



Pacific Islands Fishery News

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Newsletter of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

COUNCIL CONDUCTS FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF ITS FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLANS

2014 marks the five-year point since the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council transitioned from species-based Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) to place-based Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs). The Council is now undergoing a review of its FEPs and adopting several priority work areas for the next five years (2015–2019). These work areas aim to incrementally increase the Council's capacity to manage fishery ecosystems by identifying potential improvements to the components in its FEPs.

The Council has five place-based FEPs that manage fisheries operating seaward of state waters in the US Pacific Islands:

- **American Samoa Archipelago FEP** – covers fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in offshore waters around American Samoa's seven islands and atolls.
- **Hawai'i Archipelago FEP** – covers fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in offshore waters around the Main and Northwest Hawaiian Islands, including Midway Atoll.
- **Mariana Archipelago FEP** – covers fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in offshore waters around Guam in the south and the Northern Mariana Islands to the north.
- **Pacific Remote Islands FEP** – covers fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in offshore waters around Howland, Baker, Wake and Jarvis Islands; Johnston and Palmyra Atolls; and Kingman Reef.
- **Pacific Pelagic FEP** – covers fisheries for pelagic species in offshore waters and domestic fisheries based in the Region that operate on the high seas.

of objectives, structure, data integration and cumulative impacts. The consultants will conduct research and interviews with key staff members to suggest areas of improvement in the delivery of ecosystem-based fishery management, program operations and collaboration among the Council, its family and its agency partners.

Council members and staff are engaging the extended Council family and other interested groups and individuals in structured

Priority work areas include inputting emerging ecosystem-based information into the FEPs, advancing the collection and use of data in the region, supporting US pelagic fisheries in the international arena and increasing local agency capacity and fishery development. Council staff has begun a series of activities to obtain external and internal input on the plans, which will be presented to the Council during its 162nd meeting in March 2015.

The Council has contracted independent consultants to conduct external assessments of the FEPs. These assessments will focus on how well the current plans guide ecosystem-based fishery management in terms

discussions regarding improving the Council's ability to manage fisheries and their ecosystems. The Council held four formal FEP review meetings in the Mariana Archipelago in mid-November 2014. All Mariana members of the Council's various advisory bodies, including the Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committees, were invited. The meetings resulted in productive discussions and solid recommendations, which are being synthesized by Council staff. Similar meetings are planned for American Samoa and Hawai'i in January and February 2015, respectively.



John Gourley, new Council member from CNMI, welcomes participants at the CNMI Council family Fishery Ecosystem Plan meeting in Saipan on Nov. 14, 2014.

A Council consultant will also conduct a survey of non-traditional stakeholders in the region. The purpose is to learn more about people and groups in the general public that do not typically participate in management activities but that may be impacted by fishery management decisions or be interested in how fishery resources are being managed on their behalf.

While FEP management is still oriented around stocks and fisheries, Council's fishery management activities also focus on the relationships among the biological, physical, social and economic aspects of fisheries in the federal waters around Hawai'i, American Samoa, the Mariana Archipelago and the US Pacific Remote Island Areas. The Pelagic FEP must explicitly consider a wide array of factors that influence the management objectives the Council has developed such as species' distribution, and migration and international agreements.

The evolution to an ecosystem-based management approach has been incremental. The Council recognizes the difficulty of obtaining important data and ensuring that the many key process components work together to both protect and conserve ecosystem structure and function and provide food, income and livelihoods for humans. By moving towards integrated ecosystem-based management, fishery managers are able to be more proactive rather than reactive to the state of the stocks. The current review provides an opportunity for the Council to advance its practice of ecosystem-based fishery management and to assess more long-term ecosystem management objectives. ➔



Guam Council members and advisors, including Council Vice Chair (Guam) Michael Duenas and Advisory Panel Chair Jesse Rosario, discuss the objectives of the Mariana Archipelago FEP.



Meeting facilitator Zita Pangelinan (second from left at the table) discusses the Mariana Fishery Ecosystem Plan objectives with a breakout group.

Ecosystem-based Management of Fisheries in the US Pacific Islands

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council was established by Congress in 1976 to manage marine resources and maintain opportunities for sustainable domestic fishing in the US exclusive economic zone waters and high seas around Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the eight US Pacific remote island areas.

FISH AND INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES FACE MAJOR CHALLENGES

It's not a good time to be a bigeye tuna or a US purse seiner in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO).

The recent stock assessment conducted by the Scientific Committee of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) is far from encouraging. Catches continue to be twice the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) despite longline fishery reductions, primarily due to the continued high catches of juvenile bigeye around fish aggregating devices (FADs) by purse seiners. The provisional catch estimate for bigeye tuna for 2013 by purse seiners of 82,151 metric ton (mt) was the highest on record. The record high bigeye tuna catch in 2013 coincides with continued high purse-seine effort levels and elevated bigeye tuna catch rates for all set types. The number of purse-seine vessels in the tropical fishery was at an all-time high (297 vessels) as was total effort in terms of fishing days. This contrasts with a longline catch of 62,641 mt, which was the lowest since the mid-1990s.

It is believed that the majority of the Kiribati fishing days was sold to Asian distant water fishing nations such as Korea and Taiwan. It remains to be seen if Kiribati has days in reserve, which can be bought by the American fleet.

As a consequence of the high purse-seine catch, the bigeye stock continues to be subject to overfishing, although it is not yet overfished as defined under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). However, given the lack of any reduction of FAD-associated purse-seine fishing, there are fears that the stock will eventually be evaluated as overfished.

A succession of WCPFC conservation and management measures (CMMs) were intended, among other things, to reduce the impact of FAD-associated purse-seine fishing on bigeye tuna. The most recent of these, CMM 2013-01, included up to four-month closures on FAD-associated fishing plus other measures designed to reduce purse-seine fishing mortality on bigeye. However, they are proving to be unenforceable and ineffective. The closure of FAD fishing does not decrease the fishing mortality but merely delays it until the vessels can fish the FADs when the fishery reopens.

Interestingly, bigeye is not under such high fishing pressure at higher latitudes such as above 20 degrees north, where the Hawai'i longline fishery predominantly operates and where no purse-seine fisheries operate. Regardless, no significant relief is apparent for bigeye in the near future, a topic that was a focus of discussion at the WCPFC's 11th Regular Session in Apia in December 2014.

The United States is one of the member countries of the WCPFC and has a major fishing fleet in the WCPO. Fishing by this fleet is governed largely by a treaty between the United States and the independent nations of the Pacific Islands plus Australia and New Zealand. Of these, eight nations (Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu) comprise the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) and control most of the access to skipjack tuna, the main target of WCPO purse-seine fisheries.

The US purse-seine fishery, like the bigeye stock, may be hurting, after the October 2014 South Pacific Tuna Treaty negotiation session in Honolulu. Officials from Kiribati, which controls some of the best tuna fishing grounds in the Pacific, surprised US negotiators by contributing only 300 days of the 8,300 fishing days for 2015 the United States is buying for \$90 million. In previous years, Kiribati provided about 2,400 fishing days to the US fleet through the treaty. With such a large percentage of US purse-seine tuna fishing having been centered in Kiribati's productive ocean zone, the reduction in days by Kiribati is a heavy blow to the US purse-seine industry. If the United States wants additional days in Kiribati waters, it must purchase them bilaterally, outside of the treaty.

Fishing in Kiribati's waters meant that the US purse-seine fleet based in American Samoa had only a relatively short distance to motor to be on the fishing grounds. Now these vessels will likely make a longer haul to the waters of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands to find fish or pay additional fees for more fishing days in Kiribati. It is believed that the majority of the Kiribati fishing days was sold to Asian distant water fishing nations such as Korea and Taiwan. It remains to be seen if Kiribati has days in reserve, which can be bought by the American fleet.

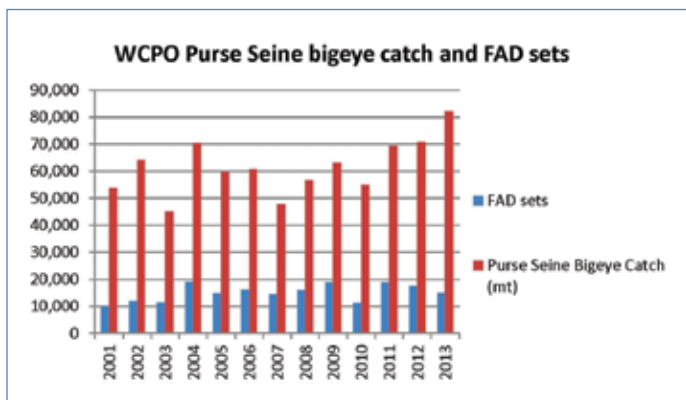
The bottom line is the US purse-seine fleet has been marginalized from the most productive and lucrative fishing grounds in the WCPO. ➡

Bigeye tuna being auctioned at Choshi fishery port in Japan. Photo credit shin-k via photopin cc.

