



Impacts of Marine National Monument Fishing Prohibitions on US fisheries managed under the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

PACIFIC MARINE MONUMENTS COMPRISE 26% (892,241 square nautical miles) OF FEDERAL U.S. EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE¹ AND 90% OF THE AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL '30 by 30' GOAL²

MARINE MONUMENTS COMPRISE 53% OF THE US EEZ IN THE US PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION³

61% OF THE US EEZ AROUND THE HAWAII ARCHIPELAGO IS CLOSED TO COMMERCIAL FISHING DUE TO MONUMENT DESIGNATION

IMPACTS

- Monument regulations prohibit commercial fishing for key US tuna fisheries (US purse seine fleet, Hawaii longline, American Samoa longline)
 - NWHI monument expansion area produced on average around 10% of the catch harvested by the Hawaii longline fishery
 - PRIA monument eliminated fishing grounds for the Hawaii longline fishery that comprised over 12% of the fishery's landings
 - PRIA monument closed fishing grounds to US purse seine that historically delivered tuna local canneries in American Samoa
 - One of American Samoa's two canneries ceased operations in December 2016 as a result of reduced supply of US caught tuna
 - 5,500 jobs in American Samoa supported by fishing, of a workforce of 18,000
 - Rose Atoll monument reduced fishing grounds in US waters around American Samoa, resulting in annual loss of \$237,000 of fish to the American Samoa longline fleet
- Displaced fishing increases trip costs and poses greater safety at sea risks
- Disproportionate burden of a '30 by 30' goal carried by underserved Pacific Island communities

MONUMENT FISHING PROHIBITIONS WEAKEN U.S. FISHERIES, INCREASE IMPORTS AND JEOPARDIZE U.S. FOOD AND NATIONAL SECURITY

- Monuments displace U.S. fishing fleets to international waters where they must fish alongside and compete with foreign fishing fleets
 - Longline vessels from China, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan are regularly observed fishing the border of the US EEZ around the Hawaii Archipelago and the US Pacific Remote Islands.
- China continues to build up its longline fleet in the WCPO, which was at around 100 vessels in 2007 to now over 480 longline vessels, catching approximately 45,000 mt of tuna annually
 - In comparison, the Hawaii longline fishery consists of 145 vessels catching nearly 8,000 mt of tuna
- Deterrence of foreign fishing fleet encroachment in the U.S. EEZ is compromised when U.S. commercial fishing vessels are removed from a quarter of the U.S. EEZ now designated as monuments
- Monuments weaken key US tuna fisheries which in turn impacts national food security

¹ All Marine National Monuments have been designated by Presidential Proclamations issued under the Antiquities Act of 1906. The United States has the second largest EEZ at more than 4.3 million square miles.

² U.S. Department of Interior Report. Conserving and Restoring America The Beautiful, 2021

³ The US Pacific Islands region includes: Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Pacific Remote Island Areas (Wake, Johnston, Palmyra, Howland, Baker, Jarvis Islands, Kingman Reef)

- 90% of seafood consumed in the US is imported from foreign sources, of which 30% is estimated to be from Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported fisheries.
- Displaced U.S. commercial fishing vessels could also concentrate effort and increase potential gear conflicts in the reduced areas of fishable U.S. waters that are also fished by recreational and small boat fishermen
- The United States is losing influence in the international fisheries management organizations such as the Western and Central Pacific Commission due weakened US fisheries and impacts exacerbated with the loss of US fishing grounds as result of monument designations.

MONUMENT FISHING REGULATIONS CAUSE REGULATORY DUPLICATION AND LACK CONSERVATION BENEFITS

- NWHI monument was an overlay of the Protected Species Zone established under the MSA
- PRI monument overlay the 0 to 300-foot depth no-take and low-take zones established under the MSA and 0 to 3 mile refuges established by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in many of the islands
- Rose Atoll monument overlay the Large Vessel Prohibited Area established under the MSA
- Marianas Trench monument's Islands Unit overlay the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' conservation zone
- All coral reef, deep-reef slope, and pelagic ecosystems in federal waters were subject to comprehensive fishery ecosystem management regulations established under the MSA prior to monument designation
- Monuments and other large-scale static marine protected areas DO NOT provide more effective conservation benefits to marine resources, especially for highly mobile species^{4,5} such as tunas, billfish and sharks versus other fishery management tools⁶

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON PROTECTING HIGH SEAS BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

- Legally binding framework, *Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction* established in 2023
 - UN Convention on Biological Diversity goal to conserve 30% of lands and waters by 2030
- Proponents are calling for Marine Protected Areas in 30% of the high seas, which if implemented in high seas areas fished by US fleets in the Pacific Ocean, in combination with Marine National Monument prohibitions, these hugely important fleets would be decimated and left with nowhere to fish

NO PUBLIC PROCESS, TRANSPARENCY OR ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Monuments are established under the Antiquities Act of 1906, with Presidential Proclamations and directives to various agencies to implement regulations under their respective authorities. The National Environmental Protection Act and the Administrative Procedures Act are not

⁴ Hampton J., Lehodey P., Senina I., Nicol S., Scutt Phillips J., and K. Tiamere. 2023. Limited conservation efficacy of large-scale marine protected areas for Pacific skipjack and bigeye tunas. *Front. Mar. Sci.* 9:1060943. doi: 10.3389/fmars.2022.1060943

