

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hawaii fishermen have high standards

Hawaii residents on average consume nearly 40 pounds of seafood per capita annually, more than 60 percent of which is imported from southeast Asia and other places.

Since we pride ourselves on fresh, local and sustainable seafood, this is sad. But recent large fishery closures in U.S. waters in the Pacific, including the potential expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, should remind us not of imports but of exports.

Hawaii's pelagic fisheries, which bring in the fresh ahi, monkfish and opah so important to us, are recognized globally for their highly successful efforts to minimize impacts to seabirds, turtles and marine mammals, as well as their track record of fishermen safety.

Every pound of fish that Hawaii fishermen are prohibited from bringing to the islands is made up by fish caught by foreign fleets, which are not held to nearly the same environmental standards.

How could anyone think this is good environmental policy?

Edwin Watamura
Makiki

Proposed fishing rules would hurt Hawaiians

My heart aches for the Hawaiians and what the proposed federal regulations will do to their ability to fish around their own islands.

Hawaiians may think the federal government and environmental groups have their best interests in mind, but how has that worked out so far?

If the federal government is allowed to "protect" hundreds of miles of ocean from "overfishing," the fish caught here will be more scarce than before. The 40 percent local supply of fish will be replaced by, "Go Safeway, guys."

Once the federal government gets its hands on our state's oceans, we can kiss our fish and our freedom goodbye.

Faith Burns
Aina Haina

Bigger reserve won't cut fish exploitation

An expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument has been proposed to make it a no-take ecological reserve. It is mistakenly expected that this will improve fish production inside and outside the reserve.

The proposed expansion is virtually all deep, open-ocean space. No-take reserves in the open ocean

have never been found to reduce fishery exploitation and therefore are not expected to enhance production or recovery of fish populations.

The fishery operating in the proposed area is the Hawaii-based longline fishery. This fishery has been well managed for decades by international and U.S. laws that regulate harvest levels and protect endangered species.

The monument would be expanded by virtue of the U.S. Antiquities Act, an act not designed as a fishery-management tool. To use it that way is pointless and a distraction from weighty ecological concerns such as rising temperatures, pollution and ocean acidification.

Pierre Kleiber
St. Louis Heights

More restrictions on fishery not needed

The Hawaii longline fishery is considered by the international community to be among the best managed and most responsible fisheries in the world.

There is a proposal on the table that would expand the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) from 50 nautical miles to 200 nautical miles. However, the fishery has no impacts to the bottom of the sea and is the only activity affected by the proposed expansion.

Before we expand conservation areas and create restrictions to our fishery, we need to fully consider the impacts these expanded areas will have upon our local fishermen and food supply. PMNM already provides near-absolute protection for nearshore habitats.

If the expansion does not provide additional protections beyond those already provided by U.S. law, let's not make it more difficult for our fishermen who ensure we have a fresh, sustainable supply of local seafood in Hawaii.

Roy Yamaguchi
Chef-founder,
Roy's Restaurant