



192nd Meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

September 20-22, 2022

Regional Communications and Outreach Report

This report summarizes regional communications and outreach efforts conducted by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council from approximately June 2022 through the end of August 2022.

Publications

Pacific Islands Fishery News

The summer issue of the Council's quarterly newsletter will be distributed in early September 2022 primarily through the Constant Contact email list with ~2,000 subscribers. Less than 100 hard copies will be direct mailed. A few hundred hard copies are being distributed through local agencies and fishermen throughout the regions. This issue highlights a sustainable indigenous take of green sea turtles in other parts of the world, proposed fishing regulations for the national marine sanctuary in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, 2021 Stock Assessments and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) reports, and high gas price impacts on fishermen in the Mariana Archipelago, among others (www.wpcouncil.org/wp-council-newsletters).

In addition, a special issue of *Pacific Islands Fishery News* was developed to discuss the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) expansion proposal by the Pacific Remote Islands Coalition. The issues includes quotes taken from Council members at the June 2022 meeting, the big picture and even bigger unintended consequences for American Samoa and the United States, a discussion on the need (or lack thereof) for the expansion, and historical use of the area.

Hawaii Fishing News

The Council submitted monthly articles to the magazine *Hawaii Fishing News* on the following topics:

- July - Equity and Environmental Justice in the Western Pacific
- August – solicitation for 2023-2026 Advisory Panel (AP) members, and updates from the June Council meeting, including area-based management issues and others
- September – 2021 SAFE report highlights

Islands Business

The Council submitted an article on tuna, COVID-19 and the economy in Hawaii for the July 2022 issue of *Islands Business* magazine. The articles for this issue focused on how the global tuna industry has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and how Pacific Island nations are responding to this. The monthly magazine is read by decision-makers, businesses and academics and students throughout the Pacific Islands region, Australia, New Zealand, UK, USA and Asia.

WCPFC Monograph

The Council published the latest in its Pacific Islands Fishery Monographs series this summer - *Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, The Second Decade: Evolution of Modern Management*. Authored by Svein Fougner, National Marine Fisheries Service (ret.), and Mark Fitchett, Council pelagic fisheries ecosystem scientist, this monograph is a follow-on to one the Council published in December 2010: *Ten Years and Counting: The First 10 Years of the Western and Central Pacific Highly Migratory Fish Stocks Convention*.

This monograph focuses on progress from 2010 to 2019 in the following areas: conservation of the stocks; trends in fishery catch and values, and in the distribution of catch by species, gear and fleets; the expanding scope of management, including the consideration of environmental resources and values; and the adoption of a more sophisticated and complex management process that could lead to greater stability and predictability in the management of Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission fisheries. Find it online in our Education Library:

www.wpcouncil.org/educational-resources/education-library

Council's 44-year History Book

The Council published *U.S. Pacific Islanders and the Sea: A History of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (1976- 2020)* in late July. The book examines what it took to replace unregulated foreign fishing in the U.S. waters around the Pacific Islands with well-managed American fisheries, while addressing equity and justice for the region's underrepresented, indigenous fishing communities. Founding members of the Council and its Scientific and Statistical Committee recount what motivated them to make the decisions they did to manage U.S. fisheries in the region.

This history recounts the struggles of both the U.S. fishing industry to operate and the native peoples to maintain their cultural relationship with the ocean within an ever increasing regulatory environment. The book was written to appeal to men and women who are interested in natural resource management, the seafood industry, indigenous issues and government policymaking, covering a wide range of topics from sport fishing to environmental justice, climate change and food security.

U.S. Pacific Islanders and the Sea is available in hardback, paperback and e-book formats (ISBN 978-1-9448-2780-9, ISBN 978-1-9448-2781-6 and ISBN 978-1-9448-2782-3). With a 6-inch x 9-inch trim size, the 600-page book features more than 200 color photographs.

The book's authors drew not only from in-depth research but also from their strong backgrounds in the field of fisheries in the region. Michael Markrich holds degrees in history and in agricultural and resource economics and has been recognized for outstanding research. Sylvia Spalding has degrees in journalism and in English (expository writing) and has received awards for ethics in journalism and for excellence in marine education.

Media

In this reporting time period, the Council published 9 press releases; 4 on the Science and Statistical Committee meeting, 4 on the 191st Council meeting, and 1 on the 2021 SAFE reports.



WESTERN PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Council received two interview requests from *Undercurrent News* stemming from the releases - Kitty Simonds and Mark Fitchett on the new Pacific strategy to advance U.S. interests through fisheries, and Manny Dueñas on the NMFS's annual budget cut of \$343K to the Council, resulting in 2 stories:

- www.undercurrentnews.com/2022/06/24/chinese-tuna-money-threatens-us-security-interests-council-says
- www.undercurrentnews.com/2022/07/15/us-pushes-tuna-politics-with-10-year-600m-pledge-to-pacific-islands

From May 26, 2022 to Aug. 23, 2022, there were 29 instances when news outlets either picked up Council press releases or mentioned the Council.

