

**NOAA Fisheries Service**

**Pacific Islands Region**

# **Strategic Plan**

**for the Conservation and Management of  
Marine Resources in the Pacific Islands Region**

***2005 – 2010***



U.S. Department of Commerce  
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service





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## **I. Introduction and Purpose**

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to facilitate, expand, and improve the research, conservation, management, and administration of the Pacific Islands region's marine resources. This plan will guide the activities of four offices through the establishment of a coordinated plan to achieve our shared goals and objectives. Progress towards achieving these goals and objectives through 2010 will be tracked through periodic comprehensive performance reviews and via milestones established in the associated Action Plans (see Section V). This plan does not attempt to incorporate all of the activities undertaken by each office but instead focuses on those areas in which the four offices have shared or overlapping goals and objectives.

In April 2003, the NOAA Fisheries Service (also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service) transferred the responsibility for managing the marine resources in federal waters surrounding the U. S. Pacific Islands from the Southwest Regional Office and Southwest Fisheries Science Center, based in Long Beach and La Jolla, California, respectively, to the newly established Pacific Islands Regional Office and Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center based in Honolulu, Hawaii. The fishery management responsibilities of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council in Honolulu continue.

Four offices collaboratively support the conservation and management of marine fisheries, protected species, and marine habitats in the region - the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), the Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO), the Pacific Islands Division of the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE), and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (Council). For the purposes of this plan, the four offices are collectively referred to as the Pacific Islands Region.

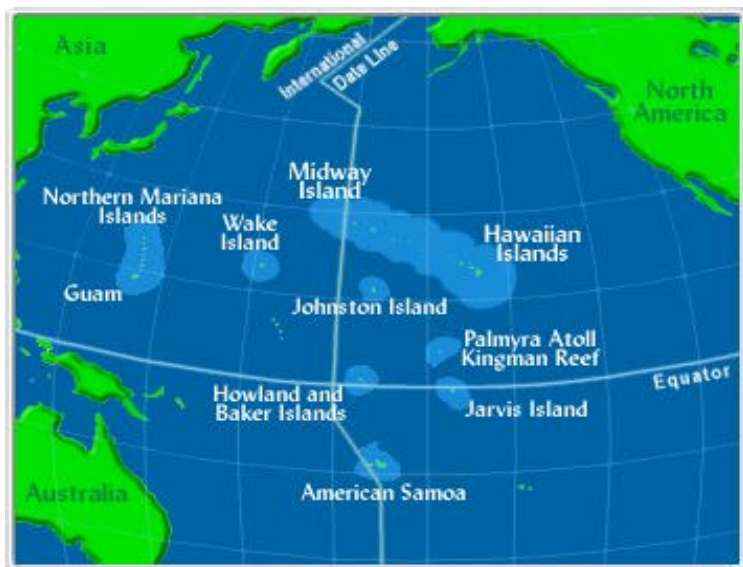
Working together, these offices are committed to employing regional expertise to provide improved customer service and stewardship of living marine resources within this expansive geographic region. The Pacific Islands Region's jurisdiction includes activities in both domestic and international waters, with a focus on managing fisheries based in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Pacific remote island areas (Kingman Reef, Howland, Baker, Jarvis and Wake Islands, and Johnston, Midway and Palmyra Atolls.)

This Strategic Plan provides an integrated overview of a science-based approach to marine resource conservation and management in the Pacific Islands Region and the scientific enterprise on which such management depends. It also includes a strong commitment to public outreach and the involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process. The goals and objectives outlined here also reflect the NOAA national mission, with appropriate acknowledgments of the unique features that characterize this region. Finally, this plan is consistent with the purposes, policies and requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and other laws governing our conservation and management mandates.

Production of this plan has involved extensive consultation with staff and involved stakeholders. Early recognition that stakeholder input was necessary for the development of a successful strategic plan led to confidential interviews with 30 stakeholders in the region. These stakeholders represented a cross-section of environmental groups, natural resource management and enforcement agencies at the state, territorial, federal and international levels as well as fishing interests, including commercial, recreational and subsistence fishermen located throughout the region. In 2003 and 2004, staff members from the four offices participated in a series of workshops to first develop and then refine the plan. Subsequent stakeholder workshops were convened in 2004 to provide feedback on the plans progress and solicit additional input. The outcomes of the staff workshops, stakeholder interviews, and stakeholder workshops have been carefully considered in the formulation of this plan. Concur, Inc. an environmental consulting firm facilitated all stages of the plan's development and provided strategic planning advice to the region's steering committee.

