

# ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS FOR American Samoa

## What Is an Annual Catch Limit?

An annual catch limit (ACL) is the yearly harvest limit of a population or population complex that is established to prevent overfishing. If the ACL is met or exceeded, accountability measures are triggered.

## What Is an Accountability Measure?

Accountability measures are management controls, such as a seasonal closure or quota closure, to prevent ACLs from being exceeded. These measures can also correct or mitigate occurrences of exceeding an ACL.

## Why Do We Need ACLs?

To improve conservation of managed fishery resources, the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) of 2006 required Regional Fishery Management Councils to develop ACLs for each of their managed fisheries and to establish a mechanism for specifying a harvest level that prevents overfishing.

## Do All Species Have ACLs?

The MSA provides limited exceptions to ACL requirements. ACLs and accountability measures are not required for species that have an annual life cycle with only one reproductive cycle (e.g., squid), species managed under international agreements (e.g., tuna and billfish in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean), and ecosystem component species, i.e., non-target species that are not overfished or likely to become subject to overfishing and are not generally kept for sale or personal use.

## How Were the ACLs Calculated?

The analyses for the ACLs were done on the entire range of the stocks. The available catch information is incomplete and thus resulted in the low ACL limits.

## What Will Happen If an ACL Is Exceeded?

If the post-season accounting of the 2013 catches shows that more fish were caught during the year for a species/species group than the 2013 ACL allowed, then the 2013 ACL for that species/species group will be reevaluated.

## How Can You Help?

Fishermen and vendor participation in the catch reporting and creel surveys implemented by the fishery management agencies is crucial. Accurate estimates of the island-wide catches will reduce management uncertainty and increase catch limits.

For more information, go to [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org) or contact the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council at [info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov).

## About the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

In 1976, the US Congress through the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) established eight Regional Fishery Management Councils to manage the nation's fisheries in the US EEZ (generally 3-200 miles offshore). The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's jurisdiction includes the EEZ waters around the State of Hawaii; US Territories of American Samoa and Guam; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI); and the US Pacific remote island areas. This area of nearly 1.5 million square miles constitutes about half of the entire US EEZ.



## What Are the ACLs for American Samoa in 2013?

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council has specified the following ACLs for fisheries operating in federal waters surrounding American Samoa in 2013.

FISHERY	FEDERALLY MANAGED SPECIES	ANNUAL LIMIT (LBS)
BOTTOMFISH	Bottomfish multi-species stock complex	101,000
	Deepwater Shrimp	80,000
CRUSTACEAN	Kona Crab	3,200
	Spiny Lobster	2,300
	Slipper Lobster	30
PRECIOUS CORAL	Precious Corals in the American Samoa Exploratory Area	2,205
	Black Coral	1,742
CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM	Acanthuridae (surgeonfish)	19,516
	Lutjanidae (snappers)	18,839
	Mollusks (turbo snails, octopus, giant clams)	16,694
	Carangidae (jacks)	9,490
	Selar crumenophthalmus (atule, bigeye scad)	8,396
	Scaridae (parrotfish)	8,145
	Lethrinidae (emperors)	7,350
	Serranidae (groupers)	5,600
	Mugilidae (mulletts)	2,857
	Holocentridae (squirrelfish)	2,585
	Crustaceans (crabs)	2,248
	Cheilinus undulatus (Humphead "Napoleon" wrasse)	1,743
Carcharhinidae (reef sharks)	1,309	
Bolbometopon muricatum (bumphead parrotfish)	235	
All other coral reef ecosystem species combined	18,910	



Ecosystem-Based Management of Fisheries in the US Pacific Islands  
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