

Pacific Coral Reef Fishery Management Workshop *Workshop Summary*

The Pacific Coral Reef Fishery Management Workshop was held in Guam on October 8 and 9, 2003. The workshop was sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service and was held under the auspices of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force. The workshop was developed by a steering committee comprised of Federal and Territorial coral reef managers from American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam, in response to the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Management Initiative.

The goal of this regional workshop was to allow island resource managers, fisheries educators, enforcement personnel, and stakeholders to identify successful coral reef fishery management approaches. The workshop provided an open forum to exchange information and discuss current coral reef fishery management practices in the islands, to continue a broader discussion on the development and implementation of local action strategies, and to enhance stakeholder involvement in management activities. Throughout the workshop, attendees were able to provide recommendations related to fishery management activities, better communication between stakeholders and managers, and improved coordination of coral reef conservation efforts in these Pacific Islands. These recommendations will be used by Federal and Territorial agencies to improve local action strategy and management efforts.

The participants of the workshop heard fourteen presentations and participated in four breakout sessions. Over 125 State, Territorial, Commonwealth, and Federal managers, fishermen, academics, students, representatives from non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders participated in workshop discussions and breakout sessions.

Each day began with a series of presentations that fell into four main themes, followed by a question and answer period for each presentation.

1. *Management Tools and Data Acquisition:* There are a variety of tools available for coral reef fishery management some developed through research and others based on cultural traditions. These two presentations explored integrating traditional management tools with currently used scientific methods of coral reef fishery management. They also emphasized the importance of both accurate data acquisition and participation of the fishing community in acquiring these data.
2. *Status of Coral Reef Fishery Management:* Coral reef fisheries support and sustain local communities by providing food and income. As population dynamics and fishing methods have changed, fishing pressure

and extraction have increased in many regions throughout the U.S. To address the concerns related to over-harvesting due to increased fishing pressure and extraction, American Samoa, NMI, and Guam have taken different approaches to managing their coral reef resources. During this session local resource managers from each jurisdiction provided an overview of the status of fishery management activities, along with challenges and future opportunities.

3. *Jurisdictional Issues:* Each jurisdiction has unique issues concerning Federal, Territorial/Commonwealth, and international boundaries and regulations and these issues have direct impacts on the fishing communities in the islands. During this session, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council provided information about its role in fisheries management within the Territories and the Commonwealth, while the local managers provided overviews of their jurisdictional concerns.
4. *Law Enforcement:* Effective law enforcement is an essential part of successful management and conservation of fishery resources. This session provided background information on enforcement activities and the challenges faced by enforcement officers within American Samoa, NMI, and Guam.

Each afternoon, there were four breakout sessions to discuss: 1) uses of data, 2) ecosystem assessment, 3) long-term monitoring strategies, 4) management choices, 5) cultural/community issues, 6) increasing stakeholder involvement, 7) local action strategies, and 8) other impacts to coral. These breakout sessions provided an opportunity for participants to voice concerns and provide recommendations to the local resource managers. Recurring themes throughout these breakout discussions included the need for:

- Increasing stakeholder participation in the decision process;
- Increasing outreach to the fishing community at large including research findings, management actions, and education material; and
- Building partnerships with the communities.

While the workshop focused on coral reef fisheries management activities, it was widely recognized that other impacts, such as non-point source pollution, play a critical role in the degradation of coral reef habitats and need to be simultaneously addressed.