This plan reflects the input of many people with many different perspectives. It is a living document, and all readers should provide input now, and over the years of this plan. It articulates a vision for actions needed to conserve and manage the region's marine resources, as well as helping to define the human and financial requirements to accomplish those activities. This plan will be reviewed annually, and amended as needed to meet the changing status and needs of the region and its inhabitants.

## **NOAA Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Region**



Bound by the Hawaiian Archipelago in the north, American Samoa and U. S. Pacific remote island areas (PRIAs) in the south, and the Marianas Archipelago, including Guam in the west, the Pacific Islands Region encompasses the largest geographical management area within both the NOAA Fisheries Service and the regional fishery management council system.

The total area of the U. S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) waters included in the region is more than 1.5 million square nautical miles, roughly equal to all the remaining U. S. EEZ waters surrounding the continental U. S., including Alaska.

The *Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center* (PIFSC) provides scientific research and advice to marine resource managers, user groups and other stakeholders. Work at the Science Center focuses on three areas: fisheries, coral reefs, and protected species research. The Science Center conducts biological, ecological, oceanographic, and socio-economic research in support of the Council's five fishery management plans. Research and analysis of the resulting data support fisheries policy and management, and recovery efforts of the Hawaiian monk seal and sea turtles.

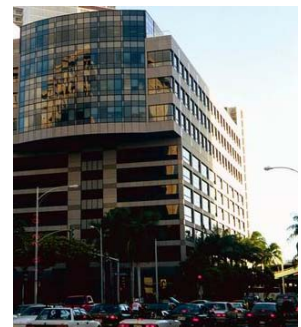


The Science Center with its main facility located adjacent to the campus of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, conducts cooperative studies with a variety of federal and state agencies, universities, and private organizations. It includes a staff of more than 160 researchers.

The Science Center also operates a research facility at Kewalo basin where researchers conduct hands on work with sea turtles, monk seals, and other marine organisms. Additional staff conducts research at the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center in Aiea. At-sea research is supported by the NOAA research vessel *OSCAR ELTON SETTE*.



Located in downtown Honolulu, the *Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO)* is responsible for assisting the Council in the development of fishery management plans and amendments, drafting and implementing federal fishery regulations, issuing federal fishing permits, and monitoring fisheries through its observer program. Other major responsibilities include the conservation and recovery of protected species, the preservation and restoration of marine habitat, and the coordination with international organizations to implement and monitor fishery agreements and treaties. PIRO has one field office located in Pago Pago, American Samoa, and staff located in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.





The NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) enforces a range of federal marine resource regulations through a combination of at-sea, dockside, and remote surveillance programs, combined with educational outreach to resource users. The ***Pacific Islands Division*** of OLE is located in the Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole Federal Building in downtown Honolulu, and has field offices in American Samoa and Guam.

Also located in downtown Honolulu, the ***Western Pacific Fishery Management Council*** (Council) is one of eight regional councils in the United States operating under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The main task of the Council is to protect fishery resources and the marine ecosystem while maintaining opportunities for domestic fishing at ecologically sustainable levels. To accomplish this, the Council monitors fisheries within the region, and prepares and modifies fishery management plans as needed.



The Council has thirteen voting and three non-voting members. Half of the members are citizens appointed by the U. S. Secretary of Commerce to represent the fishing and related community interests in the Region. The other members are designated state, territorial, and federal officials with fishery management responsibilities. In addition to its staff in Honolulu, the Council has island coordinators located in American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



## II. Vision for the Future

The Pacific Islands Region's strategic planning process begins with a vision of the future that we are trying to enhance through the combined activities of the NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center and Regional Office, the NOAA Pacific Islands Division of the Office for Law Enforcement, and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council. The goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan reflect those of NOAA nationally but are tailored to the unique cultural, geographical, and ecological features that characterize the people and living marine resources of this vast area.

