



Report of the Hawaii Archipelago and PRIA FEP Advisory Panel Meeting

Wednesday, September 3, 2025; 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. (HST)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Gil Kualii, Hawaii Advisory Panel Vice Chair, opened the meeting at 9:05 am. Members in attendance included Clay Tam, Khang Dang, Eddie Ebisui III, Carrie Johnston, and Kaleo Crivello. Abraham Apilado, Amanda Padilla, Len Nakano, and Nathan Tsao were excused.

Others in attendance include Zach Yamada, Asuka Ishizaki, Joshua DeMello, Mark Fitchett, Mark Mitsuyasu (Council Staff), Kenny Sullivan (California fisherman), Craig Severance (SSPC), Adam Ayers (SSPC/CIMAR), Annette Harnish (Cascadia Research Collective), Michaela Kratofil (Cascadia Research Collective/Oregon State University), Keith Kamikawa (PIRO SFD), Marlowe Sabater, Minling Pan (PIFSC), Thomas Remington (Lynker), Alex Min (PIFG), Mark Ladao, and Chloe Winter (UH Hilo Student).

2. Review of the Last AP Recommendation and Meeting

Council staff provided a review of the last AP recommendations from its meeting on May 30, 2025.

3. Council Fisheries Issues

A. SEEM Process Review Report

Adam Ayers and Craig Severance, Social Science Planning Committee, provided an overview on the review of the social, economic, ecological and management (SEEM) uncertainties analysis for further review. The SEEM analysis is a Council process that provide the fishing community with direct input into the annual catch limit setting process that complements the P* process which describes the scientific uncertainty in the stock assessment model. The draft report provided potential additions or alternatives to the SEEM process to focus on desired outcomes, implementation process, initiation, and participation strategies.

Ayers provided a summary of the input previously provided by the Hawaii AP at the informal meeting:

- asked whether imports could be part of the economic aspect of SEEM scores;
- expressed concern that informal market sales are unknown data in the BF fishery;
- said that SEEM should make identifying priority research/management questions one of the outcomes;
- mentioned that SEEM should consider other laws/regulations that impact fisheries
- explained that the loss of cumulative experience in the fishery (on the water & at PIFSC) may limit representative participation

Kualii thanked the SSPC WG for their presentation and noted that the AP did not have any further input on the process revision at this time.

B. Shortline Fishing

Mark Fitchett provided an overview of the shortline fishing meeting held in Kailua-Kona on August 23. In March 2025, the Council hosted a fishing community meeting in Kona during which an issue was raised regarding gear conflict between pelagic handline and shortline fishers. The Community requested that the Council provide further information regarding the federal management of the longline and shortline fisheries and convene future meetings to discuss the issue.

Historically, the Council has discussed potential management options for the Hawaii shortline fishery, which include establishing multiple control dates, catch limits, and a limited entry program. In each instance where the Council discusses management, the shortline fishing community asserts that it is a small fishing sector that can self-regulate without the intervention of State and Federal agencies.

At present, commercial shortline fishers that sell their fish are required to obtain a commercial marine license and are required to report their catch and activity on a monthly basis. Compared to the longline fishery, the shortline fishery is restricted to keep its gear under 1 nautical mile in length to differentiate between the two and protect the Native Hawaiian fishing practice of using kaka line.

The State of Hawaii's Commercial Marine License (CML) reporting system has collected catch data from shortline gear since 1999. However, current systems do not record detailed gear configurations, the number of hooks, or soak times, which limits the ability to assess fishing effort and its impact fully. From 2013 to 2024, there has been a growing interest among fishers who reported fishing with shortline gear, as compared to the consistent number of fishers from Cross Seamount.

An AP member said there is no federal management needed for the shortline fishery since the fishing community had the opportunity to have the conversation, and the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) has the gear type defined, and there could be discussion on the number of sets and the spools that could be used in the boat. One of the comments was on setting them in a line, which is an opportunistic technique for shortlines. Setting them in a line is a successful method along the ledge, and they should not be prevented from doing that. They should consider limiting the number of sets.

An AP member said this exercise should be written as a success story and be provided to the community as a template to address future conflicts to restore understanding on issues.

