

About the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council was established by Congress in 1976 to monitor, develop and regulate fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ)—waters 3 to 200 miles offshore—surrounding the State of Hawaii, the Territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the US possessions of Baker, Howland, Jarvis, Johnston and Wake Islands; Palmyra and Midway Atolls; and Kingman Reef. This area comprises about half of the US EEZ.

The Council meets routinely throughout the year to develop and amend fishery management plans (FMPs) for the Western Pacific Region. The FMPs regulate gear types, seasonal and area closures, quotas, bycatch, protected species interactions, and permitting, monitoring and reporting schemes. Decisions made by the Council are transmitted to the Secretary of Commerce for approval.

The Council is made up of 16 members. The 13 voting members include the head of fisheries from Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa and CNMI; one individual from each of these areas and four at-large representatives (nominated by the respective governor and selected by the Secretary of Commerce); and the regional administrator of the Pacific Islands Regional Office, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Voting members serve three-year terms, with a maximum of three consecutive terms. A regional US Fish and Wildlife representative, commandant of the 14th District of the US Coast Guard, and a representative of the US Department of State make up the non-voting members.

The Council draws upon the services of knowledgeable people from a variety of state and federal agencies, universities and the public who serve on the following panels and committees, among others:

- **Scientific and Statistical Committee:** 16 economists, biologists, sociologists and other experts knowledgeable about the technical aspects of fisheries in the Western Pacific Region.
- **Advisory Panels:** 56 recreational and commercial fishermen, charter boat operators, buyers, sellers, consumers and other experts knowledgeable about the fisheries in the region, including indigenous fisheries.
- **Plan Teams:** 38 biologists and other experts on the region's bottomfish and seamount groundfish, coral reef ecosystem, crustaceans, pelagics and precious coral fisheries.
- **Other Advisory Committees:** numerous experts in sea turtles, marine mammals, marine protected areas, etc.



For more information:

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In addition, the Council has a full-time executive director and a staff to assist in writing fishery management plans, conducting public hearings and coordinating council, committee and advisory panel meetings. The Council secretariat is headquartered in Honolulu, with satellite offices in Guam, American Samoa and CNMI.

What We Have Achieved

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council can point proudly to a 30-year record of sound management and an environmentally responsible longline fishery.

- Prohibited drift gillnet fishing, bottom trawling and other non-discriminatory and destructive fishing methods throughout our 1.5 million square nautical miles jurisdiction
- Pioneered satellite-monitoring of fishing vessels
- Limited entry into the Hawaii- and America Samoa-based longline fisheries, and required fishers, captains and owners attend yearly protected species workshops
- Prohibited longline fishing in areas inhabited by albatross, Hawaiian monk seals and spawning swordfish in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and in areas frequented by non-longline fishing boats near the main Hawaiian Islands and Guam
- Required fishing vessels to keep logbooks and carry observers to monitor bycatch and protected species interactions
- Maintains sea turtle, seabird and marine mammal special advisory committees to assist the Council in making the best management decisions
- Organized international protected species workshops to exchange information and generate momentum for collaborative research, conservation and management
- Implemented a sea turtle conservation programs to protect turtles at critical stages of their life history, at nesting beaches and coastal foraging habitats, to increase survivorship by reducing anthropogenic and environmental impacts
- Supported research and development of improved gear technology which reduces and/or eliminates fishery interactions with protected species
- Organized international conferences and workshops to transfer best practice gear technology and essential information to reduce protected species interactions and promote environmentally responsible longline fisheries throughout the Pacific Ocean

- Co-hosted international conferences to reduce the worldwide problem of marine debris to assist in reducing impacts to essential habitats and protected species
- Assisted the United States in hosting four of the seven conferences that concluded in September 2000 in Honolulu, with the first international fishery management convention for the central and western Pacific which established the Western and Central Pacific Fishery Commission to manage migratory fish stocks within the region.

Council Members (2005)

AMERICAN SAMOA

Frank W. McCoy Sr., Stephen Haleck, Ray Tulafono

GUAM

Manuel Duenas, Adrienne Loerzel

HAWAII

Edwin Ebisui, Frank Farm Jr., Sean Martin, Roy Morioka (chair), Peter Young

CNMI

Benigno Sablan, Richard Seman

NMFS

Bill Robinson

NON-VOTING

Bill Gibbons-Fly, Jerry Leinecke, RAdm. Charles D. Wurster