**Our vision for this region is to achieve:**

*Healthy marine ecosystems that provide for stability in fishery resources, recovery of endangered and threatened marine species, and enhanced opportunities for commercial, recreational, and cultural activities in the marine environment.*

To achieve this vision, we will:

- Develop an integrated and comprehensive science-based approach to marine resource management, with the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center becoming a world-class science and research facility producing science and research for all of NOAA in this region.
- Foster greater coordination among the Pacific Islands Region's offices, island governments and our international partners, as well as a range of non-governmental science and conservation partners, by expanding our management and science presence throughout all of the islands and by providing leadership in international negotiations throughout the region.
- Enhance cooperation among the Pacific Islands Region's offices, our NOAA sister agencies, other resource management peer agencies, the fishing community, coastal communities and environmental groups to ensure that planning and policies move forward in a coordinated and integrated fashion.
- Dramatically increase our community involvement and public outreach by providing more and better information on marine resource issues and conditions and by increasing avenues for public participation in our management, conservation and science enterprises.
- Ensure sufficient human capacity, facilities and funding to meet our goals and provide long-lasting and satisfying careers for all of our employees.

Please join us as we move toward achieving this vision.

### III. Goals and Objectives

Twelve goals guide the activities of the new Pacific Islands Region, and within those goals are a number of specific objectives through which to measure progress. These twelve goals cover the three main program areas of NOAA Fisheries Service – habitat conservation, protected resources and sustainable fisheries – and an ecosystem approach to meeting those goals.

**Goal 1: Implement conservation and management measures based on *ecosystem* principles and scientific research**

- Objective 1. Implement appropriate conservation and management measures for geographically based ecosystems throughout the Pacific Islands Region.
- Objective 2. Expand current research and monitoring regarding ecosystem conditions, relationships and status indicators.
- Objective 3. Reduce and mitigate impacts of bycatch associated with commercial and recreational fisheries.
- Objective 4. Collaborate with other federal and Pacific islands governments and offices to achieve effective ecosystem conservation and management.

**Goal 2: Conserve and enhance recovery of *protected marine species***

- Objective 1. Conserve and manage populations of sea turtles for recovery throughout the Pacific.
- Objective 2. Conserve and manage populations of Hawaiian monk seals for recovery in Hawaii.
- Objective 3. Conserve and manage populations of other marine mammals in the Pacific Islands Region.
- Objective 4. Support the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the conservation and management of populations of protected seabirds in the Pacific.
- Objective 5. Coordinate with other NOAA and peer agencies to conserve and enhance recovery of protected marine species.
- Objective 6. Expand our scientific understanding of sea turtle, monk seal, cetacean and other protected species populations and behaviors.

**Goal 3: Conserve and manage *fisheries* using science-based management and, as appropriate, traditional and community-based management approaches**

- Objective 1. Build grass roots support for and participation in fishery research, conservation and management throughout the region.
- Objective 2. Support and work collaboratively with local authorities and communities in managing near-shore and off-shore fisheries.
- Objective 3. Assure the integrity of scientific information used in conservation and management decision making and seek ways to reduce scientific uncertainty.
- Objective 4. Ensure that scientific research is designed to minimize short-term impacts and avoid long-term harm to marine species or habitat to the extent possible.
- Objective 5. Ensure transparency and accountability in fisheries conservation and management decisions and actions.

**Goal 4: Conserve, protect and restore marine *habitat* and coastal ecosystems**

- Objective 1. Implement broad-based scientific research programs on the marine habitat throughout the region.
- Objective 2. Increase partnerships with other federal and local authorities, fishery participants and local communities to maintain sustainable coastal ecosystems.
- Objective 3. Ensure that all proposed federal actions in coastal habitats eliminate or reduce potential negative environmental impacts on the marine habitat.

**Goal 5: Support *international* cooperation in the conservation and management of pelagic ecosystems**

- Objective 1. Lead U.S. representation in international agreements for the conservation and management of pelagic resources in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.
- Objective 2. Increase international education and outreach, and collaboration concerning techniques to reduce and mitigate bycatch, especially bycatch of protected species.
- Objective 3. Provide information on reducing fishery-related and other sources of marine debris to international fisheries forums.
- Objective 4. Increase research and access to scientific information to support international conservation and management of pelagic fisheries.

