels.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) made the overfished determination on Dec. 5, 2013, and also determined that the WCNP stock is currently subject to overfishing. NMFS based its decision on the 2012 stock assessment conducted by the International Scientific Committee (ISC) for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific, which indicates that the stock's fishing mortality rate is higher than the rate that would produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY) on a continuing basis. In addition, the spawning biomass, 938 metric tons (mt), is lower than the minimum stock size threshold of 1,628 mt, indicating that the stock is overfished. A Kobe plot (Figure 2) of the fishing mortality and biomass shows the recent condition of the spawning biomass, which is 35 percent of the spawning biomass to produce MSY.

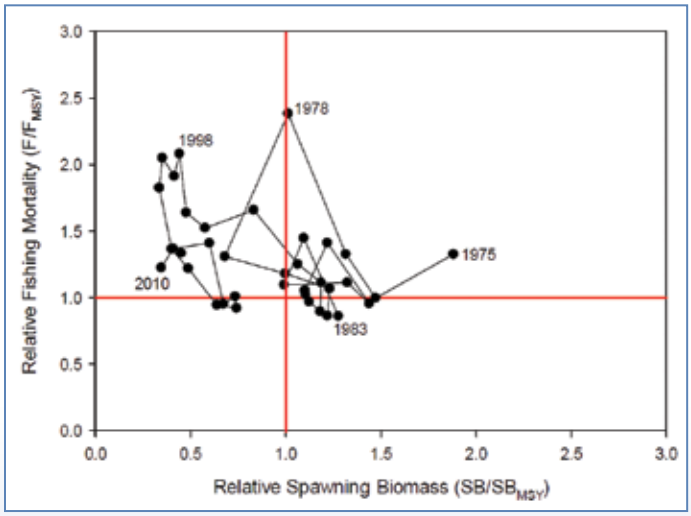

Figure 1. *Kobe plot illustrates the trends in estimates of relative fishing mortality and relative spawning biomass of WCNP striped marlin between 1975 and 2010. Source: Lee et al. (2012)*

Catches of WCNP striped marlin have exhibited a long-term decline since the 1970s due to international fishing. Catches averaged roughly 8,100 mt per year between 1970 and 1979 and declined by roughly 50 percent to about 3,800 mt per year between 2000 and 2009.

Catches of striped marlin by Japanese fleets exceed those taken by fleets from all other nations fishing in the North Pacific (Figure 2 and Table 1). The 1984 catch by Chinese-Taipei and the 1994 and 1997 catches by South Korea were the only national annual totals other than Japan above 1,000 mt since the start of the data series. In contrast, three Japanese fleets (distant-water/offshore longline, coastal longline and large-mesh gill net) each caught more than 1,000 mt in several different years.

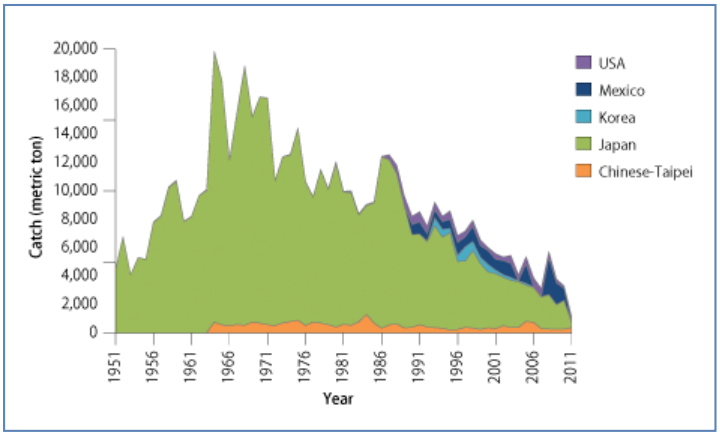

Figure 2. *Graphic shows the annual landings of striped marlin reported by ISC members (Canada, Chinese=Taipei, Japan, Korea, Mexico, People's Republic of China and the United States). Source: ISC web site, http://isc.ac.affrc.go.jp/fisheries_statistics/index.html*

Japanese catches of North Pacific striped marlin averaged about 74 percent of the total catch between 2006 and 2010, evenly split by longline and drift gillnet. US and Chinese-Taipei catches over this period averaged about 14 percent each of the total.

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Table 1. Catches of Striped Marlin by Country in the North Pacific

Source: International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean

Year	Chinese Taipei	Japan	Korea	USA	Total	WCPFC area
2006	741 mt	2,447 mt	56 mt	630 mt	5,076 mt	1,308 mt
2007	301 mt	2,220 mt	47 mt	567 mt	5,540 mt	1,083 mt
2008	270 mt	2,408 mt	29 mt	440 mt	5,729 mt	1,446 mt
2009	262 mt	1,719 mt	22 mt	270 mt	3,788 mt	974 mt
2010	253 mt	2,028 mt	18 mt	177 mt	3,310 mt	1,074 mt

The seventh meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) adopted Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2010-01 that requires Commission members and cooperating non-members to reduce total catches of North Pacific striped marlin. In a phased reduction, the catch would be at 80 percent of the levels caught in 2000 to 2003 by Jan. 1, 2013. The CMM covers all fisheries, not just longliners.

Most striped marlin in Hawai'i are landed by the longline fishery (≈96-97%) (Table 2), and most of this longline striped marlin catch comes from the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) (≈76%). US historical longline catches of striped marlin in the North Pacific WCPO have ranged between 200 and 700 mt annually. Applying CMM 2010-01 to the specified period 2000 to 2003, where the maximum catch in Hawai'i (longline plus troll/handline) was 573 mt, produces a catch limit of 458 mt per year. Total catches of striped marlin in Hawai'i in 2012 and 2013 amounted to 293 mt and 401 mt respectively (Table 2).

Table 2. Striped Marlin Catches by Hawai'i Based Fisheries (Source: WPRFMC 2013 and unpublished data)

Year	Deep-set longline	Shallow-set longline	Troll	Total	Troll % total
2009	234	24	10	268	3.72%
2010	153	12	5	171	3.19%
2011	343	20	16	378	4.20%
2012	270	11	11	293	3.87%
2013	376	15	10	401	2.38%

When a management unit species is overfished or approaching a condition of being overfished due to excessive international fishing pressure, the Council is obliged under sections 304(i) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) to develop 1) recommendations to the Secretary of State and Congress for international actions to end overfishing and rebuild the stock and 2) domestic regulations to address the relative impact of the domestic fishing fleet on the stock.

Anticipating an overfished evaluation from NMFS, the Council considered the implications of the 2012 stock assessment at its 157th meeting in June 2013 for international actions regarding a potential new WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure for WCNP striped marlin. The Council recommended "NMFS develop management measures that will end overfishing and lead to stock recovery, such as fishing at a constant catch of 3,600 mt as noted in the 2012 stock assessment, and further advocate for measures that establish limits of not more than 500 mt for any commission members, cooperating non-members and participating territories with a history of catching less than 500 mt of striped marlin."

The Council action was based on advice provided by the ISC that fishing at a constant catch of 3,600 mt would lead to potential increases in spawning biomass of between 48 percent and 120 percent by 2017. NMFS acknowledged the Council's recommendations noting they were based on sound scientific advice.

As for domestic regulations, at its 160th meeting, the Council directed staff to prepare, for consideration at the 161st meeting, draft domestic regulations to prohibit the retention of WCNP striped marlin in the Hawai'i longline fishery when 95 percent of the US limit of 458 mt is reached by the Hawai'i longline fishery.

Under this measure the troll fishery would continue to operate with the likelihood it would not exceed 5 percent of the total catch. The measure thus is not overly burdensome on the charter fishery. However, a continued decline of striped marlin spawning biomass may lead to tougher measures by the WCPFC. These in turn may require further catch reduction, even among small boat fisheries, primarily commercial troll vessels including charter vessels, which account for as much as 40 percent of the troll catches.

It is difficult to imagine, though not inconceivable, that noncommercial catches might also have to be regulated so that the Council is consistent with its obligations under National Standard 1 of the MSA. Ultimately, if recovery does not happen then total non-retention of commercial WCNP striped marlin catches may be required.

