



# **Cultural Fishing Practices**

**The Fagasa Story**

**By**

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**Culture we are referring to the pattern of development reflected in society's system of knowledge, ideology, values, laws, and day-to-day ritual.**

**Samoans rely on narrative stories handed down orally, from generation to generation to provide stability and understanding of the unknown.**

**Religion and mythology were interwoven in Samoan culture; and local legends and genealogies were preserved in song, chants, and narrative stories.**





**As a result of one of these narrative stories, I would like to share with you an event which occurs in the village of Fagasa.**

**Fagasa is a village on the northern coast of Tutuila Island (main island of American Samoa). This village is considered privileged and blessed to be able to harvest schools of akule (mackerel) at any given time of the year due to the following village events.**



# Sequence of Events

1. **Swimming, fishing, or any boating activity is restricted.**
2. **Initiating hollering “Eiiiiiii” a call that would last about 4 seconds in interval and that will precipitate the same action from any other chief to do the same**
3. **The women with their fish baskets and nets will quickly make their way to the beach with the children to await further instructions.**
4. **While this is going on, a group of young chiefs will be making their way to each and every home to ensure that everyone is at the beach.**







- 5. Tying the green coconut leaves and connecting them to form a long line of tied coconut leaves.**
- 6. High chief is constantly assessing the situation and the location of the school of fish on the reef.**
- 7. Two of the swiftest and tallest young men would lead the charge by making their way to each other to complete a semi-circle of green coconut leaves,**
- 8. The movement in the water is swift and as quiet as possible to minimize any detection of the school of fish of what is going on.**
- 9. And last, a second sweep over the reef to gather all the loose leaves or pieces of the leaves is done to ensure that none of the debris is left floating in the water.**

# Conclusion

**The significance of this story is that cultural practices embody sustainable yields with acceptable approaches to the resource use for the good of all. To my fellow islanders here today, in your planning, and implementation of programs, I urge you to consider education, bridging science to policy, and management regimes.**

**No matter where you live in the world, in the continental United States or an Island in the Caribbean or the Pacific always remember when making decisions or deliberations and strategies that we are all inhabitants of the Ocean, after it is not only MY HOME, but it's OUR HOMES in the oceans.**





# Soifua

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