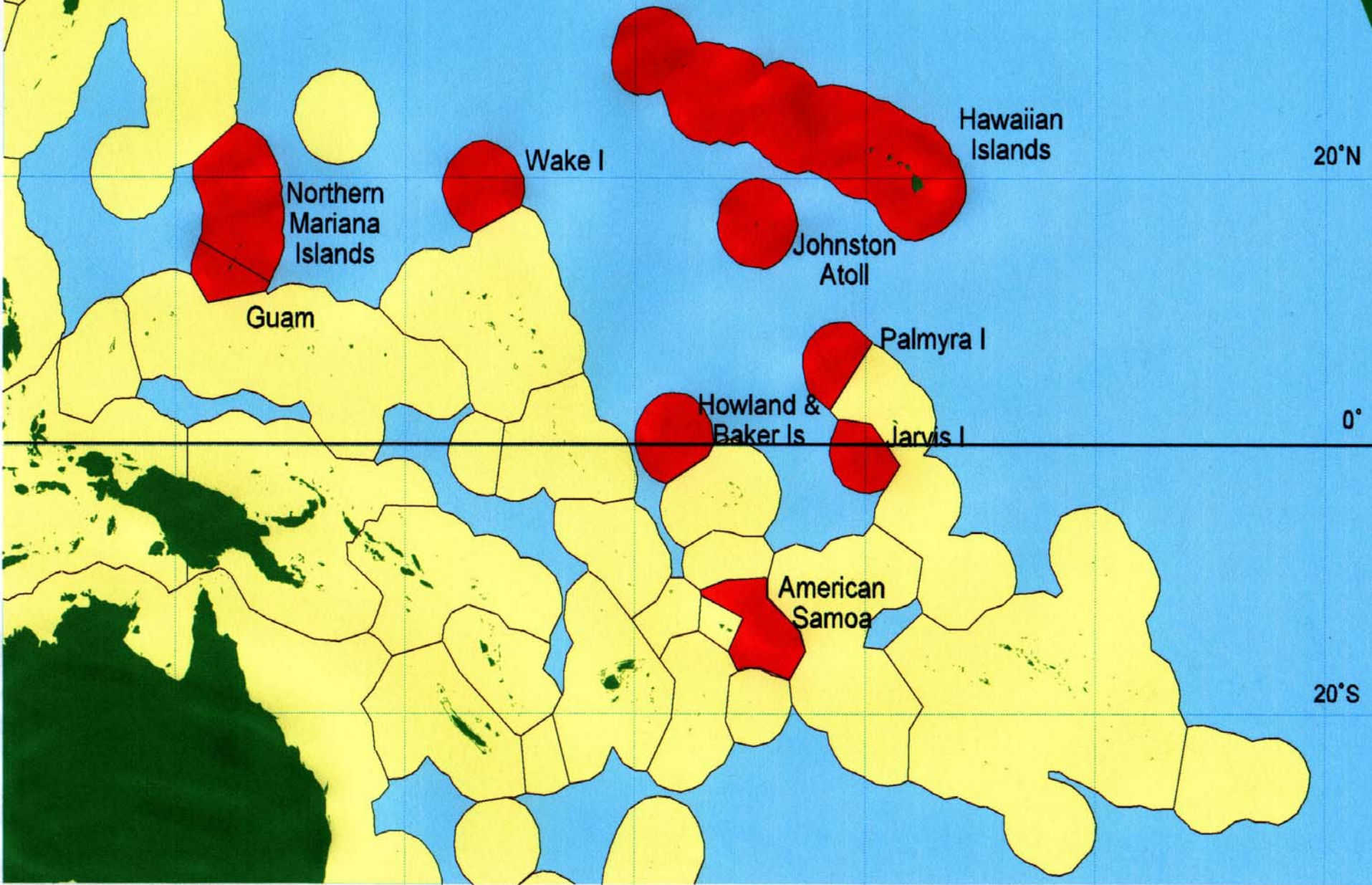


Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

Presentation to the MPA FAC
Maui September 2004

160°E 180° 160°W 140°W

WPRFMC Manages 1.5 Million Square Miles of US EEZ Waters



WPRFMC Regional Fisheries

- ◆ Pelagic: Fishery Management Unit Species include Billfish, Tuna, Sharks, Mahi mahi, Wahoo, Opah, Pomfret & Snake Mackerels
- ◆ The largest and third largest canneries in the world operate in Pago Pago, American Samoa
- ◆ Demersal: the Council has developed Fishery Management Plans for Coral Reef Ecosystems, Bottomfish & Seamount Groundfish, Crustaceans and Precious Corals

Culturally Distinct

- ◆ The Western and Central Pacific Region is culturally and ecologically distinct from the USA.
- ◆ Islands groups within the region are culturally and ecologically distinct from each other.



