



Report of the Joint Archipelagic & Pelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team Meeting

May 15, 2024

8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Hawaii)

7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (American Samoa)

4:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. + 1 day (Guam and CNMI)

1. Pelagic Plan Team Welcome and Introductions

Emily Crigler, Pelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team (PPT, or Pelagic Plan Team) Chair, opened the meeting, reviewed meeting protocols, and invited Plan Team members to introduce themselves. Present from the Pelagic Plan Team were Don Kobayashi, Reka Domokos, Felipe Carvalho, Michelle Sculley, Bryan Ishida, Jason Helyer, Rob Ahrens, T. Todd Jones, Kirsten Leong, Michael Kinney, Minling Pan, Brent Tibbatts, Jenny Suter, Phoebe Woodworth-Jefcoats, Frank Roberto, Chelsey Young, Ashley Tomita, Russell Ito, Jason Phillibotte, and Melissa Snover. Presented from the Archipelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team (APT, or Archipelagic Plan Team) were T. Todd Jones, Sean Hanser, Tye Kindinger, Marc Nadon, David O'Brien, Domingo Ochavillo, Tom Oliver, Marlowe Sabater, Eva Schemmel, Brent Tibbatts, Kisei Tanaka, Felipe Carvalho, and Angela Dela Cruz.

2. Approval of PPT Draft Agenda

T. Todd Jones, Archipelagic Plan Team Chair and Pelagic Plan Team member representing the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), noted that discussion would be held regarding data impacted by changes to the Pacific Islands Region Observer Program (PIROP) under agenda item 3.B.ii. The draft agenda for the May 2024 Pelagic Plan Team meeting was approved by consensus.

3. 2023 Archipelagic and Pelagic Annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Reports

A. Fisher Observations

Roy Morioka, Hawaii-based fisherman, provided a presentation on ongoing efforts to collect and provide observations from fishers at-sea in the annual SAFE reports. The Council recently began collecting anecdotal “on the water” information from active fishers about the region’s fisheries over the past year to systematically document empirical fisher knowledge stemming from developments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Observations are collected from fishers during quarterly Council Advisory Panel (AP) meetings and an annual summit hosted by the PIFSC Social-Ecological and Economic Systems (SEES) Program. The PIFSC annual summit was held on February 1, 2024, for Guam and the CNMI, on January 30, 2024, for Hawaii, and on January 29, 2024 for American Samoa. Generally, observations included indications of climate change and inclement weather that impacted fishing. High fuel costs limited operations in some areas, and shark depredation continued to be an issue throughout the region. In American Samoa, fishers noted a shift in gear type preference to jigging. On Guam, fishery effort and sales were affected by Typhoon Mawar destroying the GFCA. Increased military activities were noted in the CNMI, impacting fishing access. In Hawaii, it was reported that the United Fishing Agency (UFA) auction had bottomfish for only 72 days out of its 272 total days of operation.

Plan Team discussion on the review of this section included the following:

- Reef fish are being observed moving deeper, specifically toward the deeper ledge of the reef. Fishers suspect this is due to the warming of surface waters.
- The fisher observations are high quality and result in support for additional data collection.
- Relatively low catch and effort in the territories in 2023 may be due to how weather and sea conditions drive fisheries, alongside the fact that pandemic-related impacts fundamentally changed fisheries.
 - Even in Hawaii, there has been a decline in Commercial Marine Licenses (CML) being issued as well as catch since COVID-19 began in 2020.
 - The pandemic resulted in a shift from traditional markets like the UFA auction to alternate markets.
 - Hawaii fishers had to retain their catch overnight and drop it off in the morning, resulting in additional burdens.
 - There is no centralized market in American Samoa.
 - In Guam, the Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association (GFCA) was destroyed by Typhoon Mawar, prompting direct sales from fishers to restaurants and hotels.
- The numbers of days bottomfish are present at the UFA auction are not tracked over time.
 - The 2023 data stemmed from a personal effort by Morioka and Reno Young, but it should be continued into the future.
 - The Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources (HDAR) tracks UFA data for bottomfish, but it may be confidential since UFA is considered a single vendor.
 - A waiver would be required unless all bottomfish dealers are being examined.
 - The current agreement between NMFS and UFA is only for longline catch by species and economic value.
 - It would not be feasible to get waivers from the 40 to 50 individual dealers.
- The Joint Plan Teams developed a work item to look into the feasibility of expanding the existing waiver to include bottomfish to better determine bottomfish auction availability.

