

- Pacific blue marlin (*Makaira mazara*) is commonly known in Hawaii as “kajiki” or as “a’u” (the Hawaiian word applied to all marlin species caught in Hawaii).
- Several Atlantic billfish are overfished and/or subject to overfishing, e.g., white marlin, blue marlin and East Atlantic sailfish.
- Pacific and Western Pacific billfish populations are sustainably managed (not overfished or subject to overfishing), with the exception of Western and Central North Pacific striped marlin, due to international fishing.
- Commercial harvest of Atlantic billfish has been prohibited since 1988, and a Billfish Certificate of Eligibility (COE) is required to accompany billfish to any dealer or processor who subsequently receives or possesses the billfish. The COE ensures billfish in the U.S. market is not from the Atlantic or foreign fisheries by documenting the vessel, homeport, port of offloading and date of offloading.
- Legislation is under consideration that would prohibit the currently permitted interstate commerce of billfish (not including swordfish) caught by U.S. fishermen and landed in Hawaii and the U.S. Territories of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- Congresswomen Colleen Hanabusa (D-Hawaii), Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-Guam) and Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen (R-American Samoa), say the legislation “will negatively impact the livelihoods of fishermen in Hawaii, Guam and the Pacific Insular Areas by closing off the only off-island market for U.S.-caught billfish.” They add, “We support needed-conservation efforts in the Atlantic, but do not believe that Pacific fisheries need to be targeted in order to achieve these goals.”
- Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, in a June 5, 2018, letter, said “we believe the legislation would not advance the conservation of billfish significantly, and would block a small amount of sustainably harvested domestic product from entering commerce on the U.S. mainland.”
- American-caught billfish landed in the U.S. Pacific Islands that is annually marketed in the continental United States amounts to approximately 550,000 pounds, worth approximately \$830,000 in 2017 dockside value and an estimated \$2.5 million in value expanded through wholesale and retail markets.
- The United States imports more than 80 percent of the seafood consumed in the nation, amounting to more than 6 billion pounds of imported seafood valued at more than \$21.5 billion in 2017, which is more imported seafood than at any point in the nation’s history, according to the National Marine Fisheries Service.