Communities in the Pacific

- ◆ It's about FOOD
- ◆ Island fishing communities live with, and are dependent upon, their marine resources.
- ◆ Island communities have to pay more for imports, and so self-sufficiency or being able to supplement purchased food with what they catch, is for some a necessity.



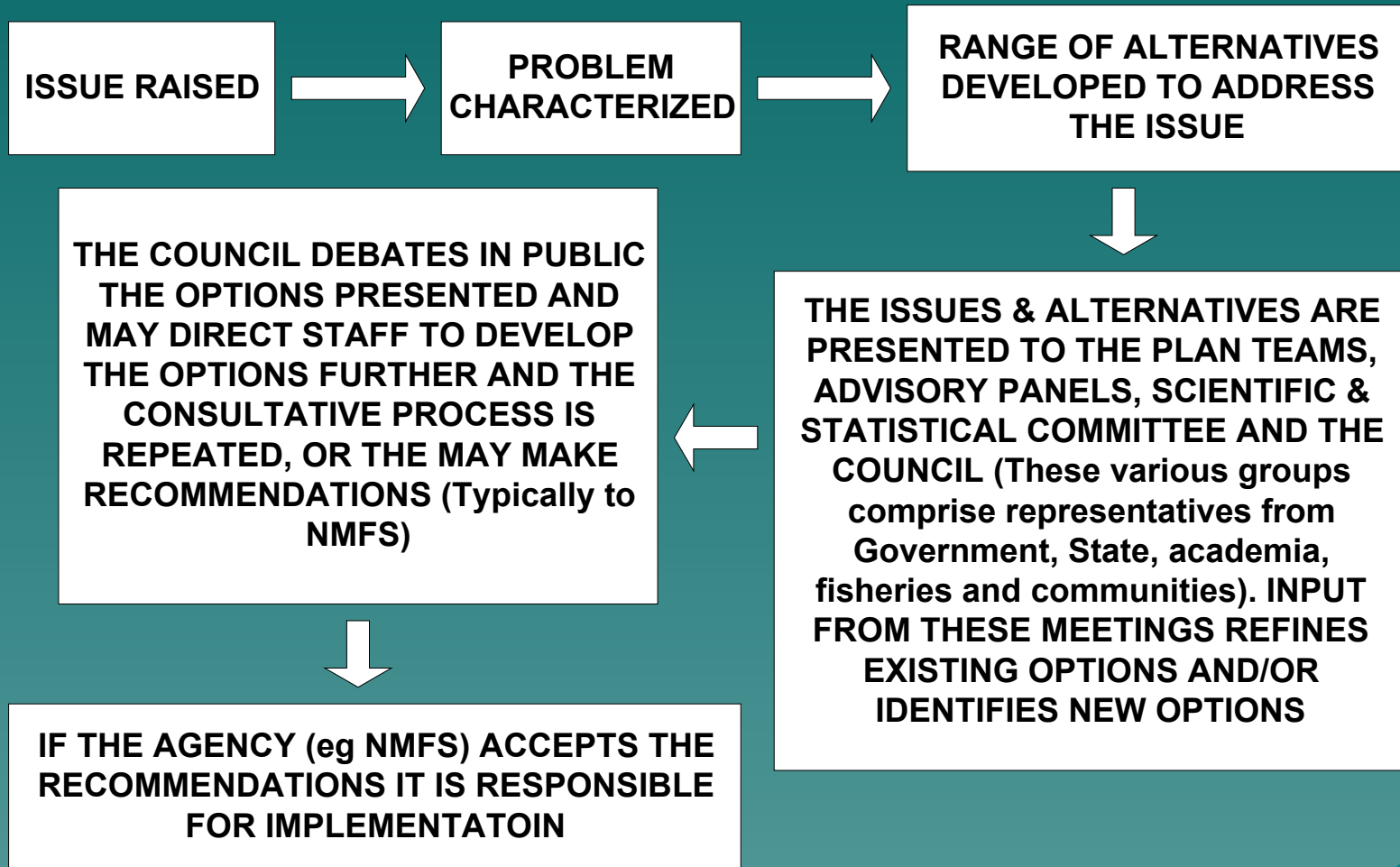
Community Involvement

- ◆ Given the relatively low level of federal/state assessment and monitoring of natural marine resources in the Central and Western Pacific, an invaluable source of data can be found at the community level.
- ◆ In American Samoa, with the support of DMWR, using the experiences of Samoa, community based MPAs have been established through a village process.
- ◆ Hawaiians have traditionally based their fishing on natural rhythms and cycles. 'Kupuna' (elders) are a repository of the community experience and wisdom. These traditions are not static, but evolve over time. (refer Current Vol. 20 No 3, 2004)

Community Buy-in Enhances Compliance

- ◆ Government agencies do not have the resources to enforce regulations throughout the region.
- ◆ Community involvement, with good outreach can lead to effective peer pressure on offenders to stop offending.
- ◆ Community participation and commitment, is VITAL – without this element MPA initiatives are very likely to fail and will need to be revisited at some point in the future.