B. Ecosystem Considerations and Indicator Development

i. Oceanic and Climate Variables

Phoebe Woodworth-Jefcoats, PIFSC Ecosystem Sciences Division (ESD), provided updates to the climate and oceanic indicators section of the 2023 annual SAFE report. The presentation reviewed both basin-wide and pelagic-specific indicators, including atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂), oceanic pH, the Oceanic Niño Index (ONI) measuring the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO), tropical storm activity, sea surface temperature (SST), temperature at 200 to 300 meters depth, chlorophyll-*a* concentrations, and the North Pacific subtropical frontal zone (STF) and transition zone chlorophyll front (TZCF). Additional fishery-based indicators included fish community size structure, bigeye tuna weight per unit effort (WPUE), bigeye tuna recruitment index, and bigeye tuna catch rate forecast. Woodworth-Jefcoats also reported a new indicator, the North Pacific Gyre Oscillation (NPGO) index. Notable changes in indicators included the continuing exponential increase in atmospheric CO₂ to 421 ppm and commensurate decrease in oceanic pH to 8.05 based on data with a one-year lag time. In 2023, there was a transition from prevailing La Niña conditions to El Niño conditions and a negative PDO phase. Tropical storm activity was below average across the region for 2023 except in the Eastern Pacific. SST was relatively average (21.1 °C) in the area in

which the Hawaii longline fisheries operate, though there has been a steady increase year over year. Temperature at 200 to 300 m depth was also average at 11.16 °C with a minor declining trend over time. Chlorophyll-*a* concentrations were average at 0.14 mg/m³. The STF was north of average across a majority of the front, and the TZCF was north of average in the west. Estimated median phytoplankton size, which is expected to decline with climate change, was roughly average in 2023. Other fishery-based indicators generally did not indicate a recruitment pulse last year, but the bigeye tuna forecast suggests steady CPUE and WPUE should remain steady for the species over the next four years. With respect to size structure, swordfish were slightly smaller than average while bigeye tuna were slightly larger than average in 2023.

Plan Team discussion on the review of this section included the following:

- The Joint Plan Team developed a work item for Woodworth-Jefcoats to include the NPGO into the module, given that it is becoming an important indicator for longline fisheries.
- PIFSC ESD intends to determine consistency between field and satellite observations for estimated mean phytoplankton size.
 - With the shift to electronic monitoring, it could be possible for optical methods to collect phytoplankton information directly from fishing vessels.
- Purse seine fisheries do not overlap with longline fisheries such that they would be responsible for the smaller fish size observed over time for Hawaii longliners.
 - PIFSC ESD is working to incorporate purse seine catches into the forecast.
- The Plan Team noted the utility of the bigeye tuna recruitment index.
 - There may be opportunities for PIFSC ESD to utilize CEFI funds to support the bigeye tuna recruitment index, but the effort does not need to be tied to this funding going forward.
 - The Plan Team frequently inquires if there are plans to expand the index to other species or fisheries and agreed to develop a list for consideration by PIFSC ESD.

Tom Oliver, PIFSC ESD, presented updates to the climate and oceanic indicators sections of the 2023 archipelagic annual SAFE reports. Sea surface temperature (SST) continued to increase around Hawaii, American Samoa, the Mariana Archipelago, and the PRIA. These increased temperatures were associated with coral bleaching and mortality events in 2023 in all island areas except Hawaii. Trends in chlorophyll-*a* concentration and rainfall were mixed and generally consisted of weak anomalies. Sea levels continued to rise in all island areas.