**Goal 6: Maximize the quality, accessibility and timeliness of *information* in support of sustainable marine ecosystem management**

- Objective 1. Improve fisheries and ecosystem monitoring, including coordination across the Pacific basin.
- Objective 2. Make cost-effective improvements to the accuracy, precision and timeliness of collected data.
- Objective 3. Develop data management practices to ensure that databases are useful, fully documented, transparent and easily available to appropriate parties.
- Objective 4. Improve current data processing and transmission systems.
- Objective 5. Improve the coordination of data management and timely accessibility to enhance data sharing.
- Objective 6. Pursue cooperative research with fishers as a means of accessing needed data.

**Goal 7: Integrate *social, economic and cultural* information and understanding of traditional knowledge and practice into sustainable marine ecosystem management**

- Objective 1. Encourage and enhance the collection and exchange of social, economic and cultural information regarding fisheries and other human involvement in marine ecosystems, between the public and resource managers.
- Objective 2. Increase understanding of trade-offs in policy decisions related to both market and non-market values (such as recreational fishing and sociocultural values).
- Objective 3. Develop mechanisms for comprehensive data collection on human uses and valuation of marine ecosystems.

**Goal 8: Expand support and education concerning good *stewardship* of sustainable marine ecosystems**

- Objective 1. Increase outreach to work cooperatively with and support individuals and organizations to improve good stewardship practices.
- Objective 2. Increase fishery participation by indigenous people and communities by providing information regarding marine resource issues, conditions and research results to all marine resource users on a regular basis.
- Objective 3. Increase communication with island residents concerning scientific research results, good stewardship principles and scientific principles, with targeted communications to address potential language and cultural barriers.
- Objective 4. Increase education regarding good stewardship principles and the scientific basis for such practices.

**Goal 9: Support successful conservation and management of living marine resources through effective *enforcement* strategies**

- Objective 1. Create partnerships and other means to cost-effectively enhance enforcement strategies, including partnerships to promote voluntary compliance.
- Objective 2. Expand the range and use of innovative enforcement tools.
- Objective 3. Ensure consistency in the treatment of all persons through objective decisions and equitable policies.
- Objective 4. Support strategies for effective monitoring, control and surveillance to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
- Objective 5. Promote the establishment of an entity to oversee international marketing of marine resources.

**Goal 10: Integrate the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (*NEPA*) into sustainable marine ecosystem management**

- Objective 1. Increase staff expertise concerning NEPA processes and requirements in the decision-making process, including the early identification of issues.
- Objective 2. Increase and coordinate information available for NEPA analyses and integrate this information into fishery management, protected species recovery, habitat conservation and research planning.

**Goal 11: Provide appropriate and effective staffing and *administrative support* for sustainable marine ecosystem management**

- Objective 1. Consider new organizational structures to address issues relevant to staff morale and development.
- Objective 2. Improve the technological structure for administration and information sharing.
- Objective 3. Improve facilities management to enhance the working environment for Pacific Islands Region staff and accessibility to the public.
- Objective 4. Improve coordination and planning within administrative, information technology and other service-oriented functions.

**Goal 12: Promote and improve *safety and security* for both fishery participants and Region staff**

- Objective 1. Increase safety at sea for fishery participants and other marine resource users.
- Objective 2. Improve workplace safety and security for staff in the office, laboratory and field environments.

## IV. Links to Other NOAA Strategic Plans

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide an integrated overview of a science-based approach to marine resource conservation and management for the Pacific Islands Region. Successful implementation of this plan relies on similar plans at the Department and Agency levels. The Department of Commerce, NOAA and the NOAA Fisheries Service have developed strategic plans to guide Department and Agency efforts over the next five years.

In general, NOAA's mission *to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our Nation's economic, social, and environmental needs* falls under Goal 3 of the Department of Commerce plan.

NOAA has established four mission goals and a mission support goal:

1. Protect, restore and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through an **ecosystem** approach to management
2. Understand **climate** variability and change to enhance society's ability to plan and respond
3. Serve society's needs for **weather** and water information
4. Support the nation's commerce with information for safe, efficient, and environmentally sound **transportation**
5. Provide critical **support** for NOAA's mission

All of the Line Offices within NOAA (i.e. NOAA Fisheries Service, Weather Service, Ocean Service, etc.) have developed Strategic Plans to support these five NOAA goals. This Strategic Plan directly supports the NOAA Fisheries Service Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010.

