



# *Navigating* THE WESTERN PACIFIC COUNCIL PROCESS

*A Guide to the  
Western Pacific Regional  
Fishery Management Council  
6th Edition*



*Ecosystem-based Management  
of Fisheries in the US Pacific Islands*

*Navigating*  
THE WESTERN  
PACIFIC COUNCIL  
PROCESS

*A Guide to  
the Western  
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# WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

*This guide is designed for a variety of people. It is for those who want a voice in fisheries management issues; for those who may not want to become involved in fisheries management but are interested in knowing how it works; for fishers who want to participate in the decisions affecting their livelihood and/or cultural/subsistence activities; for those concerned about environmental issues; and for students, managers, fishing family members and recreational anglers.*

*This guide is designed for both those who are unfamiliar with fisheries management as well as those who are already involved in the process. The Reference Desk chapter provides contact information, mailing list information and useful telephone numbers.*



# WHAT IS THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL?

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional councils established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in 1976 to manage offshore fisheries.

The Council's jurisdiction includes the US exclusive economic zone (EEZ) waters (generally 3-200 miles offshore) 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 of Johnston, Midway, Palmyra and Wake Atolls; Baker, Howland and Jarvis Islands; and Kingman Reef. This area of nearly 1.5 million square miles is the size of the continental United States and constitutes about half of the entire US EEZ. It spans both sides of the equator and both sides of the dateline. The Council also manages domestic fisheries based in the US Pacific Islands that operate on the high seas.

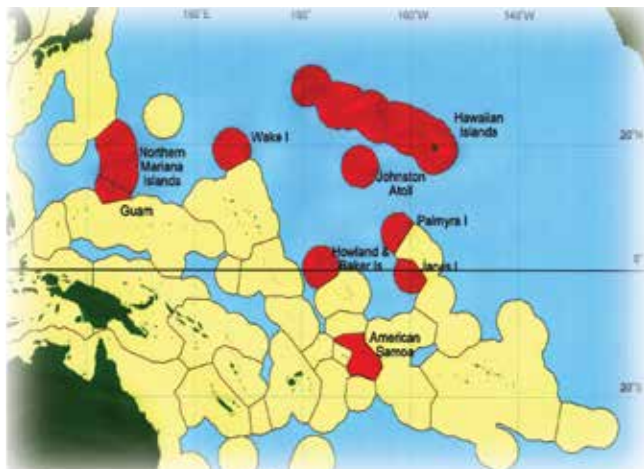
## FISHERIES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION

### COMMERCIAL

In 2012, the Hawaii commercial fishing industry overall generated \$855 million in sales, \$251 million of income, and approximately 11,000 full-and part-time jobs, according to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Commercially important species and species groups include lobsters, mahimahi (dolphinfish), marlin, opah (moonfish), pomfret, akule (scad), snappers, swordfish, tunas and ono (wahoo). Tuna offloaded in Honolulu is of sashimi quality and accounts for this fishing port consistently ranking among the nation's top 10 in value of landings.

In American Samoa, the longline industry landed about 8.9 million lbs of tuna and tuna-like species in 2012. American Samoa non-pelagic domestic fisheries earned approximately \$170,000 and include an artisanal bottomfish





for fiestas with family and friends. Small-scale commercial, recreational and subsistence fishing for coral reef-associated fish, crustaceans and bottomfish occur in both island areas. Pelagic fish are caught by commercial, recreational and charter-boat trollers in CNMI and Guam. Both island areas have also served as transshipment sites for tuna caught by foreign

fishery (17,000 lbs in 2012), a shoreline subsistence fishery (typically between 1,000 and 5,000 lbs lobster annually plus a variety of reef fish and scad, or atule) and a recreational tournament fishery. American Samoa is home to StarKist Samoa, one of the world's largest tuna canneries, processing foreign and US caught skipjack, yellowfin and albacore tuna. In 2010, TriMarine acquired the former Chicken of the Sea canning facility and will be conducting fresh and frozen fish processing and canning operations under the name of Samoa Tuna Processors. The fish processing industry is by far the largest private-sector employer in American Samoa. The economic growth of many other private-sector employers in the territory is tied to the disposable income of tuna industry workers.

In the Mariana Archipelago (Guam and CNMI), non-pelagic fisheries earned approximately \$470,000, while pelagic fisheries generated \$1.2 million dollars in income in 2012. The Guam Fisherman's Cooperative Association includes more than 180 full- and part-time fishermen. However, most of these and other fishermen in the archipelago continue to harvest primarily for subsistence, barter and cultural sharing purposes, such as

longline vessels and destined principally for Japan, though this activity has declined markedly over the past decade.

