



**Western
Pacific
Regional
Fishery
Management
Council**

June 15, 2020

Mr. Peter Navarro
Director, Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Subject: Impacts of Marine National Monuments and China on US Pacific Tuna Fisheries

Dear Mr. Navarro:

The year 2020 will be a watershed year for the three major U.S. tuna fleets in the Pacific Ocean:

- Hawaii-based longline fleet targeting bigeye tuna and swordfish in the North Pacific;
- U.S. tropical tuna purse-seine fleet harvesting skipjack and yellowfin tuna operating in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO); and
- American Samoa longline and trolling fleet catching South Pacific albacore.

Attached is a one-page document with attached maps/graphs that details the detrimental impacts of the monument no-fishing restrictions not only on our American tuna fleets but also on the nation's food and economic security and its international standing in the region. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's visit to Hawaii this week to meet with Chinese government officials highlights the concern your Administration has on the Chinese economic and military escalation in the Pacific.

In consideration of these facts, Mr. Navarro, we request that you please advise President Trump to lift the fishing restrictions in the Pacific marine national monuments and allow America's fishermen to fish again in the US EEZ under the regulations promulgated through the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Quick action is urgently needed to support our Hawai'i and American Samoa longline fisheries, the US tropical tuna purse-seine fishery and the tuna cannery in American Samoa.

We are available to meet with you by teleconference or video conference should you need more information or would like to discuss these matters. You may reach Kitty at (808) 522-8220 or kitty.simonds@wpcouncil.org and Archie at asoliai@hotmail.com.

Archie Taotasi Soliai
Chair

Sincerely,

Kitty M. Simonds
Executive Director

Attachment: Marine National Monument Impacts on U.S. Tuna Fisheries in the Pacific

Cc: Chris Oliver, NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
Commandant Admiral Karl Schultz, US Coast Guard
Michael Brakke, Foreign Affairs Officer, U.S. Department of State, Marine Conservation Office



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Marine National Monument Impacts on U.S. Tuna Fisheries in the Pacific

The impact of the Papahānaumokuākea, Rose Atoll, Pacific Remote Islands and Marianas Trench Marine National Monuments on U.S. tuna fleets needs immediate action. The expeditious solution would be for President Trump to modify the four Pacific monuments through a proclamation, similar to the one announced on June 5, 2020, to modify the Northeast Canyons and Seamount Marine National Monument. We understand the proclamation for the Pacific monuments is drafted and available to President Trump to sign.

The commercial fishing restrictions in these Pacific monuments were established beginning in 2000 under President Clinton and continuing through 2016 under President Obama. They force U.S. commercial fishing vessels from the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) out 200 miles to the high seas. The size of the combined marine monuments in the Pacific is 1 million squares, which is equivalent to 51% of the U.S. EEZ in the Western Pacific Region. Combined with other fishing restrictions, 82 percent of the U.S. EEZ around the Hawaiian Islands is closed to the Hawaii longline fleet.

As American fisheries are displaced from the majority of the U.S. EEZ in the region, they are forced to fish on the high seas. There they face increased operating costs and safety at sea risks and must directly compete on the same fishing grounds that are used by the longline and purse-seine fisheries from distant water fleets, such as those from China.