Plan Team discussion on the review of this section included the following:

- The rate of sea level rise in American Samoa is likely exacerbated by local subsidence related to the 2009 earthquake. Regardless, the increased sea level brings increased threats of wave energy and erosion that may impact near-surface reefs.
- The Joint Plan Team extensively discussed integrating fishery performance and ecosystem indicator information to inform fishery-ecosystem relationships with intention of developing biologically meaningful indicators for fisheries to tie everything together beyond simple analyses.
 - The “low hanging fruit” would be to make an index of fishable conditions from satellite data using impacts from climate indicators on fishing effort. It would also be possible to model environmental (e.g., SST) impacts on species distribution.

- PIFSC ESD could engage with biosampling data for climate-informed assessment processes by considering how climate impacts growth of management species.
 - Size at maturity would be more meaningful to track against environmental conditions because it responds to changes in SST and food availability at a rapid pace.
 - Biosampling has natural gradients from north to south and with temperature in the Mariana Archipelago.
 - Kindinger is conducting collaborative research using thermal tolerance experiments on reef fishery relevant species to determine physiological responses, which may inform how populations could expand or contract based on climate forecasts.
 - The Plan Team requested to be kept informed of the outcomes.
 - The PIFSC SAP is supportive of moving forward with incorporating biosampling information linked to environmental conditions (i.e., as annual variation in growth patterns) into stock assessments as single species assessments progress.
 - After building a baseline biology model for key species, the frequency of update depends on how often new information becomes available using climate-related and life history variables – perhaps every five years.
 - Parameters for some species are variable based on where they are caught.
 - Data integration can happen in stock assessments, but that is not necessarily the only avenue by which this process can occur. Dynamic management can be implemented based on improved integration of environmental and fisheries data, potentially adjusting ACLs using harvest control rules.
 - The uku EBFM project is considering dynamic management.
 - Indicator species for functional groups can also be used.
- The Joint Plan Team supported a working group with both fisheries scientists and managers to start looking at integrating available indicators and indices with annually observed changes to better understand impacts to MUS and ECS fisheries and addressing through coordinated management.
 - When developing these scientific products, there could be a parallel effort to develop harvest control rules in pursuit of dynamic fisheries management. For example, the Mid-Atlantic region utilizes a decision tree approach.
 - The inclusion of ECS in this process must consider the authorities of the State and territories to manage species in their waters.

a. Dashboard Presentation

Woodworth-Jefcoats and Emily Conklin presented on a new pelagic climate indicator dashboard that presents the climate indicator data from the annual SAFE report on a monthly scale and in an intuitive manner. The dashboard includes general indicator summaries, data visualizations, and allows users to directly download the data. Woodworth-Jefcoats and Conklin sought feedback from the Plan Team on the utility of the dashboard and whether it would be useful to develop an archipelagic dashboard. Representatives from territorial resource management agencies emphasized the utility of this information for their respective island areas. The source code for this dashboard has also been used to help develop a life history dashboard.

The Plan Team supported a work item to develop a similar dashboard for archipelagic indicators. There is some synergy between the indicator dashboard and the online portals for the

annual SAFE reports. The online portals directly mirror the report structure and present fishery-level indicators, while the dashboard presents monthly data.

b. Discussion: Incorporating Fishery-Ecosystem Relationships

This agenda item was covered during a previous Plan Team discussion (agenda item 3.B.i).

ii. Socioeconomics

Minling Pan, PIFSC SEES Program, provided updates to the archipelagic and pelagic socioeconomics modules for the 2023 annual SAFE reports. Fuel prices across the region declined slightly in 2023. Commercial information for American Samoa and Guam BMUS were confidential last year due to fewer than three vendors reporting data. Commercial data from the CNMI indicate a much lower level of pounds sold and revenue, but during the Archipelagic Plan Team meeting, a representative from the CNMI DFW indicated that not all commercial invoices had been accounted. The average fish price in the CNMI was 4% lower than in 2022, but trip costs were 26% lower than the previous year. In Hawaii, BMUS pounds sold and revenue both increased, and price of Deep 7 bottomfish increased by 7% from 2022 to 2023. Crustacean MUS also had increased in pounds sold and revenue driven by increases for Kona crab and especially deepwater shrimp despite a decline in average shrimp price. Similar to the bottomfish fisheries, commercial information for the Guam pelagic troll fishery was confidential for 2023, and decreases in commercial data from the CNMI troll fishery were likely not representative due to outstanding commercial invoices. American Samoa small boat (i.e., troll) pelagic fisheries landed around 5,000 lbs. despite average fish price substantially decreasing. Hawaii small boats also had a relatively poor year compared to 2022 despite the 4% increase in average fish price. Hawaii longline fisheries had an increase in the amount of pounds sold but a decrease in revenue due to lower average fish prices. American Samoa longline fisheries had both decreased total landings and revenue in 2023.

