

Science, Service, Stewardship



NOAA

**NOAA
FISHERIES
SERVICE**



NOAA Fisheries Service

manages, **conserves**, and
protects **fish, whales, dolphins,**
sea turtles, and other living
marine resources in the oceans

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and conserving our nation's living marine resources through scientific research, management, enforcement, and habitat conservation. The mission of the agency is to ensure stewardship of living marine resources through science-based conservation and management, and the promotion of healthy ecosystems for the benefit of all Americans.

NOAA Fisheries Service is an agency of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), within the Department of Commerce.



Conserving and Managing our Nation's Resources

Our oceans and coasts are among the most productive and beautiful in the world — more than half of America's population lives within 50 miles of our shorelines.

Through effective conservation and management, the nation's living marine resources provide significant social and economic benefits. Annually, commercial and recreational fisheries harvest billions of pounds of fresh, healthy seafood and generate billions of dollars to the nation's economy.

In fact, the sale of domestically caught fish and shellfish by the commercial fishing industry was approximately \$4.0 billion, making the U.S. the fifth-largest producer of seafood in the world. By producing and marketing a variety of fishery products for domestic and foreign markets, the commercial marine fishing industry contributed \$35.1 billion (in value added) to the U.S. Gross National Product (GNP). Likewise, recreational fishing activities contribute almost an equal amount to the nation's GNP.



NOAA Fisheries Service is the federal agency responsible for the stewardship of the nation's living marine resources and their habitat within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. Around the world, from the North to South Pole, along the coast and in the open ocean, our scientists and resource managers work to ensure the conservation, protection, and management of living marine resources and their habitats for long-term sustainable use by current and future generations.

Implementing Management Regulations

NOAA Fisheries Service's science and management is guided by more than 100 federal laws that were established to ensure our marine resources are properly managed and conserved through regulations and enforcement activities. The primary laws that govern these resources are the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

Under these laws, NOAA Fisheries Service promotes sustainable fisheries and prevents lost economic potential associated with overfishing by limiting the total harvest in every fishery through the establishment of annual catch limits. We are committed to securing America's future seafood supply by keeping American fishermen working through well-managed wild fish stocks.

**NOAA Fisheries Service establishes
domestic catch limits
to end overfishing**

NOAA Fisheries Service **protects** and **restores** habitat essential for healthy **ecosystems**

Modernizing Recreational Data Collection

NOAA Fisheries Service recognizes the value of recreational fisheries to the U.S. economy and its contributions to outdoor family activities. Our scientists and managers are collaborating with partners in the recreational fishing industry to design a new data collection program for our nation's marine recreational fisheries.

Complementing Wild Stocks with Aquaculture

NOAA Fisheries Service is at the forefront of a national initiative to increase the production of seafood through aquaculture. Sustainable aquaculture can help meet rising seafood demand, reduce dependence on imports, support new jobs and businesses in U.S. coastal communities, increase regional food supply and security, and help restore depleted commercial and recreational marine species.

Protecting Marine Mammals and Endangered Species

NOAA Fisheries Service protects marine mammals and threatened and endangered species under its jurisdiction, including whales, dolphins, invertebrates, sea lions, sea turtles, sea birds, acropora corals, and several species of salmon and sturgeon. Many of these species are affected by fishing, habitat degradation, poor water quality, and other human impacts as well as environmental changes. Several innovative programs — recovery and restoration activities, ship strike strategies, stranding networks, and rehabilitation efforts — are contributing to the recovery of species to healthy population levels.

Achieving World-Class Science

NOAA Fisheries Service provides world-class science that continues to improve with robust scientific peer reviews and the continued development of an ecosystem approach to managing our nation's marine resources. We conduct cooperative marine research with a number of federal and state agencies, universities, fishermen, and others to help develop sound fishery management measures.



Working Globally Toward Healthy and Productive Oceans

NOAA Fisheries Service takes a leadership role in numerous international fishery management and science organizations. We are an active member of the International Whaling Commission and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. We have strong domestic programs that give us a platform and the credibility to engage and persuade other countries to take a stronger conservation approach to fisheries management to end overfishing throughout the world's oceans. In addition, we lead efforts to curtail illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing throughout the world.

Maintaining and Restoring Healthy Ecosystems

NOAA Fisheries Service continues to protect and restore habitat essential for healthy ecosystems and productive, sustainable fisheries. Coastal habitats, such as estuaries and reefs, provide food and shelter for marine life during important stages of their life cycles. Scientists and managers observe threats to these fragile ecosystems by monitoring development, water, and sediment contamination and other natural and human-caused activities. The agency maintains the health of marine ecosystems by leading research, reviewing coastal development, and recommending measures to offset impacts.

Embracing Partnerships

NOAA Fisheries Service scientists and managers balance competing interests and work collaboratively with partners, constituents, and stakeholders to develop management strategies that rebuild and maintain our marine resources at sustainable levels. Our partners include the nation's eight fishery management councils, state government agencies, regional fisheries commissions, commercial and recreational fishing industries, environmental organizations, tribal entities, and others. These partners provide advice and guidance on conservation and management of the nation's marine resources.

NOAA Fisheries Service helps countries
take a **stronger** conservation
approach to fisheries

NOAA





We value your interest, questions, and comments.
Please feel free to contact us.

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