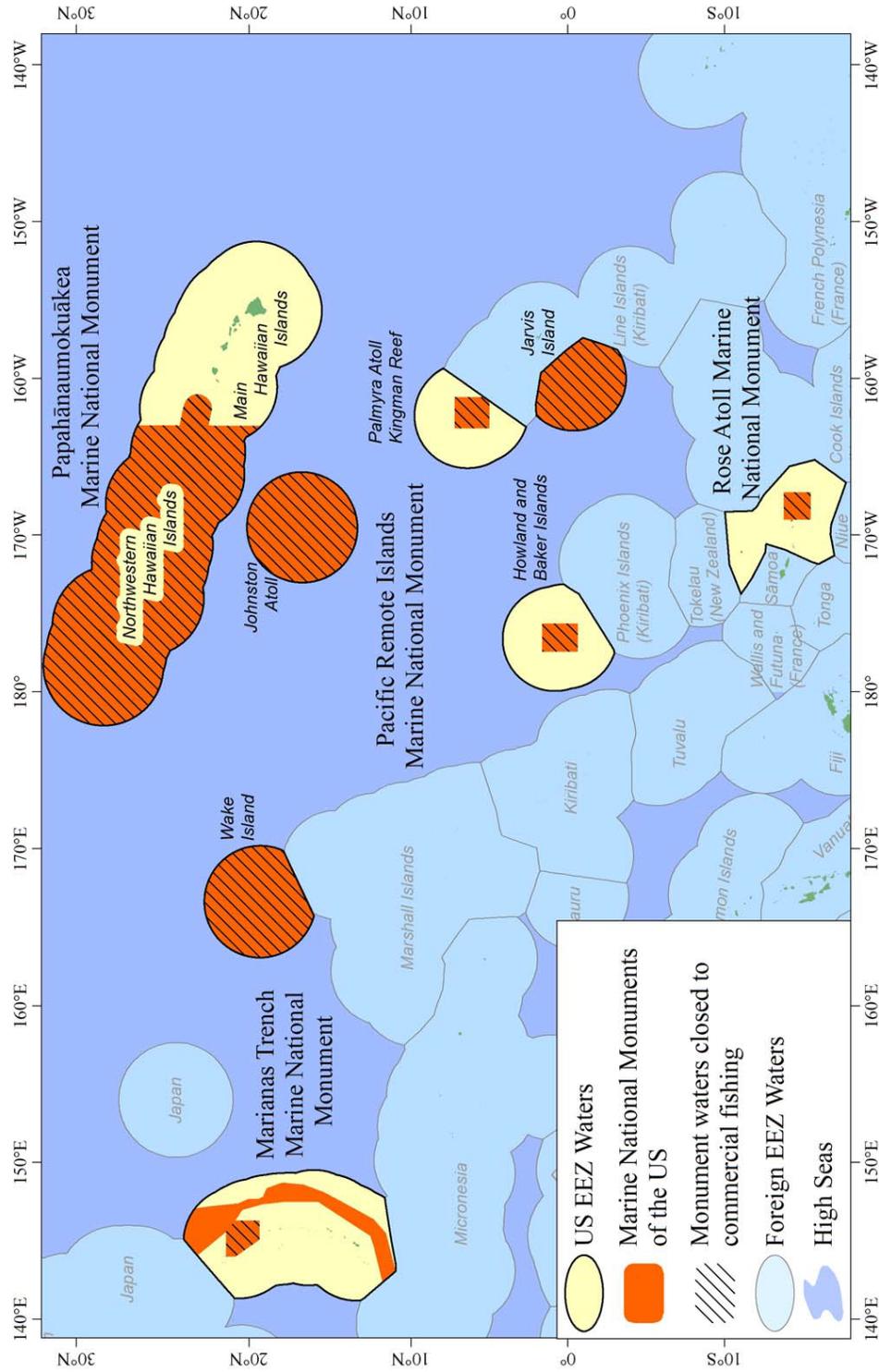
While the U.S. tuna fleet in the Pacific is decreasing, China's fishing capacity has increased at an unprecedented rate. China has more than 500 longline vessels registered with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. More than 350 of those are active. In 2017, China caught 45% of the South Pacific albacore.

Together, the U.S. tuna fleets in the Pacific support thousands of U.S. jobs; contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to the U.S. economy; and provide a high quality protein source produced under standards unmatched by any other nation for compliance with national and international rules, requirements, and regulations, including monitoring and reporting requirements and strict enforcement provisions.

In late 2016, one of the tuna canneries in American Samoa permanently closed due in part to the U.S. fleets' reduced fishing access. The closure resulted in the loss of 800 jobs. The loss of the other cannery would be devastating. According to the American Samoa government, the cannery represents 80% of American Samoa's exports and 24% of its imports, creating an economies of scale that drives down shipping cost for the Territory, the only U.S. port in the Southern hemisphere.

The Monument closures have reduced the US economic footprint in the Pacific and compromised the United States ability to negotiate at international regional fishery management organizations (RFMOs). The fishing closures of the Pacific marine national monuments exacerbate the U.S. seafood deficit with competing nations, including China, and increase our nation's dependence on foreign seafood, often from illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) operations.

