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President Donald Trump signs an executive order to reopen the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument to commercial fishing after speaking at a roundtable discussion with commercial fishermen in Bangor, Maine, June 5, 2020. Associated Press Photo/Patrick Semansky.

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Trump Initiatives Support American Seafood

Two years ago, the cover of the *Pacific Islands Fishery News* focused on decades of federal policy that prioritized ocean protection over the health of the U.S. seafood industry. Driven by well-financed environmental campaigns, this policy culminated in the designation and expansion of four marine national monuments in the Western Pacific and one on the U.S. mainland between 2006 and 2016. Created by Presidential proclamations under the Antiquities Act of 1906, the marine monuments banned commercial fisheries that had been stringently regulated for decades under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the nation's premier law governing U.S. fisheries. The affected fisheries were either entirely lost (such as the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands lobster and bottomfish fisheries) or displaced to compete with foreign fleets on the high seas (such as the Hawai'i and American Samoa longline and U.S. tropical tuna purse-seine fisheries).

Federal policy began the swing back to a more conservative, pro-business approach in April 2017 with President Trump's issuance of Executive Orders 13792 and 13795, directing the Secretaries of the Interior and Commerce to review the nation's national monuments and sanctuaries and to provide recommendations for future actions.

Members of Congress wrote to Trump in November 2017 with recommendations to repeal monument fishing regulations via executive order and to return

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Trump Initiatives CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

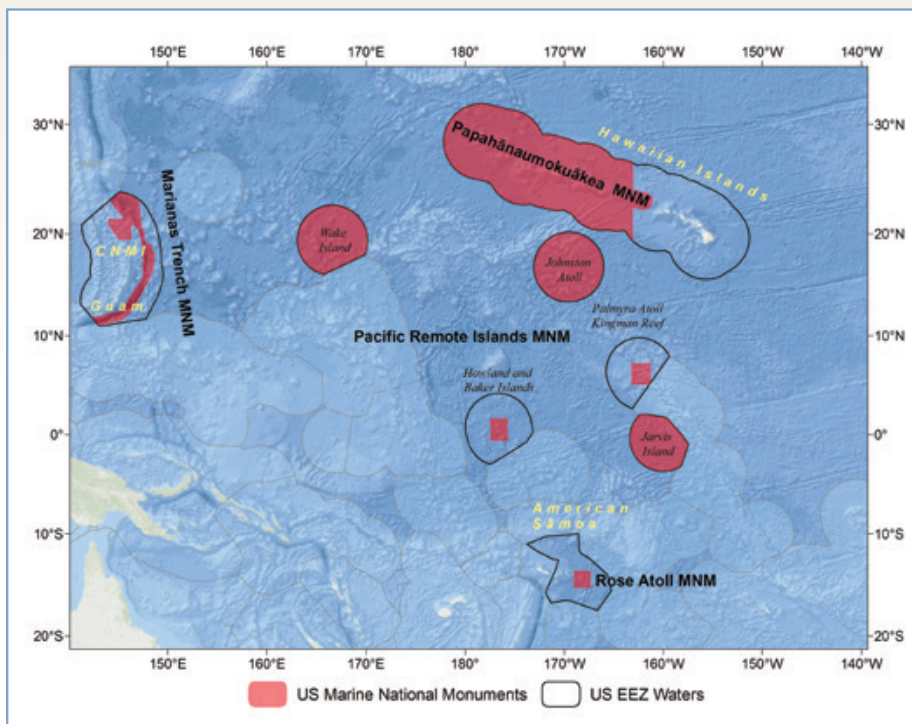
management of fisheries to the nation's regional fishery management councils under the MSA. On Dec. 5, 2017, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke made similar recommendations in his final report summarizing findings of the review of the Antiquities Act designations.

On June 5, 2020, President Trump acted on part of those recommendations, issuing Proclamation 10049 Modifying the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument, the sole marine monument off the U.S. continent, to reopen it to commercial fishing. Covering 4,913 square miles, that monument is less than 0.5% the size of the four marine national monuments in the Western Pacific Region, which engulf 1,186,430 square nautical miles of U.S. waters and submerged lands and account for more than 51% of the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around Hawai'i and the other U.S. Pacific Islands.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council at its 182nd meeting (June 23-25, 2020) directed the Council chair and executive director to send a letter of gratitude to the president for the proclamation as well as his authorization of \$300 million to assist fishery participants affected by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), including \$8.8 million for impacted fisheries in the Western Pacific Region. The letter, sent July 1, acknowledged the proclamation's recognition that "the objects in the monument can be, and are currently, protected pursuant to carefully tailored regulation and management under existing Federal law." The letter also noted that the proclamation says that the MSA "regulates commercial fishing to ensure long-term biological and economic sustainability for our nation's marine fisheries, taking into account the protection of associated marine ecosystems" and establishes regional fishery management councils "that develop fishery management plans to regulate our Nation's fisheries, using the best available science and observing strict conservation and management requirements." The letter concluded with hopes that similar amendments and recognition could be given to the Pacific marine national monuments.

The nation's eight regional fishery management councils have long contended that commercial fishing in all five marine monuments should be reopened and returned to management under the MSA. Their latest communique regarding this was addressed to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross May 29, 2020, in response to Trump's Executive Order 13921 on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth. The purpose of the order, announced May 7, is to remove outdated and unnecessarily burdensome regulations; strengthen efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; improve transparency and efficiency of environmental reviews; and renew focus on long-term strategic planning to facilitate aquaculture projects. The order also established an Interagency Seafood Trade Task Force (Seafood Trade Task Force) to further fair and reciprocal international trade in seafood products.

Signed by the chairs of all eight councils, the letter said, "At a time when our nation's fisheries are experiencing the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) believes that immediate action to support American fisheries is urgently needed. Therefore, we would like to collectively reiterate several of our previous points and recommendations regarding marine national monuments and the unintended consequences for our nation's fisheries." Among the points made were the following:



- Decisions to close areas of the U.S. EEZ through statutory authority such as the Antiquities Act may not take into account MSA requirements to achieve optimum yield from the nation's fishery resources and may negatively impact jobs and recreational opportunities.
- Authorities such as the Antiquities Act do not require a robust process or science-based environmental analyses.
- Marine monument designations can be counterproductive as they may shift fishing effort to less sustainable practices that are not regulated by the United States.
- The ban on commercial fishing with the marine national monument water is a regulatory burden on domestic fisheries, requiring many of the affected American fishermen to travel outside U.S. waters with increased operational expenses and higher safety-at-sea risks.
- There is no peer-reviewed literature that demonstrates a conservation benefit of the monument fishing restrictions to

the highly migratory stocks that are targeted.

- Marine national monument designations in their present form hinder the Council's ability to sustainably manage fisheries throughout their range and restrict the Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) from acquiring invaluable knowledge about the stocks and the marine ecosystem made available through catch-and-effort and observer data.

The letter concluded, "Given the urgency of the threats facing our nation and its fisheries, we hope you will continue to support our nation's fisheries and fishing communities by encouraging the President to restore management of fishing throughout the U.S. EEZ, including the marine national monument waters, to the Councils and the Secretary of Commerce as implemented by the MSA."

Two other Trump initiatives announced in 2020 also bode well for American fisheries. Executive Order 13924 on Regulatory Relief to

Support Economic Recovery notes that "it is the policy of the United States to combat the economic consequences of COVID-19 with the same vigor and resourcefulness with which the fight against COVID-19 has been waged." The May 19 order directs agency heads to address this economic emergency by rescinding, modifying, waiving or providing exemptions from regulations, standards and other requirements that may inhibit economic recovery.

On July 16, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) published a final rule updating regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The final rule establishes a presumptive two-year time limit for environmental impact statements and a presumptive one-year time limit for environmental assessments as well as presumptive page limits for both documents. Among other accomplishments, the final rule also avoids redundant documentation by facilitating use of documents required by other statutes or prepared by State, Tribal and local agencies. The new regulations are effective Sept. 14, 2020.

The Western Pacific Council and others have long contended that NEPA requirements duplicate in large part the process for federal fisheries decision-making under the MSA.

"Each action by the Council to establish or amend fishery management plans is subject to NEPA," notes Council Executive Director Kitty M. Simonds. "The Council looks forward to working with CEQ and NMFS on the initiatives by the Trump Administration to support U.S. seafood including application of the functional equivalency provision of the final rule on NEPA to the MSA fishery management process."

Highlights from 182nd Council Meeting, June 23-25, 2020

AMERICAN SAMOA BOTTOMFISH STOCK REBUILDING

American Samoa bottomfish has been determined recently by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to be overfished and subject to overfishing. The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management



The American Samoa bottomfish fishery is a small-boat, daytime fishery that targets both shallow and deep waters, mostly nearshore.

