



# Coral Reef Ecosystems Draft Fishery Management Plan

- ! A Coral Reef Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan (FMP) being developed by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council takes into account President Clinton's 1998 executive order on coral reefs and priorities set by the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, the U.S. Coral Reef Initiative and the Magnuson-Stevens Act (M-S Act).
- ! Reef area in U.S. Pacific exclusive economic zone (EEZ) comprises nearly 11,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Much of the reef areas are in Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI).
- ! Marine debris (largely fishing gear from vessels not based in Hawaii that are fishing outside of the Hawaii EEZ) impacts NWHI reefs.
- ! Potential for unregulated harvest and bio-prospecting for reef fish, live grouper, live rock and corals exists throughout Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa areas under the Council's jurisdiction.
- ! The draft FMP proposes the following initial regulatory measures:
  - permit and reporting requirements for non-subsistence harvest of coral reef resources
  - establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) with zoning provisions ranging from full-utilization to no-take
  - a listing of allowable gear types for harvesting reef resources in the EEZ
- ! Other aspects required under the Sustainable Fisheries Act, such as Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs) and fishing and non-fishing threats, have been preliminarily identified.
- ! Completion of the FMP is a high priority item, to be facilitated by the Council's Plan Team, contractors and staff, and the National Marine Fisheries Service.