

Addressing overfishing in the U.S. Western Pacific Region

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Western Pacific Region: Membership comprises Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, CNMI & Hawaii (Total Population of citizens and % native)

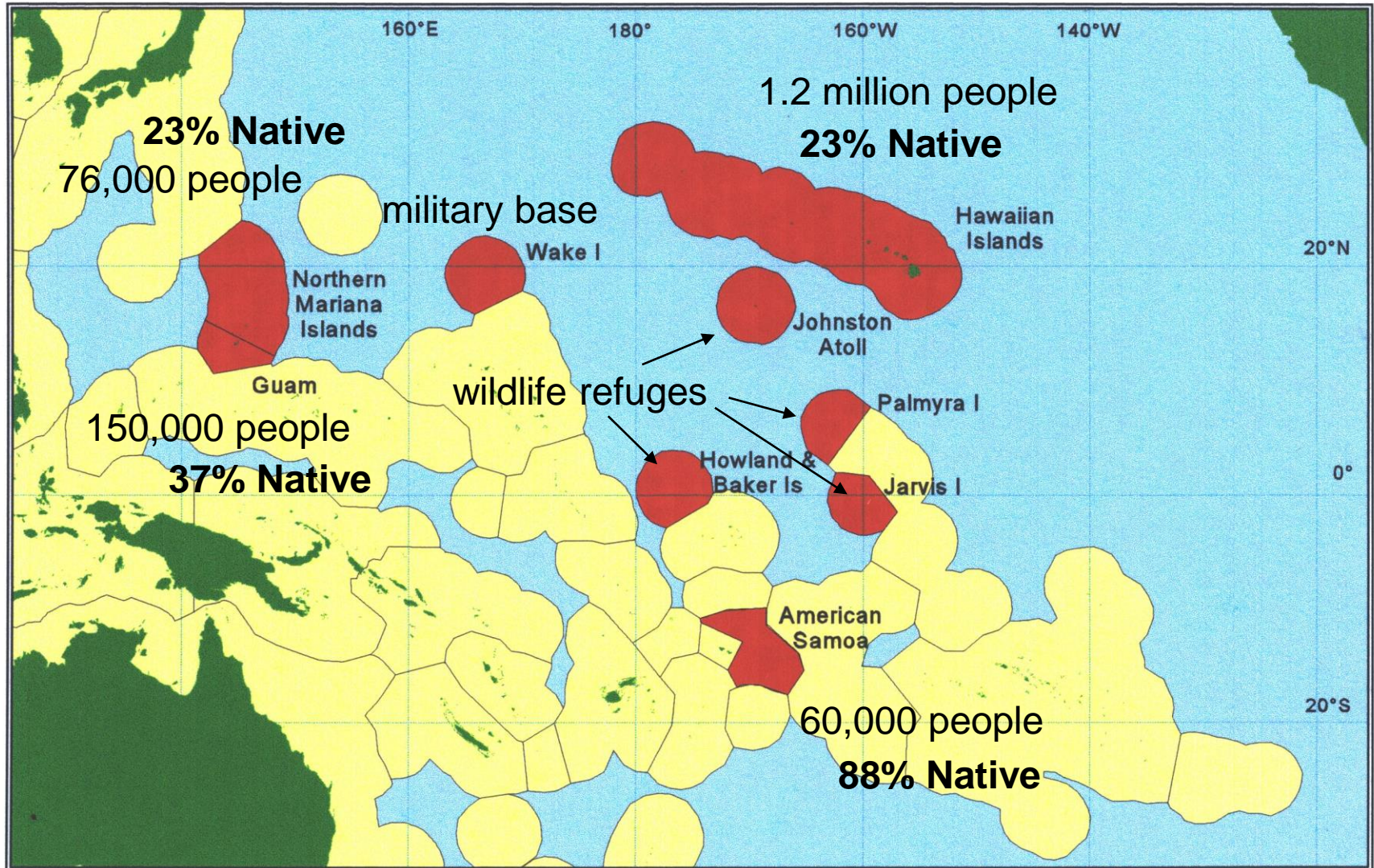


Figure 1. Exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the Pacific Islands. Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council EEZ area shown in red.