Council has two years to develop and implement a rebuilding plan for the stock in federal waters. Bottomfish habitat maps suggest that the majority occurs in waters 0 to 3 miles offshore under jurisdiction of the Territory.

An interim measure, proposed at the 180th Council meeting in October 2019, would allow only 13,000 pounds of bottomfish to be caught in one year from both federal and territorial waters,

after which the bottomfish fishery in federal waters would be shut down. The average annual catch from 2013 to 2017 has been 21,139 pounds. The Council will work with its Scientific and Statistical Committee and the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) to explore other management options, such as area management and including cultural harvest at the offshore banks for deep-water snappers, to address the overfished status. The Council also requested that the NMFS Pacific Islands Fishery Science Center (PIFSC) prioritize the development of a fishery-independent survey in American Samoa to improve understanding of the stock.

To improve the collection of data in the American Samoa bottomfish fishery, the Council directed its staff to work with its local fishermen advisors to identify ways the members can assist with training fishermen on using a self-reporting data app. The Council also requested that the American Samoa DMWR

work with the governor's Fisheries Task Force to address issues with data collection that have led to the current poor stock status and to coordinate with the Council and NMFS PIFSC to develop a strategy to address those issues.

The Council also recommended that PIFSC coordinate with the Council and the American Samoa DMWR to determine viable logistic solutions to continue the NMFS research cruises to American Samoa that PIFSC Director Mike Seki reported have been canceled due to COVID-19. The Council also directed the Archipelagic Plan Team to account for the impacts of COVID-19 to the fisheries by noting these impacts in the annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Report for 2020.

The Council also directed its staff to explore the creation of sectors in the American Samoa bottomfish fishery that would separate the species complex between the nearshore bottomfish fishery and the offshore deep-water snapper fishery.



For decades, traditional wooden hand-cranked reels have been used by American Samoa bottomfish fishermen, including most alia fishermen, since modern fiberglass rods and electric reels are expensive and not readily available.

SEA TURTLE MANAGEMENT MEASURES

While the Magnuson-Stevens Act is the nation's preeminent fisheries legislation, the region's fisheries are often managed to meet other legislation, such as the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act. Under the ESA, NMFS develops a biological opinion (BiOp) to evaluate whether a federally managed fishery jeopardizes the continued existence of species listed as threatened or endangered. If the fishery is likely to jeopardize species, NMFS must implement reasonable and prudent alternatives (RPAs) to avoid jeopardizing the species. If the fishery is not likely to jeopardize species, NMFS must implement reasonable and prudent measures (RPMs) to minimize impacts of any incidental take by the fishery. Currently, NMFS is developing BiOps and considering RPMs or RPAs for the Hawai'i deep-set longline fishery, which targets bigeye tuna, and for the American Samoa longline fishery, which targets South Pacific albacore tuna. Of particular concern is the Hawai'i fleet's interaction with leatherback and loggerhead sea turtles. These RPMs in the past have required the shallow-set longline fishery to close after interacting with 16 leatherback turtles, even if they were released alive.

The Council recommended that NMFS in drafting any RPMs consider the ongoing impacts from COVID-19 on these U.S. fisheries and should not create additional regulatory or economic burdens on them. For example, the revenue for the Hawai'i fishery dipped to about 20% its historic levels soon after COVID-19 related measures that essentially closed restaurants, shut down the tourism industry and reduced air traffic to the point that transshipment of locally caught fish to the U.S. mainland was not feasible. The Council noted that this recommendation is consistent with the president's recent Executive Order 13921 on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth and his Executive Order 13924 on Regulatory Relief to Support Economic Recovery.

The Council also asked that NMFS consider the impact of the U.S. fisheries on the protected species populations compared to the impact on the populations by foreign fisheries (see page 8).

The Council also recommended that drafting of the RPMs place priority on improving handling and release methods to improve post-hooking survival rates and on creating industry-led incentives to report and reduce impacts. 🐟

Uncertainty in the seafood market had many of Hawai'i's commercial longline vessels tied up at the pier during the COVID-19 pandemic.





Council Addresses Presidential Order on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth

On May 7, 2020, President Donald Trump issued Executive Order (EO) 13921 that aims to enhance economic growth in the seafood industry by addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; remove burdensome regulations on fishing; enhance implementation of aquaculture; and create an Interagency Seafood Trade Task Force.

At its June 2020 meeting, the Council addressed two sections of the EO.

In Section 4 of the EO, the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils were specifically tasked to submit a prioritized list of actions to reduce burdens on domestic fishing and increase production within sustainable fisheries. The recommended actions could include

changes to regulations, guidance, policies and other similar agency actions. The Council members discussed issues in the Western Pacific Region including restrictions on fishing access to U.S. waters due to Marine National Monuments; closure of the Southern Exclusion Zone off Hawai'i for false killer whale interactions; prohibition of interstate commerce for billfish and exports to foreign countries; the Council's recusal policy; and a re-evaluation of National Standard 1 guidelines for data-limited stocks. The Council directed staff to work with its Scientific and Statistical Committee working group and Executive Committee to develop and finalize the prioritized actions addressing these issues, which is due to the



Foreign-sourced fishery products such as tuna are often gassed with carbon monoxide as a preservative to promote color retention, which is a known seafood safety concern.

Secretary of Commerce by Nov. 3.

The Council will vote on the final list at its September meeting.

Section 11 of the EO directed the Task Force to provide recommendations to the Office of the

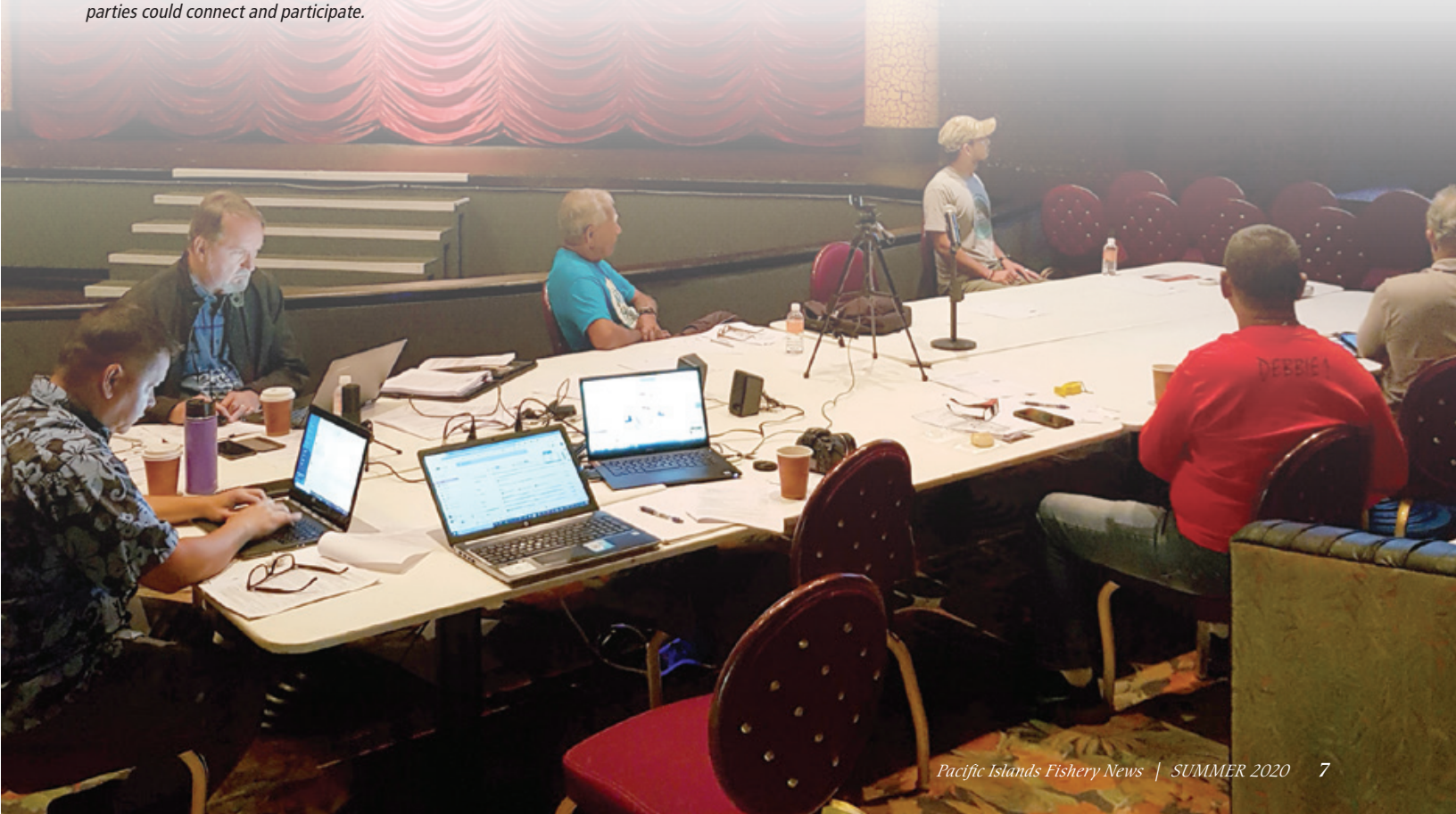
United States Trade Representative in preparation for a comprehensive interagency seafood trade strategy that identify opportunities to improve access to foreign markets through policy and negotiations, resolve technical barriers to U.S. seafood exports and support fair market access for U.S. seafood products. To address this directive, the Council recommended that the Task Force evaluate all impacts of foreign-sourced fishery products on domestic fisheries and markets. The evaluation should include products specific to Hawai'i and Guam with known seafood safety concerns such as carbon-monoxide gassed tuna. The issue is even more critical for U.S. Pacific Islands where "cheaper" tuna and tuna-like products are harvested by fisheries that do not meet

typical U.S. fishery standards. This process creates an illusion of product freshness and can create deleterious health risks to the unsuspecting members of the public.