COUNTRIES AGREE TO DISAGREE, BIGEYE CONSERVATION LOOKS BLEAK AT WCPFC 11

The 11th regular session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) occurred in Apia, Samoa, from Dec. 1 to 5, 2014. Major agenda items included adopting a permanent compliance monitoring scheme, eliminating a data provision loophole, eliminating bigeye overfishing and establishing a comprehensive management framework for South Pacific albacore. Arguably, none of these were accomplished—the WCPFC adopted a temporary compliance monitoring scheme for 2015, operational data will only be provided by major Asian distant water fishing nations for stock assessments, no new measures for bigeye were adopted and the WCPFC failed to adopt a stricter measure for South Pacific albacore.

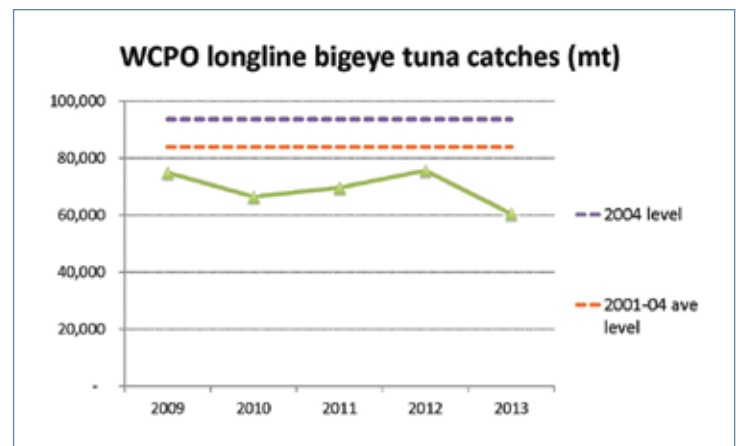
With respect to bigeye, the mix of interests appeared too great to make any changes to the existing conservation and management measures. Since 2008, the WCPFC has agreed to manage the impacts from purse-seine fishing through a seasonal fish aggregating device (FAD) closure and from longline fishing through flag-based longline limits. Beginning in 2009, purse-seine vessels operating in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) were subject to a three-month FAD closure (July, August, September). In 2013, the FAD closure period was increased to four months including the month of October. WCPFC members with longline vessels were required to reduce the catch of bigeye in years 2009-2011 from their 2001-2004 average levels. The longline catch limits were maintained in 2012 and 2013 but will be further reduced through 2017 to achieve a 40 percent reduction from 2001-2004 levels.



The main point of fracture in the WCPFC with regards to bigeye is whether or not the seasonal FAD closure, which was scheduled to be extended to five months in 2015, is resulting in a disproportionate conservation burden on Small Island Developing States and Territories (SIDS). The SIDS countries are claiming that they will receive less potential purse-seine access revenue during a seasonal FAD closure while not receiving any benefit from the conservation of bigeye, which they say will future benefit

longline fisheries targeting adult bigeye. Based on the results of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's September 2014 workshop on disproportionate burden, every country's fair share of conservation cost needs to be determined before deciding whether or not disproportionate burden exists. The WCPFC is not undertaking such an exercise.

The catch of bigeye by longline vessels in the WCPO has been reduced significantly over the last five years, while purse-seine catches of bigeye have increased. Based on these trends, limiting the catch of longline vessels through flag-based quotas is effective. On the other hand, the purse-seine seasonal FAD closure is not. Reasons attributed to the poor performance of the seasonal FAD closures include 1) non-compliance, 2) exemptions, 3) exclusion of archipelagic waters, 4) purse-seine overcapacity and 5) increased purse-seine effort in the central-equatorial region.



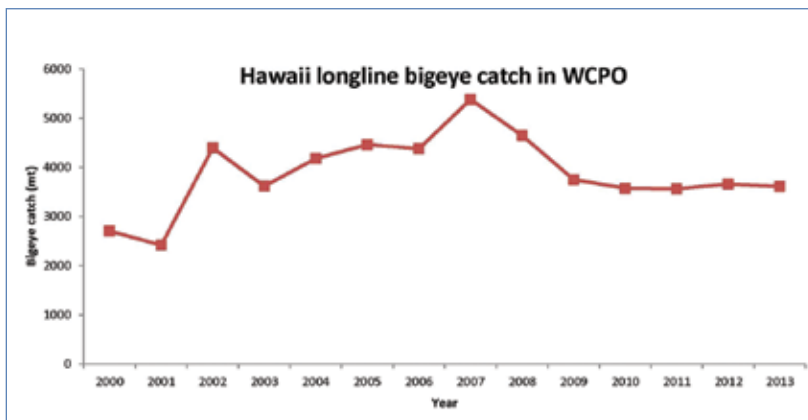
For bigeye overfishing to be eliminated, a new purse-seine management regime needs to be adopted by the WCPFC. The Council is advocating for the evaluation of alternative purse-seine management options including a) total purse seine closure, similar to what is required in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), b) purse-seine bigeye catch limits, c) purse-seine gear modifications (restrict number of panels to required level) and d) purse-seine FAD set limits. The Council is coordinating a workshop to be conducted in early 2015 to consider these management options.

For nearly three decades, the Council has been concerned with the rapid expansion of the equatorial purse-seine fishery that targets skipjack and yellowfin. When fishing on FADs, the purse-seine fishery incidentally catches juvenile bigeye tuna. The total incidental catch of bigeye by WCPO purse-seine vessels now exceeds the total WCPO longline catch, which is alarming.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

BIGEYE CONSERVATION LOOKS BLEAK (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

The Council remains especially vigil with the international management of bigeye tuna, which is the main target species of the Hawai'i longline fishery. The Hawai'i longline fishery began in 1917 and is the nation's largest producer of bigeye. Nearly 80 percent of Hawai'i longline fishery landings stay in Hawai'i to supply the local seafood market, with the remainder shipped to the US mainland and less than 2 percent exported overseas. The Hawai'i longline fishery, which is among the best managed and highly monitored fisheries in the world, is being impacted by international management measures and is subject to annual quotas



established by the WCPFC and IATTC. In the WCPO, for example, the Hawai'i longline bigeye catch limit has been reduced from the 2004 baseline level by 10 percent and is scheduled to reduce by another 10 percent by 2017. Yet the Hawai'i longline fishery contribution to bigeye fishing mortality is minimal, as the fishery accounts for less than 3 percent of the total WCPO bigeye catch and about 7 percent of the WCPO longline bigeye catch.

Of particular concern for the Hawai'i longline industry is that unless the WCPFC addresses the ineffective purse-seine seasonal-FAD closure, the international overfishing of bigeye will worsen and the Hawai'i longline fishery will face additional quota reductions. Although 90 percent of bigeye mortality occurs within the equatorial zone (10 degrees north and 10 degrees south of the equator), longline limits applicable to the Hawai'i longline fishery apply wherever they fish. Approximately 95 percent of Hawai'i longline fishing effort occurs outside of the troubled equatorial zone. A worsening bigeye stock condition and resultant additional reductions in bigeye quota for Hawai'i longliners would have a disproportionate burden on this well managed fishery.

The WCPO supports the world's largest tuna fishery, with approximately 2.6 million metric tons caught in 2013, generating a landed value at over \$6 billion annually. The WCPFC is charged with managing this high-valued resource, but, with such economic value, negotiations become more about protecting one's economic interest and less about the conservation of stock. The 11th meeting of the WCPFC was no exception.

The WCPFC is an international fishery management organization responsible for the conservation and the management of highly migratory fish stocks in the WCPO. The WCPFC is comprised of 26 member countries, seven participating territories and several cooperating non-member countries. The principal stocks under international management by the Commission include tuna (skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye, albacore, Pacific bluefin), billfish (swordfish, striped marlin) and sharks. The main fisheries utilize purse-seine and longline gear. 🐟

PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES AGREE ON TOKELAU ARRANGEMENT, AMERICAN SAMOA INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING

On Dec. 1, 2014, Australia, Cook Islands, Niue, New Zealand, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu signed the Tokelau Arrangement. According to the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), this multinational agreement provides a framework for the development of cooperative zone-based management of South Pacific albacore tuna fisheries, including potentially wider implementation of the FFA's Harvest Strategy for the South Pacific Albacore Fishery.

The main target species of the American Samoa longline fishery, South Pacific albacore, accounts for approximately 80 percent of the American Samoa longline fishery landings. Catch rates of albacore in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around American Samoa are much lower now than in the early 2000s when the American Samoa longline fishery began.

In 2013, low catch rates coupled with high operating costs forced several Pacific Island fleets, including the American Samoa longline fishery, to tie up to prevent further economic losses. Based on 2014 fishery data from the American Samoa longline, catch rates have not improved, indicating that the economic viability of this fishery is in serious question.



One of the federally permitted longline fishing vessels fishing out of American Samoa for albacore tuna. Photo credit NOAA.