COUNCIL PROCESS

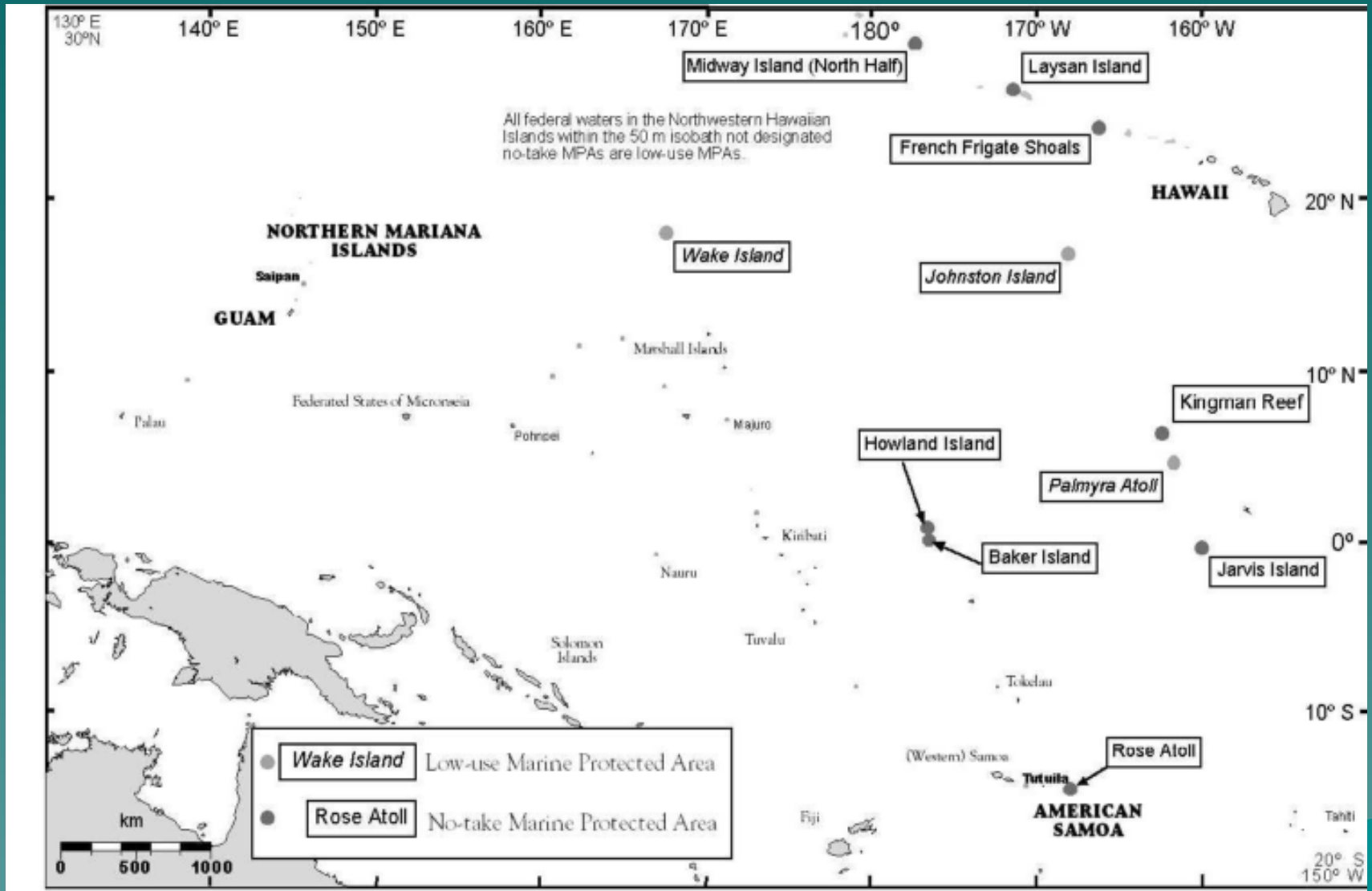


Extract from WP Council MPA Policy

The Council believes that:

- ◆ It is important to work cooperatively and collaboratively with all relevant agencies;
- ◆ MPAs are a useful tool for dealing with a number of fishery management issues;
- ◆ The size, nature and location of MPAs are important factors which may be viewed differently by different user groups and constituents
- ◆ Fishery management needs under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and the appropriateness and effectiveness of various MPAs may differ among fisheries and geographic areas; and
- ◆ No-take reserves are a subset of MPAs

Coral Reef Ecosystem MPAs - Central & Western Pacific



The NWHIs [Midway, Laysan & FF Shoals] MPAs disapproved due to E.O.s 13178 & 13196