## RECREATIONAL

In 2012, about 1,200 jobs in the Western Pacific were generated by recreational (noncommercial) fishing activities, and fishermen who fished in the region spent over \$108 million, according to NMFS. Most of these employment impacts were generated by industries servicing anglers who fished from shore or a private boat. These fishing trips also generated the most trip-related expenditures. Only 25% of the total trip-related expenditures in the region came from non-resident fishermen. Other economic impacts include sales, contribution of recreational fishing activities to gross domestic product (value added impacts) and expenditures on durable equipment.

The key Western Pacific recreational species in 2012 were mahimahi, bigeye and mackerel scad, trevallies and other jacks, and snappers.

According to NMFS, more than 87,000 recreational fishermen took 1.5 million trips and caught a total of over 3 million fish.



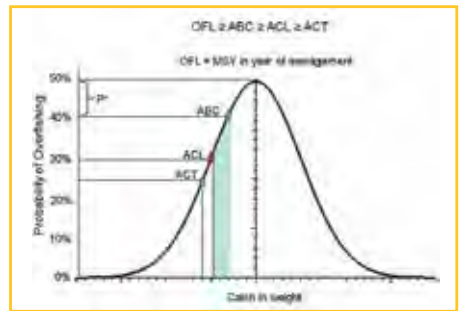
*Original members of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council in 1976.*

The MSA has been amended several times since it was first passed. In 1996 the Sustainable Fisheries Act added specific new requirements directing Councils

## **The Magnuson-Stevens Act**

The fishery management council system was established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), which Congress originally passed in 1976 as the Fishery Conservation and Management Act. It is named for Senator Warren Magnuson of Washington and Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska.

The MSA is the main law governing management of living marine resources in the United States and guides nearly all Council actions. Designed to encourage local participation, responsibility and authority, the MSA established the regional fishery management council system and prescribed how it would work. It also established measures to control foreign fishing in US waters, to allow overfished stocks to recover, and to monitor, conserve and manage fishery resources in a manner that maximizes long-term benefits to the nation.



to base management measures on the best available scientific information, to reduce bycatch, to consider the effect of management measures on communities and to protect essential fish habitat. Also added were new provisions calling for the development of community programs and projects to support and sustain indigenous fisheries in the Pacific. In 2006 the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act added requirements to establish annual catch limits and to provide marine education and training to Pacific islanders, among other things.

The MSA contains 10 national standards that Councils must follow when developing new fishery management

measures. A brief listing of the National Standards is in the following table.

The Act requires that the Councils establish annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures for all stocks and stock complexes in its FEPs. Exceptions are made for species managed internationally, species with a one-year or less lifespan and ecosystem component species. ACLs are quotas that aim to prevent overfishing. Typical ACL-based management starts with a stock assessment that estimates the maximum annual amount of harvest and fishing effort allowed without negatively impacting the fish stock. The assessment dictates the overfishing limit. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee determines the acceptable biological catch (ABC) of the stocks, which is the reduction from the overfishing limit due to scientific uncertainty. From the ABC the Council specifies the ACL, which is the equal or a reduction from the ABC due to management uncertainties. Once the annual harvest reaches the ACLs the fishery closes or adjustments are made to the ACLs for the following fishing year. The Western Pacific Region currently has 101 management unit species or stock complexes that have ACLs.

## NATIONAL STANDARDS OF THE MSA (ABRIDGED)

Conservation and management measures shall:

1. Prevent overfishing while achieving optimum yield.
2. Be based upon the best scientific information available.
3. Manage individual stocks as a unit throughout their range, to the extent practicable; interrelated stocks shall be managed as a unit or in close coordination.
4. Not discriminate between the residents of different states; any allocation of privileges must be fair and equitable.
5. Where practicable, promote efficiency, except that no measure shall have economic allocation as its sole purpose.
6. Take into account and allow for variations among the contingencies in fisheries, fishery resources, and catches.
7. Minimize costs and avoid duplication, where practicable.
8. Take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities to provide for sustained participation of, and to minimize impacts to, such communities (consistent with conservation requirements).
9. Minimize bycatch or mortality from bycatch.
10. Promote safety of human life at sea.



## THE COUNCIL'S ROLE



The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council fulfills a central role in the management of the nation's marine fisheries resources. Its primary role is to prepare, monitor and amend management plans for offshore fisheries based in the Western Pacific Region. Each plan contains a suite of management measures and associated regulations that have been implemented to support sustainable fisheries, reduce and mitigate interactions with protected species, and conserve marine habitat and ecosystems.