Plan Team discussion on the review of this section included the following:

- The PIFSC SEES Program should include summary results from their surveys in the socioeconomics module.
- The socioeconomics module should report on Kona crab and deepwater shrimp separately given the disparate nature of the two fisheries.
 - There may be confidentiality concerns for deepwater shrimp in some years. Waivers may be utilized, but those could take a long time to process.
- The Plan Team supported an evaluation of the presented socioeconomic data to better determine what would be useful for State and jurisdictional partners.
 - This may include providing economic data alongside fishery performance, which used to be the case for the annual SAFE reports until 2015.
 - In the future, archipelagic and pelagic data will be presented separately to the Plan Teams (i.e., not during the joint session).
 - There should also be an effort to ensure consistency between numbers presented in the new territorial non-commercial data modules (i.e., revised commercial data streams) and the socioeconomic modules.
 - The Plan Team supported the formation of a working group to undertake these efforts and also determine what to do with other portions of the socioeconomic modules (e.g., the new Equity and Environmental Justice [EEJ] subsection).

- The Plan Team discussed the risks to the long-term economic data collection program, a collaborative effort between PIFSC and PIROP that has been in place for 20 years, associated with reduced observer coverage and the transition to electronic monitoring (EM). The Plan Team noted the need to maintain this data collection effort in some capacity.
 - The data collection form would not be modified (i.e., generating Paperwork Reduction Act concerns), but there needs to be a change in how the forms are delivered to vessel captains.
 - Observers could continue distributing forms to the captains.
 - Data collection is voluntary by the captain, but the Council could theoretically make a recommendation to mandate it.
 - The Council should weigh in on the value of the data and determine methods by which collection can be ensured. The Plan Teams could emphasize the importance of the data.
 - These data will be especially important now that the longline fleets are further experiencing economic hardship.
 - The Plan Team recognized the importance of the socioeconomic data collected by PIROP and recommended the Council work with NMFS to develop a method for continuing to collect this information from the Hawaii longline fishery.

a. Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Subsection

Danika Kleiber, PIFSC SEES Program, presented on the EEJ SAFE Report Workshop that can be used to inform the EEJ subsection of the Socioeconomics module. The workshop was held September 25, 2023, with participation by staff from PIFSC, PIRO, and the Council as well as State of Hawaii and jurisdictional resource management agency representatives. The purpose was to develop a short- and long-term plan for developing the EEJ subsection of the of the annual SAFE reports by exploring how the reports serve regional communities, identifying what data exist that could be presented, and identifying data that should begin to be collected. Brief discussion following the presentation focused on the availability of tools and data (e.g., poverty rate, educational attainment, and other similar metrics) to assist the territories in generating proposals to obtain funding for various projects.

b. Discussion: Overlap Between Hawaii Fishery Performance and Socioeconomic Modules

This agenda item was covered during a previous Plan Team discussion (agenda item 3.B.ii).

iii. Essential Fish Habitat

Tanaka provided updates to the essential fish habitat (EFH) section of the 2023 annual SAFE reports. There were no EFH reviews completed in 2023, but information was included in the sections regarding the revision to subadult and adult uku EFH in the Hawaii FEP associated with two new modeling products (Franklin 2021 and Tanaka et al. 2022). Additional updates were minimal and limited to new information regarding ongoing research related to the habitat of managed fishery species, for which much of the focus is on species such as uku and bigeye tuna. For example, there is an ongoing project studying the larval dispersal of uku to assess the potential connectivity of simulated uku larvae from Penguin Bank to island regions within the MHI and determine the degree of interannual variability in this connectivity.

