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### Federal Fishery Managers Slated to Finalize Catch Limits for Non-Deep7 Bottomfish, Consider Non-Commercial Permit and Reporting Measures

HONOLULU (14 October 2011) The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council and its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will begin a week-long series of meetings on Monday, Oct. 17, 2011, on the management of federally managed fisheries in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the remote US Pacific Island areas. The SSC will meet Oct. 17-19 at the Council office, 1164 Bishop St. Suite 1400, Honolulu. The recommendations of the SSC and other Council advisory bodies will be reviewed by the Council's Standing Committees the morning of Oct. 19 at the Council office. The full Council will take action on the recommendations the afternoon of Oct. 19 through the morning of Oct. 22 at the Laniakea YWCA-Fuller Hall, 1040 Richards St., Honolulu. Recommendations by the Council are transmitted the US Secretary of Commerce for final approval. Among the key issues to be considered are the following:

- **Annual Catch Limits (ACLs):** Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the Council is required to specify ACLs for virtually all federally managed fisheries in the US Pacific islands. Among the few exceptions are highly migratory species managed by an international regional fishery management organization (RFMO). The Council will be making decisions on ACLs for coral reef finfish, non-fish (e.g., crustaceans, deepwater precious corals, etc.) and bottomfish species, including non-Deep7 main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish (such as uku or grey snapper, ulua or trevally, etc.) based on the acceptable biological catch determined by the SSC.
- **Non-Commercial Data Collection Options:** The Council, at its June 2011 meeting, recommended developing alternatives to require federal permitting and reporting for all fisheries in Hawaii that currently do not have federal permits or reporting requirements. These regulations would affect recreational and other non-commercial fisheries targeting pelagic species and currently harvested coral reef fishery species. The Council will consider the following alternatives: 1) no action; 2) require federal permits and monthly logbooks for non-commercial coral reef fish and pelagic fish in the US exclusive economic zone (EEZ) waters around Hawaii; 3) require a single non-commercial federal permit and monthly logbooks for all non-commercial fisheries in the US EEZ around Hawaii; and 4) require a single federal permit for owners of vessels that conduct non-commercial fishing in the US EEZ around Hawaii and require catch reports on a per-trip basis.
- **Hawaii Bottomfish and Seamount Groundfish Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) and Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC):** The Council will consider revising the Hawaii bottomfish and seamount groundfish EFH and HAPC designations based on new scientific information, the findings of the Western Pacific Stock Assessment Review (WPSAR) and other reviewer recommendations. WPSAR scientists indicate that recommended HAPCs based largely on the State of Hawaii's bottomfish restricted fishing areas (BRFAs) can be significantly reduced in number and size and still protect spawning and juvenile recruitment.
- **Striped Marlin Catch Limits:** The management measure for striped marlin adopted by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) required that total catches of North

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Pacific striped marlin in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) undergo a phased reduction (10%, 5%, and 5%) from 2011 to 2013 such that by Jan. 1, 2013, the catch is 80% of the levels caught in 2000 to 2003. The Council may make management recommendations for the US striped marlin fishery.

- **Community Development Program (CDP) Proposal:** The Council will consider an exemption requested under the CDP, as authorized by the Magnuson-Sevens Act, for an indigenous community to undertake traditional flag-line fishing using traditional longline basket gear for the purpose of training youth within the longline closed area around Hawaii.
- **American Samoa Swordfish Fishery:** In 2008, the Council took action to reduce the interactions between sea turtles and the American Samoa longline fishery targeting tuna by requiring longline hooks to be at least 100 m deep. This amendment, implemented in September 2011, effectively prohibits any shallow-set longline fishing for swordfish. The Council will consider establishing measures that would allow for an American Samoa shallow-set longline fishery and mitigate the potential for interactions with sea turtles and seabirds.

As part of the Council meeting, a free Fishers Forum will be open to fishermen and the general public 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20, at the Waikiki Aquarium. Informational booths, family activities and a public discussion will focus on a code of conduct for Hawaii ocean users. Fishermen, ocean users and other members of the public are invited to come share their thoughts and learn what others are doing to bring pono conduct back among Hawaii's ocean users.

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council was established by Congress to manage fisheries in offshore waters around Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the US Pacific remote island areas. For more information or the agendas, visit [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org) or email [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov); phone (808) 522-8220, or fax (808) 522-8226.

**Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council:** Appointees by the Secretary of Commerce from nominees selected by American Samoa, CNMI, Guam and Hawaii governors: Manuel Duenas, Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association (Guam) (Chair) ; Stephen Haleck, business owner (American Samoa) (Vice Chair); David Itano, researcher (Hawaii) (Vice Chair); William Sword, recreational fisherman (American Samoa); Richard Seman, education and outreach specialist (CNMI); Julie Leialoha, environmentalist (Hawaii); Sean Martin, Pacific Ocean Producers (Hawaii); and F. McGrew Rice, charter fisherman (Hawaii). Designated state officials: Arnold Palacios, CNMI Department of Land & Natural Resources; Mariquita Taitague, Guam Department of Agriculture; William Aila, Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources; and Ray Tulafono, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources. Designated federal officials: Michael Tosatto, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office; Don Palawski, U.S. Fish and Wildlife; RAdm Charles Ray, U.S. Coast Guard 14th District; and Bill Gibbons-Fly, U.S. Department of State.

**Scientific and Statistical Committee:** Dr. Paul Callaghan, chair (University of Guam retired); Dr. Stewart Allen (NMFS PIFSC), Dr. Judith Amesbury (Micronesian Archeological Research Services), Dr. Brian Bowen (Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology), Dr. Frank A. Camacho (Guam Community College), Dr. Milani Chaloupka (University of Queensland), Dr. Charles Daxboeck (BioDax Consulting Tahiti), Dr. Richard Deriso (Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission), Dr. John Hampton (Secretariat of the Pacific Community), Dr. Pierre Kleiber (NMFS PIFSC), Dr. Donald Kobayashi (NMFS PIFSC), Dr. Molly Lutcavage (University of New Hampshire), Dr. Minling Pang (NMFS PIFSC), Dr. Craig Severance (University of Hawaii retired), Dr. John Sibert (Pelagic Fisheries Research Program), Dr. Robert Skillman (NMFS PIFSC retired) and Mr. Michael Tenorio (Northern Mariana Islands Division of Fish & Wildlife).