Albacore are believed to migrate greater distances than tropical tunas. Lower catch rates are attributable to increased albacore harvests throughout the range of the stock within EEZs and the high seas. In the 1980s and 1990s, total catch of South Pacific albacore was around 40,000 metric tons (mt). In the early 2000s, several domestic longline

COUNCIL TAKES ACTION ON MONUMENT EXPANSION

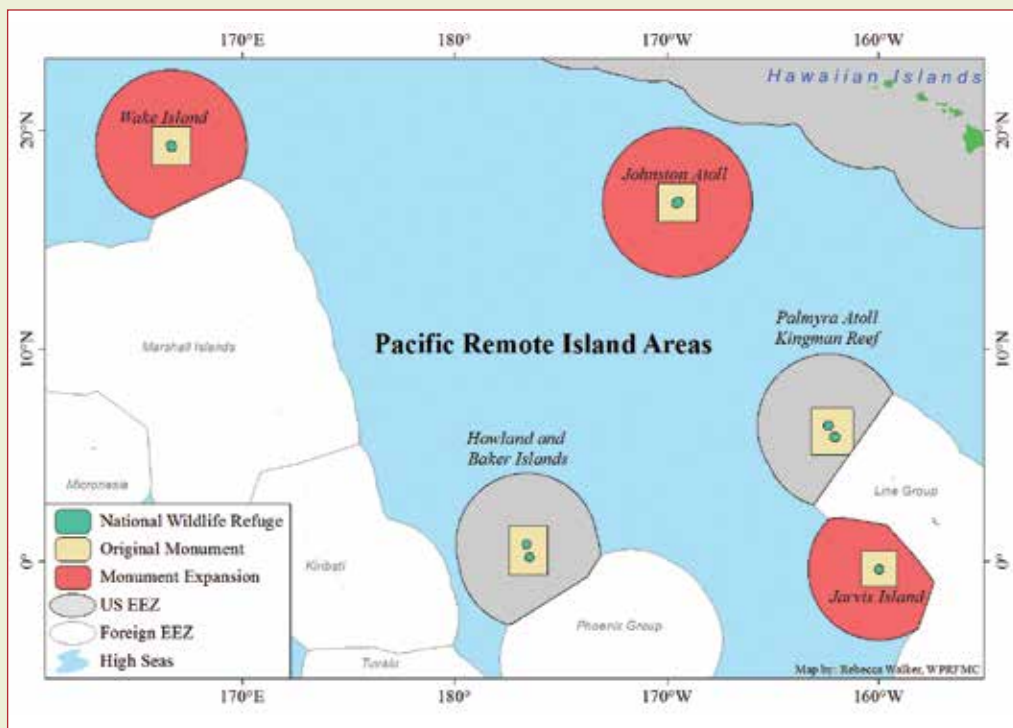
fisheries developed, including the American Samoa longline fishery, and total catch increased to around 60,000 mt by 2008. Since then, the total catch has rapidly increased, with nearly 90,000 mt of South Pacific albacore caught in 2010.

The recent increase in catch is primarily attributable to the influx of Chinese longline vessels fishing within the EEZs of Pacific Island countries and on the high seas. In 2007, for example, Chinese longline vessels caught an estimated 5,400 mt of South Pacific albacore, whereas in 2013, their catch was nearly 24,000 mt.

FFA members submitted a proposal to the 11th regular session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC11) for a collective EEZ-based limit and high seas flag-based limits for South Pacific albacore. The proposed conservation and management measure was not adopted at WCPFC11, leaving high seas catches of South Pacific albacore unregulated.

Broader regional coordination is needed to improve the economic conditions facing the American Samoa longline vessels and fleets of other Pacific Islands countries that depend on South Pacific albacore. Consistent with the Tokelau Arrangement, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council took initial action to establish an annual longline albacore catch limit of 5,418 mt (provisional), which represents the highest landings harvested from the EEZ around American Samoa by the American Samoa longline fishery in the 2000-2013 time period. At its 162nd meeting, the Council will consider taking final action on the EEZ albacore longline limit and consider recommending that the US Department of State lead negotiations for obtaining formal status for the American Samoa government to participate in the Tokelau Arrangement. ➡

At its 161st meeting in October 2014, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council took action on the expansion to the existing Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM), which includes Howland, Baker, Wake and Jarvis Islands; Johnston and Palmyra Atolls; and Kingman Reef. The Council recommended a regulatory amendment to expand the PRIMNM boundaries to 200 nautical miles (nm) for Jarvis Island, Wake Island and Johnston Atoll through which the fishery regulations that currently apply within the PRIMNM would be extended to apply within the new boundaries. In this action, commercial fishing would be prohibited within the extended boundaries of PRIMNM. Sustainable noncommercial fishing, however, may be conducted. The recommendation was subsequently transmitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service.



Map of the Pacific Remote Island Areas illustrates the extent to which the Marine National Monument has been expanded.

The PRIMNM was designated as a marine national monument by President Bush through Proclamation 8336 on Jan. 6, 2009, establishing 50 nm monument boundaries inside which all commercial fishing was banned. The Council drafted noncommercial fishing regulations for the Bush-era PRIMNM, which were published in 2014. Noncommercial fishermen are required to have a fishing permit and to report their catches to the National Marine Fisheries Service. Any selling of catch is prohibited.

President Obama expanded the PRIMNM boundaries around Jarvis Island, Wake Island and Johnston Atoll out to the outer boundary (200 nm) of the exclusive economic zone through Proclamation 9173 on Sept. 29, 2014. All commercial fishing is banned in these expanded monument waters. ➡

PERMITS ISSUED

Federal Pelagic Fishing Permits Issued in the Western Pacific Region (as of Dec. 12, 2014)

Hawai'i Longline – 139
American Samoa Longline – 47
Western Pacific (WP) General Longline – 1
WP Receiving Vessel – 31
WP Pelagic Squid – 0
Pacific Remote Island Areas Troll and Handline – 7

Federal Archipelagic Fishing Permits Issued in the Western Pacific Region (as of Dec. 12, 2014)

Western Pacific (WP) Bottomfish – 4 (2 Guam, 2 Pacific Remote Island Areas)
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Bottomfish – 6
Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) Noncommercial Bottomfish – 5
WP Lobster – 3 (2 MHI, 1 American Samoa)
WP Deep Water Shrimp – 8 (7 MHI, 1 American Samoa)
WP Precious Coral – 1 (MHI)

For more information, contact Walter Ikehara with NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office at piro-permits@noaa.gov

US PACIFIC BIGEYE TUNA MEASURE SURPASSES INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION REQUIREMENT

On Oct. 28, 2014, regulations implementing Amendment 7 to the Pacific Pelagic Fisheries Ecosystem Plan (FEP) came into effect. The amendment responds to Congressional legislation in 2012 that directed the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council to develop regulations that “authorize use, assignment, allocation, and management of catch limits of highly migratory fish stocks, or fishing effort, established by the [Western and Central Pacific Fisheries] Commission and applicable to U.S. Participating Territories.”

Amendment 7 sets annual catch limits for bigeye tuna caught by longline gear at 2,000 metric tons (mt) for each of the US Pacific Island Territories, i.e., American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The limits are considered conservative given that, under WCPFC measures, Participating Territories, including the US Territories, are treated as Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and are not subject to longline bigeye limits.

Under the amendment, each of the US Pacific Territories are able to transfer up to 1,000 mt of its annual longline-caught bigeye limit to eligible US vessels permitted under the Pelagic

FEP, i.e., the Hawai'i longline fleet. The transfer agreement must be approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service and would include payments to support fisheries development in the territories.

Charter arrangements (where vessels flagged to one country fish for another country) and other similar mechanisms are widely used by SIDS in the Pacific Islands.

“Amendment 7 is incredibly important to American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI as it recognizes their role as US Participating Territories to the Commission and their rights to develop their fisheries in the same manner as other SIDS in the Pacific,” said Kitty Simonds, the Council's executive director. “It's also important to the Hawai'i longline fishery as it provides for the continued supply of fresh tuna within sustainable limits to Hawai'i's seafood market. Well managed fisheries such as the Hawai'i longline fishery can lead by example in demonstrating stringent monitoring and best practices.”

The Hawai'i longline fishery was rated at more than 90 percent compliant against the UN Code of Responsible Fisheries and is considered a global model for pelagic longline fisheries. ➔

HAWAI'I LONGLINE VESSEL AND OBSERVER REPORTING TO GO ELECTRONIC IN 2015

Changes are coming to the Hawai'i longline fishery with respect to vessel logbook and observer reporting. Although the optional use of electronic reporting has been available under the Council's management plans since 2006, vessels have been slow to move towards it. Working with the Hawaii Longline Association, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Region, NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center and NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, the Council is funding the provision of electronic reporting tablets for Hawai'i longline vessels and for NMFS contracted on-board observers. Installations of new vessel monitoring systems (VMSs) that are compatible with tablets equipped with electronic reporting software began in December and will continue through February 2015.

