

Just as the Hawaiian star compass helped mariners find their way, this strategic plan will help the Pacific Islands Regional Office navigate through the next five years.

Pacific Islands Regional Office
Strategic Plan: 2016 - 2020

September 2015



NOAA
FISHERIES



VZ HORIZON LINES

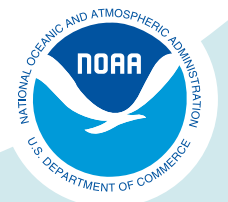
Pacific Islands Regional Office

Strategic Plan: 2016 - 2020

September 2015

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service**



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

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Introduction by the Regional Administrator

This strategic plan for the Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) identifies our priorities for the next five years (2016 through 2020). We expect that the fiscal situation in government will remain challenging and that demand for our services will increase in both amount and complexity, noting that costs, including for human resources, are expected to rise. With that in mind, the intent of this plan is to provide a framework for making decisions about the work we undertake, the resources we allocate and how we

live up to our commitment to be a productive and rewarding workplace.

This plan provides an integrated overview of a science-based approach to marine resource conservation and management in the Pacific Islands Region. It also includes a strong commitment to the investment in our workforce and the involvement of our partners and stakeholders in this approach. The goals and objectives outlined here advance the Department of Commerce (DOC) environmental goal, NOAA's national vision and Healthy Oceans goals, and the core mandates in NOAA Fisheries priorities and annual guidance, while appropriately reflecting the unique features that characterize the Pacific Islands Region.

To support these goals and mandates, we will use the best scientific information available and strive for organizational excellence through internal alignment of our resources, high quality internal and external service delivery, strategic partnerships, and innovative solutions. Annually, we will use this plan to reflect on our progress and identify the specific actions needed to accomplish our identified objectives.

We acknowledge that we will succeed in our mission only if we work with partners and stakeholders. Some of our most important partners are within NOAA. We rely on the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) as our principal science provider of top quality scientific information on marine resources and their ecosystems. We depend on NOAA General Counsel Pacific Islands Section to provide sound legal advice and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement Pacific Islands Division to ensure compliance with U.S. law and regulations. We coordinate closely with the West Coast Regional Office on the management of highly migratory species in the Pacific Ocean. And we work with

DOC Environmental Goal

- Ensure communities and businesses have the necessary information, products, and services to prepare for and prosper in a changing environment.

NOAA Vision and Healthy Oceans Goal

- *Vision:* Healthy ecosystems, communities, and economies that are resilient in the face of change.
- *Goal:* Marine fisheries, habitats, and biodiversity sustained within healthy and productive ecosystems.

NOAA Fisheries' Core Mandates

- Ensure the productivity and sustainability of fisheries and fishing communities through science-based decision-making and compliance with regulations.
- Recover and conserve protected resources through the use of sound natural and social sciences.

a variety of other NOAA offices, including the Restoration Center and the Office of Response and Restoration, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Office of Coastal Management, and the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations to achieve mutual goals in this complex ecosystem. Key external partners are equally important to the success of our mission, particularly the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC) and the State and Territory government agencies that share marine resource management responsibilities.



This plan is organized to briefly familiarize the reader with PIRO's role in carrying out NOAA Fisheries' mandates. It addresses how we are organized to carry out these duties before introducing our region-specific goals, objectives and strategies. Collectively, this plan gives the reader the road map we will follow to perform our mission. The following definitions apply to this plan.

Strategic Goal – Includes the goal statement and goal overview. This is the highest level statement of aim or purpose that is included in the strategic plan. This plan's five strategic goals are broad and long-term and articulate what PIRO must do to address relevant mandates and obligations, overcome challenges, and exploit opportunities to advance its mission. These five goals, in sum, describe the themes of PIRO's work to carry out our vision and mission, given current and expected capabilities and considering potential outside influences.

Strategic Objective – This plan's 26 strategic objectives reflect the outcome, impact or end state that PIRO must achieve to demonstrate the accomplishment of each higher level strategic goal. These objectives are individually important (meaning that no one objective is more needed than any other). That said, we will still smartly prioritize the resources available to PIRO to achieve these objectives.

Strategy – Each strategy is an approach or activity that is needed to reach the objective. These strategies are not intended to be an all-inclusive list of activities for PIRO, especially given the responsive nature of much of our work. They are

also not limited to activities wholly within PIRO's control and many support ongoing collaborative efforts. We recognize the need for additional planning to implement many of these strategies and where appropriate, detailed plans with specific, time-bound objectives will be developed. Additionally, each year, specific milestones will be identified that will guide the development of annual spend plans, travel plans, etc. for all of PIRO's programs.