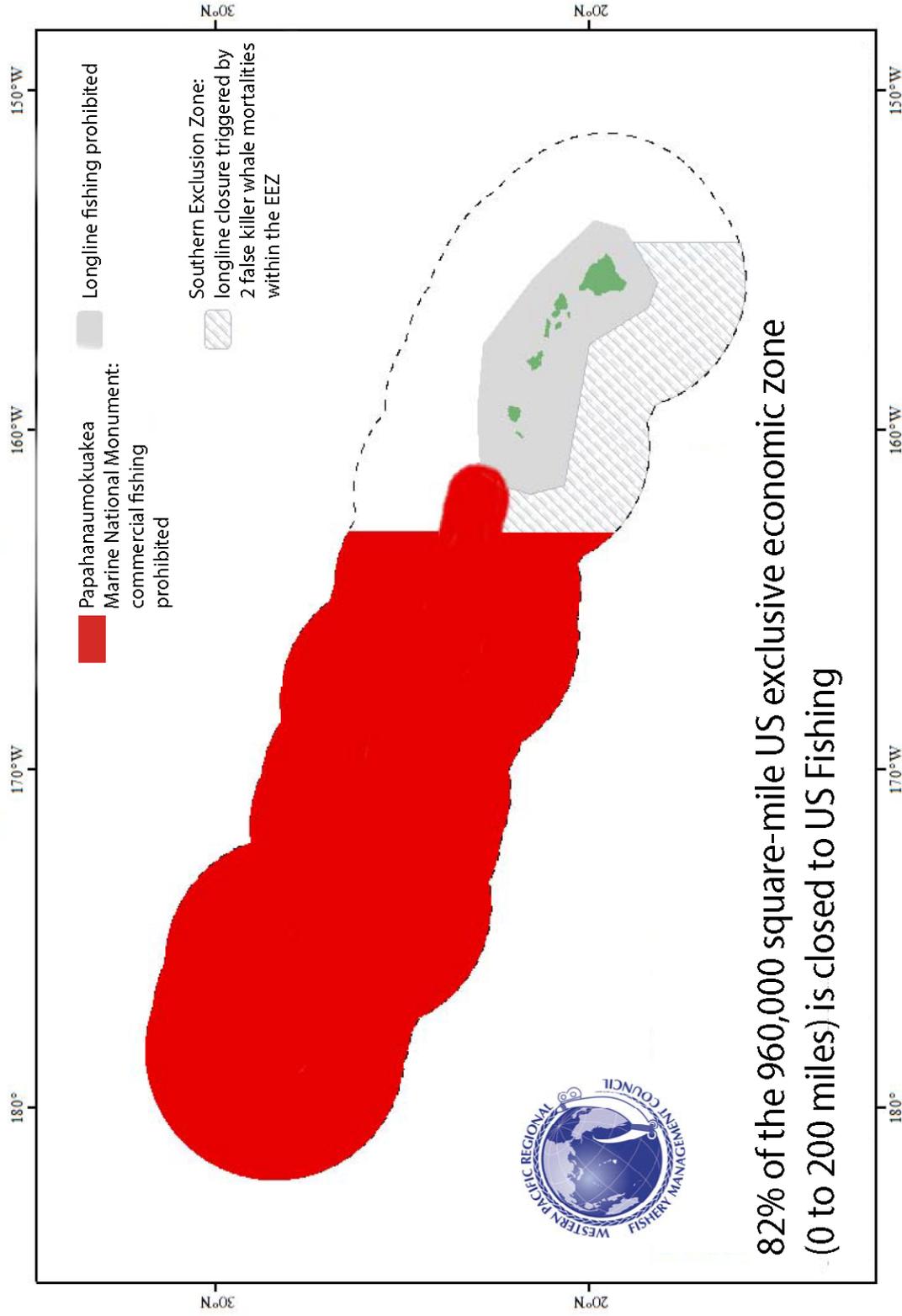
Marine National Monuments of the US Western Pacific Region



51% of the 2 million-square-mile US exclusive economic zone has been designated via Presidential proclamation.