Observers who monitor the Hawai'i longline fleet will be equipped with tablets that include electronic reporting software independent from the vessel's hardware. Current observer coverage of the Hawai'i longline is at 20 percent for the deep-set fishery and at 100 percent for the shallow-set fishery.

Electronic reporting will save time and money for fishermen and NMFS alike, reduce data time lags, improve reporting accuracy and safety at sea and allow for better monitoring of fishery quotas and other management issues.

Similar to the Council's pioneering efforts in the development of VMS on fishing vessels in the early 1990s, the Council is once again leading the nation with the development of electronic monitoring tools for fisheries under its jurisdiction. ➔

GUAM FRUSTRATED WITH MARITIME BOUNDARIES TREATY

On the final day of the 45th Pacific Islands Forum held in Koror, Palau, from July 29 to Aug. 1, 2014, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the United States signed a treaty clarifying the maritime boundaries between the FSM and Guam, an unincorporated US territory. The treaty was signed by FSM Secretary of Foreign Affairs Loren Robert and by US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Dennise Mathieu.

In FSM press release #1408-02, Mathieu stated, "There is something special about boundary. Maritime boundaries promote good order at sea and peaceful relations between countries. But a boundary is also symbolic; this boundary treaty reflects the important bonds of friendship

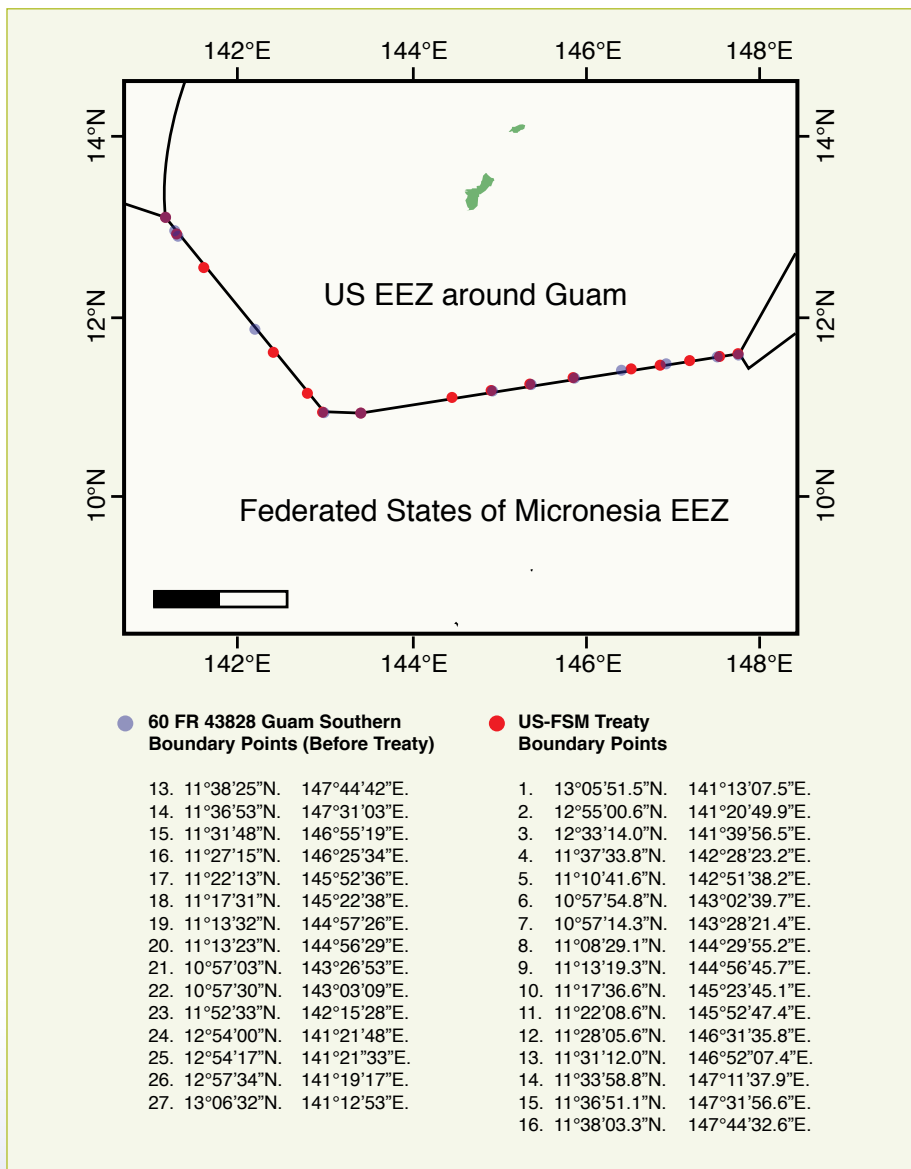
between our two countries and the close relations between the people of United States of America and the people of the Federated States of Micronesia."

The treaty was the result of a year and half of negotiations between the two governments. However, the Guam people were greatly confused and dismayed as the negotiations were published in several articles in regional papers, yet notably missing in the Guam media.

In her October 2014 letter to the federal government, 32nd Guam Legislature Speaker Judith Won Pat said, "The United States should have been significantly more diligent in discharging its duties to the people of Guam as Guam's administering

power, and, more specifically, it should have provided a mechanism for the meaningful consultation of the people of Guam prior to executing a treaty." The treaty was negotiated to formally redefine overlapping maritime boundary lines between Guam and the outlying islands of the FSM, but, Won Pat said, Guam was never consulted during discussions, negotiations or ultimately the execution of the treaty. The question is, who represents Guam's interests, and considering Guam's questionable citizenship issues (see sidebar), why wasn't a representative from Guam invited to sit at the table? 🐟

Map illustrates the US-Federated States of Micronesia maritime boundary before and after the Aug. 1, 2014, treaty signing.



The people of Guam have a non-voting delegate in Congress and cannot vote for the President of the United States. Per the equalrightsnow.org website, on Aug. 11, 2014, "the Obama Administration filed a brief before the DC Circuit arguing that Americans born in US territories have no constitutional right to citizenship." According to the article, "What's the matter with Puerto Rico" in the Pacific Standard website, "Territorial American citizenship is statutory rather than constitutional, courtesy not of the Fourteenth Amendment but of Congress via the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. Only Americans born in states can claim a birthright to citizenship." In an April 11, 2011, release expressing frustration with US federal government's snubbing of local leaders, Guam Gov. Eddie Calvo stated, "In the 100 years we have been a colony of the United States, the US government hardly did anything to resolve our colonial status. What kind of democracy allows colonialism to flourish?" In the four years since that statement was made, colonialism and frustration on Guam continues.

COMMUNITY-BASED FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS SPARK INTEREST IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

Communities in Hawai'i, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) have expressed interest in working with the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council to establish community-based fishery management plans (CBFMPs).

In Hawai'i, the Council is working with 'Aha Moku O Maui on a coastal marine spatial planning workshop for Lahaina after recent deaths and injuries in Lahaina involving boats, fishermen, divers and swimmers. Council staff, 'Aha Moku O Maui and Lahaina community residents are developing a stakeholder list, a workshop plan and a schedule for the CBFMP.



Rudy Matanane (right), mayor of Yigo, with Melissa Savares (left), the mayor of Dededo, at the Yigo community meeting on Nov. 12, 2014.

Yigo Mayor Rudy Matanane in Guam and Northern Islands Mayor Jerome Aldan in CNMI have both agreed to organize their communities to go through the planning and drafting process. The planning process is tentatively scheduled to begin in April 2015 with the goal of drafting a plan by November 2015.

Under the CBFMP system, communities take a leading role in managing fisheries and coastal areas in partnership with or with support from a promoting agency such as the Council. Communities throughout the Pacific Islands have been actively involved in and successfully

managed and protected their coastal ecosystems and fish stocks for many hundreds of years. Now, many government and non-governmental organizations are actively encouraging communities to take on more management responsibilities under CBFMP projects.

The first community the Council worked with to complete the CBFMP process is Malesso on Guam. The Malesso CBFMP includes objectives and tasks to achieve those objectives, primarily through partnerships with the Council and natural resource management agencies in Guam.

In November 2014, Council staff conducted a series of public meetings in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, during which Council staff met with the mayor and community members of Malesso. Together, they formed a Peskadot Committee made up of community members, a Steering Committee with agencies that have authority and responsibility for management of resources found in Malesso and a Saina Committee of elders to advise the Mayors' Council of Guam on traditional cultural natural resource practices. They also began developing a code of conduct for the village of Malesso.