iv. Marine Planning

Council staff provided updates to the marine planning section of the 2023 annual SAFE report. For each island area, information was added to the annual SAFE report regarding the Council's recent action to amend their FEPs to establish a management framework for commercial and research aquaculture; the new framework will be applied by the end of the year. For the Pacific Remote Island Area (PRIA), public meetings and a workshop were held over the course of 2023 regarding the proposed sanctuary, and at its 197th meeting, the Council determined that the existing fishing regulations meet the goals and objectives of the sanctuary such that additional regulations are not necessary. For the Mariana Archipelago, information was presented on active fish aggregating devices (FADs), including the lack of any active FADs around Saipan. For the proposed sanctuary in Hawaii, the Council took final action and provided fishing regulations to the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries that include provisions on commercial and non-commercial fishing, catch limits, disposition of catch, observer and Vessel Monitoring System requirements, among others. A representative from DAWR noted that the Governor of Guam created an aquaculture section at DAWR.

4. Online Portals for the Annual SAFE Reports

Remington briefly walked Plan Team members through the new socioeconomics section of the Council's online portal for the pelagic annual SAFE report, which was recently generated to mirror the SAFE report module and has not yet been published publicly. The online portal allows users of the annual SAFE report to more easily navigate and access the different sections of the report, provides data in both tabular and graphical formats, and allows users to directly download the presented data if they chose. With Plan Team approval, the pelagic socioeconomics section of the online portal would be updated with 2023 information and published on the public-facing version of the online portal this summer.

Plan Team discussion on the review of online portal included the following:

- The Joint Plan Team generally approved of the publication of the new pelagic socioeconomics section of the online portal for the annual SAFE reports.
- The Joint Plan Team suggested that no new portal sections be developed, and the current content and structure of the portals should be reviewed for various improvements.
- The portal is not heavily trafficked, but usage can be monitored using Amazon Web Services.
 - It is not possible to track the traffic going to the PDF versions of the SAFE reports.
 - Plan Team members noted the utility of the portal for their use and external purposes.

5. Plan Team Review: Working Group and Action Item Progress

A. Hawaii Non-Commercial Module

Bryan Ishida, HDAR, presented updates to the archipelagic non-commercial fishery performance module as well as the initial data generated for the pelagic non-commercial fishery performance module utilizing Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey (HMRFS) data. Non-commercial catch estimates for Deep 7 bottomfish in Hawaii could not be updated for 2023 due to changes in HMRFS implementation and catch estimation methods. However, uku data for 2023 could be presented because the same smoother and filter was not used for this species. The working group also developed a new draft module to present non-commercial data for six key pelagic species in Hawaii, including yellowfin tuna, skipjack tuna, mahimahi, ono, blue marlin, striped marlin. The working group preferentially used grand mean weight (i.e., as opposed to annual mean or 2018-2022 mean) to estimate catch stemming from the expanded number of

individuals caught. The next steps for the working group would be to revise the module, incorporate it into the annual SAFE reports, and reconvene the working group to update the summaries annually.

Ishida questioned if it would be premature to continue publishing these results in the annual SAFE reports given the variability in the HMRFS data, the intent of the MRIP surveys not to be used for species-specific monitoring, and PIFSC's ongoing efforts to review survey biases. Helyer, who also participated in the working group, noted the several different groups looking at the efficacy of HMRFS data as well as the concerns from fishers regarding HMRFS catch expansions (e.g., over 122,000 lbs. of onaga estimated to have been caught due to eight intercepts sampling 43 fish in late 2018).