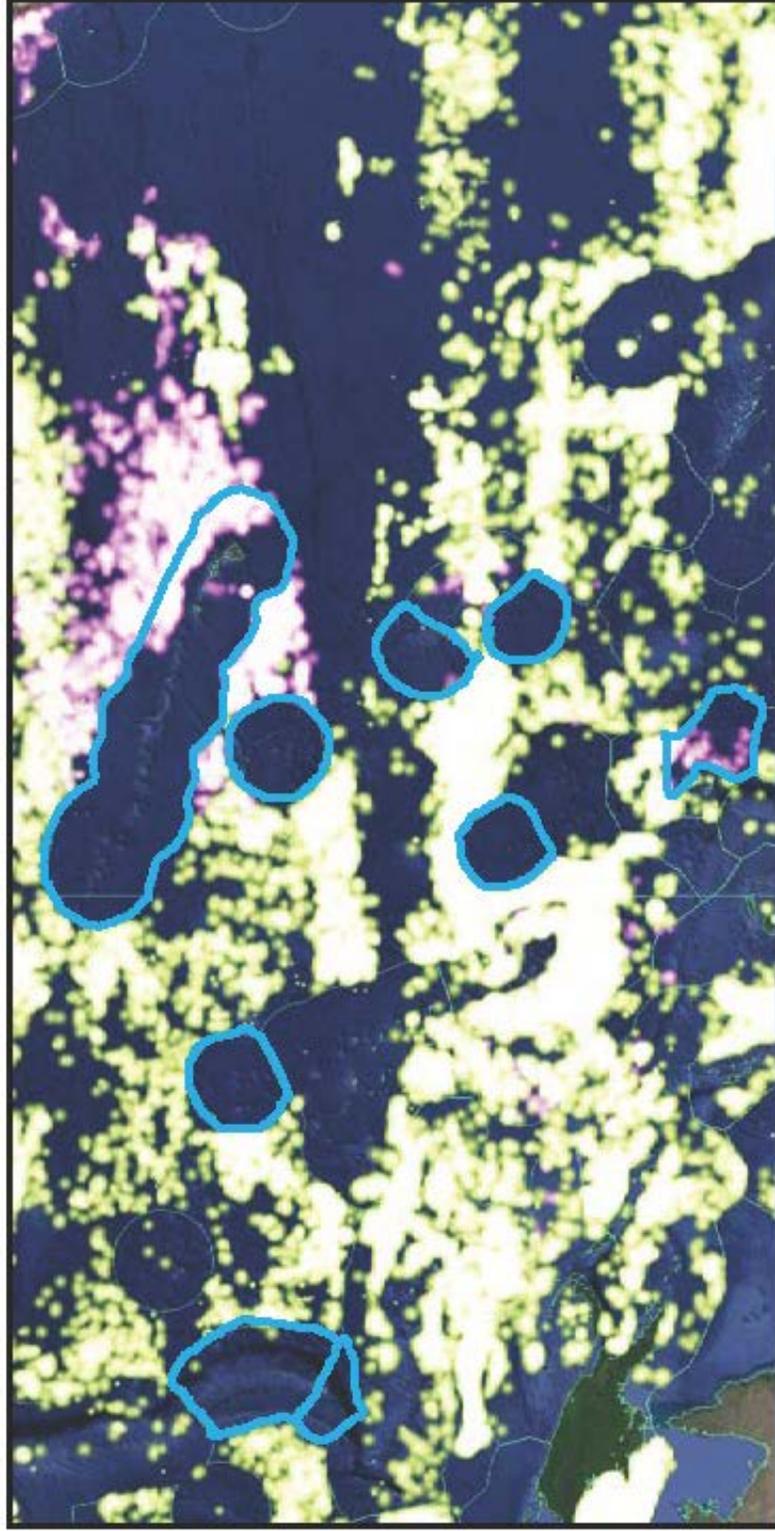
Hawaii Archipelago



82% of the 960,000 square-mile US exclusive economic zone (0 to 200 miles) is closed to US Fishing



Fishing Effort in the Pacific Ocean and the US Pacific Exclusive Economic Zone - 1.5 million square miles