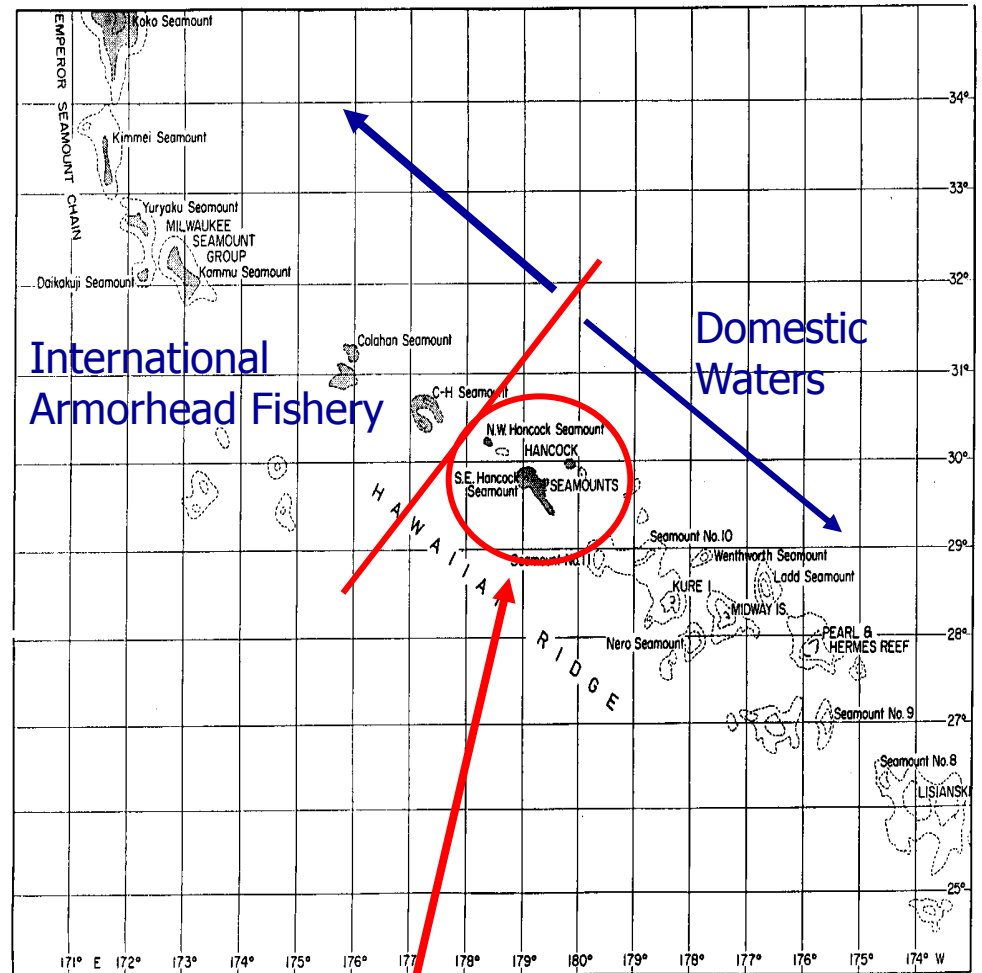
“Overfishing/Overfished” issues in the WPR

- Overfished Pelagic armorhead stock
- Hawaiian Archipelago bottomfish stock
- Overfishing of Pacific bigeye tuna
- Development of ACLs for potentially hundreds of species with poor data