Most of the NOAA Fisheries Service Strategic Plan activities support NOAA's Ecosystem goal; and accordingly, so do most of the goals in the Pacific Islands Region. We also provide agency-wide services for NOAA's mission support goal. Some regional activities support the Climate goal.

*NOAA Goal* – Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through an **ecosystem** approach to management

PIR Goal 1 – Implement conservation and management measures based on *ecosystem* principles and scientific research

PIR Goal 2 – Conserve and enhance recovery of *protected marine species*

PIR Goal 3 – Conserve and manage *fisheries* using science-based management and, as appropriate, traditional and community-based management approaches

PIR Goal 4 – Conserve, protect and restore marine *habitat* and coastal ecosystems

PIR Goal 10 – Integrate the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (*NEPA*) into sustainable marine ecosystem management

*NOAA Goal* - Provide critical **support** for NOAA's mission

PIR Goal 11 – Provide appropriate and effective staffing and *administrative support* for sustainable marine ecosystem management

PIR Goal 12 – Promote and improve *safety and security* for both fishery participants and Region staff

In an effort to build specific strengths, NOAA has identified five core capabilities called **cross-cutting priorities** that are essential to support its mission goals. The Pacific Islands Region's Strategic Plan incorporates these priorities as illustrated below.

*NOAA Priority* - Developing, Valuing, and Sustaining a World-Class Workforce

PIR Goal 11 – Provide appropriate and effective staffing and *administrative support* for sustainable marine ecosystem management

PIR Goal 12 – Promote and improve *safety and security* for both fishery participants and Region staff

*NOAA Priority* - Integrating Global Environmental Observation and Data Management

PIR Goal 6 – Maximize the quality, accessibility and timeliness of *information* in support of sustainable marine ecosystem management

*NOAA Priority* - Ensuring Sound, State-of-the-Art Research

PIR Goal 3 – Conserve and manage *fisheries* using science-based management and, as appropriate, traditional and community-based management approaches

PIR Goal 7 – Integrate *social, economic and cultural* information and understanding of traditional knowledge and practice into sustainable marine ecosystem management

*NOAA Priority* - Promoting Environmental Literacy

PIR Goal 8 – Expand support and education concerning good *stewardship* of sustainable marine ecosystems

PIR Goal 9 – Support successful conservation and management of living marine resources through effective *enforcement* strategies

*NOAA Priority* - Leading International Activities

PIR Goal 5 – Support *international* cooperation in the conservation and management of pelagic ecosystems

There is a direct relationship between the goals of NOAA, the NOAA Fisheries Service Strategic Plan Activities; and the goals and objectives of this plan. From this closely linked Strategic Plan, each office will collaborate to develop goal-oriented action plans, operating protocols, where required, as well as individual office performance plans which will be used in the ongoing review of this plan.

## **V. Implementing Strategy / Action Plans**

The successful achievement of these goals and objectives requires that the four offices of the Pacific Islands Region work together and take coordinated actions. As part of the process to produce this plan, staff members from the four offices participated in a two-day workshop to develop action plans for each objective under every goal, leading to over 100 draft action plans.

The implementation of each action plan begins with the establishment of an action team consisting of Region staff, as well as representatives from other agencies and stakeholders as appropriate. Each action team is responsible for finalizing a detailed action plan, which includes a timeline of activities, as well as identifying those parties responsible for each activity. Following review, approval and funding, the action teams are then responsible for the completion of action plans as specified.

Progress on the implementation of the action plans will be a key part of the annual review of the Strategic Plan.



## **VI. Operating Protocols**

To improve inter- and intra- office coordination and planning, the Pacific Islands Region staff identified program areas requiring further delineation of operating protocols to facilitate effective coordination and collaboration among offices responsible for the management of the region's marine resources.

Teams of key staff personnel met several times in 2003 and 2004, to review current policies and practices, identify problem areas and draft protocols to facilitate or improve coordination. When approved, the staff will carry out their program responsibilities in accordance with these protocols. Staff will review each protocol periodically to ensure its effectiveness, and make modifications as appropriate.