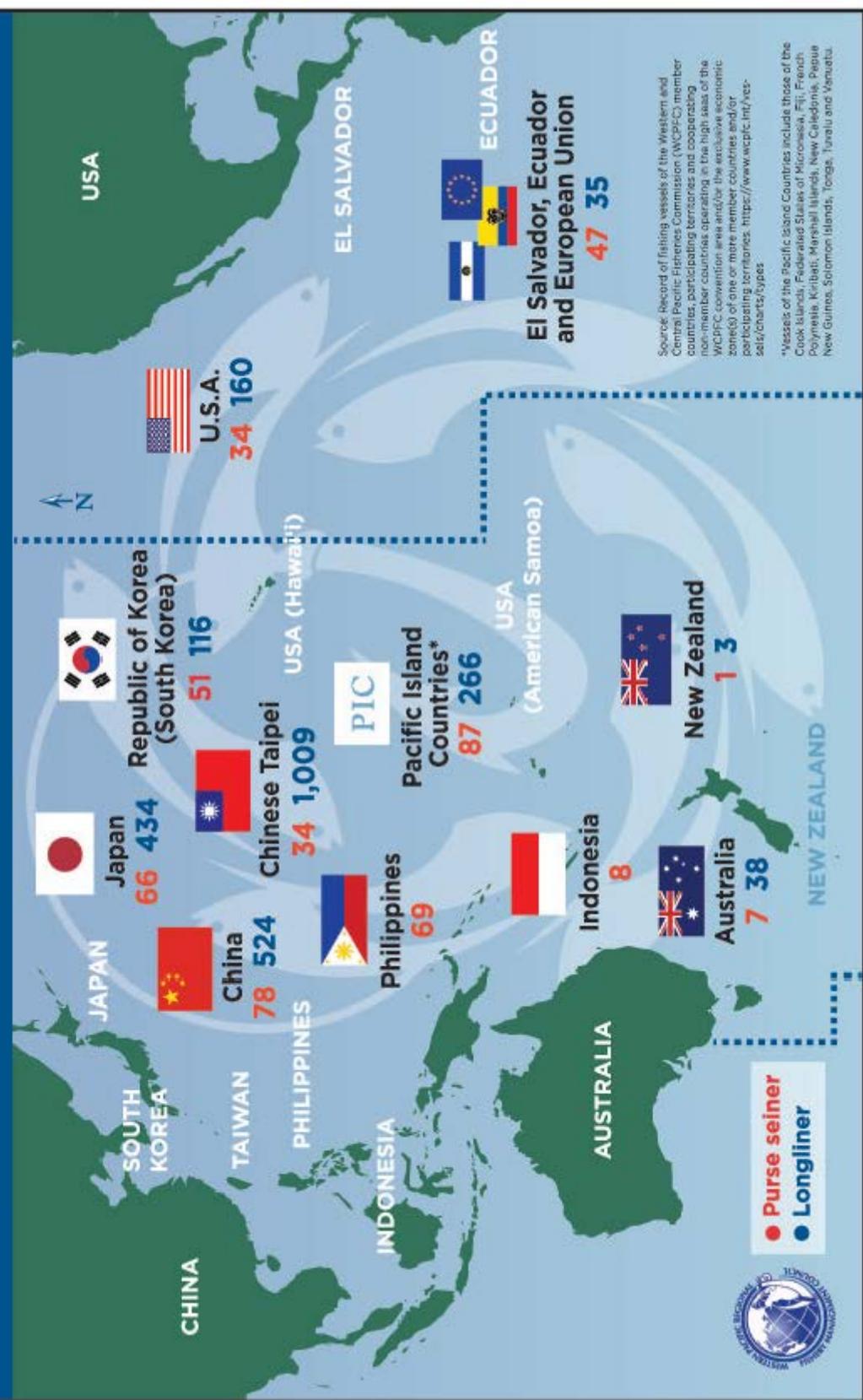


Three months fishing effort (October through December 2019)

Yellow = Foreign fishing vessels Pink = US fishing vessels Light blue = US exclusive economic zone

Vessels are predominantly purse seine, longline, and pole and line vessels targeting tuna and swordfish.

Fleet Sizes of Longline and Purse-Seine Vessels in the Western and Central Pacific (7 March 2019)