The plans and fishery regulations are dynamic and reflect the Council's adaptive management, which monitors and addresses changing conditions based on the best available information. In developing these plans, the Council provides a public forum for decision-making and works closely with communities, local governments, federal agencies and local and international organizations.

The Council currently has five place-based fishery ecosystem plans (FEPs), one each for the Hawaii, American Samoa and Mariana (Guam and CNMI) Archipelagos; one for the US Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIAs); and another for the Pacific Pelagic fisheries. The approach of these management plans allows explicit consideration to be given to the ecosystem interactions within each of the areas managed by the Council.





Vessels from Hawaii fish on the high seas in both the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and the Eastern Pacific Ocean, which are included in

the jurisdictions of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, respectively. The Council is involved in these regional fishery management organizations and other international bodies and initiatives to address resource management issues such as marine debris, marine education, and conservation of tuna and tuna-like species, seamount resources, deepwater corals and protected species, including seabirds, sea turtles, marine mammals and sharks.

The Western Pacific Council also plays a significant facilitation role in the Community Demonstration Project Program (CDPP), Community Development Program, and Marine Education and Training Program. These programs were created by Congress through the MSA to promote continued participation of indigenous communities in Pacific Island fisheries. The Council also supports fishery development and resource management projects identified in the Marine Conservation Plans of American Samoa, Guam and CNMI through the Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund (SFF), also established by the MSA.

## **Fishery Ecosystem Plans**

### ***American Samoa Archipelago***

**FEP:** This FEP manages fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in EEZ waters around American Samoa.

### ***Hawaii Archipelago FEP:***

This FEP manages fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in EEZ waters around the Hawaii Archipelago, including Midway Atoll.

### ***Mariana Archipelago FEP:***

This FEP manages fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in EEZ waters around Guam and CNMI.

### ***Pacific Remote Island Areas***

**FEP:** This FEP manages fisheries for bottomfish and seamount groundfish, crustaceans, coral reef associated species and precious corals in EEZ waters around Howland, Baker and Jarvis Islands; Johnston, Palmyra and Wake Atolls; and Kingman Reef.

***Pacific Pelagic FEP:*** This FEP manages fisheries for pelagic species in EEZ waters of the Western Pacific Region and by fisheries based in the Region that operate on the high seas.

## COMPONENTS OF THE COUNCIL SYSTEM

The Council system is composed of Council members, Council staff, advisory bodies that advise the Council and the public that participates in the Council decision-making process.

### Council Members

The Council is the system's decision-making body. The Council has 13 voting members and three non-voting members. A chair and four vice chairs (one from each island area) are elected annually by the Council members.

Council members must balance competing interests while trying to make decisions for the overall benefit of the nation. Council members are advised by the Council's advisory panels and committees, Council staff, the public, states and territories, academia and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

The 13 voting members include:

- Eight private citizens who are familiar with the commercial and/or non-commercial fisheries, marine conservation or both. These citizens (at least one member each from American Samoa, CNMI, Guam and Hawaii) are appointed by the Secretary of Commerce from lists submitted by the Governors of each of the island areas. They serve three-year terms and can serve up to three consecutive terms.



- The director of the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources or his/her designee
- The secretary of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Department of Lands and Natural Resources or his/her designee
- The director of the Guam Department of Agriculture or his/her designee
- The chair of the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources or his/her designee
- The regional administrator of the NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office or his/her designee

There are also three non-voting members who assist the Council in decision-making. They represent:

- The US Coast Guard, 14<sup>th</sup> District (enforcement and safety issues)
- The US Department of State (decisions that have international implications)
- The US Fish and Wildlife Service (ecosystems, seabirds and other relevant protected species)

## Council Staff

The Council staff supports the fishery management decision-making process. It coordinates meetings and provides information to the Council, its advisory groups, fishermen and the public.

The Council's executive director carries out the tasks assigned by the Council and, with the senior scientists and program officer, directs and oversees the technical and support staff. The technical staff analyzes alternatives for

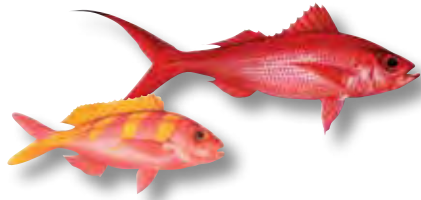


regulatory measures for the Council's review, with a focus on biology, economics, social science, ecosystems and habitat. The technical staff also develops fishery management documents and regulations based on the Council's decisions.

For a complete list of staff members and their contact information, please visit the About Us page of our website at [www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org).