Regarding shortline fishing, the Hawaii AP

- **Recommends no federal management of the shortline fishery at this time, and**
- **Recommends the Council continue to work with NMFS, the State of Hawaii and the affected fishing community to resolve gear conflicts between shortline and small boat fishers.**

C. Shark Depredation

Zach Yamada, Council staff, provided an overview on reported shark depredation in the Hawaii small boat fishery based on the State of Hawaii commercial marine licenses (CMLs). In the first rounds of Council Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) community meetings, the fishing community outlined shark depredation as a significant issue for the Council to address. Following these meetings worked with the State of Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources to explore the current data on shark depredation. From 2010 to 2024, there was a total of 4,978 unique CMLs that reported catch across 486,933 trips. Out of those CMLs, 37.4 percent of fisheries reported at least one shark depredation event in every 20 fishing trips. Based on the fishers who report depredation, they experienced shark depredation once in every 5 trips. Based on the data provided, there are uncertainties that include underreporting and misidentification of shark species. In addition, Council staff provided an overview of the status of Pacific shark stocks, and all were under their overfishing threshold, except for the oceanic whitetip shark.

An AP member asked if the establishment of the SHARKED Act was influenced by international fishers, and fishers have their own theories that may be correlated with new local laws.

Council staff said shark depredation is a nationwide issue. The SHARKED Act establishes a task force to work with fisheries management groups to address the problem posed by shark depredation.

4. Council IRA Project Discussions

A. Scenario Planning

Mark Fitchett, Council staff, provided an update on the Council's IRA scenario planning project. The goal of the Scenario Planning Project is to identify and develop adaptive fishery management strategies that support resilient and productive fisheries in the region. Two scenario planning efforts will be conducted, one of the Hawaii and American Samoa longline fisheries, and another for the small-boat fisheries across the region. Currently, the Scenario Planning project has consulted with its Steering Committees to develop materials for anticipated workshops in November 2025. Project themes that are affecting future scenarios include: 1) climate change and changes to the natural environment, including distribution of fishery resources, 2) changes in political and governance affecting fishery management, 3) markets, 4) availability and development of fishery sector labor, 5) infrastructure changes, and 6) supplies to sustaining the fisheries.

An AP member commended staff for the proactive approach to plan for the future.

Another AP member applauded the approach, which the social science committee should be interested in, and asked if the SSPC has involvement in this process.

Craig Severance, SSPC Chair, said that another SSPC working group is considering the role of social science, and noted the SSPC could provide further input into the scenario planning process as needed.

B. Regulatory Review

Zach Yamada, Council staff, provided an update on the Council's IRA Regulatory Review project. The Regulatory Review Project aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of existing regulations and associated management systems (including reporting and monitoring) within the state/territories and the federal fishery regulations to determine how responsive the regulatory framework is towards climate change. The review outcomes will identify gaps in management, inefficient regulations, and potential regulatory conflicts that would inhibit the community's ability to adapt to evolving conditions. This project continues efforts toward ecosystem-based fishery management as climate change creates greater uncertainty by ensuring FEP flexibility to anticipate and address changes to the fishery. By systematically evaluating and enhancing our regulatory framework, this project will streamline regulations, improve efficiency, and develop a coordinated approach to federally managed fisheries. Outcomes from the regulatory review will be used to support revisions and improvements to fishery regulations, Fishery Ecosystem Plans and Annual SAFE reports.

The goal of this project is to have a coordinated regulatory approach to fisheries shared between state/territorial and federal jurisdictions under the Council's Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs) that is responsive to a changing climate and supports underserved communities. The contractor for the Regulatory Review project kicked off discussions in late July/early August and is currently working with the steering committee to develop a action plan and timeline.

An AP member suggested that the review consider regulations to propose that impact shark depredation within the fishing community.

Another AP member noted, based on conversations with advisors from various councils, that one of the key issues is the MSA's rigidity, which lacks the flexibility needed for fisheries managers.

C. Protected Species

Asuka Ishizaki, Council staff, provided an update on the IRA Protected Species Project. The Council will convene two workshops to improve understanding of how climate and ecosystem drivers may impact protected species interaction rates in our region's fisheries, explore potential scenarios in which climate change impacts protected species interactions in fisheries, and identify potential strategies and frameworks for addressing those impacts. The project will primarily focus on the Hawaii and American Samoa longline fisheries, for which significant components of their management under the Council's Pelagic FEP are associated with monitoring and reducing impacts to a broad range of protected species including sea turtles, seabirds, marine mammals, sharks and rays. The first workshop is tentatively scheduled for October 2025, and the second workshop is anticipated to occur in early 2026.