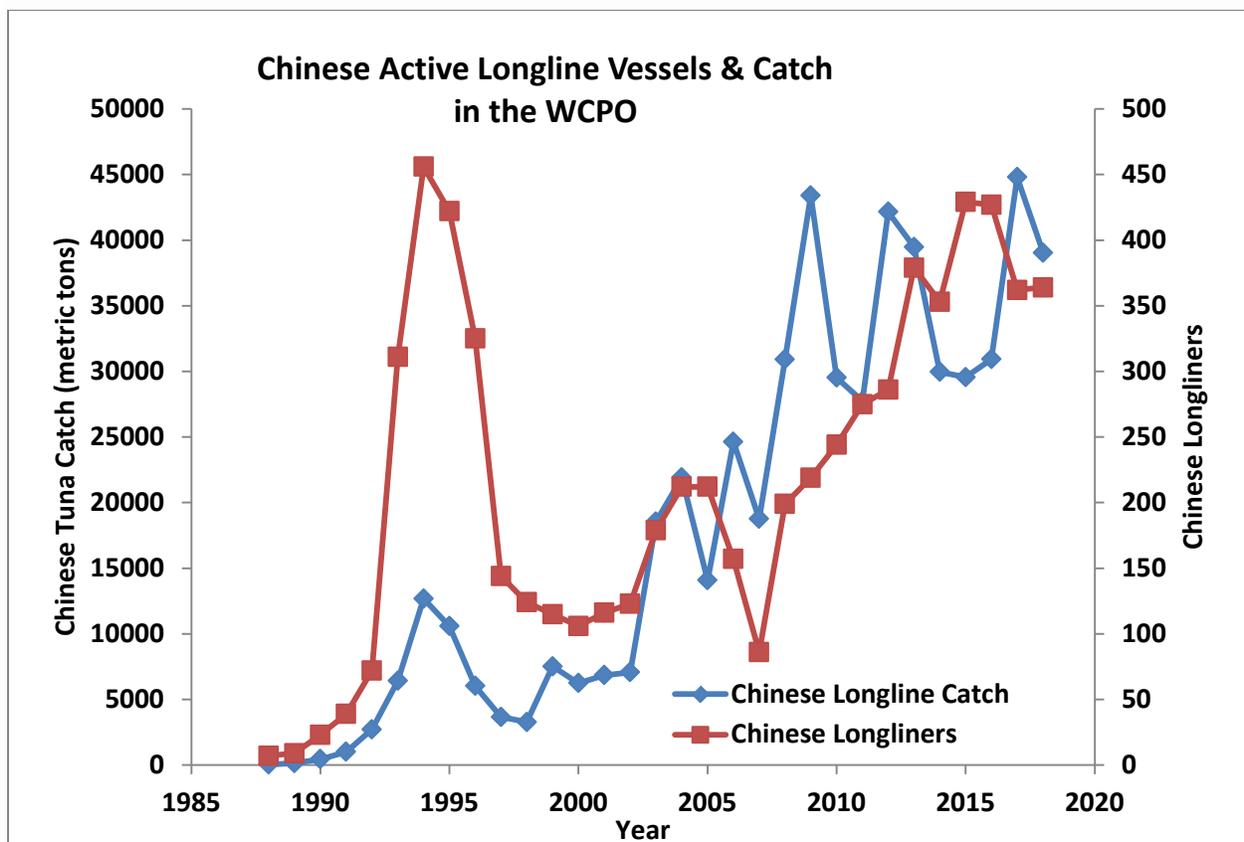


Tax incentives and Direct Subsidies by the Chinese government to its distant water fleets¹

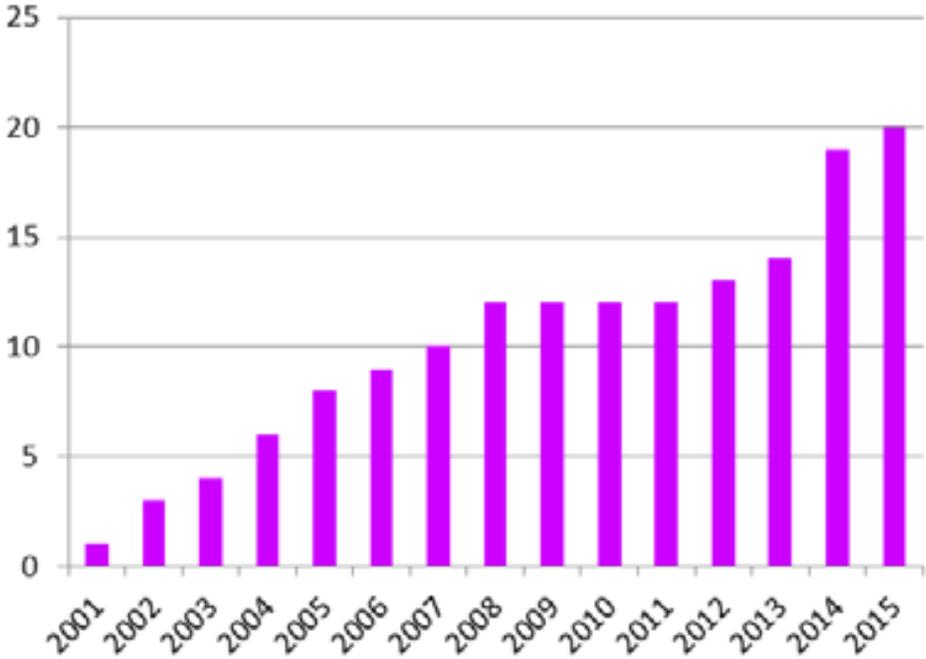
Tax Incentives	Direct subsidies to the fishing industry
• Corporate tax relief	• Fishery research, development and exploration and technology transfer
• Tax incentives to shipyards	• Fuel offsets (\$7 billion in 2018 ²)
• Tariff cuts on imported equipment	• Access fees
• Accelerated depreciation	• Favorable industry loan rates

1. Source: Ilakini and Imo 2014. Fisheries subsidies and incentives provided by the Peoples Republic of China to its distant water fishing industry. Prepared for the Forum Fisheries Agency. Honiara, Solomon Islands. 8 pages.