## THE COUNCIL'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Support quality research and obtain the most complete scientific information available to assess and manage fisheries;
2. Promote an ecosystem approach in fisheries management, including reducing waste in fisheries and minimizing impacts on marine habitat and impacts on protected species;
3. Conduct education and outreach to foster good stewardship principles and broad and direct public participation in the Council's decision making process;
4. Recognize the importance of island cultures and traditional fishing practices in managing fishery resources and foster opportunities for participation;
5. Promote environmentally responsible fishing and the utilization of sustainable fisheries that provide long term economic growth and stability;
6. Promote regional cooperation to manage domestic and international fisheries; and
7. Encourage development of technologies and methods to achieve the most effective level of monitoring control and surveillance and to ensure safety at sea.



## Advisory Bodies

When reviewing potential regulatory changes, the Council also draws upon the services of knowledgeable people from local and federal agencies, universities and the public, who serve on Council panels and committees.

Advisory bodies include the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), the Archipelagic and Pelagic Plan Teams, the Advisory Panel (AP), Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committees (REAC) and other committees.

Advisory bodies provide comments, both written and oral, on relevant issues being considered by the Council.

**Social Science Planning Committee (SSC)** – The SSC reviews the scientific and technical aspects of fisheries in the Western Pacific Region and provides the Council with management recommendations. SSC members are resource economists, biologists, sociologists, population modelers and other knowledgeable experts.

**Plan Teams** – The Council has teams of scientists, managers and industry representatives who make recommendations to the Council based on their annual review of the region's bottomfish and seamount groundfish, coral reef ecosystem, crustaceans, pelagics and precious coral fisheries.

**Advisory Panel (AP)** – The Council receives advice from a panel of recreational and commercial fishermen, charter boat operators, buyers, sellers, consumers and others knowledgeable about the fisheries in the region, including indigenous fisheries. The panel includes subpanels for the American Samoa, Hawaii and Mariana Archipelagos; Pacific Pelagic Ecosystem; and Western Pacific Community Demonstration Project Program.

**Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committees (REAC)** – The Council receives advice from the American Samoa, Hawaii and Mariana Archipelago REACs. Each REAC brings together Council members and representatives from federal, state and local government agencies; businesses; and non-governmental organizations with responsibility and interest in land-based and non-fishing activities that potentially affect the marine ecosystem of the relevant archipelago.

**Other Advisory Bodies** – The Council convenes and solicits recommendations from a variety of other committees as warranted, such as its Education Committee, Fisheries Data Collection and Research Committee, Fishing Industry Advisory Panel, Marine Planning and Climate Change Committee, Non-Commercial Advisory Committee, Protected Species Advisory Committee and Social Science Planning Committee.





## COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Council convenes three regular meetings per year, usually in March, June and October, with two meetings held in the Hawaii Archipelago and one meeting held in either the American Samoa or Mariana Archipelago. The Council usually meets over four days. The SSC typically meets the week prior to the Council following a similar agenda. All meetings are open to the public, except for an occasional, closed session to discuss internal personnel and policy issues. Agendas are posted on the Council's web site ([www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org)).



org) prior to the meeting. The Council meeting is web streamed. Minutes are taken for each Council meeting and are available to the public via the Council website.

## Briefing Materials

Council members receive briefing materials electronically and/or on hardcopy prior to Council meetings. They include brief background summaries, documents for regulatory action, reports from agencies and organizations, written public comments and other material relevant to the agenda. The briefing materials are cataloged to the meeting agenda with identifier tags located on the top right hand corner of the document.

Copies of briefing materials are made available to the public at the meeting as the Council progresses through the agenda.

Public comments to be included in the briefing materials can be submitted to the Council office by mail, fax or email and must be received at least one week before the meeting.

## Handouts

Copies of the agenda and pertinent briefing materials are provided on a table at the back of or just outside of the Council meeting venue. Copies of reports, handouts and statements generated during the Council meetings are also provided on the table.

## Agendas and Agenda Items

The Council works from an agenda, which is posted on the Council's website and provided on the table at the back of just outside of the Council meeting venue. The content of the agenda is set by the executive director, in consultation with the Council. Requests for an item to be placed on the agenda should be directed to the executive director or to the Council chair or a vice-chair.

Each fishery management agenda item has several parts. First, a staff person generally provides an overview of the issue or action to be considered. This may be followed by more detailed presentations or information and by reports from the Council's advisory bodies, including the AP, SSC and the relevant Plan Team, REAC and Standing Committee. Before the Council begins deliberations on the agenda item, it will take public testimony from those who sign up on public comment forms available at the meeting. Finally, the Council discusses the topic and may vote on it.