As a result of the plan, the first meeting of the Malesso Steering Committee on Nov. 12, 2014, was chaired by Mayor Ernest Chargualaf and included the Guam Department of Agriculture, Department of Parks and Recreation and Bureau of Statistics and Plans as well as the Council. Members of the Steering Committee recommended inviting other agencies to the committee such as the Guam Environmental Protection Agency, Health Department and Police Department. 🐟

LONG AWAITED FISHING PLATFORM PROJECT PERMIT CELEBRATED WITH CEREMONY

On Oct. 29, 2014, the Guam Department of Agriculture, Guam Organization of Saltwater Anglers and Guam fishermen held a special ceremony at the Hagatna Marina Channel to celebrate the US Army Corps of Engineers' permit to proceed with the construction of a fishing platform. The long awaited project will develop an Americans with Disabilities Act approved access ramp and fishing platform approximately 500 feet long. The fishing platform will provide a safe location for Guam's recreational and subsistence anglers, including its senior citizens and disabled citizens. The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council will be contributing funding towards the project, along with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. 🐟



Dignitaries and stakeholders gather at the fishing platform ceremony at the Hagatna Marina Channel. Photo by Jane Dia.

DATA COLLECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UNDERWAY IN AMERICAN SAMOA



Council contractor Mac Aveina provides logistic, documentation and technical support training to American Samoa seafood vendors as part of the Territorial Science Initiative program.

In 2013, funding was awarded through the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service to support efforts to enhance fisheries science capacities and improve data collection and monitoring in the US Pacific Island Territories. The

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council has utilized the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) and the Territorial Science Initiative (TSI) to work collaboratively with American Samoa's Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR).

Under the TSI, a contractor will work directly with the DMWR Data Office to train major vendors on the commercial receipt book process and develop an incentive program to promote compliance. A Seafood Vendors Forum was held on Nov. 20, 2014, at Sadie's by the Sea in Pago Pago. Representatives from 18 local



Council contractor Priti Smith and subsistence/recreational spearfisherman Luluina Toilolo conduct a shore-based creel survey in Failolo, Tutuila Island, American Samoa.

businesses attended to gather information about the receipt book training process. Under the TSI, support is also given to the DMWR's Fisheries Division to assist with creel survey collection, which improves documentation of catch and effort.

MRIP is also being implemented in American Samoa to address fisheries for which data are seldom collected, such as night spear fishing, rare fishing methods and pulse fisheries. Under the project, a contractor will conduct scoping interviews and collect data on these fisheries to gauge their impact and evaluate the importance they have in overall insular fishery production. This work will also shed light on the quality of catch. As part of the project, a statistician will help incorporate the collected data into creel survey expansions. ➡

MILITARY INTERESTS IN PAGAN PEAKING

Military interests for the island of Pagan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) may have reached a new level of cooperation with island residents as plans for military representatives and Northern Island residents to visit Pagan together move forward. According to Maj. Gen. Craig B. Whelden, who was quoted in the *Marianas Variety*, "the details are being worked out" but they were invited to join Northern Islanders in a visit to Pagan and they hoped to do that in the coming months.



Landsat view of Pagan island, located north of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Photo by NASA/Wikipedia.

The invitation was made during an earlier meeting with the Pagan residents at the conference room of the Office on Aging in Saipan. During the meeting, the military representatives agreed to a walk-through of the sites on Pagan with the residents. The purpose of the exercise is for the residents to delineate the sites of their historic and cultural resources, including sacred sites, fishing grounds and areas where they source herbal medicines in relation to the proposed alternative sites for military live fire and non-live firing training and support facilities.

According to Marine Forces Pacific's (MFP) Defense Policy Review Initiative Planning Group Operations Officer Tim Robert, who attended the meeting at the Office of Aging, "If there are special traditional areas that need to be identified and marked off, those are easily incorporated into a battlefield scenario. That will be identified in our military maps as a 'no-go' area." Site-specific input from Northern Island residents with ancestral or community ties to Pagan is crucial for mapping the no-go areas and, therefore, identifying how to minimize impacts on cultural and historic resources during "battlefield" and other training exercises.

In the meantime, the MFP continues encouraging Pagan residents and other concerned citizens to provide them with input as they refine the alternatives for Pagan. These inputs will be taken into consideration as military officials and contractors work on the environmental impact statement (EIS), which will be released in its draft form by February 2015. There will be a 45-day public comment period following the release of the draft for soliciting formalized input before release of the final statement.

According to Robert, the use of the island of Pagan is critical to fulfilling the military's training needs as the United States pivots forces to Asia and the Pacific. Pagan is considered well suited to providing combined forces training, while the CNMI island of Tinian is planned for unit level training.

The EIS scoping report, schedule and other reference documents as well as an informational video showing the types of live fire and non-live fire training planned for CNMI can be found at www.cnmijointmilitarytrainingeis.com/. ➡

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INSULAR AREAS VISITS THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

Esther Kia'aina made her first official visit to the Western Pacific Region as the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Areas over a four-week period in October and November. She met with government officials and private sector and community leaders in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), her birthplace of Guam and American Samoa.



Esther Kia'aina meets with government and traditional leaders in American Samoa. (l-r): Sen. Galea'i Tu'ufulu, Senate President Gaoteote Palaie Tofau, Speaker of the House of Representatives Savali Talavou Ale, Chief Justice Michael Kruse, Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga, Interior Assistant Secretary Esther P. Kia'aina, Lt. Gov. Lemanu Peleti Mauga, Secretary of Samoa Affairs Satele Galu Satele, Sen. Mauga Tasi Asuega and Office of Insular Affairs Director Nikolao Pula.

She also witnessed the impacts of climate change at the Managaha Sanctuary, a favorite tourist attraction and home to shearwater birds that nest and raise their chicks underground.

Kia'aina visited Guam from Oct. 20 to 24, 2014, addressing topics such as the military buildup, the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver program, Compact-Impact Aid, labor and immigration, climate change and economic and energy development. She delivered keynote remarks at the Guam Economic Development Authority Economic Symposium and spoke to the Guam Women's Chamber of Congress.

Kia'aina was on Tutuila, the main island of American Samoa, from Nov. 10 to 14, 2014. A traditional ava ceremony hosted by the Office of Samoan Affairs at the Samoan guest fale was held in her honor. The first cup of ava was presented by Sen. Mauga Tasi Asuega who is a paramount chief (among the highest ranking chiefs in the Territory). The ceremony was attended by the governor and lieutenant governor, chief justice, senate president, house speaker, district governors, senators, representatives and members of the cabinet. Participants of the Executive Leadership Development Program witnessed the event.

During her stay in American Samoa, Kia'aina made it clear that capacity building, leadership development and climate change are priorities that she will address in the insular areas. She plans to focus capacity building efforts specifically toward the youth including establishing an internship program for college students from the US Pacific insular areas in the Office of Insular Affairs DC office. Kia'aina also made a priority of addressing the American Samoa's resilience to the effects of climate change. She informed Gov. Moliga that she will be establishing a climate change coordinator position for American Samoa to work with other federal entities to address what could be devastating impacts of climate change to the territory in the future. ➡

Kia'aina started in Saipan on Oct. 16, 2014, where she met with the island leaders to discuss important issues affecting CNMI. Kia'aina said she wanted to hear the concerns of the people to ensure the voice of CNMI is heard by the federal government. She also visited some federally funded programs, including those at the Department of Lands and Natural Resources where she met Acting Secretary Manny Pangelinan and several project managers.



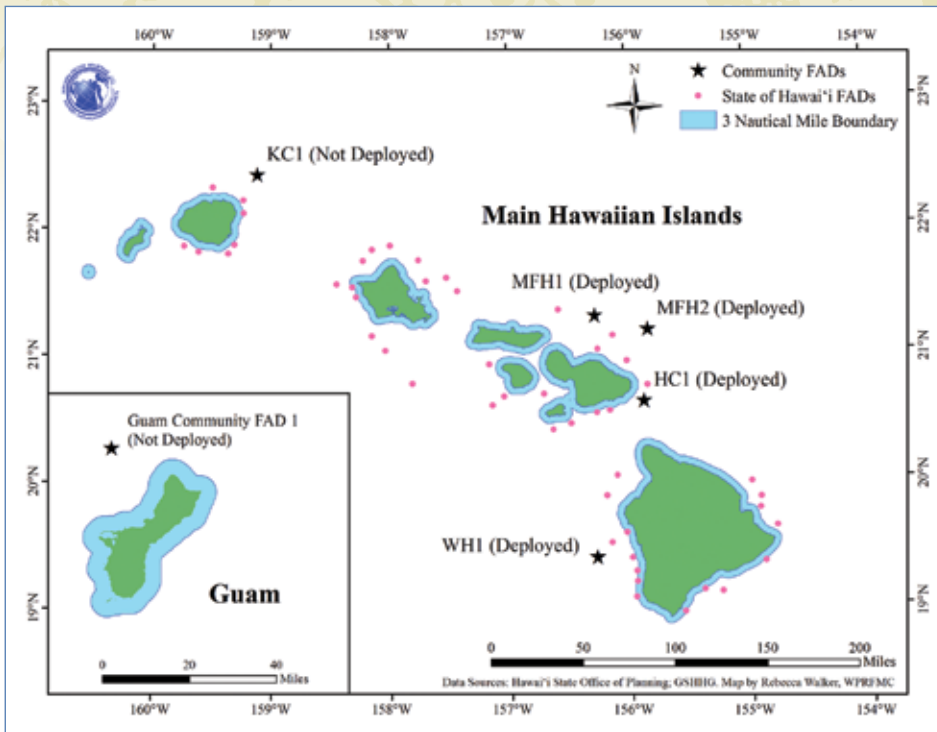
Kia'aina attends a welcoming ava ceremony hosted by the Office of Samoan Affairs at the Fale Tele (Samoa guest house) at Su'igaula Beach Park. Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga seated at right.