Social Media

Data from May 26, 2022 to Aug 23, 2022:

- The Council Facebook account has 982 (+21*) page likes, and Council staff scheduled 40 posts that reached ~10,400 people. The number of post engagements was ~473, along with 256 page clicks and 20 new fans.
- The Council Twitter account has 545 (+7) followers and, over the same time period, staff uploaded 28 tweets, had 4 engagements, 3 favorites and 1 retweets of tweets in which the Council was mentioned.
- The Council Instagram account has 116 followers (+12); 44 posts reached 397 people, with ~931 impressions.* Reach refers to the number of unique accounts that saw any posts or stories at least once.
- The Council LinkedIn account has 102 followers (+14), with 38 posts and 849 impressions.

**Numbers in parenthesis denote the changes since the previous 3-month time frame.*

Regional Initiatives – CNMI

Council staff and CNMI AP supported the following events:

- June 4: Tasi To Table (TTT) Youth Derby (Trolling). AP members assisted event organizers with logistics and trained students to weigh and record fish.
- July 16-17: 38th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament. AP members and Council staff took photos and shared AP brochures.
- August 13: Tinian Beef, Beer, & Bands Festival's "Biggest Catch" Fishing Derby. AP members shared Council information and encouraged fishermen and the public to submit their application for the Marianas-CNMI AP.
- August 20: TTT Tuna Mix Classic fishing tournament. AP members assisted event organizers with logistics and trained students to weigh and record fish.
- August 27: ISLA Association's 4th Annual Mafuti Derby. AP members and Council staff took photos and shared AP brochures.

Regional Initiatives – Guam

August 20-21: 78 boats showed up for the 2nd Annual Greg D. Perez International Sportfishing Derby. The Council had a full-page ad in the event program showing the Fishermen's Code of Conduct. Council staff served as weigh master for the event at the Agat Marina Derby Station over two days. Staff met with most participating fishermen and discussed the value of quality, timely catch data. He requested they support the creel survey and promote Catchit Logit, especially if they fish for bottomfish management unit species. The Council also had an outreach table with information and promotional materials, and displayed a banner next to the fish weigh in area. The Council also provided the 15 event category winners with canvas bags filled with Council coolers, multi-tools, floating key chains, spring 2022 *Pacific Islands Fishery News*, a marlin recipe, and the Council process booklet.

Regional Initiatives – Hawai'i

Hawai'i AP Outreach and Survey

The Hawai'i AP continues its efforts to expand and systematize fishermen's observations by sponsoring outreach events and administering brief voluntary surveys on fishermen's knowledge and attitudes toward management. This will be an ongoing project to better understand, support and represent our fishing community. Spearheaded by Hawai'i AP members Gil Kualii and Basil Oshiro, outreach was conducted at the August 14 Hilo Trollers tournament, and at fishing stores and fishing clubs on Maui in July and August. Outreach materials and a brief survey were distributed to captains and observers at the Hilo Trollers check-in and picked up at weigh-in. The survey was also fielded to general public observers at the Hilo Trollers weigh-in and to fishermen on Maui.

Kualii developed a brief voluntary anonymous survey instrument with support from Council staff, Council Scientific and Statistical Committee member Craig Severance and Council AP Chair Clay Tam. There were 14 responses from captains and crew at Hilo Trollers, nine from the public (observers at weigh-in) and 14 from Maui. Donated prizes were awarded at the Hilo event. The surveys have been tabulated and analysis of the responses is in progress. This was a pilot effort and somewhat like a pretest. Kualii noted two lessons learned: 1. As anticipated, captains and crew are so busy and focused on the tournament that survey returns were somewhat low. It may be better to distribute the surveys at an event like a club meeting or awards ceremony. 2. A team (vs. one person) may be more effective at outreach and providing a personal connection between fishermen.

Go Fish! with Mike Buck radio program: The radio show airs Saturdays from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. and is repeated on Sundays from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. with ~7300 weekend listeners on AM 690 and FM 94.3. Podcasts are available on the radio station webpage (<https://theanswerhawaii.com/radioshow/659>). Council staff and invited guests have recently covered the following:

- Call for U.S. government to develop new high-level strategy regarding tuna fisheries in the Pacific (aka New Pacific Strategy)
- Proposed PRIMNM expansion and impacts to U.S. fisheries, and other area-based management measures
- Draft National Marine Fisheries Service bottomfish biological opinion updates
- 2023-26 AP member solicitation
- 2021 Stock Assessments and Fishery Evaluation reports
- Mariana bottomfish management species revisions and outreach efforts