## Public Comment

The Council and its advisory groups (e.g., SSC, REACs, AP and Plan Teams) all allow public comment on agenda items. If you'd like to testify during the comment period, you must sign up at the back of the room on a public comment form before the public comment period is completed. Give the completed form to any staff person, who will then hand it to the meeting chair. The chair will call for comments in the order the forms were received. When your name is called, approach the podium, introduce yourself, state your affiliation and give your testimony. Due to time constraints, public comment is limited to three minutes per person or six minutes for an organization or group.



You can also provide written copies of your testimony to be distributed

during the meeting. You can do this by providing the written testimony at least one week prior to the start of the meeting or by handing 40 copies of the testimony to the Council staff either prior to or during your testimony. Oral or written statements should include a brief description of the background and interests of the person testifying.



### Robert's Rules of Order

The Council meeting process generally follows the *Robert's Rules of Order*, rules for parliamentary procedure that were first developed in 1876. Traditionally, the General Counsel serves as the parliamentarian to assist with questions regarding rules of order.

### Motions

During discussion, voting Council members may move to take action. The motion must receive a second by another Council member before a vote is taken. Sometimes Council members will move to amend a motion. An amendment is a suggestion for a change to the main motion. Other times, a Council member may make a substitute motion, which is used to propose action significantly different than the motion on the floor. Amendments may be made to any action on the floor and must be voted on. The main motion, as amended, must receive at least a majority (one over half) to pass.

### Council Decisions

In making its decisions, the Council reviews available information and considers public comments, advisory body recommendations, the National Standards (page 5) and the Council's Guiding Principles (page 9). Decisions must conform to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, Regulatory Flexibility Act and other applicable law, including several executive orders. Final decisions go to the Secretary of Commerce for a second review, public comment and final approval. Regulatory changes may take up to a year or longer to implement, particularly if complex or contentious. Once finalized and approved, they are implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service. Regulations are found in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 665.



## PROCESS FOR MAKING OR CHANGING REGULATIONS

The Council process to make or change regulations involves many stages and includes many steps and opportunities for public input and comment. The Council reviews proposals, options papers, draft amendment documents, National Environmental Policy Act analysis documents, and eventually votes on a preferred alternative, which may become regulations at the end of the process.





## GET INVOLVED, STAY CONNECTED

There are many different reasons to get involved in fishery management, but they all involve being part of the



process. Whether you are a weekend shoreline fisher, a full-time commercial

longliner, a part-time recreational or subsistence fisher, a non-fishing ocean lover or any other interested person—your voice and opinions can be heard by the Council and become part of the decision-making process.

If you are a member of the commercial fishing community or if your business serves recreational fishers, the best reason to get involved is because this is the process that controls your livelihood. By becoming involved you can help shape your future and provide valuable firsthand knowledge and input that the Council will use to make important fishery management decisions.

Becoming involved may mean attending a Council meeting, reading proposed fishery management amendments available on the Council's website or by contacting the Council office, making comments on a proposed action, or being on one of the Council's advisory bodies.

## Learn

The first step to getting involved in the Council process is to learn about the Council, the process and the issues. Learn how the Council system operates. Learn about the context of the problem you are interested in. Some good ways to start include:

- Explore the Council website at **[www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org)**.
- Read the Council newsletter, *Pacific Islands Fishery News*.
- Read other resources about how fisheries management works. *Understanding Fisheries Management<sup>1</sup>* and *Fish or Cut Bait<sup>2</sup>* are two excellent sources targeted to the fishing community.
- Attend a Council, SSC, Plan Team, AP or other advisory group meeting. Upcoming meetings are listed on the Council's website. Full Council meetings occur three times a year, usually in March, June and October. Occasionally there are abbreviated teleconference Council meetings as well.
- Learn about the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the National Standards, which are the backbone to the fishery ecosystem plans and amendments.
- Read Council documents on past or proposed management measures.
- Stay connected to Council activities on Facebook ([facebook.com/wprfmc](https://facebook.com/wprfmc)), Twitter (@wpcouncil), YouTube ([youtube.com/wprfmc](https://youtube.com/wprfmc)) and Vimeo ([vimeo.com/wprfmc](https://vimeo.com/wprfmc)).

Requests for information from the Council may be made at any time through the mail, e-mail, phone or fax.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.olemiss.edu/orgs/SGLC/fisheries.html> to <http://masglp.olemiss.edu/fishman.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.jcnerr.org/education/coastaltraining/fishing/Fish%20or%20Cut%20Bait%20FINAL.pdf>

## Make Your Comments Heard

When providing comments on a proposed management action, be informed and knowledgeable of the law and the proposed action. Comments may be made orally at a Council, SSC or other advisory body meeting. Comments may also be made in writing by regular mail or e-mail during designated comment



periods announced in the *Federal Register* for a specific proposed rule or management action as part of the MSA

process or for on an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. If you wish to comment on a particular proposed action, keep in mind that there are deadlines as part of the Council's decision-making process.

