

this two-year period. For reference, the average annual total catch between 2019 and 2021 was 43,792 pounds.

***At its 195th meeting, the Council will discuss and will consider taking final action on the ACL specifications for the CNMI bottomfish fishery for 2024-2025.***

## 6. Review of the Guam Marine Conservation Plan

The MCP for Guam will expire in 2023. ***At its 195th meeting, the Council will assess the MCP for agreement and approval.*** Once approved by the Council and the Secretary of Commerce, the MCP will be valid for three years. However, the plan can be adjusted at any time and resubmitted for approval.

The MSA authorizes the Secretary of State to negotiate and sign a Pacific

Insular Area Fishery Agreement (PIAFA), provided that the Secretary of Commerce and the Council concur. A PIAFA would allow foreign fishing within the 200-mile U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around American Samoa, the CNMI, Guam or the PRIA with the concurrence of the appropriate governors. Before entering into a PIAFA, the appropriate governor must develop a three-year MCP providing details on the use of any funds collected by the Secretary under the PIAFA, with the concurrence of the Council.

In addition to PIAFA funds, fines and penalties resulting from violations by foreign vessels in the EEZ around the Pacific Insular Areas are to be deposited into the local government's treasury and used to implement the respective MCP. The Council is also authorized by

the MSA to use funds from the Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund to implement MCP projects.

The MCP must be consistent with the Council's FEPs. The MSA mandates that the MCP comprise conservation and management objectives, such as Pacific Insular Area observer programs, marine and fisheries research, and conservation, education, and enforcement activities related to marine and coastal management. Education and training in sustainable marine resources development, scientific research, and conservation strategies are also required. The MCP must also include Western Pacific community-based demonstration projects to promote the management, conservation, and economic enhancement of the Pacific Insular Areas. 🐟

## Upcoming Events

**The 148th Scientific & Statistical Committee (SSC) meeting** will be held June 14 to 16, 2023, at the Council office, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI, 96813. The meeting will be in a hybrid format, with in-person participation available for SSC members and the public, or remote participation via Webex: <https://tinyurl.com/147SSCMtg>.

**Major agenda items include:** American Samoa Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) amendment for bottomfish management unit species (BMUS) revision (action item); Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) BMUS annual biological catch (ABC) specification for 2024-2025 (action item); Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) Kona crab ABC specification for 2024-2026 (action item); Uku essential fish habitat (EFH) revision options (action item); False killer whale issues review; and 2022 Annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report and recommendations review.

**The 195th meeting of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council** will be held June 27 to 29, 2023, at the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium, American Samoa Highway 001, Utulei, AS. The meeting will be in a hybrid format, with in-person participation available for Council members and the public, or remote participation via Webex: <https://tinyurl.com/194CouncilMtg>.

**Major agenda items include:** American Samoa FEP amendment for BMUS revision (action item); MHI Kona crab annual catch limit (ACL) specification and status determination criteria establishment (action items); Uku EFH revision options (action item); CNMI Bottomfish ACL options (action item); Guam Marine Conservation Plan review (action item); Hawai'i deep-set and American Samoa longline fishery final biological opinions and implementation plan review; 2022 Annual SAFE Report and recommendations review; and Research priorities and international fishery issues review.

For more information on the Webex connections, and complete agendas and meeting documents, go to [www.wpcouncil.org/meetings-calendars](http://www.wpcouncil.org/meetings-calendars).

**The Fishers Forums on “Rising Tides and Changing Times”** will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. June 27, 2023, at the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium,



American Samoa Highway 001, Utulei, AS. This free, family friendly public event includes informational tables, presentations and more. Come learn about climate change in American Samoa—how it affects fisheries, what government agencies and community partners are doing to address it, and how you can get involved. 🐟