The Council also recommended re-negotiating the Compact of Free Association to include stipulations for strengthening cooperation with U.S. fishery interests, relaxing restrictions on exporting U.S. products and preventing products supplied by illegal/unregulated foreign fisheries from entering U.S. markets. The Council requested that the Task Force include representatives of the Council Coordination Committee in its activities. Recommendations to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative from the Task Force co-chairs were due Aug. 5 and then to the president by Nov. 3. 🐟



The main Council office in Honolulu (above) has become the hub to host virtual meetings conducted via web conference such as the Council Coordination Committee meeting in May 2020. For the Council meeting in June, American Samoa, Guam and CNMI (below) organized host sites where Council members and other interested parties could connect and participate.



The International Context: Relative Impact of Hawai'i, American Samoa Longline Fisheries on Sea Turtles

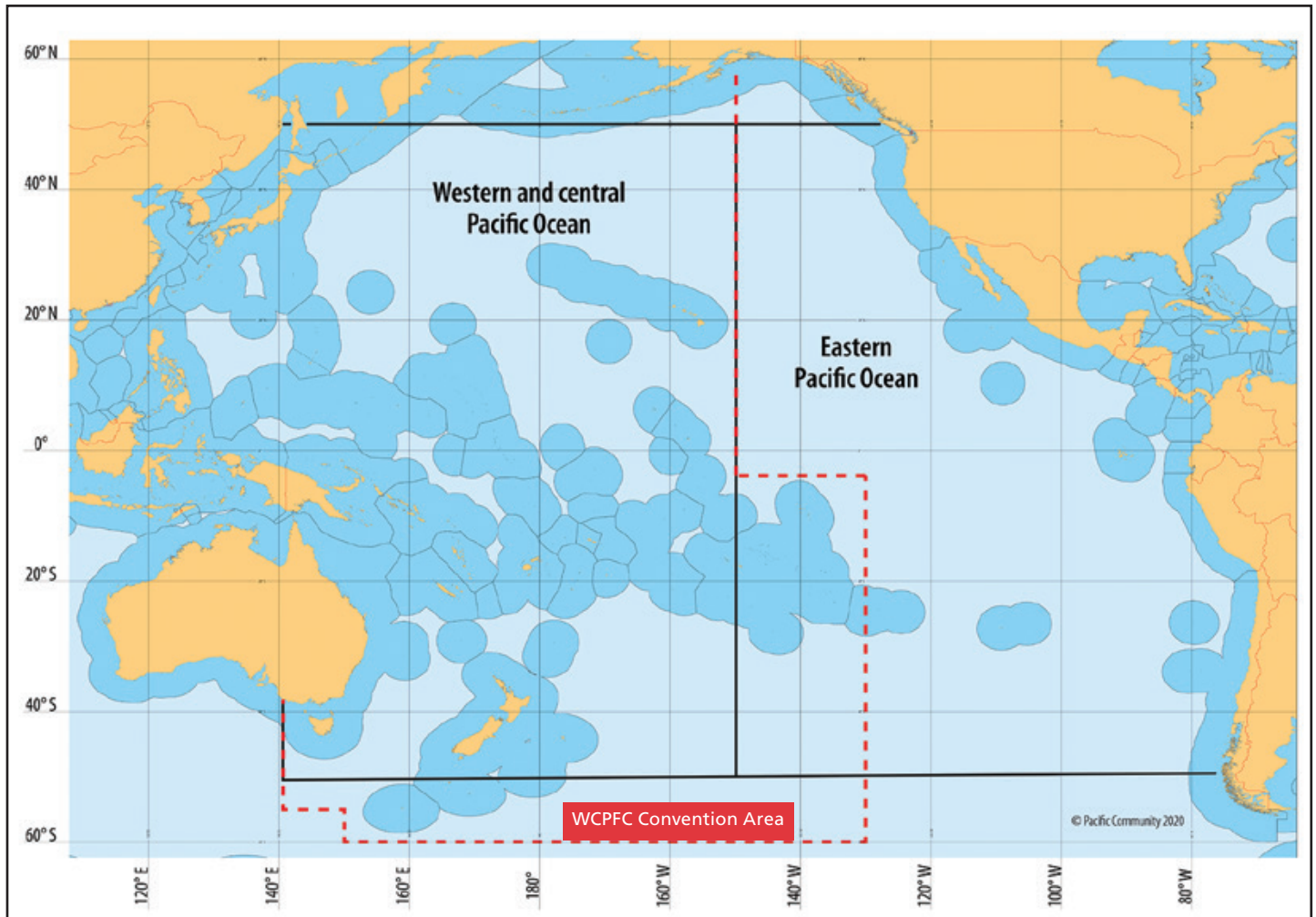


Figure 1. Map showing the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Convention Area in the Pacific Ocean, outlined in red. Image courtesy of the Pacific Community.

How many loggerhead and leatherback sea turtles are impacted by longline fisheries in the Pacific? This is an important conservation question in understanding the impact of Hawai'i and American Samoa longline fisheries on these turtle populations, and how to manage the fisheries in response.

The question is also a difficult one to answer without good data on all fisheries operating throughout the Pacific. The Hawai'i shallow-set longline fishery targeting swordfish has 100% federal observer coverage, which means that every sea turtle accidentally hooked or entangled in the fishery is recorded. The Hawai'i deep-set longline fishery targeting bigeye tuna and American Samoa longline fishery targeting albacore tuna have approximately 20% coverage (i.e., approximately one in every five trips will be assigned an observer), with a vessel selection methodology that allows scientists at the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center to generate a reliable estimate of total interactions for each year.

In contrast, most other nations' longline fleets operating in the Pacific are striving for 5% coverage agreed to at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), with varying levels of coverage in space and time. The low observer coverage rate, combined with the patchy nature of the coverage, add to the challenge of estimating the total number of sea turtle interactions throughout the Pacific.

The first WCPFC Convention Area-wide estimates of the total number of sea turtle interactions in pelagic longline fisheries using available observer data were generated in 2018. The Convention Area includes the waters around Hawai'i with the eastern cutoff at 150° W longitude (just outside of the eastern extent of the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around Hawai'i) and the U.S. EEZ around American Samoa (see Figure 1). The authors of the report acknowledge the data limitations, especially in areas north of 10° N (which includes Hawai'i), and note that their estimates are not

likely to be robust because of large areas with limited observer coverage. They also believe their estimates may overestimate overall sea turtle catches, based on comparison of data with other studies.

Notwithstanding the data limitations, these first WCPFC Convention Area-wide estimates provide a sense of magnitude of sea turtle interactions in the wider Pacific region. The estimates show that on average, the Hawai'i and American Samoa longline fisheries each account for 1% or less of total interactions in pelagic longline fisheries operating in the region (see Table 1). For example, in 2015, the total number of leatherback turtle interactions in the Convention Area was estimated at 1,865, while the interactions in the Hawai'i deep-set, shallow-set and American Samoa longline fisheries were 18 (1.0% of total), 22 (1.2% of total) and 5 (0.27%), respectively.

Loggerhead and leatherback turtle populations are also impacted by fisheries other than pelagic longline fisheries, such as coastal and artisanal fisheries in Mexico and East and Southeast Asia. However, data on interactions in fisheries outside of pelagic longline fisheries are even more limited than those for longline fisheries and the full extent of impacts are unknown. Turtle populations also endure impacts at nesting beaches and adjacent areas, including habitat degradation and direct take of

eggs and adults.