Comments or questions may also be made to the Council at any time on a matter of concern or interest to you.

## Writing Tips

The Council is interested in hearing your opinions and comments on current management issues.

As you write, consider these tips:

- Keep it short. A one-page letter is best. If your letter is too long you run the risk that key points may be overlooked.
- Stick to one subject. If you are writing concerning a FEP amendment that addresses a number of issues, it's okay to comment on all the issues in one letter. However, when writing about separate actions, it's best to write separate letters.
- State your credentials at the beginning. Are you a marine scientist, recreational fisherman, commercial fisherman, etc.? If you are representing a group, provide the name of the group and the size of its membership.
- State your opinion. State the reasons for your opinion and the facts to support it. Be explicit. Don't leave the reader guessing your meaning.





## **Participate**

Interested persons may serve on workgroups or committees. Let the Council chair, a vice chair, executive director or Council staff know about your interest in participating.

## **Can I Make a Difference?**

Absolutely. Your influence on Council decisions is related to the amount of energy you put into being involved. No matter what your level of involvement, your views will have more weight and influence if you learn about the context of the decisions being made, the timeline for the decision-making process, and the best ways to communicate with the Council, its advisory bodies and its staff.

It is also important to keep in mind that Council decisions on fishery management include consideration of many factors as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NEPA, the Endangered Species Act and other laws.



## REFERENCE DESK

### Mailing Lists

Contact the Council office to receive the Council's newsletter, meeting notices and other updates.

### Contact Information

Website:

[www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org)

Mail:

*Western Pacific Regional  
Fishery Management Council  
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813*

Phone: (808) 522-8220

Fax: (808) 522-8226

Email: [info.WPCouncil@noaa.gov](mailto:info.WPCouncil@noaa.gov)

### Internet Resources

**[http://americansamoa.gov/  
department-type/departments/  
marine-wildlife](http://americansamoa.gov/departments/departments-marine-wildlife)**

*American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources* (DMWR) protects and manages the Territory's marine and wildlife resources. It helps formulate policies and guidelines; provides assistance to develop community and government programs; and, through education and regulations, prevents abusive use of natural resources.

**[www.cnmi-dfw.org](http://www.cnmi-dfw.org)**

*CNMI Division of Fish & Wildlife* (DFW) seeks to ensure the long-term survival and sustainability of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island's natural resources for present and future generations. It is involved in research, monitoring, regulation, enforcement, planning and management.

**[www.guamdawr.org](http://www.guamdawr.org)**

*Guam Division of Aquatic & Wildlife Resources* (DAWR) Fisheries Section works to restore, conserve, manage and enhance the aquatic resources in and about Guam and to provide for the public use of and benefits from these resources. Offshore and inshore surveys, fisheries development and conservation education are among its activities.

**<http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dar>**  
*Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources* (DAR) manages the State's marine and freshwater resources. Major program areas aim to maximize commercial fishery and aquaculture productivity, protect native and resident aquatic species and their habitat, and provide facilities and opportunities for recreational fishing. DAR issues Hawaii commercial fishing licenses.

**[www.hawaiiibottomfish.info](http://www.hawaiiibottomfish.info)**

*Hawaii Bottomfish Fishery* is a public information website about management of the Hawaii bottomfish fishery. It is maintained jointly by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management



Council, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources.

**[www.soest.hawaii.edu/pfrp](http://www.soest.hawaii.edu/pfrp)**  
***Pelagic Fisheries Research***

**Program** (PFRP) provides scientific information on pelagic fisheries (generally fish that live in the near-surface waters of the ocean, often far from shore) to the Council for use in development of fisheries management policies. It was established in 1992 after the MSA was amended to include “highly migratory fish.”

**[www.pifsc.noaa.gov](http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov)**  
***NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center*** (PIFSC) administers scientific research and monitoring programs and provides scientific data about the fisheries and related issues to the Council for consideration during its decision-making process. Go here for Western Pacific Fisheries Network (WPacFIN) data collection forms.

**[www.fpir.noaa.gov](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov)**  
***NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office*** (PIRO) coordinates and oversees the processing of proposed and final regulations to implement fishery management plans that are approved by the Secretary

of Commerce. Contact PIRO for compliance guides, federal fishing permit applications and protected species workshops.

**[www.uscg.mil/d14](http://www.uscg.mil/d14)**

***US Coast Guard (USCG) 14th District*** is involved in maritime law (including fisheries enforcement), mariner assistance, and search and rescue, among other duties, in the Western Pacific Region. It operates in international waters as well as US coasts, ports and inland waterways.

