



Western Pacific Region

Status of the Fisheries 2016

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council promotes sustainable fisheries and provides sound stewardship of marine resources seaward of state waters of Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the Pacific Remote Island Areas. The Council's authority over commercial and noncommercial fisheries is mandated by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

For the resources, the Council prevents overfishing and protects the ocean ecosystem.

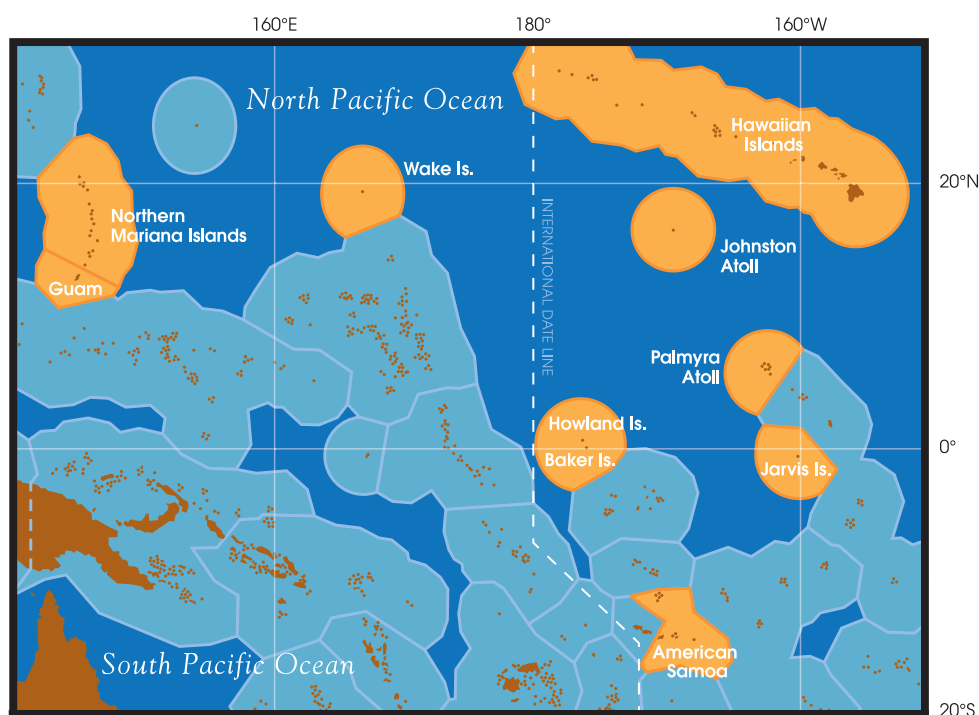
For the people, the Council supports fishing communities and ensures they have a voice in fishery management decision-making.