Federal Pelagic Fishing Permits Issued in the Western Pacific Region

(as of Oct. 1, 2014)

Hawai'i Longline – 137

American Samoa Longline – 55

Western Pacific (WP) General Longline – 1

WP Receiving Vessel – 30

WP Pelagic Squid – 0

Pacific Remote Island Areas Troll and Handline – 7

For more information, contact NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office at piro-permits@noaa.gov.

Photo by David Itano

Council Recommends Multi-Year Annual Catch Limits for 110 Species Complexes

The Western Pacific Fishery Regional Management Council, at its 160th meeting in Honolulu in June, recommended a four-year specification (2015-2018) for annual catch limits (ACLs) for the complexes of coral reef ecosystem species, crustaceans, bottomfish and precious corals in the Western Pacific Region. The majority of the ACLs were based on a modeling approach that incorporates catch, biomass and a qualitative measure of species resilience related to a range of carrying capacities and rates of population increase. Previous ACL specifications were based on catch data only, and no overfishing limit was identified. Incorporating biomass allowed the model to benchmark the biomass projection, which resulted in an increase in potential ACLs in many cases. However, much lower ACLs were recommended for some management unit species (MUS) due to insufficient biomass information or the lack thereof.

The four-year specification minimizes the analytical burden of running the model and minimizes public confusion by changing numbers on an annual basis. Currently near-real-time catch documentation is available only for the main Hawaiian Islands Deep-7 bottomfish fishery; therefore, real-time fishery closure is not possible for the other coral reef ecosystem, crustacean, bottomfish and precious coral complexes.

The National Marine Fisheries Service National Standard 1 guidelines dictate that, in the absence of an in-season accountability measure, the Council must specify a method for correcting the ACL when the limit has been exceeded. For fishing years 2015-2018, the Council will reduce the ACL by the amount of overage based on a recent three-year average catch if the three-year average exceeds both the ACL and acceptable biological catch. No adjustment will be made if the three-year average catch exceeds only the ACL.

The improved ACL specification moved most of the MUS from a tier-5 stock (i.e., stock with catch-only information) to a tier-3 stock (i.e., stock with sufficient information to utilize a model approach). The Council will be working with local fishery management agencies to co-manage the stocks using ACLs throughout the Western Pacific Region regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

2015-2018 Annual Catch Limits in the Western Pacific Region for Reef Shark, Crustacean and Precious Coral Complexes*

Family Group	Am Samoa ACLs (lbs)	Guam ACLs (lbs)	CNMI ACLs (lbs)	Hawai'i ACLs (lbs)
Carcharhinidae	1,615	1,900	5,600	9,310
HI Non-Deep 7 Bottomfish	NA	NA	NA	178,000
Deepwater shrimp	80,000	48,488	275,570	250,773
Spiny lobsters	4,845	3,135	7,410	15,010
Slipper lobsters	30	20	60	280
Kona crab	3,200	1,900	6,300	27,600
Black corals	790	700	2,100	Au'au channel – 5,512
Pink/bamboo corals	NA	NA	NA	Makapu'u bed – 2,205/551 180 Fathom bed – 489/123 Brooks bed – 979/245 Ka'ena Point bed – 148/37 Keahole Point bed – 148/37
Precious corals in exploratory beds	2,205	2,205	2,205	2,205

**ACLs for coral reef ecosystem fisheries were listed in the Spring 2014* Pacific Islands Fishery News.

A typical shallow bottomfishing catch in Guam may include more than a dozen species.

Two Projects Launched to Improve Fishery Data Collection in the Western Pacific Region

Guam data collector Christine Laurent conducts a catch interview with a rod-and-reel fisher.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, in collaboration with local fishery management agencies and the National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), recently launched two new projects aimed at improving the fisheries data collected by various programs in the Western Pacific Region.

The first project focuses on seasonal-run fisheries, such as rabbit fish, and relatively rare fishing methods, such as spearfishing and shoreline rod and reel. This collaborative project includes the Council, Guam Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources, Micronesian Environmental Services in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources. The goal is to quantify seasonal-run catches using a structured survey. Existing catch estimation methods tend to overestimate catches from seasonal-run fisheries. Rare fishing methods also tend to be under-represented in the data collection due to their low frequency. Hence, accurate estimation of catches is hard to attain. The Council secured funds from the NMFS Marine Recreational Information Program to support these improvement efforts.

The second project aims to improve vendor reporting and fishermen's cooperation in the data collection program. Dealer reporting is mandatory in American Samoa and CNMI but remains voluntary in Guam. This project will focus on vendors that are not meeting the minimum data collection standards. A contractor hired in each territory will train vendors on sorting the fish by species/family groups and entering data into logbooks. A series of outreach activities and a recognition program will be conducted to promote the project and gain support from the fishing and fish dealer communities.

In preparation for this project, Council staff met on May 30, 2014, with the Consul Generals of the Federated State of Micronesia and Palau, Robert Ruecho and Jeff Kenty, respectively, to enlist support and cooperation in the data collection program from the Micronesian community in Guam. Understanding the dynamics of the Micronesian-led fisheries is critical for the management of the stock and minimization of any user conflict with indigenous fishing groups in Guam. An exploratory study through a series of semi-structured interviews with the Micronesian fishing communities will be conducted to scope the issues, gauge the fishing impacts and determine if a more in-depth study is necessary to comprehend the full range of issues.

This is a collaborative project between the Council, Guam Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources, CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife and American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, and is funded by the Territory Science Initiative of the PIFSC through the Council.

Federal Archipelagic Fishing Permits Issued in the Western Pacific Region

(as of Oct. 1, 2014)

Western Pacific (WP) Bottomfish – 4 (2 Guam, 2 Pacific Remote Island Areas)

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Bottomfish – 7

Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) Noncommerical Bottomfish – 4

WP Lobster – 3 (2 MHI, 1 American Samoa)

WP Deep Water Shrimp – 8 (7 MHI, 1 American Samoa)

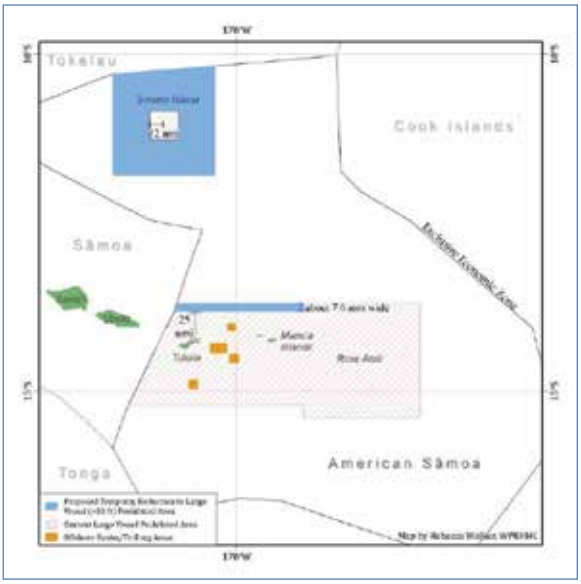
WP Precious Coral – 1 (MHI)

For more information, contact NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office at piro-permits@noaa.gov.

Council Defers Action on Temporary Reduction to American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Area

At its 160th meeting in June 2014, the Council deferred action on an option that would temporarily allow American Samoa longline limited entry permit holders with vessels over 50 feet in length to operate within portions of the Large Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA). Established in 2001, the LVPA is comprised of designated areas around Tutuila, Manu'a Islands and Swains Island (see map below). The objective of the LVPA is to separate large vessels from small vessels so as to reduce gear conflict and catch competition. The temporary easing of the boundary was considered to provide relief to American Samoa longline fishermen faced with the economic collapse of the South Pacific albacore fishery.

The Council's preliminary preferred option was to allow permitted American Samoa longline vessels greater than 50 feet to fish for a one-year period approximately seven nautical miles (nmi) closer to Tutuila by moving the northern boundary of the LVPA between the edge of the exclusive economic zone and the edge of the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument to 25 nmi north of Tutuila (see inset). The Council's preferred option would also provide an exemption to permitted American Samoa longline vessels from the Swains Island portion of the LVPA, allowing vessels to fish seaward of 12 nmi around Swains Island.