PIRO's Vision – Where we are – the U.S. Pacific Islands Region – is unique in the Fisheries Service. In the islands, the natural resources, peoples and cultures, and economic vitality are inexorably linked together: to understand one, you must understand them all; and to care for one is to care for them all. PIRO's vision reflects the need to be part of these island communities to accomplish our mission.

PIRO's Core Value – Stated briefly here, tells the reader how we will make decisions, plan and execute these strategies, and how we will behave with each other and with our partners and stakeholders.

An underwater photograph of a vibrant coral reef. The scene is dominated by various types of coral, including large, rounded brain corals and smaller, branching species. The water is clear and blue, with several small fish swimming in the background. The lighting is natural, highlighting the textures and colors of the marine life.

PIRO's Mission

Maintain and manage healthy ocean ecosystems that promote and provide for sustainable fisheries, conserve and recover protected marine resources, and enhance opportunities for commercial, recreational and cultural activities in the Pacific Islands Region.

PIRO's Vision

A community of people protecting and enjoying the bounty and benefits of healthy and diverse Pacific Islands marine ecosystems.

PIRO's Core Value

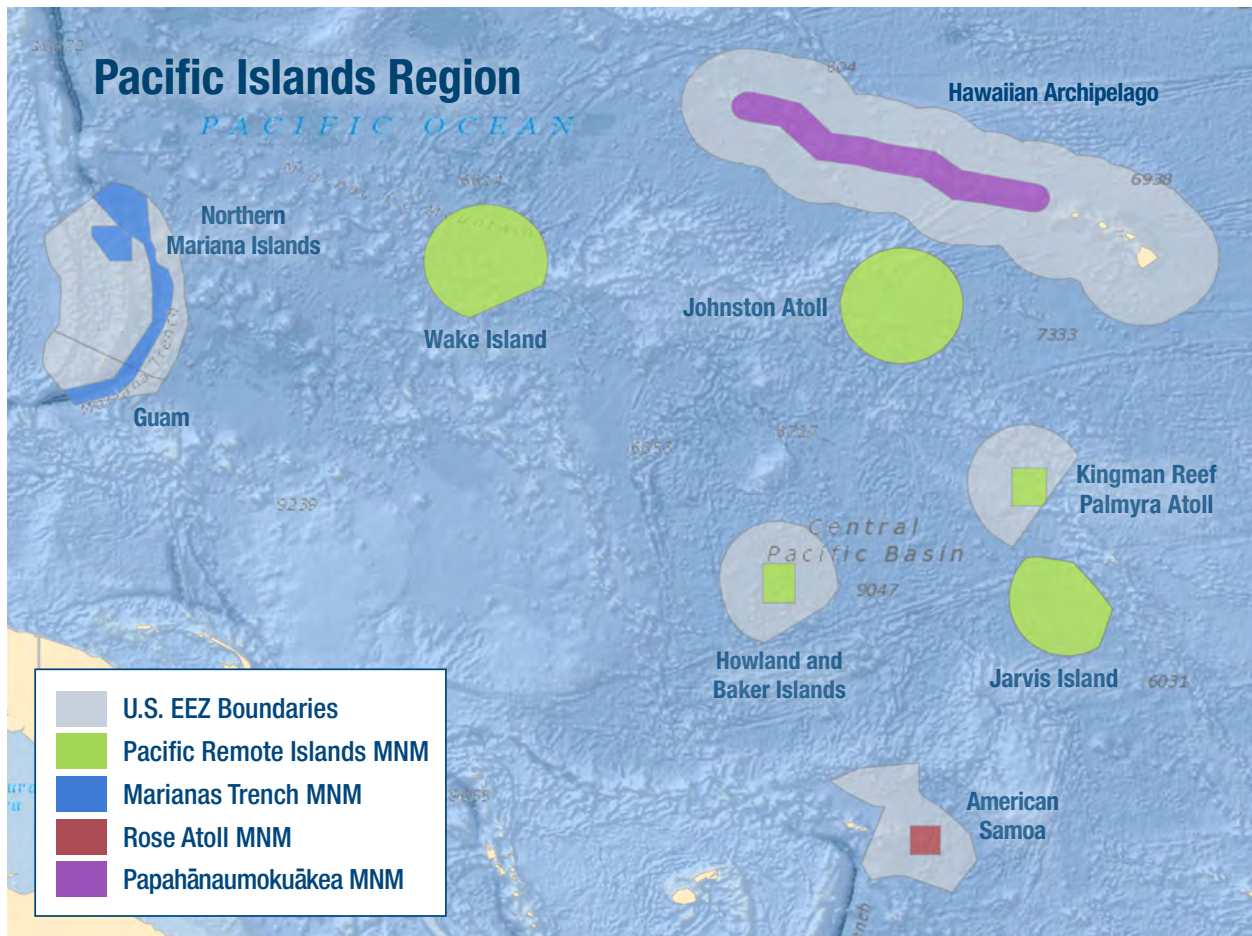
To provide science, service and stewardship with integrity.