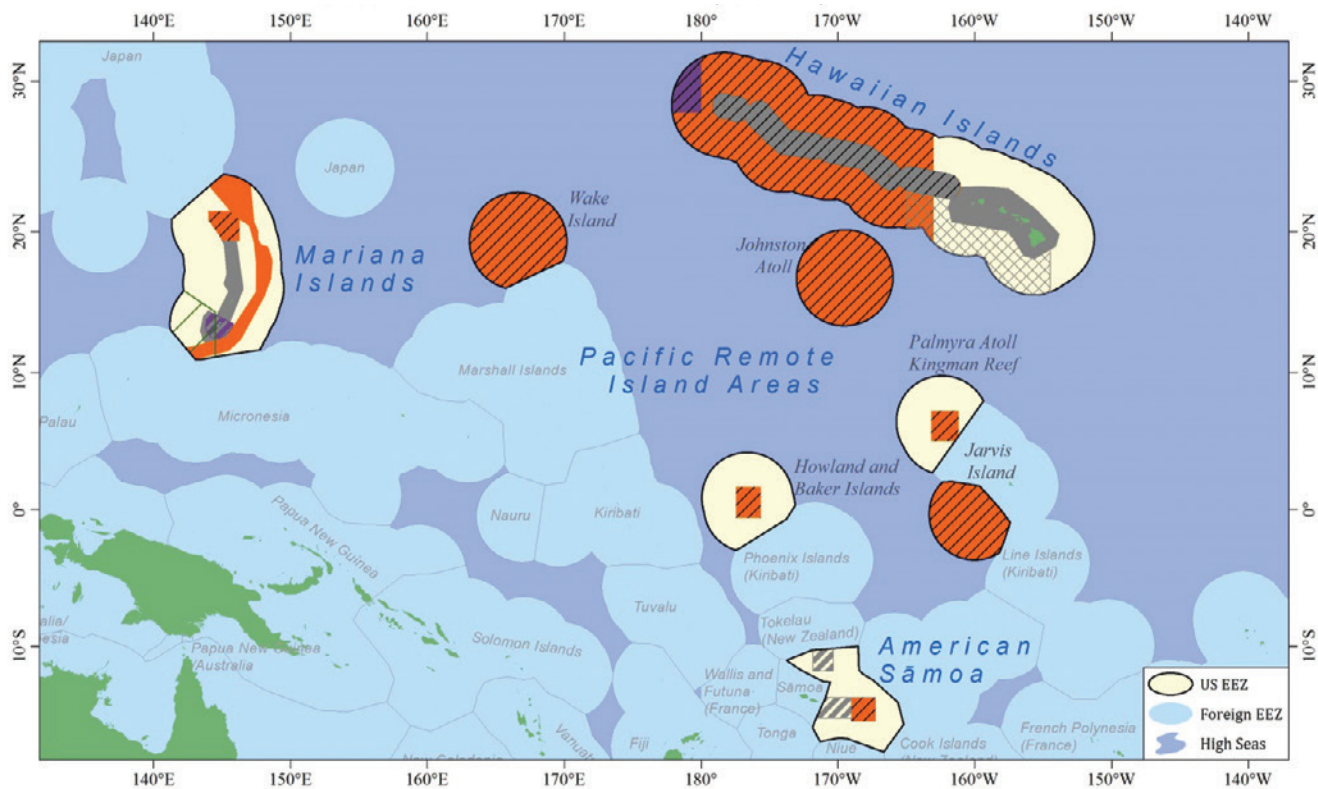
Western Pacific Fisheries by the Numbers

- 2.25 million** square miles of managed waters (about half of the US exclusive economic zone)
- 5** Fishery Ecosystem Plans
- 12** advisory bodies (about 200 advisors)
- 16** Council members
- 83** managed species and species complexes (encompassing thousands of species)
- 3,515** active fishing vessels/permits
- 17,940** metric tons of domestic commercial landings
- \$123 million** in commercial landings



Above: I'a Lapoa Tournament, American Samoa, 2016. **Map:** Western Pacific Region Fishery Management Council jurisdiction (orange areas).





Economic Contributions from Hawai'i Fisheries*

*2015 values



Commercial

9,000 full- and part-time jobs
\$247 million in wages, salaries and self-employment income
\$362 million contribution to the gross domestic product
\$814 million in direct sales of fish landed and resulting business and household sales

Noncommercial

934 full- and part-time jobs
\$37 million in wages, salaries and self-employment income
\$60 million contribution to the gross domestic product
\$119 million in direct sales made by angler and resulting sales made between businesses and households

Hawai'i noncommercial fishermen engaged in 1.4 million angler trips and caught 2.8 million fish in 2016.
 Photo by @hauolivision.

Summary of the 2016 Fishery Performance in the Western Pacific Region*

*Trends compare 2016 performance against 2015.

Hawai'i

Pelagic (open ocean)

- Primary fishery for 55% of Hawai'i's licensed fishermen (2,030 of 3,669 permits)
- Dockside value of commercial landings = \$112.8 mil.

Deep 7 Bottomfish

- Number of fish caught, weight and catch rates up
- Fishery participation and effort down

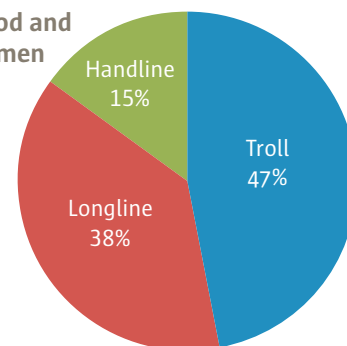
Non-Deep 7 Bottomfish

- Effort and number of fish caught up
- Landed weight slightly down



Uku (*Aprion virescens*) is the dominant species caught in non-Deep 7 commercial bottomfish fishery.