COUNCIL WORKS WITH FISHERMEN TO DEPLOY COMMUNITY FISH AGGREGATION DEVICES

For generations, native Hawaiian fishermen have tended ko'a, or fishing shrines in the ocean, by placing stones or food in distinct locations to attract fish. Today, modern fish aggregation devices (FADs), buoys anchored in depths between 100 and 2,000 fathoms, are used in Hawai'i and other US Pacific Islands as an effective method to attract pelagic species targeted by commercial, subsistence and recreational fishermen. Since 1980, the State of Hawai'i FAD Program (www.hawaii.edu/HIMB/FADS/) has been maintaining a network of FADs to promote recreational fishing opportunities using Sports Fish Restoration Act funding administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The local government jurisdictions of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands have similar programs using the same funding source. FADs are popular because they can reduce time searching for fish. Given the current fuel prices, more time catching and less time searching is important.

In recent years, Hawai'i fishermen have been deploying private FADs (PFADs) without proper authorization from the US Coast Guard and Army Corps of Engineers within state (0 to 3 nm) and federal (3 to 200 nm) waters around Hawai'i. The proliferation of PFADs in Hawai'i has raised questions such as what effects, if any, the FADs have on the movements or migration patterns of species such as yellowfin and bigeye tuna, what types of fish are attracted to FADs (including their life stage), the rate or duration of retention and the effects on seasonal fish movements.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council recognizes the potential community benefits of legally permitted and properly located and maintained FADs. In 2006, the Council worked with Hana fishermen to establish the first legal community FAD in the state. Observed benefits include



enhanced fishing opportunities, increased community fish sharing and voluntary data collection. The Council supports community development programs aimed at utilizing marine resources in a sustainable manner while facilitating and supporting cooperative research with fishermen. The Council also recognizes that the FADs are increasingly becoming a management issue and that scientific information regarding the effect of FADs on targeted pelagic species is largely lacking.

The Council is currently working with fishermen from Hawai'i and Guam on the following community FAD projects.

Locations of Community FADs listed in degrees and decimal minutes (due to currents and wind, FADs may be within 2 miles of locations listed below):

- Hana Community FAD 1 (HC1) – 20° 37.300' N, 155.52.296' W (deployed)
- Maui Community FAD 1 (MFH1) – 21° 17.783' N, 156.16.650' W (deployed)
- Maui Community FAD 2 (MFH2) – 21° 11.083' N, 155.50.008' W (deployed)
- West Hawai'i Community FAD 1 (WH1) – 19° 23.416' N, 159.16.833' W (deployed)
- Kauai Community FAD 1 (KC1) – 22° 25.518' N, 159 6.956' W (not deployed)

- Guam Community FAD 1 (GC1) – 13°44. 400' N, 144 39.680' E (not deployed)

On Maui, for example, the Council is involved in a private-public partnership with Mama's Fish House to fund the deployment of FADs using permits maintained by the Council. Mama's Fish House is helping the Council collect fishing logbooks that fishermen submit on a voluntary basis to the Council. Mama's Fish House, which is a premier restaurant in Hawai'i specializing in locally sourced seafood, recognizes the importance of supporting local fishermen whom they rely on daily for high quality, fresh fish.



FAD WH-1, deployed about 20 miles off Kealakekua Bay in West Hawai'i, increases fishing opportunities and aids in data collection and research.

The goals of community FAD projects are to support cooperative research, provide community benefits and complement the FAD programs of local jurisdictions. In 2012, the first bigeye tuna tagged with a satellite tag in the

main Hawaiian Islands was done so off one of the Maui community FADs.

Council-supported community FADs are public and fishable by everyone. When fishing around FADs, the Council encourages best practices be used such as not tying up to the FAD, not wrapping lines around the FAD and respecting other fishing near the FAD. Further, the Council requests that when fishing on a community FAD that a voluntary catch log be submitted to the Council to increase management understanding of the number of fish caught, size, species composition and fishing effort associated with the FAD.

Council funded FAD projects typically involve deploying FADs in deeper water than local jurisdiction FAD programs and utilize different float designs. As opposed to cylindrical spar

Community FAD Catch Reporting Form															
Name: _____															
Vessel name: _____ State of Hawaii vessel number: _____															
Month & Year fished: _____ 2 0 1 _____															
FISHING EFFORT							CATCH								
Day Fished	FAD Number	Hours fishing	Hours Fished	No. catch	Species name	Total number landed	Number per size class (pounds)								
							0-10	10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-70	70-80	80-100	100-lbs. (stateweight)

Notes:

Community FAD catch reporting enables fishermen to participate in data collection to improve fishery management. Form and instructions are available on the Council website at www.wpcouncil.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/04/Community_FAD_Voluntary_Catch_Report-and-Instructions.pdf.

buoys, Council supported community FADs normally use small boat hulls as floats, which are believed to reduce drag while providing a solid platform for the navigation light and global positioning system beacon. The Council is also interested in testing various FAD designs including the authorization of streamers that fishermen believe make the FADs more productive.

Based on the success of the projects, the Council may be working with additional fishing communities throughout the Western Pacific Region on community FAD projects including testing various designs and on private-public partnerships to enhance fishing opportunities and community benefits. 🐟

HAWAI‘I DEEP-SET LONGLINE FISHERY RECEIVES CONTINUED AUTHORIZATION UNDER ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

On Sept. 19, 2014, the Hawai‘i deep-set longline fishery received new authorization under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) after the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) concluded that the continued operation of the fishery is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of three species of marine mammals, four species of sea turtles and one species of shark.

NMFS conducts consultations under ESA to ensure federally managed fisheries do not jeopardize the existence of any endangered or threatened species. When NMFS finds that a federal action is not likely to cause jeopardy, an incidental take statement (ITS) is prepared to authorize a certain level of take that occurs as a result of the activity. Findings from these consultations are detailed in a document prepared by NMFS called a biological opinion.

The Hawai‘i deep-set longline fishery previously received authorization for the incidental take of green, leatherback, loggerhead and olive ridley sea turtles in a biological opinion issued in 2005. The fishery received authorization for incidental take of humpback whales in 2010.

Reconsultation for the Hawai‘i deep-set longline fishery was initiated in June 2013, triggered primarily by the listing of the main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) insular false killer whale under the ESA and a new observation of the fishery’s interaction with a sperm whale. The recent consultation also considered impacts to the Indo-West Pacific population of scalloped hammerhead shark, which was listed under the ESA in July 2014, as well as the four sea turtle species previously considered in the 2005 biological opinion.

In the new biological opinion issued on Sept. 19, 2014, NMFS included ITSs over the period of three years (see table). Numbers of protected species interactions vary from year to year, and the three-year ITS takes into account these variations. The numbers are anticipated levels of interactions over a three-year period based on past observed interaction rates.

As part of the requirement for completing the biological opinion, NMFS also considered impacts of the fishery on marine mammals according to requirements set forth under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). NMFS concluded that the Hawai‘i longline fishery will have a negligible impact on the Central North Pacific stock of humpback whales, Hawai‘i stock of sperm whales and MHI insular stock of false killer whales. As a result of this determination, NMFS issued a three-year permit to authorize incidental take of these three marine mammal species under the MMPA.

Table: Three-year Incidental Take Statements included in the 2014 Biological Opinion for the Hawai‘i Deep-Set Longline Fishery.

Species	3-year ITS		
	Interactions	Total mortalities	Equivalent adult female mortalities
Humpback whales	6	3	N/A
Sperm whales	9	6	N/A
MHI insular FKW	1	0.74	N/A
NP loggerhead turtles	9	9	0.54
Leatherback turtles	72	27	0.60
Olive ridley turtles	99	96	N/A
Green turtles	9	9	N/A
Indo-West Pacific scalloped hammerhead shark	6	3	N/A

The final biological opinion is available online at www.fpir.noaa.gov/Library/PUBDOCs/biological_opinions/DSLL_Final_BiOp_9-19-2014.pdf.

