



Garapan Fishing Base parking lot—currently the main launching area for CNMI's commercial and non-commercial fishers.

CNMI

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) has a long history of collaborating with the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council to effectively use the Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund (WPSFF). The Council works with local resource management agencies to increase capacity among local fishers and community members and build infrastructure to help commercial and non-commercial fishermen to meet their goals.

Garapan Fishing Base Improvements

The Garapan Fishing Base is one of three active launching areas on Saipan. The Council recently supported the paving of the boat trailer parking lot that can accommodate more than 30 trailers daily. Funds were also used to contract an engineering firm to design the seawall and shoreline revetment. The project is now in the permitting and construction phase. The CNMI plans to develop the location into Saipan's newest marina.

Increased Local Bottomfish Knowledge and Capacity

Over the past two years, the Council and the CNMI have joined to develop

the regional bottomfish fishing knowledge and capacity. The CNMI recognized the potential to develop local fisheries to support the local economy and visitor industry. Monies from the WPSFF were used to provide specialized training and hands-on experience in targeting deep slope bottomfish fishing, fresh fish handling and processing, and commercial fishing vessel maintenance.

The CNMI leased a commercially outfitted vessel configured to target bottomfish, the *Kirida*. The vessel is used to supplement and reinforce information provided through fishery training workshops and well as conduct needed data collection on bottomfish. Additional workshops are planned to provide more opportunities for local fishermen to participate.



CNMI's bottomfish research vessel, the *Kirida*, is used to develop and build capacity within bottomfish fisheries.

American Samoa

The Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund allows the Council to implement projects contained in the three-year American Samoa Marine Conservation Plan (MCP) developed by the governor. Two of the MCP objectives include fisheries development and education and outreach.

Longline Fresh Fish Pilot Project

Diversification of the American Samoa longline fleet operations by delivering fresh fish is the goal of this project. The fishery has experienced a decline due to a number of factors, including increased fuel and operating costs, lower fish prices and declining catch rates. US permit-holding longline owners in American Samoa decided that they would pilot jig fishing/trolling for the South Pacific albacore tuna that they deliver to the cannery.

The American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources is working with the fleet to assist in outfitting vessels with jig fishing equipment. This gear change adds another season of fishing for the fleet. The albacore longline season has historically been from mid-spring through December. The jig fishing season is from fall to spring.

Fishery Outreach Project to Spark Interest in Local Fisheries

The Curriculum and Community Outreach Project is an initiative developed by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's American Samoa Advisory Panel (AP) members with a targeted implementation date of fall 2020. The project aims to address priority areas in need of education and outreach. The project will have two major components—a curriculum integration tool to address the lack of fisheries learning in local schools and an outreach strategy

for providing fisheries information to the general public. The public service announcements (PSAs) and outreach are both designed to get more people interested and active in the local fisheries.

The curriculum portion of the project will involve the AP collaborating with a local video production company to develop a series of short video PSAs. The video series will be titled *Tele I'a O Le Sami*, which translates in Samoan to "many fish in the sea." The American Samoa Visitors Bureau has agreed to support the project and provide the voice and on-camera talent. The talent role will go to the current Miss American Samoa, who works for the Visitors Bureau during the time she holds that title. The 12 PSAs will be interconnected and provide students with a deeper understanding of the economic and cultural importance of the various fisheries in American Samoa, vessel and gear types specific to those fisheries and the people involved:

1. Fishing in Samoa: Traditional Fishing Methods
2. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
3. American Samoa's Tuna Industry: The Backbone of the Economy
4. StarKist Samoa: More Than Just Jobs
5. Longline Fishing in American Samoa: The Only US Albacore Fishery
6. American Samoa's Women in the Fisheries
7. The Alia Fishery: Profit versus Communal Obligation
8. Recreational Fishing: Adventures on the Water in American Samoa
9. Ground Attack: American Samoa's Shore-based Fisheries
10. Pelagic trolling: Big Game Fishing
11. Bottomfish Fishing: What Lies Beneath
12. Youth Movement: American Samoa's Next Batch of Fishers



The American Samoa longline fleet will explore targeting albacore tuna by jig fishing, outfitting vessels with new fishing equipment in time for the season opening in fall 2020.

AP members and the American Samoa Department of Education will host two workshops with assistance from local and federal agencies that make up the Coral Reef Advisory Group. The workshops will introduce the PSAs to teachers from local public and private schools and provide the educators with resource materials they can utilize to integrate the videos into their classroom lesson plans.

The other major component of the project will be an outreach strategy to provide information to the general public about local fisheries and issues that affect American Samoa. The AP has chosen to prioritize educating the public on data collection and the bottomfish fishery. The members will host outreach booths at public events such as fishing tournaments and community festivals (e.g., Earth Day and Coast Weeks) using displays and materials focused on those themes.

The AP will develop several outreach materials in preparation for those events—the first is a display and accompanying brochure entitled "Know Your Fisheries." The AP

members originally developed this theme in 2015 for a large public event at the Fagatogo main port dock. The first version of the material focused on the vessels and gear types of the fisheries as well as key regulations for each. This second version will focus on the socioeconomic benefits of the fisheries. Both the display and brochure will be printed in both English and Samoan. In addition, the AP will create a trivia game. Visitors to the booth will be invited to spin a prize wheel and answer trivia questions about topics such as identification of fish species (English and Samoan names), fish anatomy, fishing gear and vessel types. 🐟



Part of the Council Advisory Panel's education and outreach project will focus on teaching students in American Samoa about fisheries in their region and introducing careers in marine science.