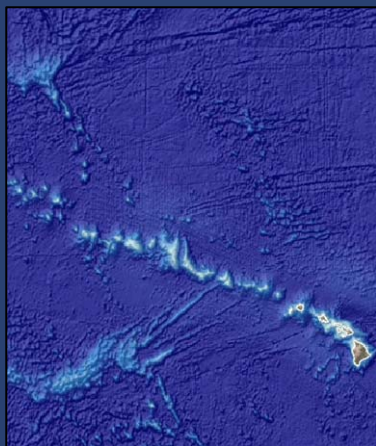




## NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE: Pacific Islands Region



The Pacific Islands Region consists of over 50 Pacific Ocean islands, forming the largest regional Exclusive Economic Zone in the U.S. (two million square miles). One large marine ecosystem (LME) has been designated in the region, the Insular-Pacific Hawaiian LME. The designation of LMEs originally focused on coastal shelf ecosystems, but several additional LMEs have been proposed for the region that will include other distinct island and oceanic areas.

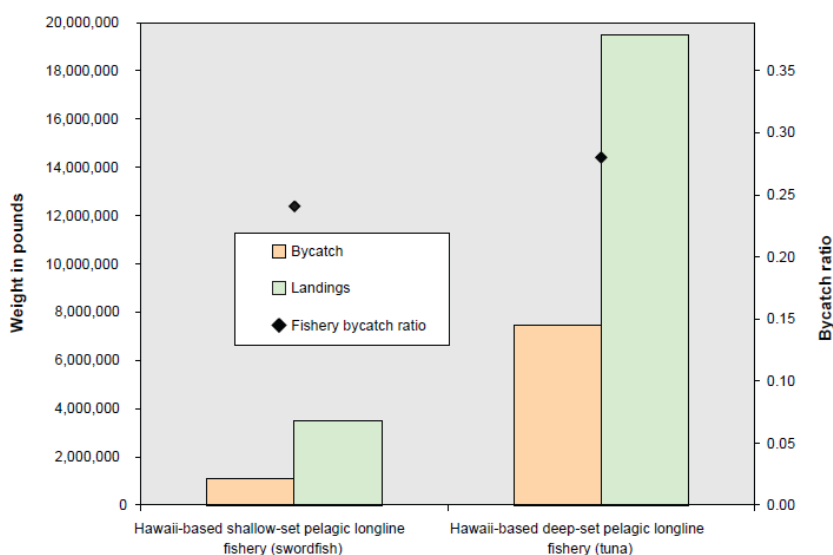
## The National Bycatch Report: Pacific Islands Region

Reducing fisheries bycatch is a top priority for NOAA Fisheries and is required under guiding legislation and international laws. Monitoring and reducing fisheries bycatch promotes healthy marine ecosystems and the best use of the nation's living marine resources. NOAA Fisheries new report, the National Bycatch Report, provides bycatch estimates by fishery and species for each of the six NOAA Fisheries Regions. The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries, is responsible for managing fisheries in the Pacific Islands Region.

### Pacific Islands Region Fast Facts

- 31 commercial fisheries (federal, state, and international) are included in this report for the Pacific Islands Region.
- 5 fishery management plans regulated the harvest of federally managed species in the Pacific Islands Region in 2005.
- Landings from all Pacific Islands Region commercial fisheries were valued at approximately \$71 million in 2005.
- Observer programs are currently in place for 3 of the 31 fisheries.
- Fish bycatch estimates were available for 2 fisheries and 88 species in 2005.
- Protected species (marine mammals, seabirds, and sea turtles) bycatch estimates were available for 2 fisheries and 23 species/groups in 2005.

### Pacific Islands Region 2005 Fish Bycatch and Landings by Fishery





## National Bycatch Report: Pacific Islands Region Bycatch Reduction Success Stories

- Annual incidental take limits for two species of sea turtles (leatherback and loggerhead) that, if reached, result in fishery closures for Hawaii longline fisheries have been reached only once since 2004.
- Take limits that trigger management actions but not fishery closures are in place for other sea turtle species in Hawaii longline fisheries.
- Large circle hooks and fish bait (rather than squid) are required in the Hawaii-based shallow-set pelagic longline fishery for swordfish to reduce loggerhead and leatherback sea turtle bycatch. Circle hooks are also used by many participants in the Hawaii-based deep-set pelagic longline fishery for tuna and the American Samoa pelagic longline fishery.
- In 2006, NOAA Fisheries required Hawaii-based longline vessels to use a suite of seabird mitigation measures to reduce seabird bycatch. One of the measures is the use of thawed and blue-dyed fish bait, which contributed to the reduction of seabird interactions by 92 to 95%.



View the complete  
National Bycatch Report  
at:

[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/bycatch.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/bycatch.htm)



Circle hooks help reduce  
bycatch of sea turtles.  
*Credit: PIRO/NOAA*



Dying bait blue decreases its  
visibility and aids in preventing  
interactions between alba-  
trosses and longline gear de-  
ployed by vessels fishing in the  
North Pacific above 23° N.  
latitude.  
*Credit: NOAA/PIRO*