Primary Fishing Method and Gear of Pelagic Fishermen Licensed in 2016



Coral Reef Fish

- Fishing participation and effort down except for the lay gillnet fishery
- Landings down for all finfish methods except lay gillnet and seine net
- Catch rates up for inshore handline, lay gillnet and seine net; down for other finfish fisheries
- Landings up for octopus; down for mollusks and limu

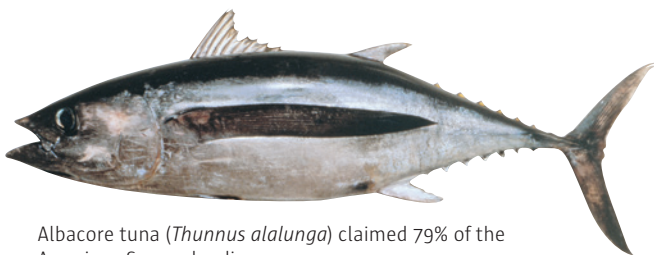
Crustaceans

- Catch and effort up for deep-water shrimp; down for Kona crab and lobsters

American Samoa

Pelagic (open ocean)

- \$1.10 per pound average tuna price (2015), primarily to the local cannery
- \$4.7 million estimated landed value
- 94% of landings are tuna, primarily albacore



Albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*) claimed 79% of the American Samoa landings revenue.

Bottomfish

- 11% estimated increase in total landings of managed bottomfish species
- 14% increase in fishery participation
- 85% decrease in commercial landings, indicating most managed bottomfish species were non-commercial

Coral Reef Fish

- Significantly higher estimated catches in the shore-based fishery
- Increases in hook-and-line effort
- Increases in catch rate for spear, gillnet and gleaning
- Significantly lower boat-based catch

- 4.3 million pounds harvested by 20 longliners
- 12% increase in troll and handline trips (190) by 12 troll and handline vessels
- 15% decrease in troll hours, but average catch per troll hour up

Local longliners landing albacore to the tuna cannery at Pago Pago.



Guam

Pelagic

- Approximately 400 vessels, the majority less than 33 feet in length
- Nearly 1 million pounds estimated landings
- 21.6% increase in number of trolling trips
- Slight decrease in trolling hours and trolling catch rates

Bottomfish

- 11% decline in commercial landings of managed bottomfish species
- Fishery participation and catch rates up, but effort down
- Majority of fishery appears to be noncommercial



Bonita (skipjack) comprised more than half of the Guam pelagic catch. Mahimahi, wahoo, yellowfin tuna and Pacific blue marlin rounded out the top five species.

Coral Reef Fish

- Fishing effort estimates generally up
- Catch and catch rates down

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Pelagic

- 14% increase in trip numbers reported by 63 commercial fishermen
- 37% increase in trolling hours to 19,260
- 5.1 to 5.5 hours for average trip



CNMI trolling vessel

- 15.9 pounds of landed fish per trolling hour
- \$2.10 per pound average price for pelagic species
- \$195,155 in commercial revenues of landed pelagic fish

Bottomfish

- Catch rates up
- Fishery participation, fishing effort and landings down

Coral Reef Fish

- Catch rates up for boat-based trolling and shore-based spear and hook-and-line fishing
- Participation, effort and estimated catches down

References

NOAA. Fisheries Economics of the United States 2015. www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/data/fisheries-economics-united-states-report-2015

NOAA. Fisheries of the United States 2016. www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/fisheries-united-states-2016-report

NOAA. Status of Stocks 2016. <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/15620>

WPRFMC. 2017. Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report, American Samoa Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan, 2016. <http://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/American-Samoa-FEP-SAFE-Report-2016-Final.pdf>

WPRFMC. 2017. Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report, Hawai'i Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan, 2016. <http://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Hawaii-FEP-SAFE-Report-2016-Final.pdf>

WPRFMC. 2017. Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report, Mariana Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan, 2016. <http://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Mariana-FEP-SAFE-Report-2016-Final.pdf>

WPRFMC. 2017. Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report, Pacific Pelagic Fisheries, 2016. <http://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Pelagic-FEP-SAFE-Report-2016-Final.pdf>

WPRFMC. 2017. Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report, Pacific Remote Island Areas Fishery Ecosystem Plan, 2016. <http://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/PRIA-FEP-SAFE-Report-2016-Final.pdf>

Administrative and Regulatory Actions

For the Federal Register notices for these actions, go to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) website at www.fpiir.noaa.gov/SFD/SFD_regs_1.html.