COUNCIL HOSTS SEMINAR ON MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION



Andre Punt is the director of the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences at the University Washington in Seattle.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council hosted a seminar entitled “Management Strategy Evaluation: Theory and Practice” with Dr. Andre Punt on Oct. 23, 2014, at the Council office. In attendance were members of the Council’s Scientific and Statistical Committee, Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center, State of Hawai‘i Division of Aquatic Resources, students from Hawai‘i Pacific University and University of Hawai‘i, a scientist from Australia and Council staff.

Management strategy evaluation (MSE) uses simulation to compare the relative effectiveness for achieving management objectives of different combinations of data collection schemes, methods of analysis and subsequent processes leading to management actions. MSE can be used to identify a “best” management strategy among a set of candidate strategies or to determine how well an existing strategy performs. The seminar outlined how input from scientists and decision makers is utilized and how MSE has been used within the US Fishery Management Council process to revise the harvest control rule for the northern subpopulation of Pacific sardine by the Pacific Fishery Management Council and to compare alternative acceptable biological catch control rules for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. The use of MSE to evaluate harvest control rules for data-moderate and data-poor Australian fisheries was also discussed.

The seminar is related to the Council’s current effort to revise and update its fishery ecosystem plans. The MSE approach will be used to evaluate the current local and federal body of regulations to determine their efficacy and provide recommendations to streamline the management efforts in the Western Pacific Region. ➡

FISHERIES INTERNSHIP AND STUDENT HELP PROJECT TO DEBUT IN 2015



Max Markrich (left), a Council intern for two summers, with former Sen. Daniel K. Akaka. Markrich is studying economics at American University in Washington, DC, and expecting to graduate in May 2015.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Fisheries

Internship and Student Help (FISH) project debuting in 2015 is designed to provide interested high school and college students in Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands with practical

experience in coral reef ecosystem, bottomfish and/or pelagic fisheries management. A primary aim of the program is to increase local fisheries management capacity over time. Secondary aims include introducing young professionals to the Council process so that they can participate more fully in the bottom-up management of fisheries and increasing available data by facilitating undergraduate, graduate and doctoral research in regional fisheries issues.

Since the 1980s, the Council has provided opportunities for students from all over the Pacific who are interested in fisheries science and management. Some of the Council's former interns have gone on to work in local and federal fishery agencies, joined Council staff and continue to play an important role in managing regional, national and international fisheries.

Recently hosted interns gained valuable experience by assisting the Council with developing fishing fleet profiles, compiling fisheries research, drafting white papers on sharks and completing annual fisheries reports. In recognizing the value of the interns and the win-win situation for the Council and the student, the Council identified the need to formalize its internship experience and provide more opportunities to more students in the Western Pacific.

Applications and more information are available on the Council's website at www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/Internships/. For more information, contact the FISH Project coordinator, Joshua DeMello, at (808) 522-7493. ➡

US PACIFIC TERRITORIES CAPACITY-BUILDING SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

In keeping with its aspiration to build the capacity of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to effectively manage their fisheries and related resources through the employment of their own people, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and its Education Committee members are pleased to announce the availability of three scholarships for academic years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

The US Pacific Territories Capacity-Building Scholarships are open to US citizens or nationals with strong ties to American Samoa, Guam or the CNMI and may be used to complete 1) junior and senior undergraduate years to obtain a BA or BS in Marine Science at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo or BS in Oceanography with a concentration in Fisheries Science at the Hawai'i Pacific University; or 2) one of the following graduate degrees: MS or PhD in Marine Biology at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB), MS in Marine Science at Hawai'i Pacific University, MS in Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo or MS in Biology at the University of Guam.



Some of the signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding to build the capacity of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to effectively manage their fisheries at the 160th Council meeting on June 25, 2014. From left, Arnold Palacios (CNMI), Matthew Liao-Troth (Hawai'i Pacific University), Kitty Simonds (Council executive director), Mike Tosatto (National Marine Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Regional Office), Mariquita Taitague (Guam Department of Agriculture), Sam Pooley (then director of the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center) and Ruth Tofiga (American Samoa Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources).

Eligible undergraduate students must also have successfully completed freshman and sophomore years of college with a grade point average of 3.0; have been accepted to attend the University of Hawai'i at Hilo or Hawai'i Pacific University in Honolulu for the 2015-2016 academic year; be available for an 8- to 10-week paid summer internship in Hawai'i; and have demonstrated interest and/or previous work/involvement with fisheries, coral reef conservation or related fields.

Eligible graduate students must have been accepted to attend one of the

following graduate programs for the 2015-2016 academic year: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's MS or PhD in Marine Biology; Hawai'i Pacific University's MS in Marine Science; University of Hawai'i at Hilo's MS in Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science; or University of Guam's MS in Biology; and have demonstrated interest and/or previous work/involvement with fisheries, coral reef conservation or related fields.

Both undergraduate and graduate scholarship recipients must be a US national or citizen with strong ties to American Samoa, Guam or the CNMI; and commit to being employed for one year for each scholarship year with the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Service, Guam Department of Agriculture or the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources commencing within the year after completion of their degree or departure from the educational program for which the scholarship was provided. Those who do not fulfill this commitment will be required to pay back the scholarship amount that has been provided.

For more information and an application, please go to www.wpcouncil.org/category/educational-opportunities, email info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov or phone (808) 522-8226. Completed application and letters of recommendation are due by Feb. 15, 2015. Preliminary decisions will be made by March 1, 2015. ➡

LUNAR CALENDARS TO FEATURE WINNING STUDENTS ART

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council concluded its 2014 poster competition for grade K-12 students in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and American Samoa. The winning artwork is being featured in the 2015 lunar calendars for the Council's jurisdictions. Because the moon has an effect on a variety of marine habitat factors, the calendars are a valuable tool for fishermen.

On Guam, the Chamorro theme was "Nihi ta fameska, hagas kustumbre ginen mañaina-ta" (Let's go fishing, a responsible and traditional activity). Selected winning entries will be featured in the 2015 *Pulan Fanha'aniyan CHamoru* (Chamorro Lunar Calendar), which will incorporate the findings and outcomes of the Chamorro Lunar Calendar Working Group. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners from the four categories (grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12) from Guam will each receive prizes at the 7th Annual *Gupot Fanha'aniyan Pulan CHamoru* (Chamorro Lunar Calendar Festival) scheduled for Jan. 17, 2015. The festival, being planned by the Chamorro Lunar Calendar Committee and the *Saggan Kotturan Chamoru* (Chamorro Cultural Center), will be held on the grounds of the *Saggan Kotturan Chamoru* just above the Hilton Resort. The day's festivities will feature exhibits, displays, demonstrations and entertainment fully utilizing the use of the Chamorro language and culture and will include the distribution of the 2015 *Chamorro Lunar Calendar*. Everyone is invited to attend.

In CNMI, the Council partnered with the Department of Lands and Natural Resources for this year's poster competition. The theme, "Let's go fishing, a responsible and traditional

activity," encourages people to fish in a responsible and respectful manner. Selected winning entries will be featured in the 2015 *Eskaleran Pulan Chamorro* (Chamorro Lunar Calendar) and the 2015 *Refaluwasch Pápáál Maram* (Refaluwasch Lunar Calendar). The calendars will also include seasonal fish runs and the popular tide chart for the fishermen of the islands. Prizes for the winning entries will be distributed in January.

In American Samoa, the Council partnered with the American Samoa Department of Commerce's Coastal Management Program (ASCMP) to develop the 2015 *Amerika Samoa Lunar Calendar*. The theme selected for this year's calendar is "Conservation Builds Generations." The Council coordinator worked with the ASCMP team to reach out to the schools and pass on information about the art contest and the specific guidelines. Local public and private schools selected the top four entries from each grade level from the more than 150 submissions received. Two calendar styles will be produced this year—a traditional flip-calendar and a poster calendar.

In Hawai'i, two versions of the calendar are being produced. One, a large calendar for classrooms, produced in partnership with a nonprofit organization for Native Hawaiians, ALU LIKE, Inc., focuses on Hawai'i fishponds, a significant cultural, architectural and aquaculture feature in the Hawaiian Islands. The other features the Council's community fish aggregation devices and is pocket-size and waterproof for fishermen. It is being distributed to fishing clubs in Hawai'i.

All calendars are available online at <http://www.wpcouncil.org/education-and-outreach/lunar-calendars/>. 🐟



COUNCIL FAMILY UPDATES



Arnold Palacios

Congratulations to Palacios

After serving on the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council for four years, his last two years as chair, Arnold Palacios stepped down at the end of 2014 to accept a Senate seat for the 13th Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Legislature. The inauguration will be on Jan. 13, 2015.

His replacement to represent CNMI on the Council will be announced in January.

Palacios is no stranger to politics. He served three consecutive terms as member of the House of Representatives from 2002 to 2008 and as House Speaker from 2008 to 2010. He also ran for lieutenant governor of CNMI in 2009.