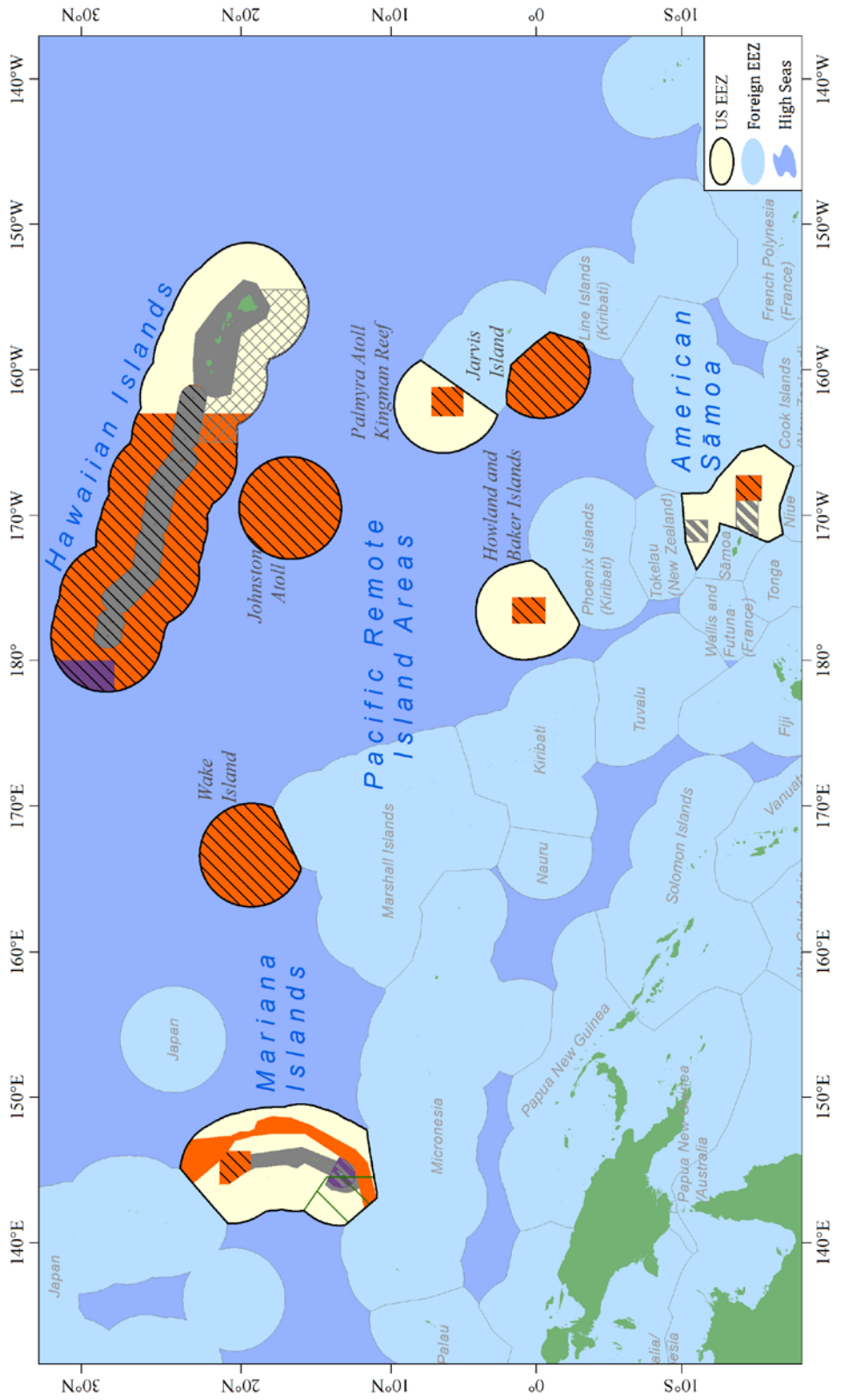
⁵ Gilman, E., Chaloupka, M., Fitchett, M.D., Cantrell, D., and M. Merrifield, M. 2020. Ecological responses to blue water MPAs. *PLoS ONE.* 15. e0235129. 10.1371/journal.pone.0235129.

⁶ Pons, M., *et al.* 2022. Trade-offs between bycatch and target catches in static versus dynamic fishery closures. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 119 (4).

required in the designation of monuments nor is the requirement is to utilize the best scientific information available

US EEZ Regulated Fishing Areas, Western Pacific Region

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|---|---|---|---|
|  | Magnuson-Stevens Act |  | Bottomfish/Groundfish fishing prohibited (1986) |
|  | Longline fishing prohibited (1991 - 92, 2011) |  | Bottomfish Vessels ≥ 50 ft prohibited (2006) |
|  | Large Vessel Prohibited Area (2002) |  | US EEZ: trawling, drift gillnets, poisons and explosives prohibited (1986 - 2004) |
|  | False Killer Whale Southern Exclusion Zone (2012) |  | |
|  | Guam No Anchor Zone (2004) | | |
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|  | Antiquities Act | |
|  | Marine National Monument (2006 - 2016) | |
|  | Closed to all commercial fishing | |



Western Pacific Council Spatial Measures

- | Bottomfish Restrictions | Pelagic Restrictions | Other Restrictions |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| Bottomfish/Groundfish fishing prohibited (1986) | Longline Fishing Prohibited Area (1992, 2011) | Guam No Anchor Zone (2004) |
| Vessels ≥ 50 ft Prohibited (2006) | Large Vessel Prohibited Area (2002) | No-take MPAs (2004) |
| US EEZ: trawling, drift gillnets, poisons and explosives prohibited (1986 - 2004) | NWHI Protected Species Zone (1991) | Lobster No-Take MPA (1986) |