The Operating Protocols include specific approaches to the following issues:

1. Preparation of FMP and Regulatory Documents
2. Development of Policy
3. Development of Recovery Plans
4. Prioritizing Research Needs
5. Enforcement Policy and Issues
6. Data Management – Maintaining Data Confidentiality
  - Handling Observer Data
  - Fisheries Monitoring
  - Information requests/sharing
7. International Management (including domestic allocation)
8. Habitat Conservation and Restoration
9. Urgent Research, Conservation, or Management Needs
10. Public Communications – Conferences, Workshops, and Meetings
11. Community Development/Demonstration Projects
12. Avoiding and Responding to Litigation

## VII. Budget

This Strategic Plan will be integrated into the planning, budgeting and execution processes by helping to prioritize how the organizations will use current and future resources to achieve identified goals. In this way the Strategic Plan guides budget preparation decisions and action plans. Currently, the four offices in the Pacific Islands Region have a combined budget of approximately \$45 million and employ about 208 federal and other long-term professional staff. The primary source of non-federal staff is through the University of Hawaii’s Joint Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Research (JIMAR) which is a cooperative program with NOAA.

The majority of the Region’s funding comes through NOAA’s core budget, primarily under the Ecosystem goal led by the NOAA Fisheries Service, as well as through special Congressional appropriations including NOAA’s matrix-managed Coral Reef Conservation Program led by the NOAA Ocean Service. The Council receives its funding through a series of cooperative agreements with NOAA that are administered by the Pacific Islands Regional Office. A significant portion of the funding described here is awarded to a variety of State and Territory agencies, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and community and private enterprises to accomplish specific projects in support of these goals and objectives.

NOAA’s Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution System (PPBES) is a formal, systematic structure for making decisions on policy, strategy, capability development and resource allocation to accomplish NOAA’s mission. It is a cyclical process containing three distinct, but interrelated phases: planning, programming and budgeting. However, FY07 is the first budgeting cycle in which the new Pacific Islands Region has had formal input into the PPBES.

As an early part of the Region’s strategic planning process, the fiscal and personnel resources needed to support the new Region were identified and summarized in the Summary Strategic Plan as a future needs requirement of over 300 staff and over \$73 million. The following summarizes the existing resources and identifies the estimated future annual requirement to accomplish the goals and objectives of this Strategic Plan

	Funding Level (\$ in thousands)	Staff Level
Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center	21,600	132
Pacific Islands Regional Office	14,980	51
Pacific Islands Division – Office of Law Enforcement	1,500	16
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council	5,000	15
FY04 Totals	43,080	214
Total Future Requirements	~ 73,000	330

Subsequently, the offices have refined and integrated these requirements into the NOAA PPBES process, including new initiatives specific to this Region, as well as various Headquarters initiatives. (e.g. Regulatory Streamlining Project, Stock Assessment Improvement Program, Marine Mammal Initiative).

While the overall budget outlay for the Pacific Islands Region represents a significant investment by the public in living marine resource research, conservation and management, further resources are required to meet our mission in this region. In some cases, active collaboration with agency partners, e.g., the NOAA Ocean Service, or with academic partners, e.g., the University of Hawaii's Institute of Marine Biology or the National Science Foundation can help achieve programmatic and operational efficiencies in meeting these requirements.



## **VIII. Contacts**

**Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center**  
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Honolulu, HI 96814  
(808) 944-2200  
[swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/pir/](http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/pir/)

**Pacific Islands Division – NMFS OLE**  
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 7-118  
Honolulu, HI 96850  
(808) 541-2727

**Western Pacific Fisheries Management Council**  
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 522-8220  
[www.wpcouncil.org](http://www.wpcouncil.org)

## Glossary

**Biodiversity**—The variability among living organisms from all sources including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (Biodiversity Convention).

**Bycatch**—Fish which are harvested in a fishery but which are not sold or kept for personal use, and includes economic discards and regulatory discards, but not fish released alive under a recreational catch and release fishery management program (MSFCMA).

**Ecosystem**—A geographically specified system of organisms (including humans), the environment and the processes that control its dynamics.