Council & Other Agencies

◆ The Humpback Whale Sanctuary

- The Council has been involved and worked closely with the designation process from the early 90's.
- The Council is a voting member on the Sanctuary Advisory Committee
- The Council and H.W.S. work together on outreach

◆ NWHI Reserve

- The NWHI islands are described as pristine – this after more than 25 years of management under the WPRFMC. e.g. the Council established a lobster closure 0-10 fathoms around all the NWHIs to act as a refugia. (Incidentally a similar refugia to protect lobster stocks is established for 20 nmis around Laysan)
- The Council has attended every meeting of the RAC (except one) since it's inception in 2000, but is not a voting member.

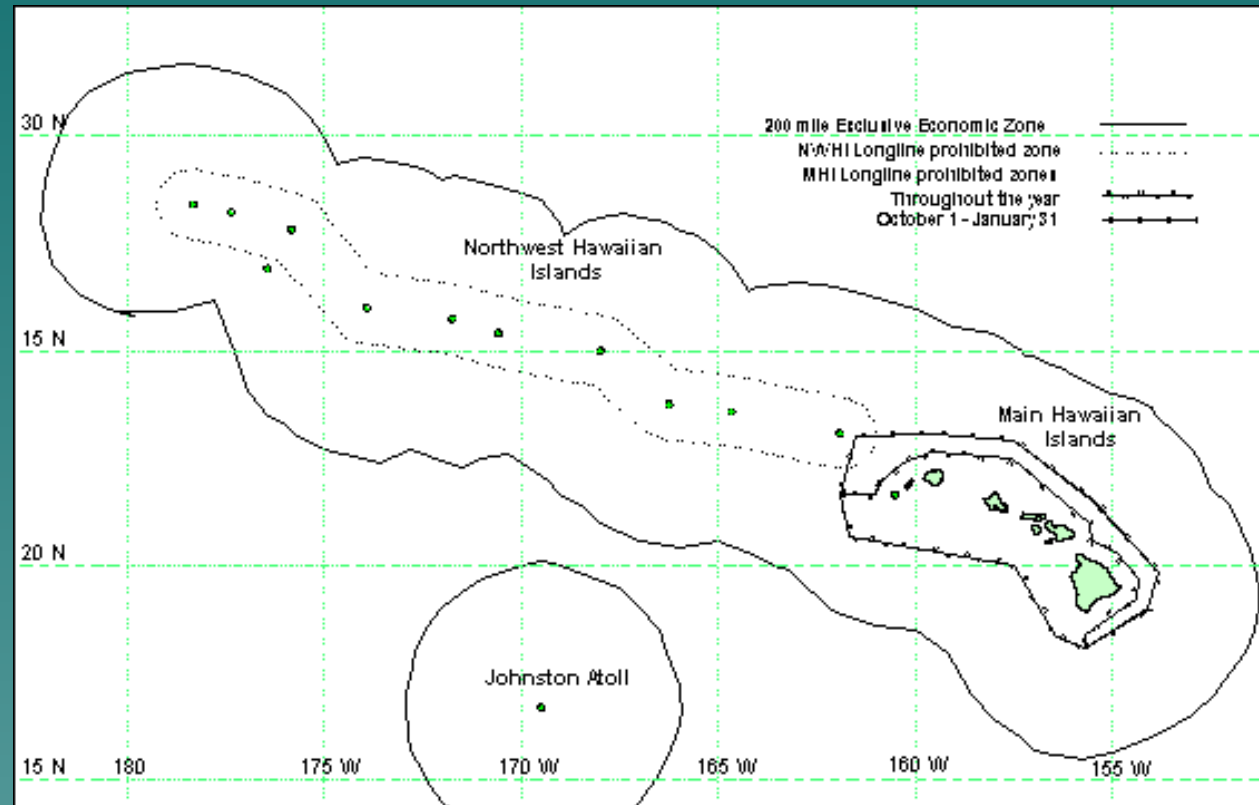
Strengths of the Fishery Management Council Process