Pelagic armorhead

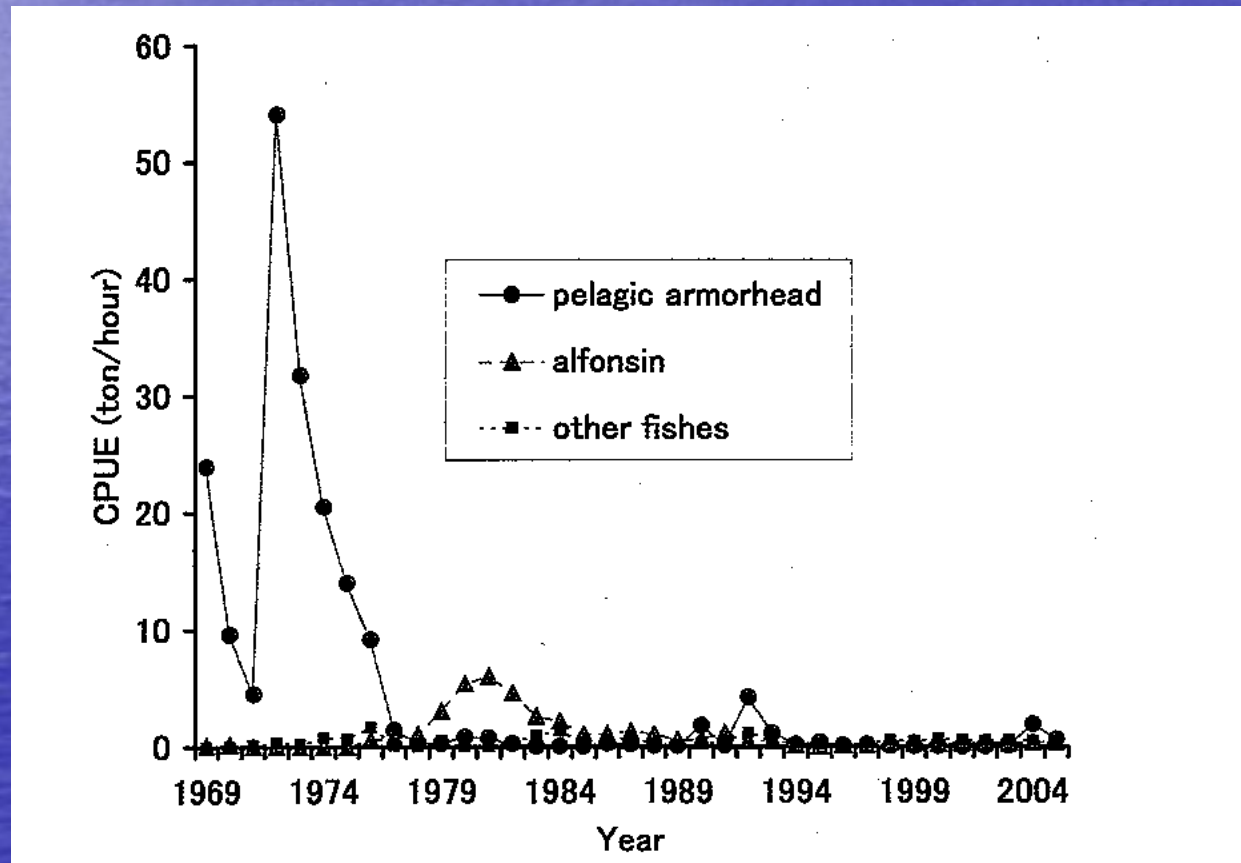


Three examples of Armorhead as after they recruit to the seamounts (oldest at top)



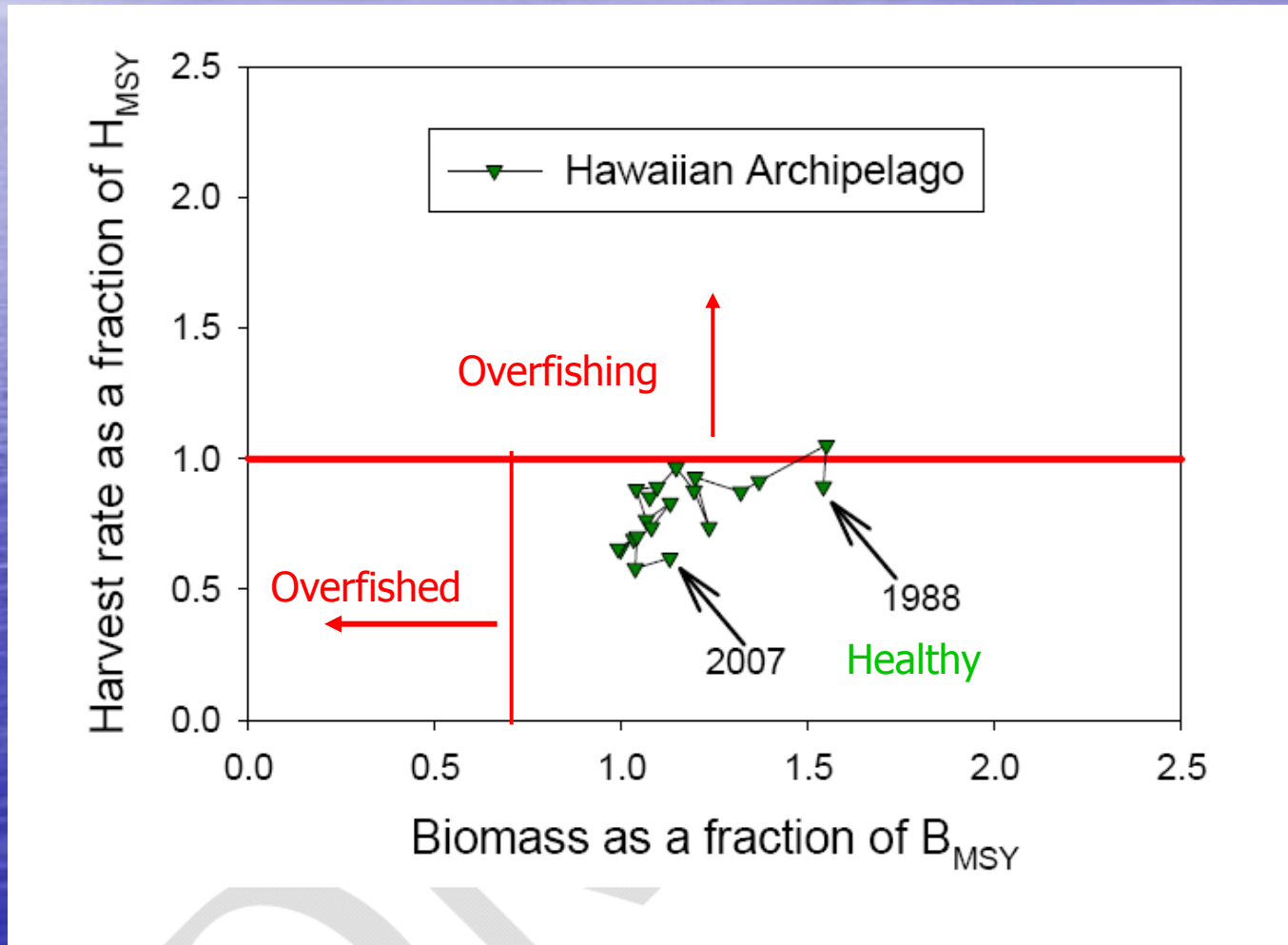
Hancock Seamounts at the Northern Most End of the EEZ surrounding the Hawaiian Archipelago

Catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) of pelagic armorhead by Japanese trawlers



Hawaiian Archipelago Bottomfish

- Archipelago-wide bottomfish stock is in good shape



Main Hawaiian Islands Bottomfish

- Bottomfish Amendment 14 established a management framework for:
 - annual total allowable commercial catch (TAC) limits,
 - non-commercial (recreational and subsistence) bag limits
 - permit and data reporting for non-commercial boat-based bottomfish fishery in the MHI.
- MHI TAC of 241,000 pounds for 2008-09
 - Zero % risk of archipelagic overfishing
 - 40% risk of 'overfishing' of the MHI bottomfish sub-population in 08/09 fishing year
 - Risk lowers to 25% in 09/10 fishing year

Pacific Bigeye Tuna

- Bigeye in the WCPO is not overfished by WCPFC evaluation
- Bigeye is not overfished based on Council NS 1 Control Rule

Pacific Bigeye Tuna

2007 Pelagics Amendment 14 recommended:

- International and domestic management measures, including:
 - mechanism for Council participation in international negotiations for pelagic stocks (disapproved);
 - international management action to end overfishing on bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks (approved and forwarded to Sec. of State and Congress for their consideration).
- Control date for Hawaii's pelagic vessels (longline, purse seine, troll, handline, etc) (approved).
- Federal permits and reporting for Hawaii-based non-longline commercial pelagic vessels (disapproved).

WPRFMC has is taking action to regulate FAD fishing in the EEZ:

- Require FADs to be defined and registered
- Prohibit purse seine catches around FADs in EEZ waters to reduce catches of juvenile bigeye tuna
- Final action expected at March meeting

Pacific bigeye tuna

5th Meeting of WCPFC in December 2008

- The US and other fresh-fish longline fisheries with landings less than 5,000 mt must reduce BET catches by 10% relative to the baseline (2004).
- Most other longline fleets must reduce BET catches by 10% in 2009, 20% in 2010, and 30% in 2011, relative to their 2001-2004 average:
 - 2,000 mt/yr limit for CCMs that caught less than 2,000 mt/yr during 2004;
 - no limit for SIDS and Participating Territories;
 - reductions for China still to be developed.
- YFT longline catches may not exceed 2001-2004 average.
- No output (catch controls) for purse seiners. Regulation of fishing on FADs on high seas and EEZs and by Vessel Day Scheme for PNA members

Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) for near shore coastal and reef fish stocks

- Problem Statement: required to develop ACLs for all MUS by 2011
- Coastal and reef MUS are data-poor, have high species diversity, impossible to generate scientific ACLs for all
- Council's Archipelago Plan Team conducted risk ranking exercises to develop primary and secondary lists of species considered to be most at risk
- Council will vote on these at March meeting and transmit to NMFS with recommendations for stock assessment prioritization based on risk ranking
- ACLs to be determined following stock assessments

FIN: Parting thoughts

- Overfishing and the risk of overfishing have become 'fetishized' by NMFS.
- US has some of the best and most stringent fishery management regimes
- Many previously overfished stocks are recovering or recovered
- Councils and NMFS should proudly stand behind this record.
- Effectively ending overfishing via catch limits cannot be accomplished without additional resources for NMFS and Regional Fishery Management Councils

The background is a smooth blue gradient. On the left side, there is a bright, vertical streak of light that fades into the blue, resembling a reflection of the sun on water. The overall tone is a deep, vibrant blue.

PAU