Map shows area that was under consideration for a temporary (i.e., one year) reduction in Large Vessel Prohibited Area for permitted longline vessels longer than 50 feet. The area shown in blue would have been temporarily open to the permitted vessels under the proposed rule.

Prior to the 160th meeting, the Council conducted public hearings in American Samoa and collected written comments. Most comments received were opposed to the temporary LVPA boundary modification around Tutuila and Manua, and a few comments were opposed to temporarily allowing longline vessels within portions of the LVPA around Swains Island.

American Samoa Advisory Committee Addresses Ecosystem Issues

On May 5, 2014, the Council's American Samoa Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committee (REAC) met at the Port Administration's Airport Conference Facility in the village of Tafuna. The REAC meeting was chaired by Taimalelagi Dr. Claire T. Poumele, one of American Samoa's three council members and the American Samoa Government's Port Administration Director.

The most salient issue at the meeting was the proposed modification to the boundaries of the American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA). See article above.

At the meeting the REAC also recommended that 1) the Council work with the American Samoa longline fleet on profit/loss projections related to the development of a new small scale multipurpose fishing vessel within the next 30 days; 2) the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa (NMSAS) program's socio-economic study be conducted and completed within six months to identify direct economic benefits of the sanctuary to American Samoa; 3) the NMSAS complete its sanctuary research plan and make it available for review to local agencies, community members and the Council within six months; 4) the Council work with the Department of Marine and Wildlife (DMWR) to translate the American Samoa Marine Conservation Plan (MCP) into Samoan and for DMWR to hold meetings with fishermen, community members, port users and local agencies to update the MCP within the next three months; 5) the Council facilitate the involvement of federal agencies in the development of a new American Samoa MCP with the objective of incorporating federal agency expertise; and 6) the American Samoa government reestablish the American Samoa Ocean Regional Council and to consider participation by ocean users and other affected individuals and businesses.

Presentations at the meeting included the Council's American Samoa fishery development coordinator, Ueta Fa`asili, on the Territory's fishery development projects; Dr. John Kaneko, of the Hawai'i Seafood Council, shared information on the Council's fresh fish handling workshop that was held at Tri Marine's Samoa Tuna Processor's facility in the village of Atu'u on May 3, 2014; NMSAS staff members on the sanctuary's efforts to expand tourism in American Samoa through education and outreach and use of their Ocean Center to attract visitors; and Eric Kingma, Council staff, on the MCPs authorized by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which are developed by the local governments of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

REAC participants included Carlos and Christinna Sanchez of the American Samoa Longline Association, Port Administration Deputy Director Christopher King, Alia fisherman Fuega Saite Moliga, DMWR Deputy Director Selaina Tuimavave, NMSAS staff Joseph Paulin and Charlene Felkley, US Coast Guard Rven Garcia, Department of Public Works Deputy Director Luki Tuitasi, American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency Director Ameko Pato, University of Hawai'i Sea Grant's local coordinator Kelley Anderson-Tagarino, Coral Reef Advisory Group Coordinator Kristine Bucchianeri, Anthony Langkilde and Sandra Lutu of the Department of Commerce and the National Weather Station's Carol Baqui.

‘Aha Moku Councils Use Native Hawaiian Generational Knowledge to Manage Resources

‘Aha Moku Councils have been established on several Hawaiian islands to use traditional, generational knowledge and a community consultation process to manage natural and cultural resources in Hawai‘i. Below is an update of the activities on these islands. For more information, go to www.ahamoku.org.

`Aha Moku representatives from six islands participated in the Lawelawe Hana Ke `Aha Moku Puwalu, hosted by `Aha Moku O Maui.

‘Aha Moku O O‘ahu

The O‘ahu Council, active since 2012, is chaired by Makani Christensen. It is organized with representatives of five of the six traditional moku on O‘ahu: Kona, Ko‘olaupoko, Ko‘olauloa, Waialua, Waianae and Ewa. The ‘Aha Moku O O‘ahu has responded to the National Historic Preservation Act section 106 consultation requests, assisted communities in commenting on environmental impact statements (EISs), provided testimony to legislation and facilitated discussions among fishermen, resource users and the Hawaiian communities. The O‘ahu Council has provided speakers to communities and the University of Hawai‘i and facilitated meetings between researchers and native communities to support the use of Na Hana Kupono, the traditional protocol for asking for and using traditional knowledge. The protocol was developed at the Puwalu Ke Kumu ‘Ike conference in November 2006.

‘Aha Moku O Maui

The ‘Aha Moku O Maui is organized under the chairmanship of Ke‘eaumoku Kapu. The work of the Maui Council is supported by Na ‘Aikane O Maui, which is approaching the Castle Foundation to help develop a management plan to address coastal marine uses in Lahaina. Na ‘Aikane O Maui is active in cultural education and development of cultural projects, protecting and preserving cultural practices and sites, as well as being active in the burial council activities.

The ‘Aha Moku O Maui is also partnering with the Lahaina Restoration Foundation on a community marine plan workshop scheduled for later this year.

Individual communities have been empowered by the ‘Aha Moku O Maui activities and community associations, and informants are being sought to assist and consult with developers on appropriate development and planning that pays homage to the host culture.

Maui County is in the process of adopting a resolution recognizing the ‘Aha Moku O Maui, and it has received a facility for meetings and other cultural activities and events in Lahaina.

Maui began organizing with the leadership of Timmy Paulokaleioku Bailey in 2007, meeting with people in all of their 12 moku communities and an around-the-island torch march led by Kapu. Through this march, relationships were developed with the Hawaiian community, and those relations have helped in consultations with developers and other resource users.

On Sept. 12 and 13, 2014, the ‘Aha Moku O Maui hosted the Lawelawe Hana Ke ‘Aha Moku Puwalu (Serving the ‘Aha Moku Conference) at the Westin Maui Resort in Ka‘anapali, Maui. About 60 representatives from the ‘Aha Moku councils of Maui, Lana‘i, Kaho‘olawe, O‘ahu, Kaua‘i and Moku o Keawe (Hawai‘i) attended the conference. Topics of discussion included the ‘Aha Moku Advisory Committee, funding for Kaho‘olawe, traditional access and gathering rights, and inclusion of Aha Moku representatives on state and local commissions, councils and advisory bodies, among others.

‘Aha Moku Moku O Keawe

After initially holding separate meetings for the East and West sides, workshop leaders from both sides of the island formed a coalition to address Big Island issues that were having an impact on the culture and lifestyle of their communities. Palikapu Dedman is the overall Po‘o of ‘Aha Moku Moku O Keawe. Terri Napeahi represents the East side of Hawai‘i, and Jerome Marks represents Kona on the West side of Hawai‘i.

The East side had targeted game management as an important issue and has engaged with the Hawai‘i County Game Management Advisory Commission to conserve and protect hunting, prevent the waste of game animals and support continued access to traditional hunting areas.

The West side is currently working to prevent further escalation of a conflict between the environmental conservation group Sea Shepherd and aquarium fish collectors. The Moku O Keawe Council will use its relationship with Sea Shepherd, established through their partnership on the geothermal development issue, to facilitate a discussion and establish a peaceful resolution.

The Moku O Keawe Council is also working with the State Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE) to increase outreach and education, as well as sensitivity to local fishermen and women. The issue came before the Moku O Keawe Council when a young fisherman was caught unknowingly fishing in a restricted area. He suffered a steep fine and confiscation of his equipment and catch. The Moku O Keawe Council thought the punishment was harsh in light of a lack of education and outreach activity by DOCARE and poor or no signage in the restricted area.

Other recent issues before the Council are the proposed mariculture projects in Kawaihae, the Aina Ho‘onanea LLC’s application for a subdivision permit with no EIS or impact analysis for the subdivision, the recent transit of a military vessel through the fishing ko‘a at Kawaihae and public access to natural resources.