After his failed bid in 2009, Palacios served as director of the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife, an office he had held prior to becoming a politician, and then as Secretary for the Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

Advisory Panel Members Selected for 2015-2018 Term

At its 161st meeting in Honolulu, the Council reviewed applications for the 2015-2018 Advisory Panel term and selected the following members:

American Samoa

Island Fisheries: Lafoga Alovao, Romero Veavea, Nathan Sagapolutele

Pelagic Fisheries: Craig Double, Christinna Sanchez, Michael Crook

Ecosystems and Habitat: Ray Tulafono, Mac Aveina, Stephen Haleck

*Indigenous Fishing Rights: Krista Corry,
Brian Thompson, Isaiah Hunkin*

Hawai'i

*Island Fisheries: Layne Nakagawa,
Nathan Abe, Edwin Watamura*

*Pelagic Fisheries: Gary Beals,
Sean Asuncion, Roy Sokolowski*

*Ecosystems and Habitat: Brealand Tam,
Steven Yamasaki, Lyn McNutt*

*Indigenous Fishing Rights:
Tathan Marks, Basil Oshiro, Clay Tam*

Mariana (Guam)

*Island Fisheries: Ken Borja,
Manuel P. Duenas II, Stephen Meno*

*Pelagic Fisheries: James Borja,
Alan Ainbinder, Matthew Orot*

*Ecosystems and Habitat: Cliff Kyota,
Jason Miller, Felix Reyes*

*Indigenous Fishing Rights: Ray Flores,
Peter Perez, Jesse Rosario*

Mariana (CNMI)

*Island Fisheries: Frank Aldan,
Manny Ramon, Richard Farrell*

*Pelagic Fisheries: Pedro Itibus,
Richard Seman, Juan Diego Tenorio*

*Ecosystems and Habitat: Floyd Masga,
Joaquin Villagomez, Ray Tebuteb*

*Indigenous Fishing Rights: Lawrence
Concepcion, Raymond Dela Cruz Jr.,
Perry Mesngon*

The Council looks forward to working with the AP in the next term. For more information on the Advisory Panel, visit the Council's website at www.wpcouncil.org.

COUNCIL MAKES GOOD ON ITS COMMITMENTS: A REVIEW OF 2014

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council is committed to giving people a voice in the decisions that are made regarding fishery management, to supporting the fishing industry and the livelihood and culture of fishermen, to preventing overfishing and protecting the ocean's ecosystem, and to providing consultation and recommendations as required by law.

In 2014, our participatory bottom-up process ranged from work with the Village of Malesso (Merizo), Guam, to develop a community-based fishery management plan; to assisting the 'Aha Moku o Maui to convene a Puwalu of the 'Aha Moku island councils throughout the Hawaiian archipelago; to listening to fishermen's views at Council meetings, Fishers Forums and various advisory group and community meetings, which led to the setting of the 2015 annual catch limits and ongoing efforts to better address noncommercial fishing and improve management of 'ahi, striped marlin and bottomfish, including the reopening of some of Hawai'i's bottomfish restricted fishing areas.

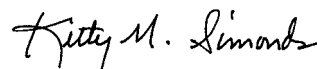
To support the industry, livelihood and culture of fishing, the Council deployed community fish aggregating devices in Maui, Kaua'i, West Hawai'i and Guam; helped in the rehabilitation of Agat Marina Dock A in Guam; undertook a skipjack population assessment in the Mariana Archipelago; and spearheaded several fishery development projects in American Samoa, including the Manu'a Fishermen Facilities, Fagotogo Fish Market renovation and fresh fish processing training. The Council also convened international workshops on the movement and connectivity of Pacific bigeye tuna and on defining disproportionate conservation burden within the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Among our efforts to prevent overfishing and protect the ocean's ecosystem, the Council fine-tuned its process for specifying annual catch limits, began a five-year review of its fishery ecosystem plans to further incorporate ecosystem-based management within them, developed a cooperative education memorandum of understanding and scholarship program aimed at building the capacity of the US Pacific Island territories to manage their fisheries and fishery-related resources, and completed a study on the of utilization Hawai'i seafood waste for aquaculture and agriculture uses.


The Council provided consultation and recommendations regarding Western Pacific Region fisheries at various national and international levels. We continued to encourage NOAA to use the term "noncommercial" instead of "recreational" fishing to better represent the diversity of subsistence, sustenance and cultural fishing in our communities. At the 2014 Recreational Saltwater Fishing Summit, we pushed for a regional approach to fisheries management to address the unique environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects of our region. We worked with a world-renowned coral expert to submit the best available scientific information to NOAA for consideration in the final decision to list reef-building corals under the Endangered Species Act. We also provided consultation to the White House that resulted in keeping 287,000 square miles around the US Pacific Remote Islands open to US commercial fisherman after President Obama announced plans to expand the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument.

These are just a few of the Council's achievements in 2014. I am grateful for all that you do to support our mutual goal of "Fish Forever!" Stay connected and involved, and together we can make 2015 the best year ever!

Aloha,



Kitty Simonds
Executive Director



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Kitty M. Simonds

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2015 Council Calendar

January

- 17**
7th Annual Gupot Fanha'aniyan Pulan CHamoru (Chamorro Lunar Calendar Festival), Tumon, Guam
- 20**
Marine Planning and Climate Change Committee, Honolulu
- 28**
American Samoa Council Family Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEP) Review, Pago Pago, American Samoa
- 29**
Public meeting on Large Vessel Prohibited Area, Pago Pago, American Samoa
- 30**
Fagotogo Fish Market Dedication Ceremony, Pago Pago, American Samoa
- 30**
American Samoa Regional Ecosystem Advisory (REAC) Committee FEP Review, Pago Pago, American Samoa

February

- 4**
Hawai'i Council Family FEP Review, Honolulu
- 5**
Hawai'i REAC FEP Review, Honolulu
- 17-19**
Council Coordination Committee, Washington, DC
- 16-20**
US Coral Reef Task Force, Washington, DC

- 21-25**
National Governors Conference, Washington, DC
- 23-25**
National Scientific and Statistical Committee-V, Honolulu

March

- 10-12**
118th Scientific and Statistical Committee, Honolulu
- 10-12**
Pacific Scientific Review Group, Olympia, Wash.
- 17**
Standing Committees, Honolulu
- 18-20**
162nd Council Meeting, Honolulu
- 18**
Fishers Forum on Stock Assessments, Honolulu

Notice of Availability: Five-Year Research Priorities

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council develops multi-year research priorities to inform policy making. The 2014-2019 priorities were sent to the US Secretary of Commerce and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) so they may be acted upon. However, many individual research priorities may go unaddressed due to limited

resources. Therefore, the Council has placed its research needs on its website so that external academics and consultants may be aware of them. Although the Council does not have dedicated funding to address these research items, grant programs such as NOAA's Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program are often developed around, or are responsive to, vetted policy information needs. The Council will, as appropriate, provide written letters of support for proposals that seek to address any of these research priorities.

Those interested in conducting research in response to the Council's data needs should contact the Council and/or PIFSC. To view the research priorities, go to www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Updated-5-yr-research-priorities_2014-2019-Final.pdf.

Request for Proposals: American Samoa Longline Dock Site Evaluation and Feasibility Plan

The Council is interested in supporting the American Samoa government in improving docking facilities for commercial longline fishing vessels, which are typically between 65 feet and 85 feet in length. There is a need to reduce port congestion by identifying a suitable location

to construct a dedicated longline dock which supports safety at sea and fisheries development in American Samoa.

All proposals shall be submitted by Feb. 15, 2015. Proposals should be sent by email to Eric Kingma (eric.kingma@noaa.gov) or by fax (808-522-8226) or by mail Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, 1164 Bishop St., Ste. 1400, Honolulu, HI 96818. Proposals must contain the following three items: **1)** project narrative, **2)** budget and **3)** project timeline. Total pages for proposal shall not exceed 15 pages.

To view Scope and Request for Proposals, visit the Council website at www.wpcouncil.org/category/news_and_events/rfp/.

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Oven Baked Provençal-Style Onaga

Courtesy of Nico Chaize of Nico's Pier 38

Ingredients

- 2 to 4 lb. onaga (ula'ula, ruby snapper)
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- 1 bunch fresh thyme
- Butter
- 1 sliced lemon
- 1 head of fennel (cut into quarters)
- 1 thinly sliced onion
- 1 thinly sliced clove of garlic
- 1 Roma tomato (cut into quarters)
- 1 cup white wine
- ¼ cup olive oil

Instructions

Display onaga in roasting pan. Salt and pepper and put fresh thyme, butter and lemon slices inside onaga's belly and on top of the fish. Sauté fennel, onion and garlic in butter and put it around the fish with tomato. Mix white wine with olive oil and pour into roasting pan. Roast in 400 degree oven for 20 to 30 minutes or until pink by the bone. Serve fillet with roasted vegetables and juices from roasting pan over the fish.



Onaga (ula'ula, ruby snapper) is in high demand in Hawai'i during the holiday season.