- ◆ The Council approach under the Magnuson-Stevens Act uses the best available science, is transparent and inclusive, requiring public scoping to identify & define issues. Scoping is also used to disseminate details of potential Council actions and debate those actions with the public.
- ◆ Under the Council system the process of marine resource management is ongoing, flexible and adaptive

Longline Fishery Area Closures

The Council recommends area closures to address various issues

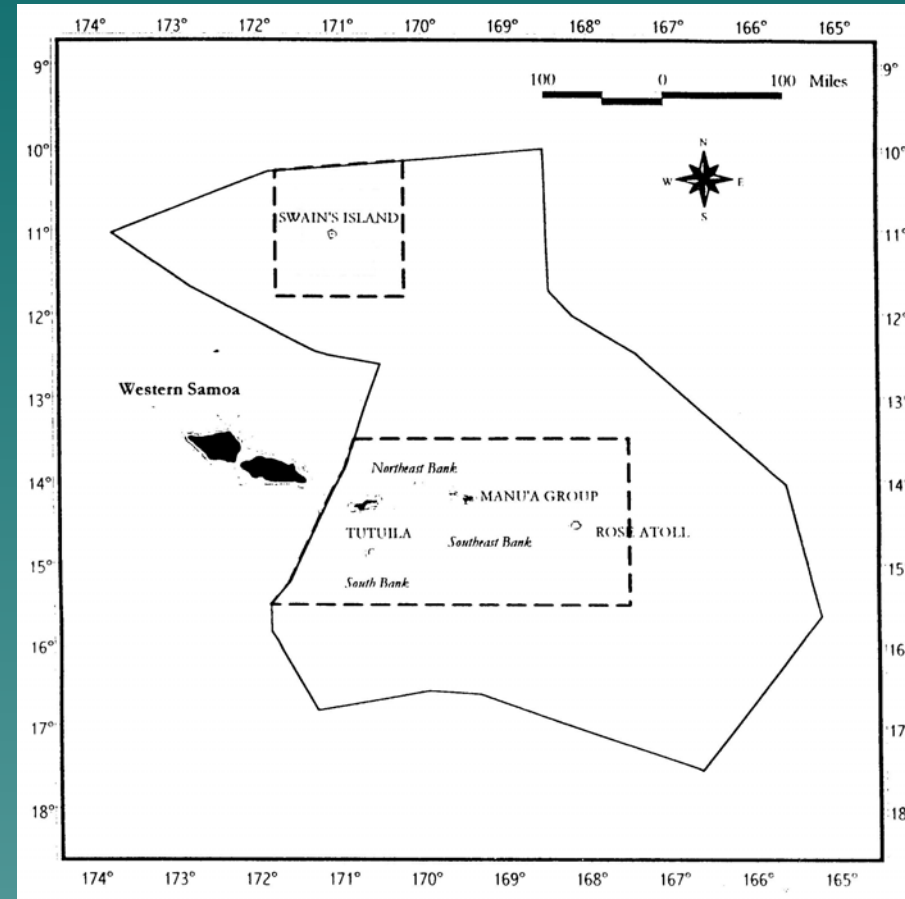
- ◆ Protected Species in the NWHI
- ◆ Gear conflicts - troll and handline fisheries near the MHI
- ◆ A 50nmi area closure for Guam and it's offshore banks