The Hawai'i and American Samoa longline fisheries are some of the most highly regulated longline fisheries in the world. Vessels that operate in these fisheries are required to follow a suite of measures to reduce interactions with protected species, such as gear requirements and spatial management measures, and carry tools to release turtles and other protected species to increase the chances of survival after the interaction. These U.S. fisheries are also monitored at high levels through observers, logbooks and vessel monitoring systems. Data from these fisheries contribute significantly to the understanding of the overall impacts of fisheries across the Pacific. 🐟

Sources:

Peatman T, et al. 2018b. Summary of longline fishery bycatch at a regional scale, 2003-2017 Rev 3 (15 April 2019). WCPFC Scientific Committee 14th Regular Session. WCPFC-SC14-2018/ST-WP-03. Busan, Republic of Korea 8-16 August 2018. 61 p. www.wcpfc.int/node/31016.

WPRFMC, 2020. Annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Report Pacific Island Pelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plan 2019. Remington T, Fitchett M, Ishizaki A, DeMello J (eds.) Honolulu, Hawaii: WPRFMC. 371 pp. + appendices. www.wpcouncil.org/annual-reports.

Leatherback Turtle Interactions (WCPFC Convention Area)

Year	Estimated median interaction with all WCPFC longline fleets	Hawai'i deep-set longline		American Samoa longline		Hawai'i shallow-set longline	
		Estimated total	% of WCPFC estimate	Estimated total	% of WCPFC estimate	Total observed	% of WCPFC estimate
2003-2017 annual range	617-2,154	0-38	0-2.1	0-22	0-1.2	1-16	0.1-0.9
Average	1,601	11	0.7	5	0.3	7	0.4

(WCPFC Convention Area, North of 10° N)

Year	Estimated median interaction with all WCPFC longline fleets	Hawai'i deep-set longline		Hawai'i shallow-set longline	
		Estimated total	% of WCPFC estimate	Total observed	% of WCPFC estimate
2003-2017 annual range	34-2,636	0-12	0-2.2	0-21	0-3.8
Average	1,084	3	0.1	10	1.0

Table 1. Comparison of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Convention Area estimates of leatherback and loggerhead turtle interactions in longline fisheries with estimates for the Hawai'i and American Samoa longline fisheries. The comparison for loggerhead turtles is shown only for north of 10° N, where Hawai'i longline fisheries and the North Pacific loggerhead turtle population overlap, because loggerhead turtles have not been observed interacting with the American Samoa longline fishery.

Annual Reports on 2019 US Pacific Fisheries Now Available

The 2019 annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) reports for the Hawai'i, American Samoa and Mariana Archipelagos, Pacific Pelagic and Pacific Remote Islands Areas were released June 30, 2020. The assembly of the annual SAFE reports was a collaborative effort of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Hawai'i Division

fisheries in 2019 are given in Table 1. Hawai'i commercial fisheries landed a combined 36.5 million pounds of pelagic fish species in 2019, mostly from deep-set longline fishing, that generated a total of over \$105.6 million ex-vessel value (value at the docks). Though Hawai'i had an increasing trend from 2010 to 2015, total catch and effort has been relatively consistent and stable since then. Conversely, the American

slightly decreasing in the early 2010s before steadily increasing over the past four years. Total estimated pelagic fish catches in Guam by the trolling fishery have also had wide year-to-year fluctuations over the past decade, but have generally increased.

While pelagic fisheries in the Western Pacific Region tend to land more fish (by weight) than bottomfish fisheries, bottomfish are still important both economically and culturally. Catch and revenue for each of the bottomfish fisheries in 2019 are presented in Table 2. Generally, catches for Deep-7 bottomfish in Hawai'i have been declining since their peak in 1987. Catches were relatively stable throughout the early 2000s but, more recently, have decreased each year since 2014. The recent decline in catch is likely due to a decrease in the number of good weather days for fishing. Catches of *uku* (grey snapper) in Hawai'i also peaked in the late 1980s before returning to normal levels in the early 1990s.

Table 1. 2019 catch and revenue for each of the pelagic fisheries in the Western Pacific Region.

Island Area	Fishery	2019 Catch (lbs)	2019 Revenue (\$)
Hawai'i	Deep-set longline	31,955,471	92,860,837
	Shallow-set longline	837,848	1,968,942
	Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) trolling	2,460,396	7,229,327
	MHI handline	675,244	2,151,912
	Offshore handline	469,834	1,017,564
	Other gears	131,025	348,851
American Samoa	Longline	2,976,794	3,889,222
	Trolling	20,479	37,710
CNMI	Trolling	466,269	464,101
Guam	Trolling	840,332	312,708

Note: Data for 2019 landings and revenues are based on commercial reports and/or creel survey expansions. Landings and revenues generated from creel survey data are estimates.

of Aquatic Resources and local agencies in each of the U.S. Pacific Territories (i.e., Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands [CNMI]). The reports summarize annual fishery performance, including trends in catch, effort and catch rates, in addition to describing several ecosystem considerations, such as climate, socioeconomics and protected species. This information is crucial for managing sustainable fisheries, ensuring a consistent supply of fish to meet demand, as well as mitigating potential issues in fishery operations.

Pelagic fisheries managed by the Council in the Western Pacific Region include large pelagic species such as tunas and billfishes harvested by longlining, trolling, handlining, and other gear types. Catch and revenue for each of the pelagic

Table 2. 2019 catch and revenue for each of the bottomfish fisheries in the Western Pacific Region.

Island Area	Fishery	2019 Catch (lbs)	2019 Revenue (\$)
Hawai'i	Deep-7 bottomfish stock complex	180,708	1,338,295
	<i>Uku</i> (grey snapper)	89,836	417,943
American Samoa	Boat-based bottomfish	11,093	5,708
CNMI	Boat-based bottomfish	21,012	95,801
Guam	Boat-based bottomfish	37,701	n.d.

Note: Data for 2019 landings and revenues are based on commercial reports and/or creel survey expansions. Landings and revenues generated from creel survey data are estimates. Not all catch shown was sold. "n.d." indicates that data were not disclosed due to rules regarding data confidentiality. Data obtained from fewer than three sources are considered confidential and are not able to be reported.

Samoa pelagic fisheries, dominated by the longline fishery, have shown a continued decline over the past decade to an all-time low of nearly 3 million pounds in 2019 and the economic outlook of the fishery continues to worsen. In the CNMI, total estimated pelagic fish catches by the trolling fishery have been mostly variable over the last decade,

Since then, *uku* catches have increased overall despite a slight decrease in 2019. The American Samoa boat-based bottomfish catch estimates have been variable over the course of available data, ranging from just a few thousand pounds to nearly 35,000 pounds annually. However, recent estimates show that bottomfish catch has been declining every year since 2015. In the CNMI,

Table 3. Annual catch limits (ACLs) for Hawai'i management unit species compared to average catch from 2017-2019 for uku and crustaceans. Catch for Deep-7 bottomfish is only shown for the 2019 fishing year.

Fishery	MUS	ACL (lbs)	Catch (lbs)	Portion of ACL caught (%)
Bottomfish	Deep-7 bottomfish stock complex	492,000	180,708	36.7
	Uku (grey snapper)	127,205	98,770	77.6
Crustacean	Deep-water shrimp	250,773	n.d.	–
	Kona crab	3,500	3,436	98.2

Note: "n.d." indicates that data were not disclosed due to rules regarding data confidentiality. Data obtained from fewer than three sources are considered confidential and are not able to be reported.

boat-based catch estimates for bottomfish have varied over the past two decades and have shown a slight declining trend over the past decade. Estimated boat-based catches of bottomfish in Guam have been relatively stable over time but hit a low in 2015 before beginning to rebound.

Annual catch limits (ACL) are used as the primary tool to manage non-pelagic management unit species (MUS) fisheries in the Western Pacific



Bottomfish caught in American Samoa.

Region. Catches are tracked against the ACLs and are reported in the annual SAFE reports. In Hawai'i, there are ACLs for bottomfish, crustaceans and precious corals, while the American Samoa and Mariana Archipelagos have ACLs for bottomfish only. Coral reef fish species used to have ACLs specified, but these species were recently re-classified and are now monitored as ecosystem component species (ECS). Based on the 2019 catch data for Deep-7 bottomfish and average catch values from 2017 to 2019 for uku and crustaceans, Hawai'i did not exceed any of its specified ACLs for 2019 (see Table 3). There were no bottomfish ACLs specified for American Samoa, Guam or the CNMI in 2019 due to a

recent bottomfish stock assessment that presented new information and changed the stock statuses for Guam and American Samoa.