At a recent meeting, Dedman noted that all of the people of Hawai‘i benefit when Hawaiian rights are recognized and supported. He cited an initiative to re-open a trail that was closed by a private landowner to illustrate his point. When the case went before a judge it had numerous plaintiffs but the only plaintiff with standing was a native Hawaiian organization. When it was proven that it was part of the traditional trail system the landowner was forced to provide access to the trail. “But not just to native Hawaiians,” Dedman stated, “access for everybody.”

Museum Exhibit Features Guam's Pelagic Fishery

Guam Museum Curator Sandy Yee (left) and Dr. Judith Amesbury, a member of the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee, at the opening night of the museum's pelagic exhibit. Yee and Amesbury are showing off a photo of a human bone fishhook point that Yee excavated on Guam.

The Guam Museum's Pelagic Fishing Exhibit in the Latte of Freedom Hall of Governors at the Ricardo J. Bordallo Governor's Complex in Adelup celebrated its grand opening on July 23 and will run through Oct. 31, 2014.

Visitors to the exhibit will enjoy a historic storyline highlighting the ancient fishing community as described in 1602 by Fray Juan Pobre. The display includes pictorials and a video of fishing families of Guam, ancient and commercial fishing equipment and a special donation from Casamar's Ben "Minoru" Ichiyasu.

This exhibit was made possible with the support and guidance of community organizations including the Guam Museum, a Division under the Department of Chamorro Affairs; the Guam Museum Foundation, Inc.; Matson, Inc.; Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association; Hurao Academy; Casamar-Ben Ichiyasu; and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

According to its organizers, the Guam Museum Pelagic Fishing Exhibit strives to demonstrate that unity is essential to successful programming and content development as well as to promote the understanding of pelagic fishing on Guam from traditional indigenous cultural knowledge to present day processes.

Protected Species Update

Feds Finalize Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery

On April 4, 2014, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued the final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for Hawaiian monk seal recovery actions and issued the Record of Decision on June 10, 2014. The draft PEIS, published during the summer of 2011, had sparked significant controversy. Among the suite of recovery actions included in the draft PEIS preferred alternative was a translocation program to improve young monk seal survival rates by temporarily moving up to 20 pups per year from the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) to the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) and returning them at three years of age. Many fishermen and community members participated in the public hearings held around Hawai'i and expressed their concerns for the potential impacts additional monk seal pups may bring to the MHI, where a small population of about 150 to 200 seals are naturally increasing.

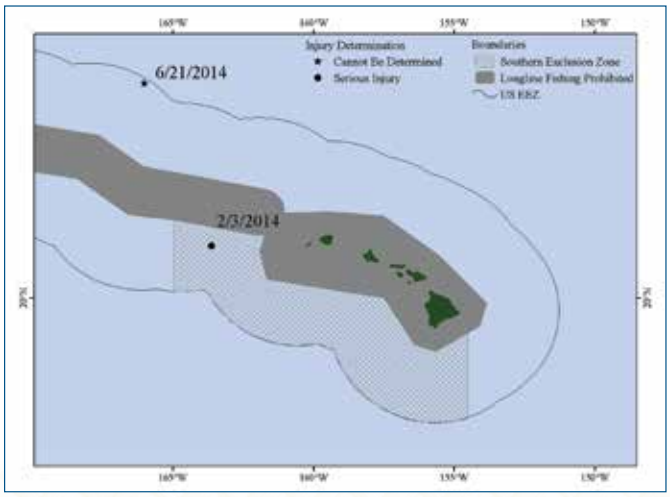
The final PEIS preferred alternative excludes the two-stage translocation of young monk seals, but includes all other research and enhancement activities considered in the draft PEIS preferred alternative. These include disentanglement and dehooking, removal of aggressive males, development of methods to minimize interactions between seals and people, relocation of problem seals from the MHI to NWHI and translocations within the NWHI or within the MHI. The research and enhancement permit associated with the final PEIS authorizes activities for five years until June 2019.

NMFS explained in their Record of Decision that the two-stage translocation proposal was deferred to allow further development of monitoring and intervention capabilities that would be essential for successful two-way translocation of seals from the NWHI to MHI. During this time, NMFS also plans to engage the public to address concerns raised during the draft PEIS public comment process.

About 1,100 monk seals inhabit the Hawai'i archipelago. The main subpopulation resides in the NWHI, where the population has continued to decline despite the full protection of the marine national monument. The decline is attributed to a combination of factors including poor survival of pups and juveniles likely caused by shark predation, food limitation and prey competition with ulua (trevally), sharks and other top predators.

Hawai'i Longline Fishery Southern Exclusion Zone to Remain Open

NMFS determined that a false killer whale interaction observed on June 21, 2014, will not trigger an area closure for the Hawai'i deep-set longline fishery. The closure area, called the Southern Exclusion Zone (SEZ), amounts to approximately 17 percent of the US exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around Hawai'i that is open to longline fishing and is a part of the False Killer Whale Take Reduction Plan (TRP) implemented in December 2012. The TRP regulations require closure of the SEZ to the Hawai'i deep-set longline fishery for the remainder of the calendar year if the fishery has two interactions that would result in death or serious injury (greater than 50 percent chance that the animal will die from the injury) within the EEZ. During the first full year of the plan



Map illustrates the location of the two false killer whale interactions within the US EEZ around Hawai'i in 2014.

Humpback whale and calf in Hawaiian Islands. Credit NOAA.

implementation in 2013, only one interaction counted toward the trigger and the SEZ remained open.

In February 2014, a hooking of a false killer whale in the US EEZ around Hawai'i was determined to be a serious injury and counted as the first interaction for the SEZ trigger for the year. The interaction on June 21 was ruled as a "cannot be determined (CBD)" case, which does not count toward this year's trigger.

In the June 21 interaction, the false killer whale was initially hooked in the mouth, but the hook broke at the barb and the animal was released alive with a partial hook. While each interaction is evaluated by NMFS on a case-by-case basis, hooking in the mouth typically results in a "serious injury" determination, while a hooking that results in the hook straightening or removal may be ruled a "non-serious injury." NMFS deemed CBD as an appropriate ruling for the recent interaction given the considerable uncertainty surrounding the fate of the partial hook.

The TRP aims to reduce injuries and deaths of false killer whales from interactions with the Hawai'i longline fishery. Development of the TRP is required under the Marine Mammal Protection Act when the incidental take of marine mammal stocks exceeds a level that is considered sustainable. Currently, the threshold level for the pelagic stock of false killer whales is 9.1 animals per year and the average estimated interaction is 13.6 animals per year. The average number of interactions is estimated from about two observed interactions per year on average by the federal observer program that covers at least 20 percent of the Hawai'i deep-set longline trips departing from Honolulu.

NMFS estimates that there are approximately 1,500 false killer whales in the pelagic stock within the US EEZ around Hawai'i. False killer whales are known to prey on longline target catch, often leaving fishermen with only fish heads when the gear is retrieved. Occasionally a false killer whale fails to avoid the hook during such attempts to forage on longline-caught fish, resulting in a hooking.

Alaska's Petition to Delist Humpback Whale Population Moves Forward

On June 26, 2014, NMFS published a 90-day finding to the State of Alaska's petition to designate the Central North Pacific (CNP) stock of the endangered humpback whale as a distinct population segment and delist it under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

NMFS found a "positive" 90-day finding on the State of Alaska petition, meaning that they will conduct a full review to determine whether the petitioned action is warranted. NMFS had previously initiated a status review in 2009 but its completion is still pending.

Alaska's petition differs slightly from a 2013 petition from the Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition (HFACT), which asked for the delisting of the entire North Pacific (NP) population of humpback whales. The CNP population is a segment of the greater NP population. The CNP population spends winter breeding in waters off Hawai'i and forages primarily off Alaska and northern British Columbia during the summer.

Marianas, American Samoa Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks Listed as Threatened

Scalloped hammerhead shark. Credit NOAA.