Plan Team discussion on this working group update included the following:

- Concerns regarding HMRFS data are warranted given that the surveys were not designed to monitor individual species.
 - There are limited technical fixes that would improve the data.
 - Until the survey can be expanded with the intention of capturing specific species with the certainty required for single species evaluation, HMRFS is the only data source.
 - This issue is not unique to Hawaii and is prevalent nationwide.
 - The new uku catch mail survey could improve effort estimates and reduce variability. The survey instrument is nearly complete, and PIFSC will work with the fishing community to ensure survey questions are appropriate.
 - The first mailing should occur in June or July.
- HMRFS data are utilized in stock assessments for uku and Deep 7 bottomfish.
 - For uku, three year running averages are used and the model can adjust for outliers.
 - Uku management also utilizes HMRFS data to monitor total catch against the ACL.
- If presented, HMRFS data should be shown with running averages instead of point estimates.
 - Some believed that the presence of outliers should not invalidate HMRFS.
 - HMRFS data are the best data available despite being low precision.
 - Audiences typically focus on point estimates and not the nature of the uncertainty values, which are likely underestimated.
 - A five year running average would be more appropriate to present, but the minimum should be a three year average.
 - “False precision” should be omitted (i.e., round down to the thousands).
 - The data could also be presented using visual representations.
- HMRFS have value in determining convergence of fisher disposition among groups.
- Several Plan Team members did not support the presentation of HMRFS data in the annual SAFE reports given the perspectives of HDAR and the fishing community.
 - The non-commercial modules could be removed or presented with caveats.
 - There are other working groups consulting with the fishing communities and HDAR to improve non-commercial fishery monitoring and assessment through HMRFS.
 - Others Plan Team members believed that the data should be presented, at least as running averages, since they are utilized for stock assessments and ACL tracking.
- Given concerns about the HMRFS data and ongoing efforts to continue evaluating the coverage of the surveys and accuracy of the resulting data, HDAR proposed withholding reporting and allowing the Plan Team to discuss further at its intersessional meeting.

- The Plan Team also suggested that MRIP representatives attend the intersessional meeting to describe the nature of their surveys and HMRFS.

B. Automation

Woodworth-Jefcoats and Suter presented on progress by the working group in determining the feasibility of automating the yearly updates of the annual SAFE reports stemming from a Pelagic Plan Team work item in May 2023. Initial discussions included that automation would be an iterative, long-term process, but other regions have successfully implemented automation of various reports. While it is a long-term goal because current data are housed in many different repositories, there would be an upside to having a data warehouse from which all required information can be downloaded for annual updates. Regardless of automation, human input would still be required to perform QA/QC and explain data outputs. To start, the annual SAFE reports may need to be overhauled to focus on key components that can be automated. Working group members decided to create flow charts of current processes for data summarization and incorporation into the annual SAFE reports to better identify steps that can be automated. Next steps would include identifying what can be done to facilitate automation in the near future. Plan Team discussion on this working group update included that the “low hanging fruit” for this effort would be to include longer time series for fishery performance on the Council’s online portals. This would only apply to pelagic data, and approaches for archipelagic data can be further discussed at the upcoming intersessional meeting. Additionally, the working group intends to reach out to section authors to better understand what portions of their modules could be easily automated.

C. Marine Planning Module Revisions

Sean Hanser, PIRO Habitat Conservation Division (HCD), presented on progress by the working group in suggesting revisions for the Marine Planning modules of the annual SAFE reports related to an Archipelagic Plan Team work item from April 2023. The working group discussed how activities that have the potential to impact fishing operations are reported, what types of activities should be included, how cumulative impacts can be accounted for, and how the module can be streamlined overall. For Plan Team consideration and feedback, Hanser presented a revised outline of the section, which included new subsections on how non-fishing activities can impact fish and their habitat, infrastructure access, and other stressors. The working group sought Plan Team endorsement on the revised outline as well as input as to how cumulative impacts could best be represented in the module.

Plan Team discussion on this working group update included the following:

- This module is more forward looking than others to provide useful information to fishers as well as fishery managers regarding potential impacts to fishing operations.
- The Joint Plan Team generally accepted the revised outline as presented.
- The Plan Team supported additional focus on cumulative impacts and facilitating a format that best suits the presentation of these impacts.
 - Inclusion of cumulative impacts would be useful for NEPA documents.
 - A map overlaying the cumulative impacts would be ideal alongside a paragraph summary; impacts need to consider all activities that came before.
- Much of the content in the introductory sections can likely be removed or moved to appendices.