Several different indicators of current and changing climate and related oceanic conditions in the Pacific are also presented in the annual SAFE reports to provide fishing communities, resource managers and businesses with climate-related situational awareness. For example, information on atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration, oceanic pH and the status of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation are among the parameters provided (see Table 4). These climate and oceanic variables may affect marine systems and ultimately the productivity or catchability of managed fish stocks. Comparing changes in the ocean environment to variability in fishery performance is an area of active research.

This article highlights only a small portion of the information available in the annual SAFE reports. New

Table 4. Summary of recent trends for climate and oceanic indicators.

Parameter	Recent trend
Atmospheric carbon dioxide	↗
Oceanic pH	↘ (more acidic)
El Niño	Neutral
Tropical storms	Average
Sea surface temperature	↗
Sea level	↗

aspects of the reports this year include data summaries for ECS, a review of crustacean habitat in Hawai'i and Guam and fish biomass



Tuna caught by the Hawai'i longline fleet for sale at the Honolulu Fish Auction.

estimates by trophic and functional group in each Pacific Island area. Full reports are available on the Council's website at www.wpcouncil.org/ annual-reports. The reports will soon be available through the Council's online portal for the annual SAFE reports (www.wpcouncildata.org) that makes navigation easier and allows readers to directly download the reported data. 🐟

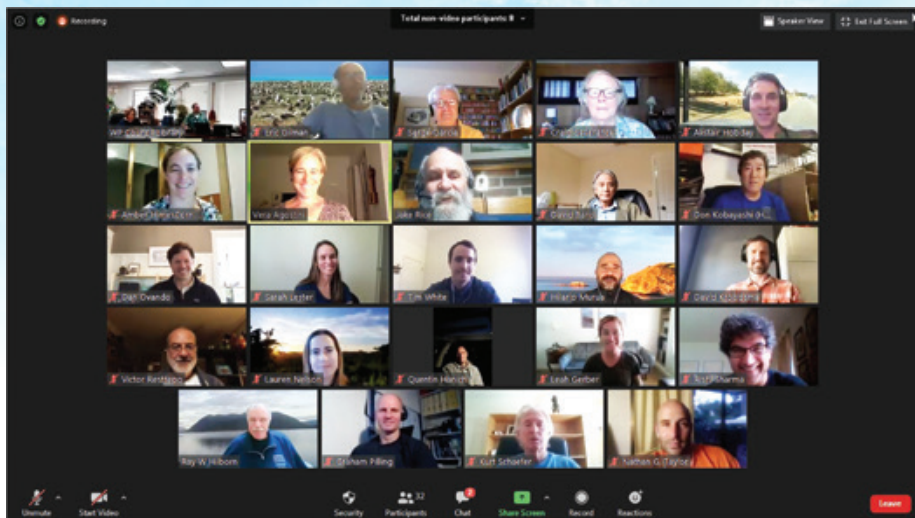
Management Unit Species

(MUS) - Stocks considered to be part of a federal fishery that require conservation and management and are predominantly caught in federal waters. These stocks are managed collaboratively by the Council and NMFS.

Ecosystem Component Species

(ECS) - Stocks included in a fishery ecosystem plan that are monitored to achieve ecosystem management objectives but do not require conservation and management. In early 2019, NMFS issued a rule that reclassified certain MUS as ECS.

Council Hosts Unique, Virtual International Workshop on Area-Based Management of Blue Water Fisheries



International and national fishery science and management experts participate remotely in the June 15-17, 2020, area-based management of blue water fisheries workshop.

Thirty-four fishery science and management experts from around the globe convened virtually for the International Workshop on Area-Based Management of Blue Water Fisheries. The workshop, held June 15-17, 2020, was a first step toward the development of a “Roadmap to Effective Area-Based Management of Blue Water Fisheries.” Participants hailed from academic institutions, environmental non-governmental organizations, regional fishery management organizations and other international agencies. It was co-chaired by Dr. Ray Hilborn, University of Washington professor and member of the Council’s Science and Statistical Committee, and Dr. Vera Agostini of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

The overarching workshop objective was to develop science-based guidelines for managers to identify objectives and practical and effective approaches to employ area-based management measures as part of governance frameworks for natural resources in blue water ecosystems.

After several deliberations, the workshop participants collectively agreed that two papers will emerge: a science-policy paper that will focus on addressing governance issues and a roadmap document.

Area-based management has become an international focal point for fisheries management with many organizations proposing some form of protected area in 30% of the ocean by 2030. Stakeholders and leading scientists caution for clear planning on the use of area-based management tools (ABMTs) in blue water ecosystems rather than strictly opportunistic or “set it and forget it” implementation. Highly migratory fish movements are dynamic and their distributions often change, so planning is critical for ABMT implementation. The workshop and resulting documents will address emerging issues in governance in national waters and in areas beyond national jurisdiction (i.e., high seas waters).

Workshop contributors addressed application of ABMT for fishery

management pertaining to sustainable food production (local and global), employment (local and global), economic health and welfare, communities and culture, protected species or interactions with non-target species, ecosystem structure and function, and resilience to climate change and other stressors. Participants commented that ABMT objectives need to have associated performance metrics and research to address knowledge gaps.

The participants agreed that simply closing large sections of the ocean is not a silver bullet for managing blue water fisheries and their ecosystems and that marine protected areas (MPAs) are merely a single element within the tool box of area-based management. “Area-based management tools are not exclusively MPAs or closures,” Hilborn noted.

ABMTs may be static in nature (i.e., have a fixed spatial delineation) or dynamic, whereby portions of the ecosystem closed to fishing can change in space and time. With rapidly emerging technologies to collect data and monitor fisheries, area-based management can be adaptive and precise in its implementation but needs to be linked to empirical evidence and research. Economic, cultural and social objectives need to be considered thoroughly prior to implementation of area-based management and industry engagement is critical, the participants agreed. Alternative management measures should be explored and evaluated alongside considerations of any area-based management measures, including take and no-take MPAs. 🐟

FADs Return to the CNMI

After waiting for two years, fishermen within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) can once again enjoy the advantages of catching fish around fish aggregating devices (FADs).

CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife's (DFW) Fishery Section Supervisor Michael Tenorio explained that many challenges exist when deploying and maintaining FADs in the ocean, such as adequate supplies, a suitable vendor and developing systems that are able to withstand severe weather.



FAD loaded and ready for deployment. Photo courtesy of Michael Tenorio, CNMI DFW.

FADs often break loose during rough weather or storms. The first major loss of FADs in the CNMI occurred due to Typhoon Soudelor in August 2015. During the summer of 2018, DFW deployed a new set of FADs that disappeared after Super Typhoon Yutu. The only ones active after that time were located off Rota.

DFW began deploying new FADs in May 2020, funded through the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Program. Currently, nine buoys are in place with two more scheduled for deployment once materials have been acquired and rigging is completed. 🐟

FAD LL was deployed in spring 2020 northwest of Saipan in the CNMI. Photo courtesy of Michael Tenorio, CNMI DFW.

MAP OF FAD LOCATIONS

This map is not intended for navigational use.