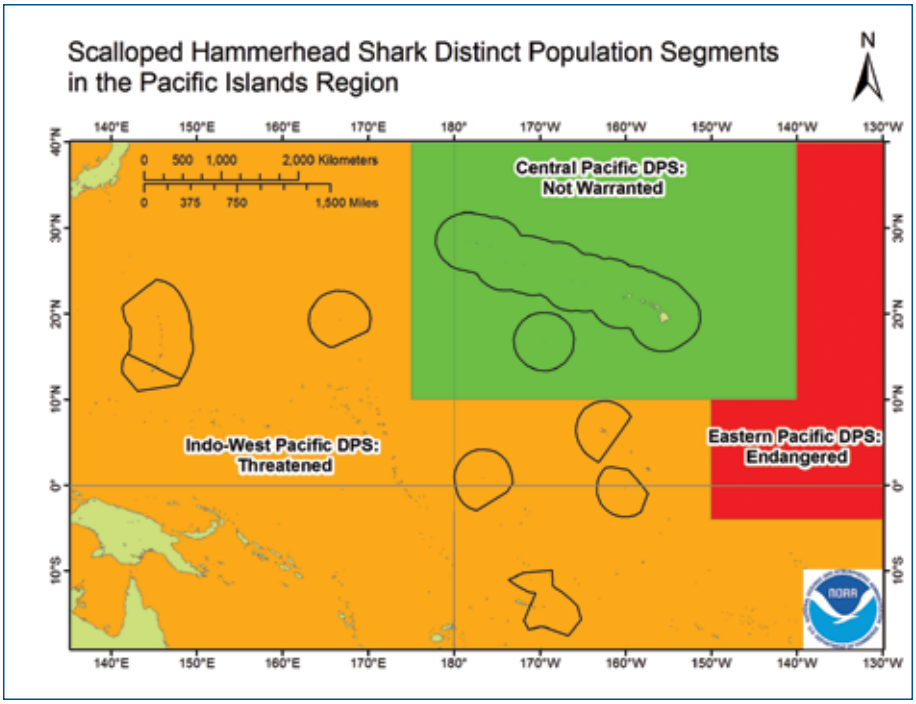
On July 3, 2014, NMFS announced its final decision to list four of the six distinct population segments (DPSs) of scalloped hammerhead sharks under the ESA. The Indo-West Pacific DPS is found in waters surrounding American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and Guam and will be listed as "threatened" (i.e., the population is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future).

NMFS will not be designating critical habitat for the Indo-West Pacific DPS at this time due to insufficient information to determine features essential to conservation within the US exclusive economic zone.

Continued on page 12

Protected Species Update

Continued from page 11



Map indicates scalloped hammerhead shark DPSs in the Western Pacific. The Indo-West Pacific DPS extends to the western extent of the Indian Ocean. Source: http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_scalloped_hammerhead_shark.html

For species listed as threatened, ESA Section 9 take prohibitions do not automatically apply and NMFS must consider whether regulations are necessary for the conservation of threatened species. In the final rule, NMFS determined that take prohibitions are not necessary for the Indo-West Pacific DPS of scalloped hammerhead sharks. NMFS concluded that the DPS' risks of extinction are primarily a result of threats from foreign fishing activities in portions of the DPS range outside of US waters. NMFS also recognized that adequate management measures are in place for US fisheries through local and federal regulations and concluded that domestic fishing activities are not contributing significantly to the threats identified for the Indo-West Pacific DPS.

Scalloped hammerhead sharks are not commonly seen or caught in waters around American Samoa, Guam and CNMI. Local regulations on shark and shark fin possession or sale are not affected by NMFS' decision to list the Indo-West Pacific DPS.

In other parts of the world, the Eastern Pacific DPS and Eastern Atlantic DPS will be listed as "endangered" (i.e., the population is in danger of extinction) and the Central and Southwest Atlantic DPS as "threatened," while the Central Pacific DPS, which includes Hawai'i, Northwest Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico DPS will not be listed.

Fifteen Species of Indo-Pacific Coral Listed as Threatened

Acropora globiceps. Credit NOAA.

On Aug. 27, 2014, NMFS announced that 15 species of corals in the Indo-Pacific will be listed as threatened under the ESA. NMFS will also list five species of corals in the Caribbean. None of the species will be listed as Endangered. The ESA listing will become effective on Oct. 10, 2014.

Of the 15 Indo-Pacific species that will be listed, eight species are thought to occur in American Samoa, four species in Guam and two species in the CNMI, according to NMFS' final rule. None of the coral species that will be listed are known to occur in Hawai'i.

For species listed as threatened, ESA Section 9 take prohibitions do not automatically apply. This means that take (defined under the ESA as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct") of the newly listed coral species will not be a violation of the ESA at this time. NMFS may consider at a later time whether regulations to prohibit take are needed for the conservation of the threatened coral species.

Federally funded, authorized or executive actions, such as fishery management actions developed by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, will be required to undergo consultations with NMFS to ensure they do not jeopardize the continued existence of the listed coral species.

NMFS' final decision is a substantial revision of a proposal issued in November 2012 that included a total of 66 species of corals in the Indo-Pacific and Caribbean. The revision was based on public comments and new scientific information that NMFS received since the proposed rule.

For more information about the listed corals (including pictures and descriptions of each of the listed species), see the NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office website at http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_coral.html.

Indo-Pacific Species Listed as Threatened

	American Samoa	Guam	CNMI
Acropora globiceps	X	X	X
Acropora jacquelineae	X		
Acropora lokani			
Acropora pharaonis			
Acropora retusa	X	X	
Acropora rudis	X		
Acropora speciosa	X		
Acropora tenella			
Anacropora spinosa			
Euphyllia paradivisa	X		
Isopora crateriformis	X		
Montipora australiensis			
Pavona diffluens	X	X	X
Porites napopora			
Seriatopora aculeata		X	

X = areas in the Western Pacific Region where species is thought to occur.

More than 100 people filled the Harbor View Center at the Council's Fishers Forum on recreational fishing in Hawai'i emceed by radio personality Mike Buck, seen at the podium.

Ed Watamura, Council member and president of the Waialua Boating Club, lets the crowd know he cares during his Fishers Forum presentation.

Council's Fishers Forum Highlights Noncommercial Fishing in Hawai'i

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Fishers Forum held on June 25, 2014, at the Harbor View Center in Honolulu, in conjunction with its 160th Council meeting focused on noncommercial fishing in Hawai'i. About 200 people gathered to share their thoughts and concerns, as well as participate in a listening session on a National Recreational Saltwater Fishing Policy being developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Radio personality Mike Buck served as the Master of Ceremonies. McGrew Rice, Council member from Hawai'i and a Kona charter fisherman, provided the welcome and introductions. Ed Watamura, president of the Waialua Boat Club and chairman of the Council's Advisory Panel, explained the apathy amongst fishermen and encouraged participants to be active and engaged in the process of changing the way both agencies and fishermen think about noncommercial fishing. Dr. Craig Severance, Council Scientific and Statistical Committee member and weigh master for Hilo Trollers, provided an overview of the noncommercial fishing universe and noted the difficulty in defining the fishery. Joshua DeMello, Council staff, followed with the current fishery data from the noncommercial fishery, likening it to a poorly planned potluck.

The National Recreational Saltwater Fishing Policy listening session was opened by Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries Sam Rauch and conducted by Russ Dunn, NOAA Fisheries National Policy Advisor on Recreational Fishing. Dunn explained the draft goals of the policy and took comments and suggestions from participants on how NOAA Fisheries should develop the policy. Participants stated that the policy needs to consider the indigenous people of the Western Pacific, noting that fishing is more than a recreation; it is a tradition and a cultural cornerstone. Many participants expressed concerns about the definition of noncommercial fishing given the wide-spectrum of intents and purposes of fishing in Hawai'i and emphasized the importance of developing a definition for noncommercial fishing that reflects the non-market value. Participants also encouraged collaboration between local and federal agencies to ensure that existing policies are not superseded. For more information on the National Recreational Saltwater Fishing Policy, visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/policy/index.html

The Hawai'i Marine Recreational Fishing Survey, Pacific Islands Fisheries Group and *Lawai'a* Magazine, the US Coast Guard, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition and the Council hosted tables offering information and give-aways for the local fishing community.

