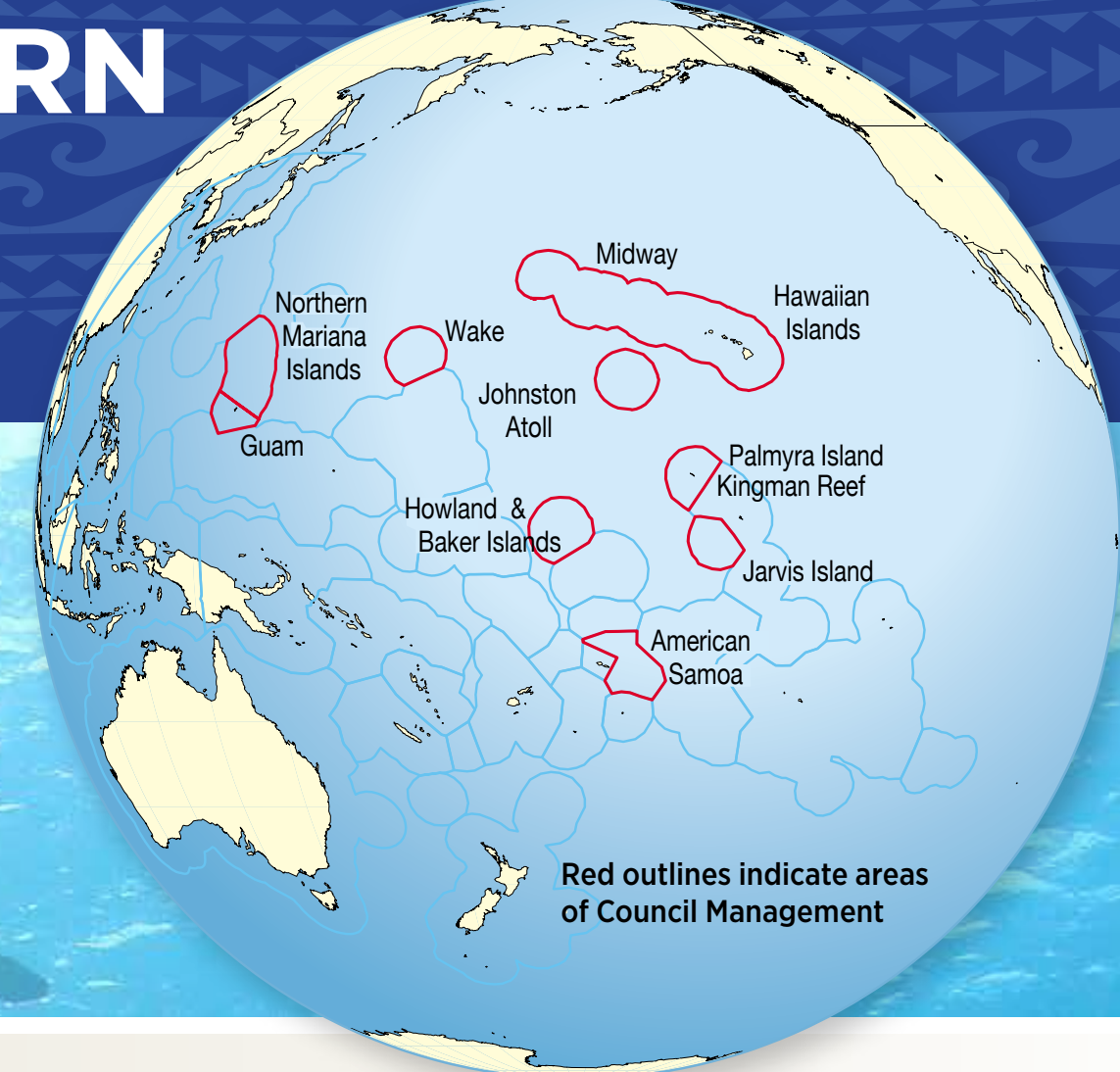




MILESTONES OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL



Red outlines indicate areas of Council Management

1976

Magnuson-Stevens Act

Congress approved the MSA, which established the WPRFMC and seven other regional Councils. Fishery Management Plans (FMP) were developed and implemented for U.S. fisheries. The original MSA did not include tuna species within U.S. management authority.