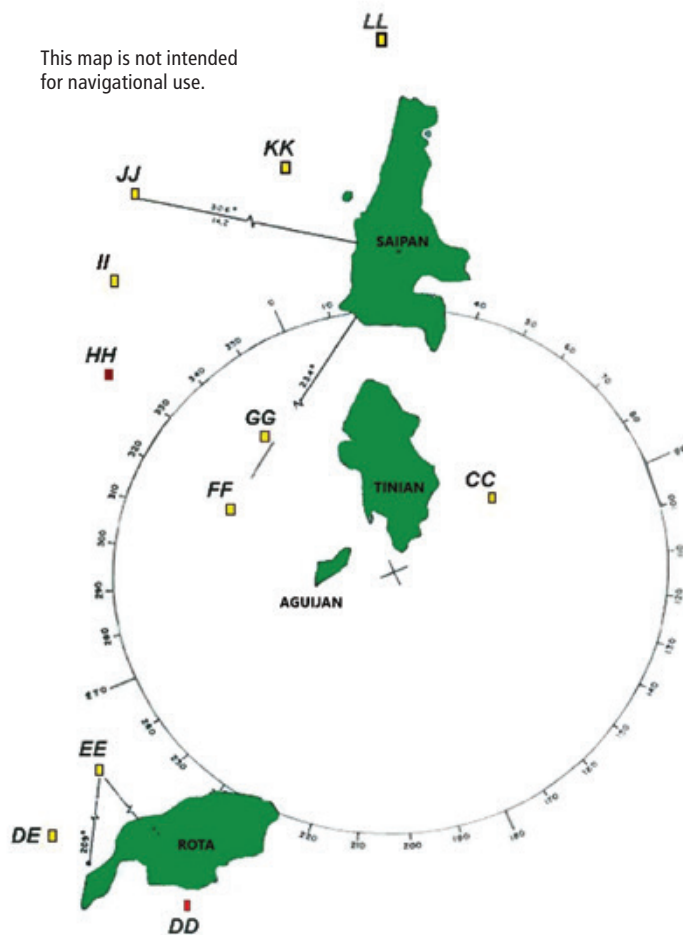
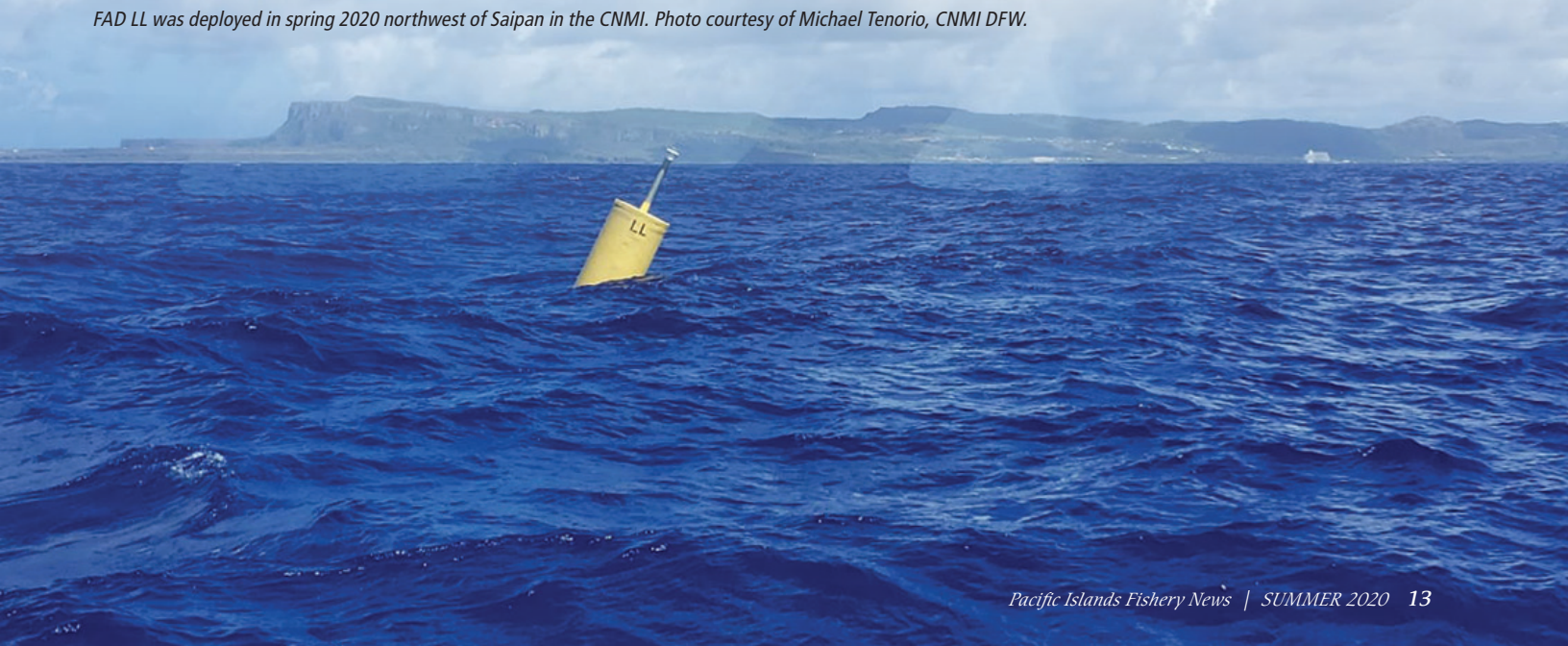


Figure 1: Illustration of FAD locations in the CNMI. Present FADs are depicted in yellow. Missing FADs are marked red.





Most charter fishing boats in the CNMI have remained at the dock due to travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Businesses Struggle, Forced to Adapt Due to COVID-19 Safety Measures

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone in different ways. Council member Monique Amani, co-owner of Mosa's Joint restaurant in Guam, provides her perspective.

Since mid-March, Guam's economy has declined sharply. While many businesses were forced to close temporarily, some businesses—including restaurants—were deemed essential. Even though we were never forced to close entirely, our restaurant saw a large decrease in revenue. During the first attempt to slow the increase in COVID-19 cases, the Guam government cut our seating capacity from 100% to 50%. Two weeks later we were required to provide takeaway orders only, reducing our revenue to about 25%. Although we received the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan through the U.S. federal government, it was strictly to cover employees' salaries, power and other utilities. The PPP loan was meant to last eight weeks, so during that time we brought back our employees full time.

At the same time, the sale of pelagic fish has decreased dramatically while supply of bottomfish has largely increased. This is a challenge for a restaurant known for its fresh pelagic fish. Normally 90% of the fish we buy from local fisherman are pelagic species such as *mahimahi*, wahoo, yellowfin tuna or marlin. Once in a while we buy *onaga* (a deep sea red snapper) or *monchong*, but in the past it's been rare. Since the

quarantines imposed due to COVID-19, not many fishermen are selling pelagic fish; if they are catching them, it's only a few pieces and the fishermen would rather keep them for their family and friends. Currently, we have only been able to buy bottomfish.

I have also found that many more people are fishing [than before mid-March]. Every time we take our boat out, we see many more fishermen trolling and bottom fishing, spear fishing, using rod and reels and throwing *talaya* (net). You would think that this would bring in more fish to the market but it hasn't. Before COVID-19, we would usually have two or three different types of local fish on our menu; now we are lucky to have one. Many fishermen have voiced their opinion that the decline in fish landings is from the lack of fish aggregating devices we have in Guam's waters. There are four or five online now, but initially there were 16. Fishermen have said that fish no longer hang around close to the island but just keep moving, so now they have to fish twice as long and go twice as far to catch the same amount of fish or less. One longtime commercial fisherman just retired after 15 years because he says the bite is too inconsistent.

My restaurant takes pride in buying as much local product as possible, but local, fresh fish just lately aren't as available as they used to be. We are really interested to see how fishing will be affected as businesses open up.



Sarah Pleadwell (left) and Monique Amani (right), co-owners of Mosa's Joint in Guam, in front of their business during happier times before the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo courtesy of Monique Amani.

Since March 15, 2020, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) has faced shutdowns and on-going restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For decades, tourism has been the main industry in the CNMI. With limited to no tourists arriving, businesses have been forced to temporarily or permanently close their doors.

A recent survey conducted by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce found the following:

- 55% of respondents have either made large operational reductions or are temporarily closed.
- 72% have either reduced staff or decreased hours.

- 40% have had to reduce over a quarter of their total staff.
- 79% have seen a reduction in revenue for more than four weeks.
- 47% have potentially lost more than \$100,000 in revenue due to COVID-19 and the economic downturn.

Fishing charter businesses and commercial fishermen are no exception and have struggled to keep their businesses open.

Fishing charters have been heavily impacted due to travel restrictions from Asian countries and have had to furlough or place staff on-call. Charters have promoted their services to the local market to try to make up the difference, but customers are scarce.

Commercial fishermen relying on fishing as a main source of income experienced the total shutdown of boating access points during the early stages of COVID-19 restrictions and now face a limited market to sell their catch. This has led to fishermen struggling to maintain operations and keep up financial obligations. Supplying fish to restaurants and hotels on a daily basis has been put on hold. Fishermen have resorted to selling mainly to the local markets and door-to-door to stay afloat.

Lino Tenorio, a bottomfish fisherman for more than 30 years, said the hardest parts of today's economy are first, to have the funds to go fishing; second, to have the ability to catch targeted premium species; and third, to find a buyer for the catch. He hopes that, once COVID-19 cases have been reduced or eliminated in the CNMI, the travel restrictions will be lifted so the economy can begin to recover. 🐟

ESA Listing of Cauliflower Corals Not Warranted

On July 6, 2020, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announced that cauliflower coral (*Pocillopora meandrina*) in Hawai'i does not warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). NMFS reviewed the species status in response to a March 2018 petition from the Center for Biological Diversity. Under the ESA, NMFS was required to publish a finding within 12 months of receiving the petition. Due to the delay, the Center filed a complaint in October 2019, after which NMFS entered into a stipulated settlement agreement and was scheduled to submit a finding to the Federal Register by June 30, 2020.