D. Regulatory Timelines

This agenda item was covered during the Pelagic Plan Team meeting on May 17, 2024.

E. Plan Team Style Guide

This agenda item was covered during the Pelagic Plan Team meeting on May 17, 2024.

6. Discussion: Archipelagic and Pelagic SAFE Report Matters

A. Uncertainty Values

This agenda item was covered during the Pelagic Plan Team meeting on May 17, 2024.

B. Non-Disclosed Data

Keith Bigelow, PIFSC, provided a brief verbal update on the proposed rule regarding guidance on data confidentiality recently published by NOAA headquarters. Questions remain regarding how confidentiality is determined once the final rule is released. Under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, data are able to be provided to many partners but not to universities or the public. , we can provide data to a lot of folks but not university or public. The availability of data for advisory bodies such as the Council's APs and SSC is also unclear given that those meetings are public. Some questions may be answered during implementation after publication of the final rule.

C. Other Items

There was no discussion under this agenda item.

7. Program Planning

A. Council Five-Year Program Plan

There was no presentation and updates would be provided to the Plan Team at future meetings.

B. MSRA Research Priorities 2025-2029

Council staff requested Plan Team members review the Council's proposed Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act (MSRA) Research Priorities for 2025 through 2029, covering each of the Council's program areas (i.e., pelagic fisheries, island fisheries, protected species, and human communities). Plan Team members were invited to provide feedback before the priorities are presented to the Council's SSC at their meeting on June 11-13, 2024.

C. Climate Ecosystems and Fisheries Initiative

Council staff briefly reviewed NOAA's Climate Ecosystems and Fisheries Initiative (CEFI) effort to build the nationwide, operational ocean modeling and decision support system needed to reduce impacts, increase resilience, and help adapt to changing ocean conditions. The system addresses four core requirements for climate-ready decision-making for marine resources, including decision-maker capability to use climate-informed advice to reduce risks and increase the resilience of resources and the people that depend on them. The Council's priority for this effort is to identify scientific products that will inform climate change scenario planning and direct associated research obligations and needs.

D. Small-Boat Fisheries

There was no presentation and updates would be provided to the Plan Team at future meetings.

8. Other Issues

There was no discussion under this agenda item.

9. Public Comment

A written public comment was submitted by Roy Morioka, which was read aloud to Plan Team members and is briefly described here. The comment generally pertained to management and associated data for MHI non-commercial fisheries. Regarding the veracity of data, Morioka questioned the number of Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) intercepts that are required statewide to ensure accurate assessment of annual MHI non-commercial catch data, considering factors such as historical catch and local weather conditions. Verification processes need to be strengthened, ensuring data from APAIS intercepts align with the bottomfish vessel registries. Regarding the use of the Best Scientific Information Available (BSIA), adherence to NMFS Procedure 01-101-10 is crucial. The Council's SSC must validate HMRFS data collection in addition to the completion of peer review. Morioka suggested caution in using HMRFS data because there are concerns that Hawaii fishers may underreport sales of their catch to avoid tax implications. This behavior has been documented in various surveys. Additionally, it is important to address whether bartered catch is accounted for during APAIS intercepts to provide a comprehensive understanding of non-commercial catch activities. With respect to uku, the lack of comprehensive data on the fishery poses limitations. Monitoring sales through the UFA offers some insight, but tracking non-commercial catch remains challenging. Understanding seasonal targeting patterns and sales behavior is necessary for a complete assessment of the fishery.

10. Discussion and Joint Plan Team Recommendations

Joint PT Recommendations:

Regarding socioeconomic data collection, the Joint Plan Teams:

- Recognizes the importance of the socioeconomic data collected by the Observer Program and recommends the Council work with NMFS to develop an approach to continue collecting this information from regional longline fisheries, maintaining current data collection at comparable levels. The Joint Plan Team notes that, as the Observer Program moves toward digital data collection and as observer coverage is reduced, collection of these economic data could be discontinued; this could have implications for monitoring the economic well-being of the region's longline fisheries going forward.