**Ecosystem Approach to Management**—Management that is adaptive, is specified geographically, takes into account ecosystem knowledge and uncertainties, considers multiple external influences and strives to balance diverse social objectives.

**Endangered Species Act (ESA)** —A statute enacted in 1973 to conserve species and the ecosystems on which they depend. Species at risk of extinction are listed as “threatened” or “endangered,” or as “candidates” for listings. Recovery plans are prepared to identify threats to species and the actions necessary to remove the threats.

**Environment**—The biological, chemical, physical and social conditions that surround organisms.

**Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)** —Waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding or growth to maturity (MSFCMA).

**Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** —Area which extends from the seaward boundaries of the coastal states (3 nautical miles, in most cases) to 200 miles off the coast of the United States. Within this area, the United States exercises sovereign rights and exclusive fishery management authority over all fish and all Continental Shelf fishery resources.

**Fishery**—One or more stocks of fish which can be treated as a unit for purposes of conservation and management and which are identified on the basis of geographical, scientific, technical, recreational and economic characteristics; and any fishing for such stocks (MSFCMA).

**Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA)** —A statute enacted primarily to establish an Exclusive Economic Zone (see definition above), and to create a conservation and management structure for U.S. fisheries. Originally passed in 1976 as the FCMA, it was amended in 1996 to include new provisions to enhance the conservation of fisheries.

**Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)**—A statute enacted in 1972 to protect marine mammals and their habitat. These include whales, dolphins, seals and many others.

**Overfishing**—A rate or level of fishing mortality that jeopardizes the capacity of a fishery to produce the maximum sustainable yield on a continuing basis (MSFCMA).

**Protected Species**—Any species protected by either the ESA or the MMPA. This includes all threatened, endangered and candidate species, as well as all cetaceans and pinnipeds excluding walruses.

**Stock (of fish)**—A species, subspecies, geographical grouping or other category of fish capable of management as a unit (MSFCMA).







# NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE

## VISION

An informed society that uses a comprehensive understanding of the role of the oceans, coasts, and atmosphere in the global ecosystem to make the best social and economic decisions

## SUPPORTING THE

# NOAA STRATEGIC PLAN

## MISSION

To understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our Nation's economic, social, and environmental needs



## NOAA GOALS

**ECOSYSTEMS**  
Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through an ecosystems approach to management.

**HABITAT CORALS**  
COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES  
PROTECTED SPECIES  
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT  
AQUACULTURE  
ENFORCEMENT  
ECOSYSTEM OBSERVATIONS  
ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH

**CLIMATE**  
Understand climate variability and change to enhance society's ability to plan and respond.

**CLIMATE OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS**  
CLIMATE FORCING  
CLIMATE PREDICTIONS AND PROJECTIONS  
CLIMATE AND ECOSYSTEMS  
REGIONAL DECISION SUPPORT

**WEATHER and WATER**  
Serve society's needs for weather and water information.

**LOCAL FORECASTS AND WARNINGS**  
COASTS, ESTUARIES, AND OCEANS  
SPACE WEATHER  
HYDROLOGY  
AIR QUALITY  
ENVIRONMENTAL MODELING  
WEATHER WATER SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INFUSION

**COMMERCE and TRANSPORTATION**  
Support the Nation's commerce with information for safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation.

**MARINE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**  
AVIATION WEATHER  
MARINE WEATHER  
GEODESY  
NOAA EMERGENCY RESPONSE  
COMMERCIAL AND REMOTE SENSING LICENSING  
SURFACE WEATHER

**SUPPORTING NOAA'S MISSION**  
Provide critical support for NOAA's mission.

**GEOSTATIONARY SATELLITE ACQUISITION**  
POLAR SATELLITE ACQUISITION  
SATELLITE SERVICES  
AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT  
FLEET REPLACEMENT  
MARINE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE  
AIRCRAFT SERVICES  
NOAA HEADQUARTERS  
LINE OFFICE HEADQUARTERS  
HOMELAND SECURITY  
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES  
FINANCIAL SERVICES  
WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT  
ACQUISITIONS AND GRANTS  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES  
FACILITIES

## NOAA PROGRAMS

*Programs NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE Directly Supports*

*Mission Support Programs  
Require Support From All  
NOAA Line And Staff Offices*