Representatives from the US Coast Guard at an information table at the Council's Fishers Forum.

Council Hosts Summer Courses in Fisheries and Marine Resource Management

American Samoa students show off their catch!

Meteorologist Hans Malala introduces students to weather forecasting and storm tracking equipment at the summer program in American Samoa.

Each year, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council hosts summer courses in Fisheries and Marine Resource Management in Hawai'i, Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The summer program, first implemented in 2008, partners with local educators to provide high school students with a broad overview of marine and resources related issues, practical experience in fishing and seafood processing, exposure to technical experts working in the field and a glimpse into potential career opportunities.

This year 17 local high school students between the ages of 15 and 18 participated in the American Samoa Fisheries and Marine Resources High School Summer Course, which ran from July 7 to July 25, 2014. The Council brought on Mr. Louie Segi, a marine science teacher at Samoana High School, to be the course instructor. Segi is an avid fisherman and spends a great deal of his free time casting nets, rod-and-reel fishing, and spear fishing for *fe'e* (octopus).

The students spent half of the three weeks in a classroom setting learning basic concepts about the various fisheries in the territory and the businesses and people of American Samoa who rely on them. They also looked at local ecosystems, the interactions that occur within them and how people are working to manage the resources within our exclusive economic zone.

The other half of the course was spent in the field. Students canvassed the local shores and learned both traditional and modern fishing techniques. They cast lines from the shores of Aua Village, threw *kili* (nets) in the village of Alao, took an alia boat ride to the island village of Aunu'u to tour the wetlands and spear *fe'e*, and learned to paddle canoes at Utulei Beach.

Students also visited local agencies to learn about the work they do and how it affects the natural resources of the islands. Participating agencies and individuals that hosted the class included the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, the American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency, the American Heart Association, the Department of Public Safety Marine Patrol Division, the American Samoa Coral Reef Advisory Group, the National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa, the American Samoa Swimming Association, NOAA's Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, NOAA's American Samoa National Weather Station, the American Samoa Community College's Land Grant Program, the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant Program and Executive Chef Charles Nelson of the Tradewinds Hotel.

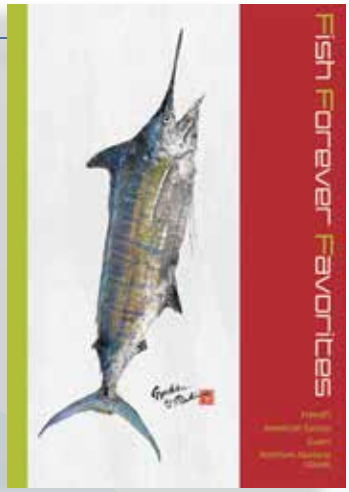
At the program's closing ceremony, students spoke about what they learned in the course to their parents in attendance. Some students created videos to chronicle their experience. Each student was given a certificate of completion and achievement as well as a 2015 pocket planner and a flashdrive containing all of the photos and videos collected during the course of the class.

American Samoa Swimming Association provides water safety lessons at the Council's sponsored high school summer program. Students also received CPR training from the American Heart Association.

The annual Saipan High School Summer Course on Marine Fisheries and Resources sponsored by the Council was held July 7 to July 30, 2014. The program provided the students with a rare opportunity to learn firsthand from local professionals about the roles and responsibilities of local fishery organizations through hands-on activities such as fishery planning, data collection, biosampling, water testing, traditional fishing, bottomfishing and rabbitfish farming. Other topics covered in the program related to marine debris, climate change, corals, fish aggregation devices, watersheds, marine protected areas, boating safety, canoe paddling and traditional navigation. The course had 16 participating students from Kagman High School, Southern High School and Marianas High School.

From left to right: *Britta Baecher (left), Department of Fish and Wildlife Marine Protected Areas Coordinator, poses with students after hiking to the famous Bird Island (shown in background), a conservation area and marine sanctuary in CNMI.* ***Center:*** *Summer Program Coordinator Rose Ada-Hocog (far left) with students and interns from the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality under Watershed Coordinator Kaitlin Mattos (far right) after planting trees at the Laolao Watershed to help beautify the area and prevent erosion at Laolao Bay (shown in background).* ***Right:*** *Zodiac III Captain Stanley Patris (second row, center), Assistant Fire Fighter II Patrick Ogo (second row, left) and summer program students enjoyed a boat ride to Managaha Island and the Pacific Islands Club.*

New Outreach Materials



Fish Forever Favorites

Fish Forever Favorites is a compilation of nearly 40 years of seafood recipes featured and shared by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council in its Pacific Islands Fishery News and at various events like the annual NOAA Fish Fry. The booklet illustrates the diversity of the cultures and the cuisine throughout the Western Pacific Region with both contemporary and traditional dishes from the archipelagos of Hawai'i, American Samoa and the Marianas (Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). It also includes a wealth of interesting fish facts to help us be better educated consumers. A free downloadable version is available at http://www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/educational-library/.

Fish Facts

Want to be a more educated fish consumer? Check out the Council's new fact sheets on Pacific blue marlin and bigeye tuna. They provide information about the distribution, stock status, importance to the Western Pacific Region, markets and management of each species. You can also learn the names for each fish in the Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro and Refaluwasch languages. An updated US Pelagic Fisheries fact sheet with the most recent statistics is also available. To view or download any of the fact sheets, visit the Council's Educational Library at http://www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/educational-library/.

Ahi Video

The *'Ahi, The Yellowfin Tuna: Managing Our Fisheries* documentary illustrates why this species is a favorite among Hawai'i fishermen, consumers and chefs. It describes the patterns of locally caught 'ahi and how the species is being managed. The information provokes fishermen and the public to consider ways to ensure the sustainability of Hawai'i yellowfin tuna.

Native Efforts on Climate Change Strengthen at 2nd First Stewards Symposium





Clockwise from left:
1) Esther Kia'aina, Fran Castro, Leo Asuncion Jr. and Kitty Simonds;
2) Malia Nobriega-Olivera;
3) Kitty Simonds and Haunani Kane;
4) Pualele "Pene" Lefale, Anna Afoa and Sandra Lutu; and 5) Faleosalafai Wayne Tipa, Michael Tosatto, Leo Asuncion Jr., Haunani Kane, Malia Nobriega-Olivera, Okenaisa Fauolo and Jerome Ailao Matagi.

First Stewards, Inc., held its second symposium in Washington, DC, on July 21 to 23, 2014. United Indigenous Voices Address Sustainability focused on climate change and traditional places. The event gathered together more than 200 persons who are native or working with native communities from the US Pacific Islands, coastal and inland tribes of North America, and the US Caribbean islands.

Keynote addresses were provided by Joann Chase, director of the Environmental Protection Agency's American Indian Environmental Office; Esther P. Kia'aina, assistant secretary for insular areas, US Department of the Interior; Colin Kippen, former executive director of the National Indian Education Association and the Native Hawaiian Education Council; and Raina Thiele, the White House's associate director of intergovernmental affairs.

The conference culminated in the announcement by Brian Cladoosby, president of the National Congress of American Indians, that he was ready to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with First Stewards. Another MOU is in the works between First Stewards and the Conservation Legacy to develop a Conservation Corps Program engaging Native American young people. Involvement of youth was a key component of this year's conference and dominated the exhibits at the Project Showcase.

Following the Symposium, First Stewards Chair Micah McCarty (Makah) said, over the next two years until the 2016 symposium, the organization will focus on developing a youth program, populating its advisory bodies and seeking officers to represent the East Coast and Gulf of Mexico. The First Stewards advisory bodies include Circles of Youth, Wisdom and Friends and a Science and Policy Council. Ann Marie Chischilly (Navajo) will step down from the First Stewards board to lead the Circle of Youth, and Jeff Mears (Oneida) will step down from the board to lead the Science and Policy Council. Chair McCarty, Vice Chair Kitty Simonds (Hawaiian and executive director of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council), Treasurer Ed Johnstone (Quinault) and Michael Williams (Yupiaq) remain on the board.