Jan. 29, 2016 (81 FR 5619, Feb. 3, 2016). **Exemption for large US longline vessels to fish in portions of the American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA)**: Allows large federally permitted US longline vessels to fish in certain areas of the LVPA but continues to prohibit fishing in the LVPA by large purse-seine vessels. Fishing requirements for the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument remain unchanged. The rule seeks to improve the viability of the American Samoa longline fishery and achieve optimum yield from the fishery while preventing overfishing.

April 7, 2016. **Final 2015–16 Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Accountability Measures (AMs) for Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) Deep 7 bottomfish**: ACL specified at 326,000 lbs for the 2015–16 fishing year. If the ACL is projected to be reached, the commercial and non-commercial fisheries for MHI Deep 7 bottomfish would be closed for the remainder of the fishing year. The specifications were effective May 9, 2016.

April 21, 2016. **Amendment 4 to the Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Hawai'i Archipelago**: Revises the essential fish habitat (EFH) and habitat areas of particular concern (HAPC) for 14 species of bottomfish and three species of seamount ground-fish in the Hawai'i Archipelago.

May 25, 2016 (81 FR 33147, May 25, 2016). **Limit for calendar year 2016 on fishing effort by US purse seine vessels in the Effort Limit Area for Purse Seine (ELAPS)**: In this Interim rule, NMFS established a limit of 1,828 fishing days in the ELAPS, i.e., that portion of the US exclusive economic zone and high seas between the latitudes of 20° N and 20° S in the area of application of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). This action was necessary for the United States to implement provisions of a conservation and management measure adopted by the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the WCPO (WCPFC).

July 25, 2016 (81 FR 41239, June 24, 2016). **Requirements for US purse seine and longline vessels operating in the WCPO**: Requires that US purse-seine vessels carry observers on fishing trips (effective July 25, 2016); Establishes restrictions in 2016 and 2017 on the use of fish aggregating devices by US purse-seine vessels (effective July 1, 2016); and Establishes limits in 2016 (3,554 mt) and 2017 (3,345 mt) on the amount of bigeye tuna that may be captured by US longline vessels (effective date of the longline bigeye tuna limit July 1, 2016).

July 22, 2016 through Dec. 31, 2016 (81 FR 45982, July 15, 2016). **Temporarily closed the US pelagic longline fishery for bigeye tuna in the WCPO** because the fishery had reached the 2016 catch limit. This action was necessary to ensure compliance with NMFS regulations that implement WCPFC decisions.

July 25 through Dec. 31, 2016 (81 FR 46614, July 18). **Temporarily closed the US pelagic longline fishery for bigeye tuna for vessels over 24 meters in overall length in the eastern Pacific Ocean** because the 2016 catch limit of 500 mt was expected to be reached. This action was necessary to prevent the fishery from exceeding the applicable catch limit established by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in Resolution C-13-01 (Multiannual Program for the Conservation of Tuna in the Eastern Pacific Ocean During 2014–2016).

Sept. 2, 2016 through Dec. 31, 2016 (81 FR 58410, August 25, 2016). **Temporarily closed the ELAPS to purse-seine fishing for the remainder of 2016** because the 2016 ELAPS limit, which was established to implement a decision of the WCPFC, was expected to be reached.

Sept. 9, 2016 through Dec. 31, 2016 (81 FR 63145, Sept. 14, 2016). **Specified a 2016 limit of 2,000 mt of longline-caught bigeye tuna for each US participating territory** (American Samoa, Guam and CNMI). NMFS allowed each territory to allocate up to 1,000 mt each year to US longline fishing vessels in a valid specified fishing agreement. As an AM, NMFS monitored, attributed and restricted (if necessary) catches of longline-caught bigeye tuna, including catches made under a specified fishing agreement. These catch limits and AMs support the long-term sustainability of fishery resources of the US Pacific Islands and fisheries development in the US territories.