**[www.fws.gov/pacific](http://www.fws.gov/pacific)**  
***US Fish and Wildlife Service*** (USFWS) ***Pacific Region*** works with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats. Among its priorities are national wildlife refuges, landscape conservation, migratory birds, and threatened and endangered species.

**[www.wcpfc.int](http://www.wcpfc.int)**  
***Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission*** (WCPFC) is a regional fishery management organization that works to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean. Catch levels recommended by the WCPFC are considered by the Council.

*Additional internet resources can be found on  
the Links page of our website—[www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org)*

## **Important Telephone Numbers**

### ***Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council***

#### ***Hawaii:***

(808) 522-8220

#### ***American Samoa:***

(684) 633-4456

#### ***Guam:***

(671) 735-3955 or 3956

#### ***CNMI:***

(670) 322-9834

### ***American Samoa Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources***

(684) 633-4456

### ***CNMI Division of Fish & Wildlife***

(670) 644-6000

### ***Guam Division of Aquatic & Wildlife Resources***

(671) 735-3955

### ***Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources***

(808) 587-0100

### ***NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center***

Honolulu: (808) 725-5300

Saipan: (670) 234-0006

Guam: (671) 737-0801

### ***NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office***

#### ***Hawaii:***

Main Office: (808) 725-5000

Permits Office: (808) 725-5175

Law Enforcement Office:

(808) 725-6100

#### ***American Samoa:***

Main Office: (684) 633-5598

Law Enforcement Office:

(684) 633-7628

#### ***CNMI:***

Main Office: (670) 234-0004

#### ***Guam:***

Main Office: (671) 646-1904

Law Enforcement Office:

(671) 472-7200

### ***US Coast Guard, 14th District***

Honolulu Office: (800) 331-6176

Command Center (Emergencies):

(808) 535-3333

Enforcement Branch:

(808) 535-3368

Sector Guam:

(671) 355-4910

### ***US Fish and Wildlife Service***

Honolulu: (808) 792-9540

# COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council can point proudly to a 38-year record of sound management.

- Prohibited drift gillnet fishing, bottom trawling and other non-discriminatory and destructive fishing methods throughout the Council's 1.5 million square mile jurisdiction
- Pioneered satellite-monitoring of fishing vessels
- Successfully advocated to include highly migratory fish species, such as tuna, under federal management and ensure that Pacific island fishery resources are managed for the benefit of indigenous people
- Restricted commercial fishing by longlines in areas inhabited by albatross, Hawaiian monk seals and spawning swordfish in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and in areas frequented by non-longline fishing boats near the main Hawaiian Islands and Guam
- Limited entry into the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands bottomfish and lobster fisheries and into the Hawaii- and American Samoa-based longline fisheries
- Required fishing vessels to keep logbooks and carry observers to monitor bycatch and protected species interactions
- Developed the nation's first ecosystem-based FMP, the Coral Reef Ecosystem FMP
- Implemented a sea turtle conservation program that protects nesting beaches and reduces fishery interactions
- Organized international conferences to find ways to develop and share environmentally responsible longline and static net gear for domestic and foreign fleets
- Assisted the United States in hosting four of the seven conferences that led to the first international fishery management treaty for the central and western Pacific, which established the first international fishery commission to oversee migratory fish stocks within the region
- Co-hosted international conferences to reduce the worldwide problem of marine debris
- Organized workshops on ecosystem-based management and on coastal and marine spatial planning as well as meetings and conferences on mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts.
- Expanded the monitoring of recreational fisheries
- Spatially separated large and small vessels in the American Samoa longline and CNMI and Guam bottomfish fisheries