Joint PT Work Items:

Availability of BMUS in Hawaii Commercial Fisheries

- Investigate aggregating bottomfish data from all dealers in Hawaii, particularly for examining the number of days bottomfish were present at the auction relative to total days that the dealers purchased fish. Assess confidentiality and non-confidentiality issues with the preference to use time strata that results in non-confidential estimates that can be

illustrated in the annual SAFE reports. Participation from Jason Helyer, Keith Bigelow, and Jenny Suter.

Climate and Oceanic Indicators

- Ocean and Climate Variables module section author, Phoebe Woodworth-Jefcoats to include information on the North Pacific Gyre Oscillation (NPGO), which may be a dominant indicator for the longline fisheries.
- Plan Team members to brainstorm and provide other gears or fisheries into recruitment indices similar to the one for bigeye tuna as presented in the current Oceanic and Climate Indicators module for the joint intersessional meeting. Thomas Remington will facilitate Plan Team feedback.
- Forms a Working Group to investigate approaches to integrate fishery performance data and climate indicators to determine fishery-ecosystem relationships. The Working Group will provide updates to the Plan Teams at the Upcoming joint intersessional meeting. Participants to include Phoebe Woodworth-Jefcoats, Tom Oliver, Jason Helyer, Bryan Ishida, Don Kobayashi, Sean Hanser, Marlowe Sabater, David O'Brien, Lynn Rassel, Michelle Sculley, Domingo Ochavillo, Brent Tibbats, Angela Delacruz, Eva Schemmel, Marc Nadon. The Working Group will decide which efforts to undertake. Working Group initiatives may include, but are not prescribed nor limited to:
 - Developing an index of fishable conditions from available climatic and oceanic data (e.g., reviewing bad weather days that would be prohibitive for normal fishing operations).
 - Exploring approaches for incorporating variable environmental and life history data (e.g., annual variation in growth patterns) into stock assessments as the assessments continue progressing toward single species analyses.
 - Reviewing progress of Life History Program efforts to glean life history information across environmental gradients.
 - Determining the feasibility of implementing dynamic fisheries management through revised harvest control rules for both management unit species (MUS) and ecosystem component species (ECS).
 - Reviewing the outcome of ongoing studies on the physiological and behavioral responses of key fishery species to changing conditions
- Oceanic and Climate Indicator Module section author, Phoebe Woodworth-Jefcoats to work toward creating a new ecosystem indicator dashboard for archipelagic indicators.

Online Portal

- Approves the inclusion of the new Pelagic Socioeconomic section of the Council's online portal for publication following the finalization of the annual SAFE reports in the summer of 2024.
- Suggests no additions of new modules to the Council's online portal in the coming year. Instead, Plan Team members will review the portal and provide feedback at the joint intersessional meeting about how the existing framework and content can be improved. Thomas Remington will facilitate Plan Team feedback in late summer 2024.

Hawaii Non-Commercial Modules

- Excludes both archipelagic and pelagic Hawaii non-commercial modules from the 2023 annual SAFE reports due to concerns of the efficacy of HMRFS data and how readers of the reports may interpret the presentation of non-commercial fishery point estimates. The Plan Teams note that a (non-Plan Team) multi-sector stakeholder working group will continue making progress and report back at the joint intersessional meeting.
- Requests MRIP representatives be invited to present at the joint intersessional meeting on the nature of MRIP surveys and HMRFS in particular.

Automation of Annual Reports

- Current Working Group members (i.e., Jenny Suter, Lynn Rassel, Melissa Snover, Phoebe Woodworth-Jefcoats, Thomas Remington) to communicate with section authors regarding opportunities to automate portions of their respective modules.

Marine Planning Module Revisions

- Endorsed outline of revised Marine Planning Module for development and implementation in the next iteration of the annual SAFE reports.

11. Other Business and APT Closing

The Archipelagic Plan Team officially closed their meeting at the end of the day.