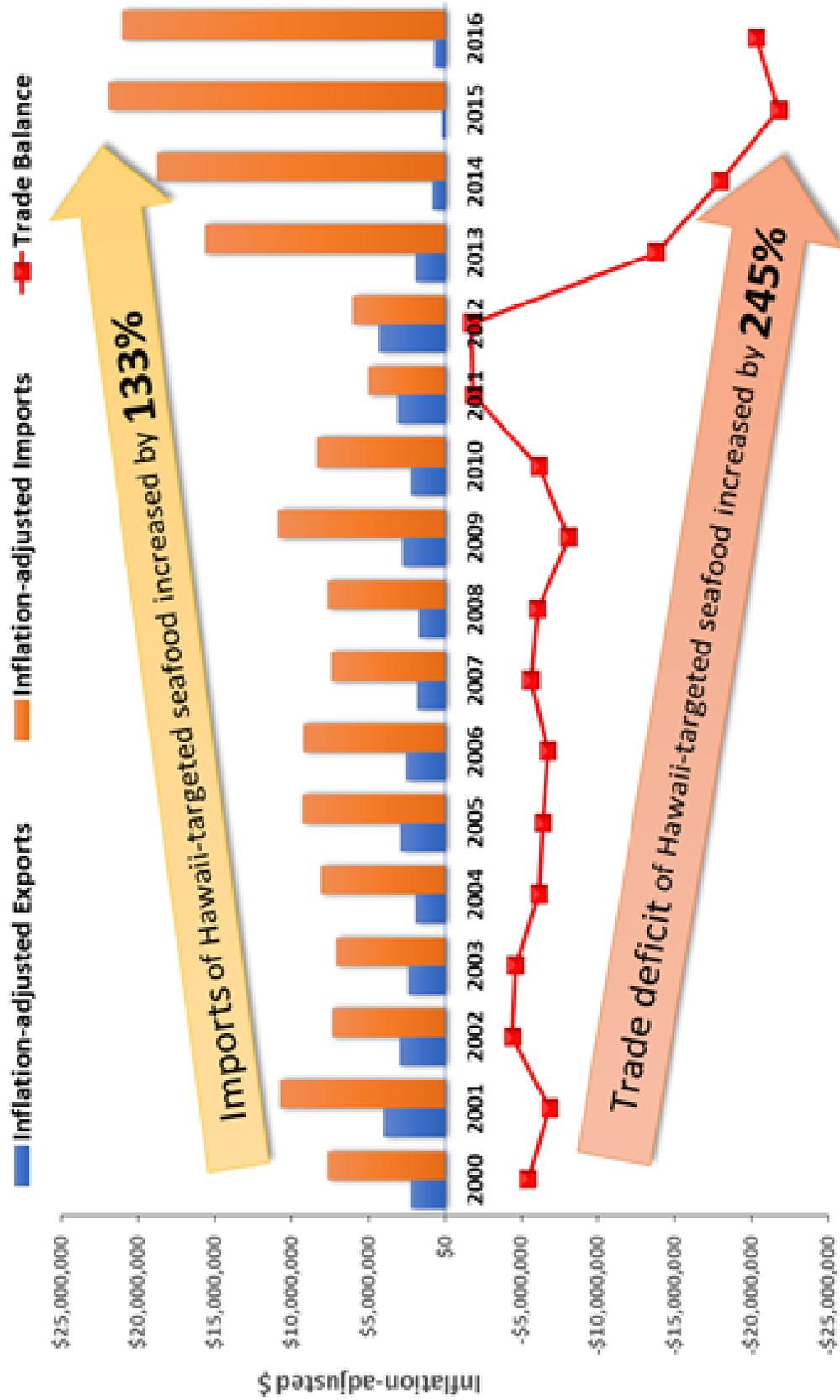
2. Hammond J. 2020 June 11. China's Fishing Fleet Is A Growing Security Threat. The Dispatch. <https://thedispatch.com/p/chinas-fishing-fleet-is-a-growing>



