



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 Council administers five Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs):

- Pacific Pelagics (open-ocean species)
- Hawai'i Archipelago
- Mariana Archipelago (Guam & Northern Mariana Islands)
- American Samoa Archipelago
- Pacific Remote Island Areas

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

Accomplishments...

- First to ban high-seas drift gillnet fishing
- First to advocate the inclusion of highly migratory species within the Magnuson Act
- First in the US to require automated satellite Vessel Monitoring Systems
- Worked with Congress to amend the Magnuson Act to protect the indigenous fishing practices of native Pacific islanders
- Developed the nation's first fishery management plan (Coral Reef Ecosystems) explicitly based on ecosystem management principles
- Banned longline fishing within 50 miles of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to protect the Hawaiian Monk Seal
- Adopted measures to protect seabirds in the Hawaii longline fishery and provided financial support to test new gear, including the underwater setting chute and side-setting
- Adopted measures to protect sea turtles in the Hawaii longline fishery
- Fostered global communication among longline fishing fleets by hosting the Second International Fishers Forum. Industry, scientists, fishery managers, and environmental NGOs met to discuss ways to avoid seabird and sea turtle bycatch in longline fisheries
- Assisted the US in hosting four of the seven Multilateral High Level Conferences to establish the Western and Central Pacific Ocean Tuna Commission
- Developed the framework for Pacific Insular Area fishery agreements for the benefit of the people of the western Pacific region