Sept. 16, 2016 (81 FR 64356, Sept. 20, 2016). **Notice of a valid specified fishing agreement for the CNMI**: Announced that a valid specified fishing agreement that allocated up to 1,000 mt of the 2016 bigeye tuna limit for the CNMI to identified US longline fishing vessels.

Oct. 4, 2016 through Dec. 31, 2016 (81 FR 69717, October 7, 2016). **Temporarily reopens the US pelagic longline fishery for bigeye tuna for vessels over 24 meters in overall length in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO)**: Part of the 500 mt catch limit remained available after NMFS closed the fishery on July 25, 2016. This action allowed US vessels to access the remainder of the catch limit, which was established by the IATTC in Resolution C–13–01.

Nov. 21, 2016 (81 FR 85162, Nov. 25, 2016): **Announced a valid specified fishing agreement that allocated 1,000 mt of the 2016 bigeye tuna limit for the Guam to US longline fishing vessels**. NMFS began attributing to Guam bigeye tuna caught by vessels identified in the agreement, starting on Nov. 24, 2016.

Dec. 1, 2016 through Dec. 31, 2016 (81 FR 83715, Nov. 22, 2016). **Closed the US pelagic longline fishery for bigeye tuna in the WCPO** because the fishery would reach the 2016 allocation limit for the CNMI. This action was necessary to comply with regulations managing this fish stock. This closure did not apply to any vessel included in a valid agreement with another territory.

Jan. 18, 2017 (82 FR 5517). **Proposed ACLs for Pacific Island bottomfish, crustacean, precious coral, and coral reef ecosystem fisheries and AMs to correct or mitigate any overages of catch limits**. The proposed ACLs and AMs would be effective for fishing year 2016. The fishing year for each fishery begins on Jan. 1 and ends on Dec. 31, except for precious coral fisheries, which begin July 1 and end on June 30 the following year. Although the 2016 fishing year has ended for most stocks, NMFS evaluates 2016 catches against the 2016 ACLs when data become available in mid-2017.

2016 Publications

2015–2018 Hawai'i Advisory Panel brochure. ISBN 978-1-937863-85-2

2016 Hawaiian Lunar Calendar (classroom version). ISBN 978-1-937863-84-5

2016 Hawaiian Lunar Calendar (fishermen pocket version). ISBN 978-1-937863-86-9

2016 Amerika Samoa Lunar Calendar. ISBN 978-1-937863-87-6

2016 Refaluwasch Pápáál Maram (Refaluwasch Lunar Calendar). ISBN 978-1-937863-88-3

2016 Fanha'aniyan Pulan CHamoru (Chamorro Lunar Calendar). ISBN 978-1-937863-89-0

2016 Eskaleran Pulan Chamorro (Chamorro Lunar Calendar—CNMI version). ISBN 978-1-937863-90-6

DeMello J, M Maciaz, J Kurokawa and M Sabater (Eds.), 2016. Western Pacific Coral Reef Fisheries: A decade of research in the U.S. Pacific Islands. Pacific Islands Fishery Monographs. Vol. 8. Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. ISBN 978-1-937863-98-2

Fishermen Code of Conduct (display in 9 languages). ISBN 978-1-937863-91-3

Fishing Conflicts on Guam: A Report of Meetings and Interviews with Fishermen. Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. ISBN 978-1-944827-19-9

From Boat to Plate (13-minute video). ISBN 978-1-937863-92-0

Hawkins C. Importance of Small Ahi on Hawai'i Island, Maui and Kaua'i: A Report of Surveys of Fish Vendors. ISBN 978-1-944827-20-5

Ka'ai'ai C. 2016. Western Pacific Community Development Program and Western Pacific Community Demonstration Project Program. Pacific Islands Fishery Monographs. Vol. 7. Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. ISBN 978-1-937863-97-5

Kingma E. 2016. Fisheries Development Projects in American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands, 2010–2015. Pacific Islands Fishery Monographs. Vol. 6. Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. ISBN 978-1-937863-96-8 [print]; ISBN 978-1-937863-99-9 [online].