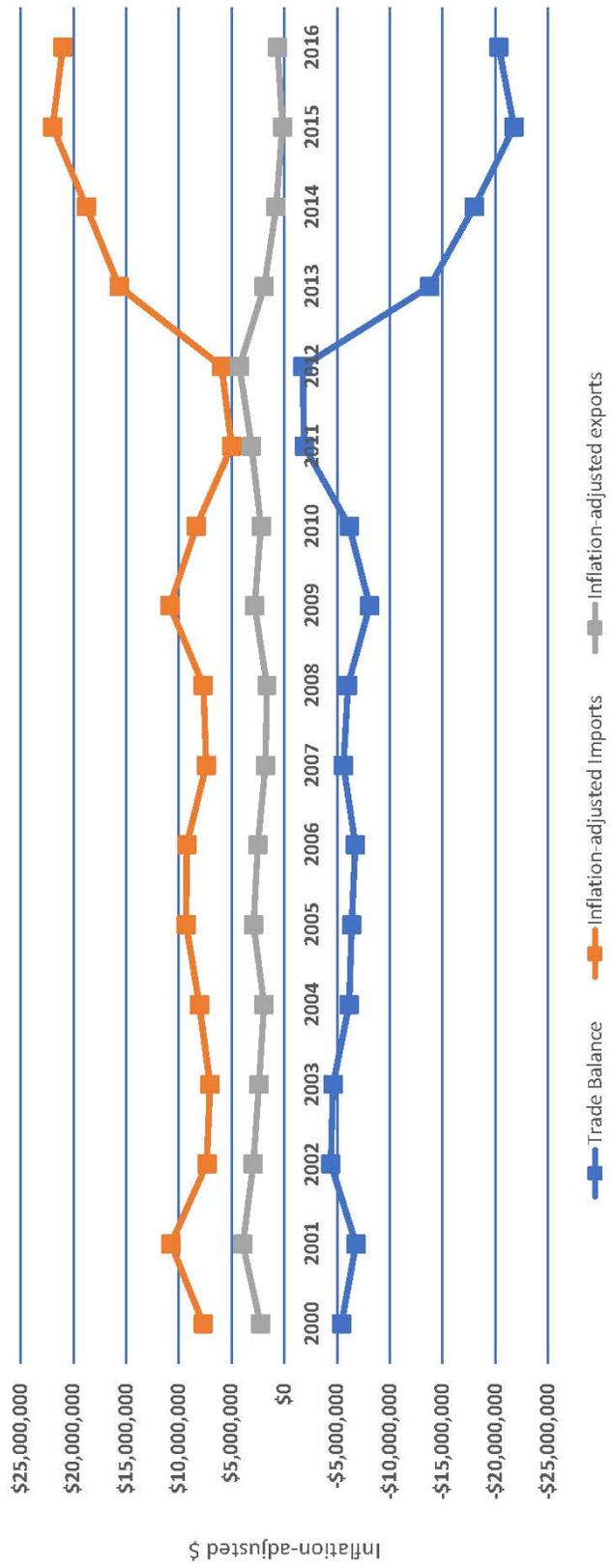
Chinese-flagged purse vessels operating in the WCPO. Source: WCPFC 2016.



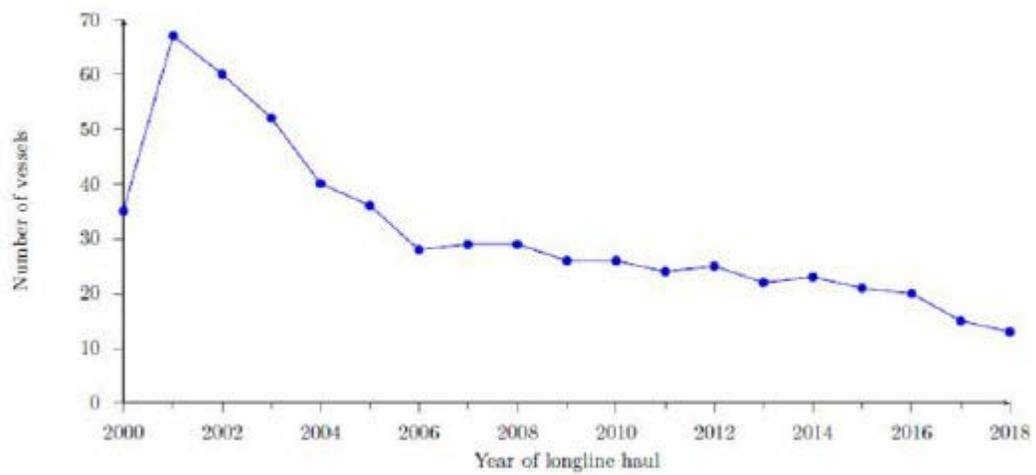
Hawaii Targeted Seafood Trade Balance, 2000-2016 Inflation-adjusted Dollar Values (2016 Base)



Hawaii targeted seafood trade balance
 Inflation-adjusted \$ values (2016 base)
 2000-2016



Number of active US longline vessels based in American Samoa by year, 2000-2018.



Landings of South Pacific albacore (SPALB) tuna by China and United States, 2007-2018.

Year	China SPALB mt	USA SPALB mt	China/USA (times larger)
2007	5,416	5,183	1.0
2008	15,058	3,561	4.2
2009	20,093	3,903	5.1
2010	12,926	3,943	3.3
2011	11,847	2,291	5.2
2012	24,523	3,147	7.8
2013	23,788	2,128	11.2
2014	14,476	1,430	10.1
2015	14,486	1,855	7.8
2016	16,118	1,517	10.6
2017	29,143	1,411	20.7
2018	21,175	1,416	15.0

Source: SC15-SA-WP-08_ALB_trends.pdf



NOAA FISHERIES