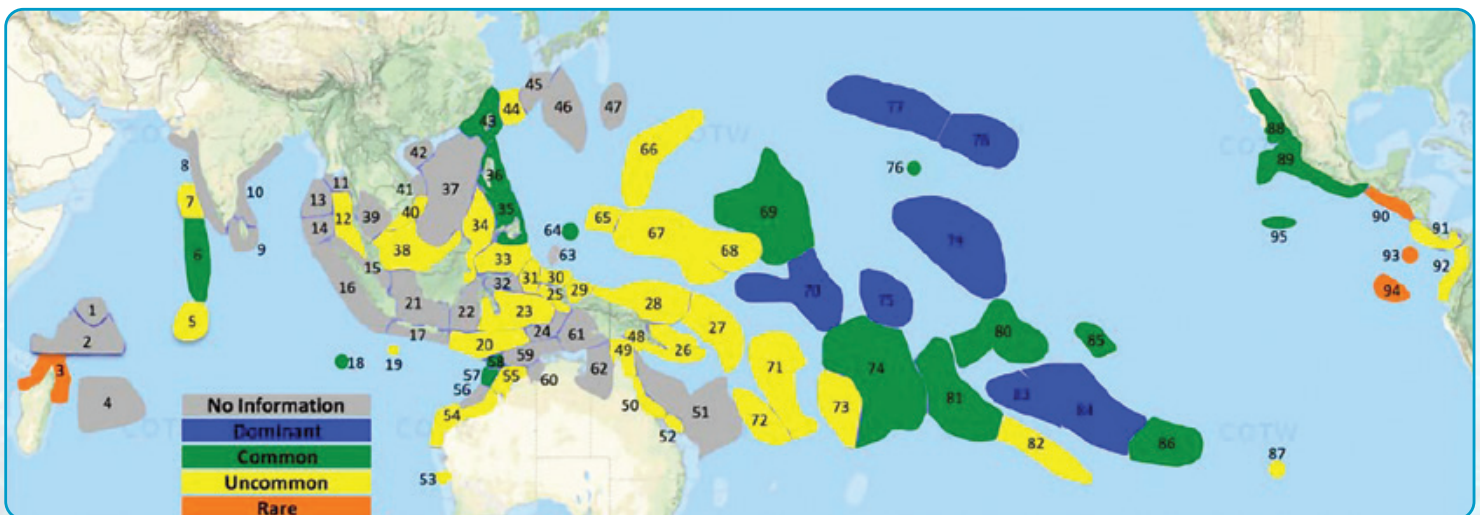


Cauliflower coral. Source: NMFS.

The petition requested that the Hawai'i portion of the species' range be considered a significant portion of its range (SPR) and to list the species as endangered or threatened under the ESA. SPR is a terminology that first requires a review of whether the species is at risk of extinction throughout its range. If the initial review finds that the species is at a low risk for extinction, it will trigger a review of whether the species may have a higher risk of extinction in a SPR. If confirmed, then the species may be listed throughout its range.

Cauliflower coral is one of the most widely-distributed and abundant corals in the Indo-Pacific and is found from Madagascar to Costa Rica. In its status review, NMFS determined that the species currently faces a low risk of extinction throughout its range and is expected to face low to moderate extinction risk in the foreseeable future. NMFS describes cauliflower coral as a species with strong demographic factors, characterized by its very large and stable distribution, very high overall abundance (but unknown overall abundance trend), high and stable productivity and high and stable diversity. While the species faces broad and worsening threats, the species' demographic characteristics are expected to moderate its extinction risk. For example, the species has been documented to recover quickly after high mortality events, as witnessed at Fagatele Bay in American Samoa and at the Kahe Power Plant on O'ahu in the main Hawaiian Islands.

NMFS identified four locations that meet the definition of a SPR for this coral, but determined that the extinction risk at these locations are similar to the coral's status throughout the range. The not-warranted finding completes NMFS' review process for the petition, and there is no associated public comment period. 🐟



Cauliflower coral distribution based on surveys conducted between 1970 and 2018. The ocean is subdivided by ecoregions color-coded according to the coral's relative abundance. The Hawaiian Island Archipelago is denoted by ecoregions 77 and 78, where cauliflower coral is one of the most commonly found species (dominant). American Samoa is part of ecoregion 74, where the coral is common, and Guam and CNMI constitute ecoregion 66 where its abundance varies but is overall rated as uncommon. Source: NMFS Status Review Report & Corals of the World.

Congressional Corner

Courtesy ABC's Schoolhouse Rock



Follow the bills that impact your fisheries at www.congress.gov.

The effects of COVID-19 reverberate throughout the fisheries community and up to the Nation's capital where Congress is closed to the public.

The Senate remains in session with restrictions but the House of Representatives has allowed proxy voting on the floor and in committees and "remote" hearings. As the pandemic lingers on, the focus of Congress is on the response to the virus, having already provided over \$330 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations to aid Americans. Part of these appropriations from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (or CARES) Act (P.L. 116-136) provided direct relief payments to fishery participants.

Up to \$300 million in funding is being provided by Congress to commercial fishermen, fish processors and aquaculture businesses that have experienced an economic revenue loss greater than 35% as compared to the prior five-year average or negative impacts to subsistence, cultural or ceremonial fisheries. The Western Pacific Region state and territories received \$8,890,639 under the CARES Act, or 3% of the available funding. The State of Hawai'i, territories of American Samoa and Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are working on spending plans for how this funding will be allocated and provided to affected fisheries. Other bills currently being discussed in Congress that would provide economic recovery and relief, such as HR 6800 (Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions, or HEROES Act), which was passed by the House May 21, 2020, also contain relief packages to aid fishery participants.

Congressman Huffman has postponed his roundtable discussions on the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) due to the pandemic but remains committed to completing all of the listening sessions. Comments are still being accepted through his website (<https://huffman.house.gov/msa>) where previous listening sessions can also be viewed.

Fisheries legislation, including potential MSA reauthorization bills, has stalled due to the pandemic and with this being the second year of the 116th United States Congress. Bills will need to be reintroduced next year. 🐟

New Outreach Resources

Council staff has been busy developing new outreach visuals:

- The last two in a series of five Council 101 handouts:
 - ~ From an idea to implementation
 - ~ What happens at Council and Advisory Group Meetings?
- A handout on the history of protected species conservation in U.S. Western Pacific fisheries and a yellowfin fact sheet with its life history details, community value and catch history.
- The first in a planned series of four 30-second PSAs to briefly introduce the Council and highlight a Council-sponsored project done in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The video focused on American Samoa and the Malaloa 450-foot dock extension project.

These resources and more can be found on the new Fisheries 101 page on the Council website (www.wpcouncil.org/fisheries101). Fishermen and the general public can find handouts, brochures, short videos and PSAs that help them to understand fisheries and fisheries management on a basic level. The resources are grouped by topic and shown as clickable images on a bookshelf and in a linked list below each topic.

While on our website, check out the page for the new Catchit Logit electronic fishery data reporting app (www.wpcouncil.org/catchit-logit).

The collage features three digital resources. At the top left is the 'Fisheries 101' website, which includes a 'What do you think? Send us a comment.' button and a 'COUNCIL 101' section. Below it is the 'CATCHIT LOGIT Electronic Reporting' app, showing a mobile interface for reporting fishery data. To the right is a 'Yellowfin Tuna' fact sheet, detailing the stock status, life history, and management of yellowfin tuna. The fact sheet includes a 'Stock Status' section with a blue circular graphic, a 'Life History' section with a timeline, and a 'Management' section with a list of actions.

Council Family Updates



Frank L. Barron



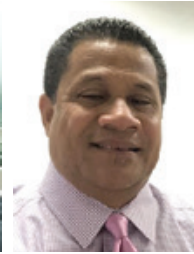
Roger Dang



John Gourley



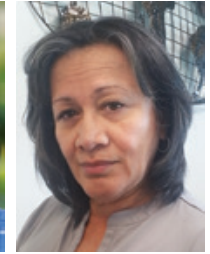
Jason Helyer



Jerome Jerome



McGrew Rice



Pafuti Ana Tupua

The U.S. Department of Commerce has appointed three new members to the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. Council members are appointed to both obligatory (state-specific) and at-large (regional) seats. Council members serve a three-year term and can be reappointed to serve three consecutive terms. The Council members are:

Obligatory Seat:

- **John Gourley** (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, CNMI), reappointed member

At-large Seats:

- **McGrew Rice** (CNMI), reappointed member
- **Roger Dang** (Hawai'i)

At the 182nd Council meeting, the Council supported the following advisory body changes:

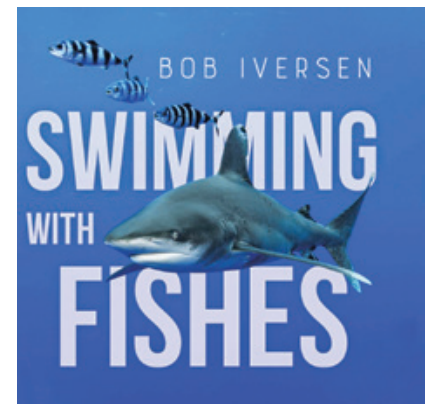
- Advisory Panel Changes:
- Appointed **Pafuti Ana Tupua**, **Frank L. Barron** and **Jerome Jerome** as Alternates to the American Samoa Advisory Panel.
- Accepts the resignation of George Moses as an Alternate on the CNMI-Marianas Advisory Panel.
- Approved **Jason Helyer** as the Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources representative to the Scientific and Statistical Committee.
- Reconstitute the Non-commercial Fisheries Advisory Committee

and Fishing Industry Advisory Committee and solicit new members for Council consideration and approval in September 2020.