SETTING UP THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



DECADES OF EXCELLENCE

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (WPRFMC, Council) has been a leader in marine conservation and fisheries management for decades. Since its establishment under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the Council has developed key measures benefiting protected species and promoting sustainable fisheries. This timeline highlights WPRFMC's major milestones, from foundational management frameworks in the 1970s to recent advancements in ecosystem-based management, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to responsible fishing and marine ecosystem protection in the U.S. Pacific Islands.



1983

Precious Coral FMP

Precious Coral Fisheries prohibited bottom trawling, dredging and other potentially destructive and non-selective gear.

1983



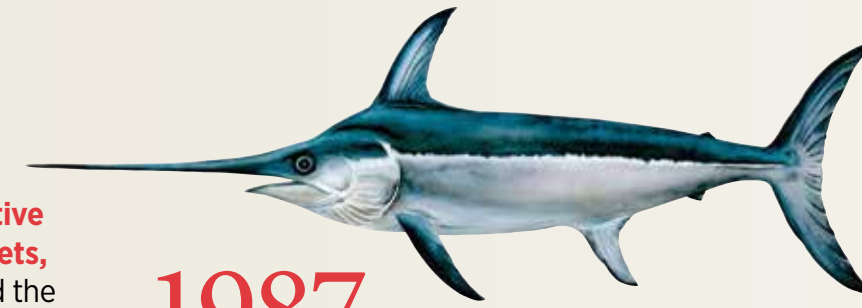
Crustaceans FMP

Crustacean Fisheries established gear restrictions such as trap design specifications and prohibition of gear to minimize risk to Hawai'iian monk seals. Other measures for the Northwestern Hawai'iian Islands (NWHI) management area, included federal permit requirements and area closures within 20 nautical miles of Laysan Islands and all waters shallower than 10 fathoms.

1986

Bottomfish FMP

Bottomfish and Seamount Groundfish Fisheries prohibited destructive fishing gear and techniques such as trawl nets and bottom-set gillnets, including explosives and poisons. An amendment in 1988 established the Nation's first limited-entry program for bottomfish fishing within the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around the NWHI.



1987

Pelagic FMP

Pelagic Fisheries prohibited drift gillnet gear within the U.S. EEZ unless authorized by an experimental fishing permit.

1988

Limited Access

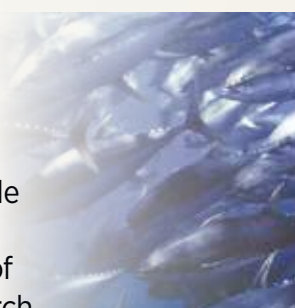
Bottomfish Limited-Access system required the completion of a protected species workshop established for the distant Ho'omalulu Zone of the NWHI. Both provisions were expanded to the Mau Zone of the NWHI in 1999.



1990

Tuna Inclusion

Congress amended the MSA to include highly migratory tuna species in the Pacific under management authority of WPRFMC. The Pacific Fisheries Research Program was established at University of Hawai'i JIMAR in 1992 to provide scientific information on pelagic fisheries to support management policies.



1991-1994

Hawai'i Longline Fishery Management

Pelagic Fisheries included a limited-entry program, permit and reporting requirements, a mandatory vessel monitoring system, a 25-75 nautical mile exclusion zone around the MHI and the establishment of a 50 nautical mile protected species zone in the NWHI.



1992

Limited Access

Crustacean Fishery established a limited-entry program.

ADAPTING TO NEW FISHERIES



1994

Observer Program

Hawai'i Longline Fishery established a mandatory federal observer program.

1996

Seabirds

Hawai'i Longline Fishery established program to reduce albatross interactions.



SOLVING BYCATCH ISSUES & SHIFT TO ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT

2000

Sea Turtles

The Council adopted international Sea Turtle research and mitigation solutions.