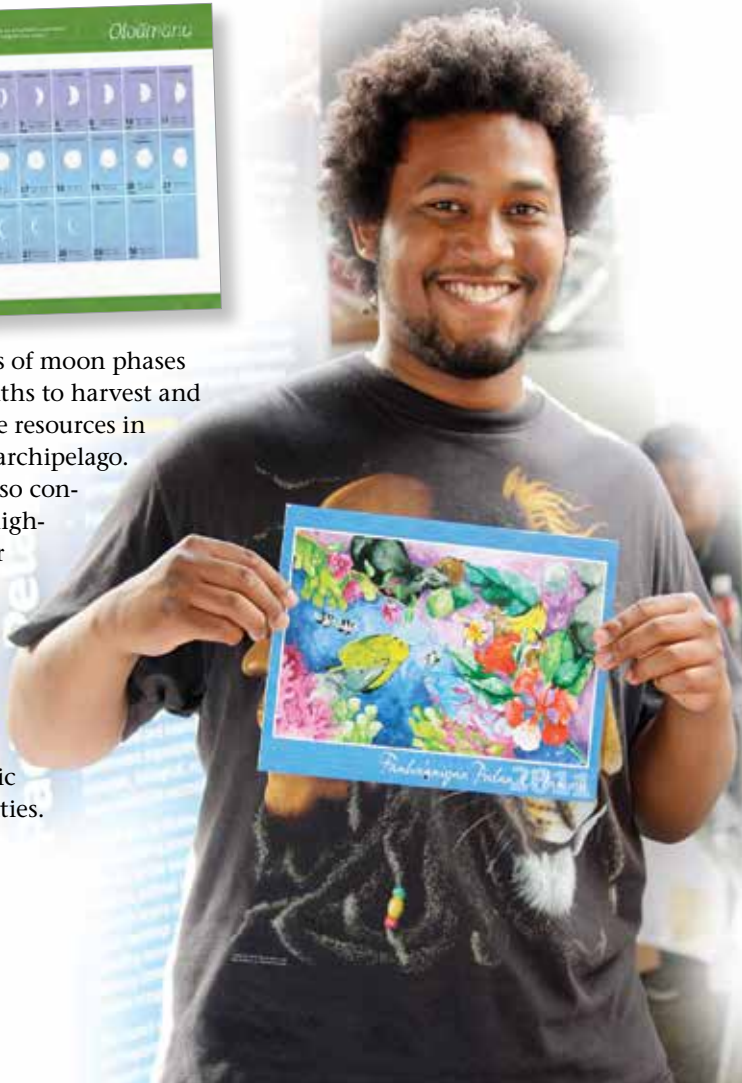
*Ecosystem-based Management of Fisheries  
in the US Pacific Islands*

# OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

To raise public awareness about its Fishery Ecosystem Plans, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council conducts student art contests annually on each of the island areas. The winning posters are featured on calendars that promote Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro and Refaluwasch languages and



traditional uses of moon phases and lunar months to harvest and manage marine resources in the respective archipelago. The Council also conducts annual high-school summer courses as well as teacher and community workshops and participates in a variety of public outreach activities.







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## FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS

### ABC

*Acceptable biological catch*

### ACL

*Annual Catch Limits*

### AP

*Advisory Panel*

### CNMI

*Commonwealth of the  
Northern Mariana Islands*

### CPUE

*Catch Per Unit Effort*

### DAWR

*Guam Division of Aquatic and  
Wildlife Resources*

### DFW

*CNMI Division of Fish  
and Wildlife*

### DMWR

*American Samoa Department of  
Marine and Wildlife Resources*

### DOC

*United States Department of  
Commerce*

### EA

*Environmental Assessment*

### EEZ

*Exclusive Economic Zone*

### EFH

*Essential Fish Habitat*

### EIS

*Environmental Impact  
Statement*

### ESA

*Endangered Species Act*

### F

*Fishing Mortality*

### FAD

*Fish Aggregating Device*

### FEP

*Fishery Ecosystem Plan*

### FFA

*Forum Fisheries Agency*

### FMP

*Fishery Management Plan*

### FWS

*US Fish and Wildlife Service*

### GC

*NOAA General Counsel*

### HAPC

*Habitat Areas of Particular  
Concern*

### HDAR

*Hawaii Division of  
Aquatic Resources*

### IATTC

*Inter-American Tropical  
Tuna Commission*

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**MMPA**

*Marine Mammal  
Protection Act*

**MSA**

*Magnuson-Stevens  
Fishery Conservation and  
Management Act*

**MSY**

*Maximum Sustainable Yield*

**MUS**

*Management Unit Species*

**NEPA**

*National Environmental  
Policy Act*

**NGO**

*Non-Governmental  
Organization*

**NMFS**

*National Marine  
Fisheries Service*

**NOAA**

*National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration*

**OLE**

*NOAA Office for  
Law Enforcement*

**OY**

*Optimum Yield*

**PIRO**

*NMFS Pacific Islands  
Regional Office*

**PIFSC**

*NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries  
Science Center*

**PT**

*Plan Team*

**SPC**

*Secretariat for the Pacific  
Community*

**SSC**

*Scientific and Statistical  
Committee*

**TAC**

*Total Allowable Catch*

**USCG**

*United States Coast Guard*

**VMS**

*Vessel Monitoring System*

**WCPFC**

*Western and Central Pacific  
Fisheries Commission*

**WPACFIN**

*Western Pacific Fisheries  
Information Network*

**WPRFMC**

*Western Pacific Regional Fishery  
Management Council*

**WPSAR**

*Western Pacific Stock  
Assessment Review*



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