



## Rising Tides and Changing Times: Climate Change in American Samoa



**As part of its 195th meeting** held in Tutuila, American Samoa, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council hosted a public Fishers

Forum on June 27, 2023. The Forum focused on different effects of climate change on the territory. The Rex Lee Auditorium was bustling with nearly 80 attendees interacting with 12 exhibitors from various government agencies and organizations sharing information and initiatives in progress related to the theme. For example, the American Samoa Department of Commerce gave a status update its Super Alia Project, which focuses on providing training and education to the local fishermen on sustainable fishing practices and business management. In addition, the Council had a hands-on demonstration on ocean acidification due to increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and its disruption to food webs.

Council Vice Chair for American Samoa Taulapapa Will Sword opened and emceed the event, setting the stage for an evening filled with informative presentations and discussions. National Marine Fisheries Service Assistant Administrator Janet Coit described steps the agency is taking to address challenges to coastal communities. The Council presented on climate change impacts on tuna fisheries near American Samoa, showing predictions based on various greenhouse gas emission scenarios and physiological impacts on tuna growth and development due to ocean acidification. University of Hawai'i PhD student Carla Baizeau introduced a sea-level rise viewer<sup>1</sup> via web conference, providing participants with a visual representation of the potential consequences of rising sea levels on the local coastline.

Community outreach for this event included a banner, flier distribution, and radio and social media advertisements. Many of the participants were reached by word of mouth from our local sponsors and supporting departments and agencies. Local newspapers covered the event and it was also posted on the Council's website. Items generously donated by sponsors, along with items from the Council to acknowledge participation, were raffled off to attendees. 🐟

<sup>1</sup><https://pi-casc.soest.hawaii.edu/research/research-projects/slr-viewer-american-samoa>