The US Pacific Islands were well represented at the event. Panelists included Taimalelagi Dr. Claire Tuia Poumele (American Samoan) to discuss cultural and food security; Malia Nobrega-Olivera (Hawaiian) to address rights and responsibilities; Simonds to chair the Traditional Natural Resources Management Practices Panel, which included presenter Paulokaleioku Timmy Bailey (Hawaiian); and Keseta Okenaisa Fauolo (American Samoan) to present on cultural resource damage assessments, while Pualele Penehuro "Pene" Lefale (Samoan) represented the Pacific Islands on the Moving Forward Panel.

Haunani Kane (Hawaiian) served as the Pacific Islanders official witness to the Symposium. Students Anna Imelda Afoa, Toni Marie Fulisia Hollister, Jerome Ailao Matagi and Faleosalafai Wayne Tipa of the American Samoa Community College's Samoan Studies Institute participated in the Project Showcase as well as provided a cultural ceremony. Their exhibit "Traditional Samoan Expressions about Fishing and Weather and Their Similarities to Other Pacific Islands" presented outcomes of research they undertook for the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

Also participating in the Project Showcase were Rachel Dela Cruz, Farrington High School student; and recent graduates Carey Shiho Nishizuka Demapan, Mount Carmel School, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI); Louisa Kelani Faulkner, South Pacific Academy, American Samoa; and Ferdinand Rondilla, George Washington High School, Guam. They exhibited their winning photo-essays from the 2013 Council-sponsored contest on the theme of climate change and traditional places: rights and responsibilities.

Others from the Pacific Islands attending the Symposium included Leo R. Asuncion Jr., acting director, State of Hawai'i Office of Planning, and planning program manager, Hawai'i Coastal Zone Management Program; Fran Castro, director, CNMI Division of Coastal Resources Management; Michael Duenas, Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council member and Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association operations manager; Sandra Fuimaono Lutu, assistant to the director, American Samoa Coastal Management Program; and Michael Tosatto, regional administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Pacific Islands Regional Office.

Parents Amelia "Amy" Delacruz and Mark "Ashley" Faulkner helped chaperone students, and Council staff members Charles Ka'ai'ai, indigenous program coordinator, and Sylvia Spalding, communications officer, assisted with organization and logistics for the Pacific Island group.

Postcards
FROM THE REGION

1. *At the Council booth at the June 2014 NOAA Fish Fry in Washington, DC, Council Executive Director Kitty Simonds (far left) greets (l-r) Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker, Assistant Secretary of Insular Affairs Esther Ki`aina and NOAA Administrator Dr. Kathryn Sullivan. See page 19 for one of the Pacific Island recipes that was served.*

2. *The Council and NOAA OceanWatch teamed up May 2014 in Honolulu to offer a three-day workshop for educators on geologic history, sea-level change and water resources. Participants from Hawai'i (Kimi Apiki, Kamealoha Hanohano Smith, Ui Kapu, Simon Tajiri, Renee Wallace Silberstein), American Samoa (Christina Mataafa, Maria Vaofanua), Guam (Cliff Kyota, Jason Miller) and the CNMI (Rose Tama Ada-Hogoc, Frank Vilagomez) enjoyed classroom lessons and hands-on experiences in water quality testing, beach profiling and more. Pictured here, the group explores the geologic formations at Nu`uanu Pali.*

3. *On July 12, 2014, the Council hosted the Hawai'i node of the 5th International Pacific Marine Educators Network conference. Participating via the web while the main conferees gathered at the Tokyo University of Marine Science & Technology, the Hawai'i presenters included Council member Michael Goto and Council staff Sylvia Spalding ("Japan's Influence on Hawaii Fisheries & Seafood"), Kamealoha Hanohano-Smith ("Traditional Knowledge Resource Management Practices on Kaua'i"), Michael Louis Markrich ("Combatting class and demographic bias in cross-cultural education") and Mark Heckman ("Teaching hypotheses testing using night plankton light traps"). Others from the Council and the OCEANIA Marine Educators Association gathered to watch the local presentations and those broadcast live from Japan.*

4. *American Samoa Community College students, sponsored by the Council, and the college's Samoan Studies Institute director, Okenaisa Fauolo, exhibited their research on fisheries and climate change at the Living Earth Festival at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, July 18-20, 2014.*

5. *First place winners, Frank Menno, Aaron Roberto and Frank Roberto at the Saipan International Fishing Derby held July 20, 2014.*

6. *In partnership with the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, the Department of Commerce American Samoa Coastal Management Program hosted a Seafood Festival as part of the 2014 Coastweek's Celebration to highlight the vital role of a healthy coast to the wealth and health of individuals and the economy. Held Sept. 27, 2014, at the Fagatogo Market Place, the festival included a cook off of local seafood in four categories: raw, traditional, cooked and baked.*

Council Family Updates

Council Member Appointments

Ed Ebisui

John Gourley

Frederick "McGrew" Rice

On June 26, 2014, the U.S. Commerce Department announced the appointment of 22 new and returning members to the eight regional fishery management councils. The new and reappointed council members began their three-year terms on Aug. 11, 2014.

For the Western Pacific Council the 2014 appointee for the obligatory seat for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is **John Gourley**. **Edwin "Ed" Ebisui Jr.** and **Frederick Rice**, both of Hawai'i, were reappointed for two at-large seats.

MAFAC – Recreational Fisheries Working Group

The reappointed Pacific Islands members of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee Recreational Fisheries Working Group include **Jesse Rosario**, University of Guam, Guam; **Dr. Craig Severance**, University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Hawai'i; and **Ed Watamura**, Waialua Boat Club, Hawai'i.

In Memorium

Photo courtesy of Steve Wilkings / Surfing Heritage

Dr. Ricky Grigg, reknown waterman, big-wave surfer, University of Hawai'i professor in the Department of Oceanography and long-standing chair of the Council's Precious Coral Plan Team since its inception in 1977 passed away on May 21, 2014, at the age of 77. He was one of the world's leading experts on coral in the Western Pacific Region and a lead author of the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Precious Corals, one of the Council's first FMPs. Ricky was a valued colleague and friend of the Council who embodied the aloha-spirit. He will be greatly missed.

Dr. James Parrish, 78, University of Hawai'i professor and long-time member of the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee, passed away May 8, 2014. He also served on the Marine Protected Area Advisory Council and, as a member of the Plan Team, was instrumental in the finalization and implementation of the Bottomfish Fishery Management Plan. Jim will be long-remembered at the Council for his encyclopedic knowledge on Pacific reef and near-shore fish life histories.

Donald Flores, Mayor of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), passed on June 3, 2014, at the age of 65. Flores was one of several mayors from Guam and the CNMI who attended the initial Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning community training sponsored by the Council in 2011 and was a supporter of traditional fishing rights. He was best known in Saipan for his island beautification projects and controlling the animal population.

Council Committees

The **Social Science Planning Committee** met on June 16, 2014, in Honolulu, for the first time since being restructured. Members discussed the human dimensions of a number of contemporary regional fisheries issues such as fishing community profiles, marine protected areas, post-harvest fish flow and climate change. Particularly important was the Committee's task to provide the Council guidance on a new five-year set of human-communities research priorities. The Committee settled on 19 priorities and ranked them on a scale of one (maximum importance) to five.

The Committee also reviewed a proposed a set of activities for the Council's Ecosystem Program's Human Dimensions Focus Area. Members concurred with the proposals and recommended the Council endorse the document, which it did at its 160th meeting the following week. Activities include the developing of a program to monitor relevant human dimensions attributes in appropriate Council-managed fisheries, undertaking integrated social-biophysical fishery assessments, improving social and economic data that feeds into annual catch limit (ACL) determinations and evaluating a risk-based approach to fisheries social impact assessment.

