Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
Managing Marine Fisheries of Hawai‘i and the US Pacific Islands - Past, Present and Future

What We Manage
The Council manages fisheries in the region, including the EEZs of Hawaii, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands in the western Pacific, American Samoa in the south Pacific, and Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, and Palmyra, Jarvis, Howland, Baker, Midway, and Wake Islands in the central Pacific - an area of 1.5 million square miles.

The Goal
The Council oversees healthy fisheries with only one overfished species.

The Council’s goal is to anticipate and respond to changes in our fisheries.

The regional focus of the 1976 Magnuson Act put fishery management in the hands of island people intimately familiar with the marine ecosystem and local communities. These island constituents have the greatest long-term interest in conserving sea life and maintaining a traditionally strong relationship with the sea.

The Council has brought together people from the Pacific and been guided by the unique social, cultural and economic aspects of island communities.

Ongoing Priorities...
- Assist with international management of highly migratory pelagic stocks
- Partner with industry, environmental groups and other government agencies to conduct cooperative research on protected species mitigation methods
- Foster sea turtle recovery efforts by supporting international meetings and partnering with regional organizations and NGOs to promote conservation and management programs at nesting beaches and coastal foraging grounds
- Strengthen ecosystem-based principles within all fishery management plans
- Continue to provide indigenous communities adequate access to marine resources
- Improve stock assessments for new annual catch limits
- Assess new fisheries and new developments in existing fisheries

Accomplishments...
- First to ban high seas drift gillnet fishing
- First to designate the inclusion of highly migratory species within the Magnuson Act
- First in the US to require automated satellite-based monitoring systems
- Worked with Congress to amend the Magnuson Act to protect the indigenous fishing practices of native Pacific Islanders
- Developed the region’s first fisheries management plan (Eco-Fish Conservation Plan) explicitly based on ecosystem management principles
- Began longline fishery in the northern Hawaiian Islands to protect the Hawaiian Monk Seal
- Adopted measures to protect seamounts in the Hawaiian longline fishery
- Protected global conservation among longline fishing fleets by hosting the Second International Fisheries Forum with scientists, fishery managers, and environmental NGOs which led to shared rules and a turtle bycatch in longline fisheries
- Awarded the US hosting tour of the seven inhabited and high-level Conference to establish the Western and Central Pacific Ocean Tuna Commission
- Developed the framework for Pacific Island Areas fishery agreements for the benefit of the people of the western Pacific region