Markrich M and C Hawkins. 2016. Western Pacific Region Fisheries and Fleets. Pacific Islands Fishery Monographs. Vol. 5. Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. ISBN 978-1-937863-95-1

Pacific Islands Fishery News. 2016 Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall issues. ISSN 2151-2329 [print]; ISSN 2151-2337 [online]

WPRFMC. 2016. Annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report for the American Samoa Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan 2015. M Sabater, A Ishizaki, R Walker, C Hawkins, S Spalding (Eds.). Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

WPRFMC. 2016. Annual SAFE Report for the Hawaii Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan 2015. M Sabater, A Ishizaki, R Walker, C Hawkins, S Spalding (Eds.). Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

WPRFMC. 2016. Annual SAFE Report for the Mariana Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan 2015. M Sabater, A Ishizaki, R Walker, C Hawkins, S Spalding (Eds.). Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

WPRFMC. 2016. Annual SAFE Report for the Pacific Remote Island Area Fishery Ecosystem Plan 2015. M Sabater, A Ishizaki, R Walker, C Hawkins, S Spalding (Eds.). Honolulu: Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

WPRFMC. 2016. Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the American Samoa Archipelago.

WPRFMC. 2016. Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Hawai'i Archipelago.

WPRFMC. 2016. Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Mariana Archipelago.

WPRFMC. 2016. Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Pacific Pelagic Fisheries.

WPRFMC. 2016. Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Pacific Remote Islands Area.



Left: Former US Sen. Daniel K. Akaka (at podium) and former Hawaii Gov. George Ariyoshi (far left) join fishermen, seafood representatives, Native Hawaiians and other politicians at a press conference at the State Capitol on July 26 against the proposed expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. **Center:** US longline vessels received an exemption to fish in portions of the American Samoa Large Vessel Prohibited Area so as to improve the viability of the fishery and achieve optimum yield while preventing overfishing. **Right:** Original Council members Frank Goto, United Fishing Agency (Honolulu fish auction) manager, and Peter Fithian, Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament founder, with Council Executive Director Kitty M. Simonds celebrating the 40-year anniversary of the Council and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

2016 Council and Advisory Body Meetings

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (chair Edwin A. Ebisui Jr.): 165th meeting March 15–17 Honolulu; 166th meeting June 4–10, CNMI and Guam; 167th meeting, Oct. 11–14, Honolulu

Scientific and Statistical Committee (chair Paul Callaghan): 122nd meeting, March 8–10, Honolulu; 123rd meeting, May 31–June 2, Honolulu; 124th meeting, Oct. 4–6, Honolulu

Advisory Panel (chair Judith Guthertz)

- American Samoa (chairs Krista Corry and Christinna Lutu-Sanchez): March, May 18 and Sept. 23
- CNMI (chair Richard Farrell): Jan. 29, May 18, June 4, Sept. 21
- Guam (chair Peter Perez): Jan. 28, May 20, June 4, Sept. 24
- Hawai'i (chair Gary Beals): March 10, May 11, Sept. 29

Plan Teams: Archipelagic (chair Stefanie Dukes) and Pelagic (chair Keith Bigelow): April 11–13, Honolulu

Education Committee (chair Craig Severance): no meeting

Fishery Data Collection and Research Committee (chairs Mike Tenorio and Wil Castro): April 14–15, Honolulu; June 4, CNMI

Fishing Industry Advisory Committee (chair Stuart Chikami): May 11, Honolulu; Oct. 7, teleconference

Hawai'i Bottomfish Advisory Review Board (no chair): no meeting

Marine Planning and Climate Change Committee (chair Eileen Shea): March 30–31, Honolulu

Non-commercial Fisheries Advisory Committee

Protected Species Advisory Committee (chair Jim Lynch): April 7–8, Honolulu

Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committee
American Samoa (chair William Sword): May 18
CNMI (chair John Gourley): June 3
Guam (chair Michael Dueans): June 2
Hawai'i (chair McGrew Rice): May 11

Social Science Planning Committee (chair Craig Severance): April 15 and Sept. 15, teleconference

2016 Workshops, Events and Public Scoping

Community-Based Fishery Management planning meetings: Jan. 25–30, Guam and CNMI; June 2, Guam