The inaugural meeting of the **Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee** (FDCRC) of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council was held on June 24, 2014, in Honolulu. The meeting included a presentation of a regional strategic plan developed in April by the FDCRC-Technical Committee that details the tasks needed to improve collection, access and use of fishery data for research. The FDCRC informally reached consensus to adopt the plan and recommended finalizing the task-assignments with Council staff working directly with representatives from each committee-member agency. The Committee also adopted the FDCRC Standard Operating Procedures and Policies and reached consensus that **Dr. Ruth Matagi-Tofiga** be the Committee chair.

The FDCRC is comprised of the heads of the State, Territory and Commonwealth fishery management agencies; Director of Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans; National Marine Fisheries Services–Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center; a representative from the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program of the US Fish and Wildlife Service; and the Council. The purpose of this committee is to proactively implement fishery data collection improvements and coordinate fishery-related research.

The **Marine Planning and Climate Change Committee** (MPCCC) held its inaugural meeting on June 20, 2014, in Honolulu and by videoconference. Committee members noted the value of integrating marine planning and climate change and congratulated the Council for convening the Committee. The members recommended that the definition of climate change, for the purposes of this Committee, include natural climate variability such as the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle. The MPCCC stressed the importance of acquiring information that is useable for planning and resource management purposes, noting that data available currently are large scale.

The Committee held its second meeting by teleconference on Sept. 15, 2014, to prioritize the climate change related recommendations that the Council has made to date, to review a draft Committee SOPP and consider a policy on

marine planning and climate change the Council can use as it develops/modifies its fishery ecosystem plans and programs.

The MPCCC members are **Rose Taman Ada-Hogoc**, community member, CNMI; **Leo R. Asuncion Jr.**, Office of Planning, State of Hawai'i; **Paulokaleioku Timmy Bailey**, Haleakala National Park, Hawai'i; **Sheena Black**, Guam Economic Development Authority; **Fran Castro**, CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality Division of Coastal Resources Management; **Ernest Chargualaf**, Mayor of Merizo (Malesso), Guam; **Lorilee Crisostomo**, Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans; **Jacqueline Kozak-Thiel**, Hawai'i State Sustainability Coordinator; **Dr. John J. Marra**, NOAA Regional Climate Services, Pacific Region; **Therese Ogumoro**, CNMI Zoning Board; **Eileen Shea**, consultant; **Melagi Suitonu-Chapman**, community member, American Samoa; **Selaina Vaitautolu Tuimavave**, American Samoa DMWR; and **Susan White**, Pacific Reefs National Wildlife Refuge and Monuments Complex, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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FDA and EPA Issue Draft Updated Advice for Fish Consumption

On June 10, 2014, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued draft updated advice on fish consumption. The two agencies have concluded pregnant and breastfeeding women, those who might become pregnant and young children should eat more fish that is lower in mercury in order to gain important developmental and health benefits. The draft updated advice is consistent with recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Previously, the FDA and the EPA recommended maximum amounts of fish that these population groups should consume, but did not promote a minimum amount. Over the past decade, however, emerging science has underscored the importance of appropriate amounts of fish in the diets of pregnant and breastfeeding women, and young children.

This updated advice is intended to help pregnant women and mothers make informed decisions about the right amount and right kinds of fish to eat during important times in their lives and their children's lives. According to the FDA, an analysis of seafood consumption data from over 1,000 pregnant women in the United States found that 21 percent of them had eaten no fish in the previous month and those who ate fish ate far less than the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends. The draft updated advice recommends pregnant women eat at least 8 ounces and up to 12 ounces (i.e., 2-3 servings) per week of a variety of fish that are lower in mercury to support fetal growth and development.

The draft updated advice cautions pregnant or breastfeeding women to avoid four types of fish that are associated with high mercury levels: tilefish from the Gulf of Mexico, shark, swordfish and king mackerel. It also advised limiting consumption of white (i.e., albacore) tuna to 6 ounces a week.

Choices lower in mercury include some of the most commonly eaten fish, such as shrimp, pollock, salmon, canned light tuna, tilapia, cod and mahimahi.

Before issuing final advice, the agencies will consider public comments, seek the advice of the FDA's Risk Communication Advisory Committee and conduct a series of focus groups.

Hawaiian-Style Marlin Poke

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

Ingredients:
1 lb marlin ½ inch dice
½ cup yellow onion ⅛-inch diced
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
3 tbsp ginger, peeled and finely chopped
6 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp sambal oelek (Indonesian chili paste)
4 tsp sesame oil
1 tbsp roasted white sesame seeds
3 tbsp scallions, thinly sliced
4 tbsp dry roasted macadamia nuts, chopped
Lemon juice, to taste

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.*

Chef Mafnas arranges the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council table featuring cuisine from across the Pacific region including Hawaiian-Style Marlin Poke during the 39th Annual NOAA Fish Fry, June 11, 2014, in Washington, DC.

2014 Council Calendar

October

6-7
Permanent Advisory Committee to the US Commissioners to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, Honolulu

13
Education Steering Committee, Honolulu

14-16
117th Scientific and Statistical Committee, Honolulu

20
Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee, Honolulu

20-23
161st Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, Honolulu

21
Fishers Forum, Honolulu

November

12-13
Marine Planning and Climate Change Committee, Honolulu

13-17
Fishery Ecosystem Plan Strategic Planning, Guam and CNMI

19-20
Pacific Islands Regional Planning Body meeting, Honolulu

27
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's Disproportionate Burden Workshop, Apia, Samoa

December

1-5
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, Apia, Samoa

16-18
Social Scientists in Regional Fisheries Management Workshop, Honolulu

Upcoming Events

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

The Council will hold its 161st meeting 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Oct. 21-23, 2014, at the Laniakea YWCA, Fuller Hall, 1040 Richards St., Honolulu. Major agenda items for this public event are annual catch limits (ACLs) for American Samoa, Guam and CNMI bottomfish; reconsideration of ACLs and accountability measures for coral reef fish, crustaceans and main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) non-Deep-7 bottomfish; reconsideration of ACLs for MHI Deep 7 bottomfish; regulatory changes establishing a market delay for the sale and removal of noncommercial bag limits for MHI bottomfish; management of Western and Central Pacific Ocean Northern Pacific striped marlin; bigeye tuna stock status; Hawai'i yellowfin and bigeye tuna commercial minimum size limit; American Samoa albacore management; and Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument expansion. For more information go to wpcouncil.org or call 522-8220.

Fishers Forum

The public is invited to participate in the Fishers Forum on Hawai'i yellowfin and North Pacific striped marlin management to be held 6 to 9 p.m., Oct. 21, at the Harbor View Center, Pier 38, 1129 N. Nimitz Highway, Honolulu. This free family-friendly event will include a sneak preview of the documentary *'Ahi – The Hawai'i Yellowfin Tuna* as well as informational booths, presentations, public discussion and door prizes.

Workshop Addresses Disproportionate Burden in Pacific Island Fisheries

On Sept. 18–20, 2014, economists, scientists and fisheries managers from the Pacific Region, Indian Ocean, United States and Europe met in Honolulu to participate in a first of its kind workshop, sponsored by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, on the concept of "disproportionate burden." This subject is timely because the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) is considering international bigeye tuna management measures that may result in burdens to small Pacific islands.

Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, international agreements have been created to conserve and manage migratory fish stocks that move across international boundaries. Many of these agreements require participants to ensure that conservation actions do not transfer a disproportionate burden onto small island developing states (SIDS). The WCPFC contains both SIDS such as Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Kiribati and the US territories of Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as well as metropolitan countries such as the United States, Japan, China and the European Union.

Workshop participants discussed ways to define and measure disproportionate burden, ways to ensure a fair distribution of conservation costs to the satisfaction of WCPFC members and who pays for compensation when a disproportionate burden is incurred. They suggested, depending on the situation, it might be those who benefit most from a management measure, those most responsible for depleting the resource or those most able to pay.

The outputs of the workshop will be discussed at a meeting of the Permanent Advisory Committee to advise the US Commissioners to the WCPFC in Honolulu on Oct. 6–7, 2014, as well as the WCPFC workshop on disproportionate burden in Apia, Samoa, on Nov. 27, 2014. The eleventh regular session of the WCPFC will be held on Dec. 1–5, 2014, in Apia.

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