2000

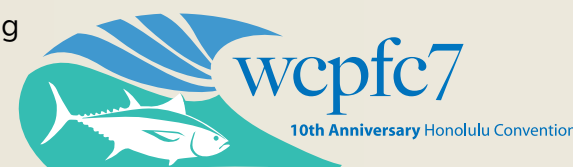
Honolulu Convention

The Council hosted in Honolulu the last four sessions of the international Multilateral High-Level Conference on highly migratory fish stocks, concluding in September and resulting in the establishment of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

2001

Coral Reef Ecosystem FMP

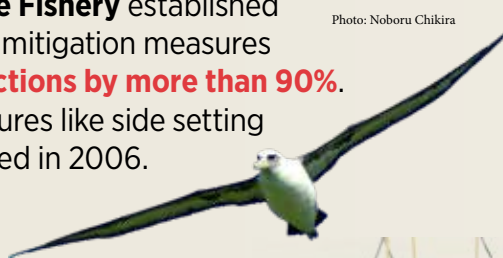
The first ecosystem plan for U.S. fisheries, prohibited the use of destructive and non-selective fishing gears.



2002

Seabirds

Hawai'i Longline Fishery established Seabird bycatch mitigation measures reducing interactions by more than 90%. Additional measures like side setting were implemented in 2006.



2004



Sea Turtles

Hawai'i Longline Fishery established Sea Turtle bycatch mitigation measures, reducing interactions by nearly 90%. Measures were also established for the American Samoa longline fishery in 2011 to minimize interactions with green sea turtles.

2006

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

The Council convened a series of Puwahu, gathering lawai'a (fishing) and mahi'ai (farming) practitioners from across Hawai'i to share knowledge of traditional practices and management. A renaissance of traditional ahupua'a-based resource management is being applied in today's context. Tradition-Based Natural Resource Management book published in 2019 describes more than a decade of documenting and sharing information.



2002-2005

Support for Native Peoples

Congress approved funds for the MSA Community Demonstration Program to support indigenous fishing practices in Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).



2006

American Samoa Longline Fishery Management

American Samoa Longline Fishery established a limited-entry system requiring federal permits, logbooks and a vessel monitoring system.

2006

Observer Program

American Samoa Longline Fishery established a mandatory federal observer program.

2009

Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management

FMPs restructured as four Archipelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs) for Hawai'i, Marianas, American Samoa and the Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIA), and one Pacific Pelagic FEP, shifting WPRFMC's management focus from species-based to an ecosystem-based conservation approach.



EVOLVING STRATEGIES & FOCUS ON DATA COLLECTION

2012-2014

Community-Based Management

The Council finalized and publicly vetted Malessa Community-Based Resource Management Plan in Guam through series of community workshops on coastal and marine resource issues of village residents.

2011

Management with Quota

Annual catch limits implemented for all federally managed fisheries.

2019

Ecosystem Component Species

The Council reclassified nearshore species from Management Unit Species to Ecosystem Component Species until there are adequate data to manage them.

2011

Conservation of Pacific Sea Turtles

The Council supported the Bellagio Blueprint for Action on Pacific Sea Turtles (2004) – a holistic and multilateral approach for recovery of populations and published a book based on key issues of the proceedings and work that followed that meeting.

2020

Data Collection

The Council created a suite of apps for fishers, vendors and administrators to facilitate fishery data reporting in American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI and address data gaps. In 2021, mandatory electronic reporting implemented in Hawai'i and American Samoa longline fisheries.



2011

Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management in the Western Pacific

The Council convened a series of workshops (2005-2007) to facilitate understanding of this approach to fisheries management – the biophysical, human and institutional requirements. The proceedings were published.



2020-2024

Protected Species

The Hawai'i Longline Fishery reduced annual fleet sea turtle interaction limits, prohibited wire leaders to reduce oceanic whitetip shark interactions, and revised seabird bycatch mitigation measures to include tori (bird scaring) lines.

2022

The Council published the history of 44 years of challenges and accomplishments in fisheries management for the U.S. Pacific

Islanders of American Samoa, the CNMI, Guam and Hawai'i, highlighting efforts to maintain their fishing heritage and benefit from the rich marine resources in surrounding waters through the bottom-up MSA decision-making process.