D. Community Consultation/Vocation Training

Alex Min

Mark Mitsuyasu, Council staff, provided an overview and update of the IRA Community Engagement Project, which aims to leverage the Council's consultation processes to listen, learn, and understand the impacts and issues communities face as they adapt to evolving ecosystems and changing climate. This project builds on the Council's consultation efforts to empower communities and provide them with the knowledge, tools, and resources to participate in their

fisheries and engage in the federal management process. The first round of community engagement meetings was held between February and June 2025, and the second round of meetings was initiated in August 2025. The community consultation, which began with Hawaii Island, serves as the backbone, with each subsequent round responding to points raised in the previous meeting. Shortline and sharks are the first steps, and we will need to build them out.

Small boat scenario planning will occur in the second year, be readjusted, and require AP feedback. Scenario planning is a future planning process that examines management and facilitates quicker decision-making, aligning with the current regulatory landscape, including the FEP and its integration with local jurisdiction regulations. When you consider the bottomfish fishery, there was work with the State of Hawaii through coordinated management and if we ran into the same issue, that process is not in place. During the review process, determine the alignment. Scenario planning for the future and regulatory review looks backwards. PS was pulled to allow the scenario planning to focus on non-protected species issues and what the drivers are for the fisheries.

An AP member said from a macro perspective, non-government organizations perpetuate the mindset of the ecology of the fishery. The Council opened her eyes to how the closed areas are growing through a system. The systems in closed systems do not create a new threshold, and people often fail to realize that this lack of development does not contribute to building the fish population. We need to do better at defining what an ideal and closed area is. Like a goldfish, it does not grow beyond its tank, and people think that when we fish that we do not return and that is not the case. When you consider that it outlines the goal and provides sufficient education on what the goal entails.

An AP member noted that many aspects appeared lopsided, with closed areas for protected species that may not be accurate, and we need to roll with the punches. If one kona crab fisher reports, then the fishery will shut down. If we continue this path, people will stop reporting, and without reports, the fishery could shut down. Looking for more flexibility rather than relying on closures and considering changes that are happening more quickly. A presentation on turtle interactions with the shallow set was correlated with a bumper crop of the population. Need to adapt as science tries to catch up.

An AP member noted that reporting by people provides a reflection of the fishery. If it is demonstrated that the fishery can handle higher catch rates, it can continue to manage fisheries in a sustainable model.

An AP member stated that it has been proven that we can collaborate with the agencies. The way forward, however, depends on our interrelationship with the other agencies governing fisheries, and we need to improve our partnering efforts.

Alex Min, Pacific Islands Fisheries Group, provided an overview on the vocational fishing program that will start on September 10. Based on over 40 applicants, 6 were selected to participate in the training that includes courses on CPR, different fishing techniques, fisheries management, and financial planning.

5. Hawaii AP Action Plan Planning for 2025

Zach Yamada, Council staff, provided an overview and status on the AP action plan for 2025. Based on the listed projects, the AP will focus on its FishMaps project to identify and map traditional fishing grounds to provide fishers the opportunity to consult with potential marine spatial planning. During the second rounds of Hawaii community meetings, the AP will have a table to engage the fishing community.

An AP provided an update on the SmartFAD working group that met on August 1. Based on the discussion, the working group is exploring opportunities for funding opportunities and pathways to improve the state FAD program.

6. Other Business

There was no other business discussion

7. Public Comment

Craig Severance, Hilo fisherman, said there was a FAD workshop a decade ago with The Pacific Community participants. The technology they used for inshore FADs was more expensive and have the WG should consider existing information and technology to consider.

Adam Ayers provided an update that PIFSC is conducting surveys on the Uku pilot surveys and Rob Ahrens will be conducting a MSE and they are figuring out what are their goals in the fishery.

8. Discussion and Recommendations

Regarding shortline fishing, the Hawaii AP

- ***Recommends no federal management of the shortline fishery at this time, and***
- ***Recommends the Council continue to work with NMFS, the State of Hawaii and the affected fishing community to resolve gear conflicts between shortline and small boat fishers.***

The meeting ended at 11:00 a.m.