50 nm Closure American Samoa

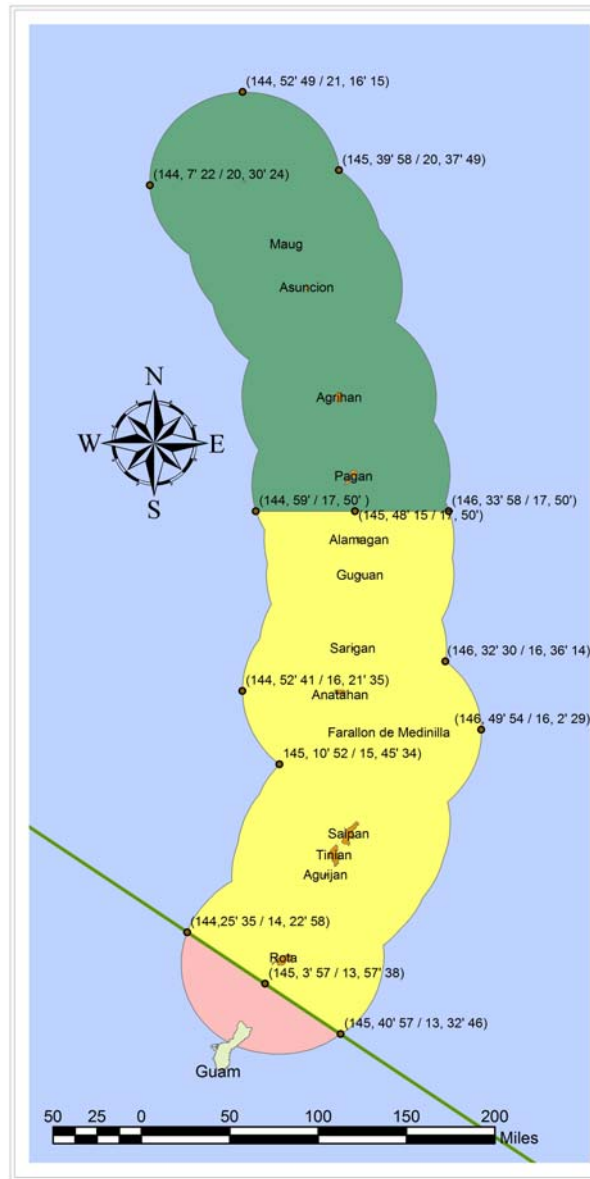
Large vessels, over 50 feet are excluded from fishing within 50 nmi of shore, this:

- ◆ Reduces gear conflict
- ◆ Encourages smaller boats to stay relatively close to shore for safety reasons, and,
- ◆ Coincidentally supports those members of the fishing community (typically American Samoans) who cannot afford a larger vessel



Work in Progress

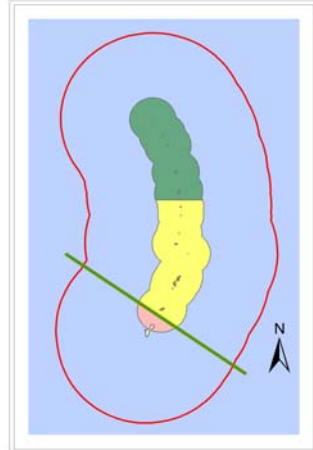
- ◆ To mitigate against potential transferred effects of management measures in Guam, a 50 nmi closure for bottomfish boats over 30 feet is proposed for CNMI
- ◆ The closure would apply only to the main inhabited islands to ensure a sustainable bottomfish fishery for local small boats
- ◆ Vessels 30 foot and over would still be able to fish in the relatively underutilized the northern part of CNMI



Proposed Vessel Boundaries: Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



Data produced by Western Pacific Fishery Management Council
Cartographer: Evan Weinberg



Legend

- Guam Rota Boundary
- Guam
- Northern Mariana Islands
- 50 Mile Boundary**
- Vessels over 30' permitted
- Vessels over 30' prohibited
- Guam waters overlap
- 200 Mile EEZ

Take Home Messages

- ◆ The Council Process is a success story because it depends upon consensus and involves all interested parties
- ◆ Fishery management must be adaptive and include a range of tools such as a suite of MPA options
- ◆ In the Pacific it's about communities and food

IT'S ALL ABOUT COMMUNITIES AND FOOD