For World Oceans Day (June 8, 2020), UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission organized its first Ocean Literacy Summit, which was held virtually due to COVID-19. During a four-hour session, ocean experts, sports and business people, high-level government representatives and artists from across the globe exchanged ideas, experiences and insights on the future of ocean literacy in the context of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

Interactive discussions with the more than 1,600 participants from 119 countries centered on how ocean literacy can catalyze advocacy for sound marine policy and public action, mainstream ocean topics into educational systems, foster more responsible citizenry and behavioral changes, encourage ocean aware corporate practices and stimulate young people to start a career in the ocean affairs. Council Communications Officer **Sylvia Spalding** represented both the International Pacific Marine Educators Network and the National Marine Educators Association on a panel with other ocean experts on ocean engagement. A recording of her presentation and written remarks are available at www.marine-ed.org/news/virtual-ocean-literacy-summit-remarks-by-sylvia-spalding.

Bob Iversen, a former National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) employee who served shortly as the interim director of the Council when it was first established in 1976, has published a memoir of his adventurous maritime career. Written in a whimsical and witty



conversational style, *Swimming with Fishes* includes 28 vignettes that highlight Bob's professional exploits, from surveillance of illegal foreign fishing in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, to marine research at Enewetak Atoll where 43 nuclear bombs were exploded, to diplomatic attaché in Japan. The book's 10th episode features **Peter Fithian**, one of the inaugural Council members and founder of the Hawai'i International Billfish Tournament. Bob's various jobs at sea and on shore introduced him to many unusual events, including several shark stories. He hopes that his career will spur young men and women to consider a field in marine biology. The 202-page book was self-published in March 2020 by Tellwell Talent and is available in hardback, paperback and Kindle through Amazon.

The Council supported a study on the complex dispersal of adult yellowfin tuna from the main Hawaiian Islands (MHI), resulting in a peer-reviewed article co-authored in part by **Clay Tam**, Pacific Islands Fishery Group (PIFG) and



A tagged yellowfin tuna is released as part of a dispersal study off Kaua'i. Photo courtesy of Molly Lutcavage, PIFG.

Council Advisory Panel chair; **Don Kobayashi**, NMFS and Council Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) member; and **Molly Lutcavage**, PIFG and former SSC member. From 2014-2016, the authors partnered with local fishermen to catch and release 19 yellowfin tuna off Kaua'i with pop-up satellite archival tags programmed for nine to 12-month missions. The authors found that adult yellowfin tuna frequenting the MHI have more complex movements than previously assumed.

Lam CH, Tam C, Kobayashi DR and Lutcavage ME. 2020. Complex Dispersal of Adult Yellowfin Tuna From the Main Hawaiian Islands. *Front. Mar. Sci.* 7:138. doi: 10.3389/fmars.2020.00138. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2020.00138/full>

Council Pelagic Fisheries Ecosystem Scientist Mark Fitchett co-authored a peer-reviewed article recently published in the journal *PLOS One* on a comprehensive evaluation of impacts on fisheries production and ecological responses to pelagic marine protected areas.

Gilman E, Chaloupka M, Fitchett M, Cantrell DL, Merrifield M. 2020. Ecological responses to blue water MPAs. *PLOS One* 15(7): e0235129. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0235129>



Recipe: Tuna Candy Kabobs



Courtesy of the Guam Fishermen's Festival (Gupot Y Peskadot)

Ingredients

2 lbs tuna (or marlin or swordfish)
Vegetables, such as onion, cherry tomatoes, green/red peppers, cut into chunks
1½ cups brown sugar
½ cup soy sauce
2 tbsp fresh ginger, minced
3 tbsp green onion, chopped
½ tsp sesame oil
½ tsp Chinese five spice powder



Preparation

Trimmings and tips from cooking grade tuna, marlin and swordfish loins can be put to good use. Slice the fish into small portions suitable for kabobs. Skewer portions (alternating with pieces of vegetable) on bamboo or metal skewers. Mix remaining ingredients together. Marinate the sticks in the mixture for 30 minutes or overnight. Grill at high temperature until fish is medium rare. A crust of sugar will caramelize on the outside of the fish.

Bigeye fillet

K Fisher and its crew, led by Jack Diaz, reeled in a 290-pound billfish to win first place at the 36th Saipan International Fishing Tournament held July 25, 2020, at the Smiling Cove Marina. Thirty-six boats participated in this year's event.





2020 Council Calendar

Connect
with the
Council
on Social
Media



August

- 26
American Samoa
Advisory Panel (AP)
meeting
- 27
Hawai'i AP meeting
- 27
Virtual Fishers Forum
and Public Hearing on
Options for Hawai'i
Small-boat Pelagic
Fishery Management
- 29
Guam AP meeting (ChST)

September

- 5
Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands
AP meeting (ChST)
- 9-10
137th Scientific and
Statistical Committee
(SSC) meeting
- 14
Pelagic and International
Standing Committee
meeting
- 14
Executive and Budget
Standing Committee
meeting
- 15-17
183rd Western Pacific
Regional Fishery
Management Council
meeting
- 21-22
4th meeting of the
Western and Central
Pacific Fisheries
Commission (WCPFC)
E-reporting and
E-monitoring Working
Group*

- 23-24
Fall Council Coordination
Committee meeting
- 23-29
16th Session of the
WCPFC Technical and
Compliance Committee*

October

- 5-6
5th Joint Inter-American
Tropical Tuna Commission
and WCPFC Northern
Committee Working
Group meeting on the
Management of Pacific
Bluefin Tuna*

- 7
16th Session of the
WCPFC Northern
Committee*
- 14-16
U.S. Permanent Advisory
Committee to the WCPFC
meeting*

- 26-30
North Pacific Marine
Science Organization
(PICES) 2020 meeting*

November

- 8-13
National Congress of
American Indians First
Stewards, TBD*

December

- 1-3
138th SSC meeting
- 7-10
184th Council meeting,
TBD: American Samoa
- 8-15
17th Session of the
WCPFC, TBD*

*Meetings are not
hosted by the Western
Pacific Regional Fishery
Management Council.

Upcoming Events

The Virtual Fishers Forum and Public Meeting on Options for Hawai'i Small-Boat Fisheries Management will be held Aug. 27, 2020, via web conference. At its 182nd meeting, the Council directed staff to prepare options for mandatory permitting and reporting in the Hawai'i small-boat fisheries. Due to in-person meeting restrictions, the Council will hold a virtual Fishers Forum event to incorporate a public meeting on these options. The virtual Fishers Forum will have presentations on ways fishermen can assist with fishery science and management and provides a venue to receive public comments on potential permitting and reporting options for the Council to consider at its 183rd meeting in September.

The 137th Scientific and Statistical Committee meeting will be held Sept. 9 to 10, 2020, via web conference. Visit www.wpcouncil.org/meetings-calendars for more information on the web conference connection and agendas. Major agenda items include main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) *uku* fishery acceptable biological catch (action item); Hawai'i small-boat fisheries mandatory



What a monster! A 340-pound bigeye tuna (about 420 pounds before being gilled and gutted) was brought into the Honolulu Fish Auction on Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2020. Auction manager Michael Goto says it's the biggest one he's ever seen. Photo courtesy of Michael Goto.

permitting and reporting options (action item); reasonable and prudent measures (RPMs) and/or reasonable and prudent alternatives (RPAs) for the Hawai'i deep-set longline (DSLL) and AS longline (ASLL) fisheries (action item); oceanic white tip shark projections and report; striped marlin rebuilding plan; and offshore energy policy.

The 183rd meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council will convene Sept. 15 to 17, 2020, via web conference. Major

agenda items include MHI *uku* fishery acceptable catch limit (action item); Hawai'i small-boat fisheries mandatory permitting and reporting options (action item); RPMs and/or RPAs for the Hawai'i DSLL and ASLL fisheries (action item); Pacific Remote Island Areas Marine Conservation Plan; and offshore energy policy.

For more information on these events, go to www.wpcouncil.org or contact the Council at info@wpcouncil.org or (808) 522-8220.

www.wpcouncil.org