Biosampling Workshop: Jan. 25–30, Guam and CNMI

Councils Communications Group, Feb. 16–18, Honolulu

Database Analytics Workshop, CNMI, Feb. 29

Fishers Forum on Marine Hawaiian Islands Bottomfish, March 15, Honolulu

Fishers Forum on Reef Fishery Sustainability: June 6, CNMI

Fishers Forum on Mapping Coral Reef Fisheries: June 9, Guam

Fishers Forum on Marine Monuments and Manguson, Oct. 12, Honolulu

Rare Events Bycatch Workshop, Oct. 18–20, Honolulu

'Aha Moku Puwala, Nov. 28–29, Honolulu

Papahānaumokuākea Monument Expansion Area
Public Scoping Hearings, Dec. 6–17, Hilo and Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i; Maui; Kaua'i; Moloka'i

2016 Council Members

Secretary of Commerce appointees from nominees

selected by American Samoa, CNMI, Guam and Hawai'i governors: Edwin Ebisui Jr. (Hawai'i) (chair); Michael Duenas, Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association (Guam) (vice chair); John Gourley, Micronesian Environmental Services (CNMI) (vice chair); Christinna Lutu-Sanchez, commercial fisherman (American Samoa) (vice chair); McGrew Rice, commercial and charter fisherman (Hawai'i) (vice chair); Michael Goto, United Fishing Agency (Hawai'i); Dean Sensui, film producer (Hawai'i); Archie Soliai, Starkist (American Samoa). **Designated state officials:** Suzanne Case, Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources; Ruth Matagi-Tofiga, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources; Richard Seman, CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources; Matt Sablan, Guam Department of Agriculture. **Designated federal official voting:** Michael Tosatto, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office. **Designated federal officials non-voting:** Matthew Brown, USFWS; Michael Brakke, US Department of State; and RADM Vincent B. Atkins, USCG 14th District.

2016 Scientific and Statistical Committee

Judith Amesbury (Micronesian Archaeological Research Services); Dr. Paul Callaghan (University of Guam retired); Dr. Frank A. Camacho (University of Guam); Dr. Milani Chaloupka

(University of Queensland); Dr. Charles Daxboeck, chair, (BioDax Consulting Tahiti); Dr. Richard Deriso (Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission); Dr. Erik Franklin (Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology); Dr. John Hampton (Secretariat of the Pacific Community); David Itano (consultant); Dr. Pierre Kleiber (NMFS PIFSC, retired); Dr. Donald Kobayashi (NMFS PIFSC); Dr. Molly Lutcavage (University of Massachusetts); James Lynch (K&L Gates); Dr. Todd Miller (CNMI Division of Fish & Wildlife); Alton Miyasaka (Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources); Dr. Domingo Ochavillo (American Samoa DMWR); Dr. Minling Pan (NMFS PIFSC); Dr. Craig Severance (University of Hawai'i at Hilo, retired); Dr. John Sibert (Pelagic Fisheries Research Program, retired); and Dr. Robert Skillman (NMFS PIFSC, retired).

2016 Council Staff

Kitty Simonds, executive director; Loren Bullard, technical assistant; Paul Dalzell, senior scientist and pelagics program coordinator; Joshua DeMello, fisheries analyst; Elysia Granger, finance and administration; Chris Hawkins, social scientist; Bella Hirayama, travel and administrative clerk; Randy Holmen, fiscal officer; Asuka Ishizaki, protected species coordinator; Charles Ka'ai'ai, indigenous program coordinator; Eric Kingma, international fisheries, enforcement and NEPA coordinator; Mark Mitsuyasu, fisheries program officer and bottomfish coordinator; Marlowe Sabater, marine ecosystem scientist; Sylvia Spalding, communications officer; Jordan Takegawa, documents manager; and Rebecca Walker, fisheries analyst.

2016 Island Coordinators

Carl Dela Cruz (Guam), Nate Ilaoa (American Samoa) and Jack Ogumoro (CNMI).

2016 Interns and Scholarship Recipient

Dane Walin (Hawai'i), Fa'alasala Kitiona (American Samoa) and Carey Demapan (CNMI).

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

1164 Bishop Street Suite 1400
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 USA

ISBN 978-1-944827-18-2