Pacific Islands Region Overview

In 2003, Congress approved NOAA Fisheries' request to establish the Pacific Islands Region with the intent of using regional expertise to provide improved science, service and stewardship of living marine resources within this expansive geographic area comprised of unique communities, cultures and challenges. Bounded by the Hawaiian Archipelago in the north, American Samoa and U. S. Pacific Remote Island Areas in the south, and the Marianas Archipelago in the west, the Pacific Islands Region encompasses the largest geographical area within NOAA Fisheries' jurisdiction. The U.S. Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) within the region encompass more than 1.7

million square nautical miles of ocean, roughly equal to the total EEZ of the continental United States and Alaska combined. The Pacific Islands Region's jurisdiction includes activities in both domestic and international waters, with a focus on managing fisheries and other living marine resources and their habitats in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and the Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIAs) including Howland, Baker, Jarvis and Wake Islands; Johnston and Palmyra Atolls, and Kingman Reef.

Since its establishment, PIRO has evolved to fulfill the broad scope of its mission and accordingly,



has grown in staff, facilities and fiscal resources. PIRO is now located at NOAA's Daniel K. Inouye Regional Center on Ford Island and has field offices in Pago Pago, American Samoa; Agana, Guam; and Saipan, CNMI. In July 2012, the long awaited NOAA Fisheries Honolulu Service Center opened at the Pier 38 Fishermen's Village in Honolulu. Located dockside, the Honolulu Service Center provides fishermen with a convenient place to submit fishing permit applications; turn in fishing logbooks; obtain compliance and regulatory information on fishing and seafood safety; receive training, education and outreach; and ask questions and interact with NOAA Fisheries staff.

PIRO's responsibilities as one of the five regional offices within NOAA Fisheries include the maintenance of healthy fish stocks for commercial, recreational and subsistence fishing; the conservation and recovery of protected species; the preservation and restoration of marine habitat; and the coordination with international organizations to implement and monitor fishery agreements and treaties. PIRO performs this mission for the benefit of the nation, its citizens, and in particular,

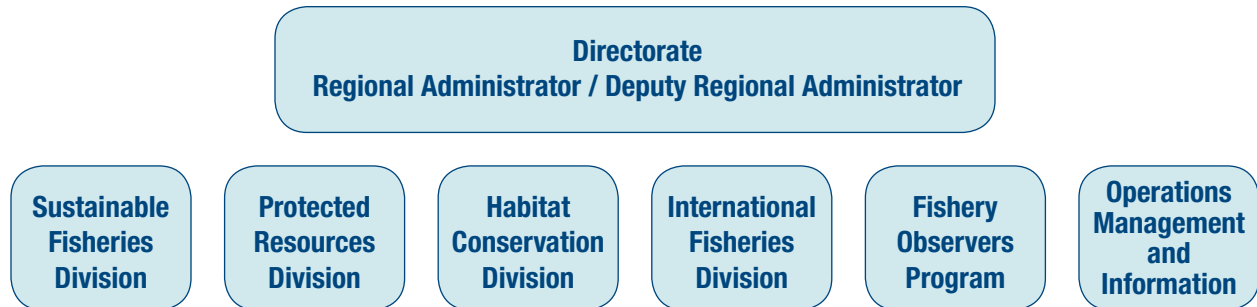
the island communities. PIRO actively engages with PIFSC to integrate cutting edge science into policy and management decision-making, working together for the conservation and management of domestic and international marine resources.

Organizational Structure

Directorate

The Directorate supports and oversees all PIRO activities, and working with NOAA Fisheries' leadership, establishes PIRO policies, procedures and regional priorities. The Directorate includes the Regional Administrator, the Deputy Regional Administrator and senior policy and management staff who ensure region-wide compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and support the National Ocean Policy's Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning activities, as well as the Marine National Monuments Program and the Communications Team.

The Communications team supports both PIRO and PIFSC programs and activities to develop and execute communications in clear



and compelling ways that engage stakeholders, promote understanding of marine resources, convey the science behind our decisions, and advance our missions. The Marine National Monuments Program implements the Presidential Proclamations that created the four marine national monuments in the Pacific. These uniquely protected marine areas include the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument, the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, and the Mariana Trench Marine National monument and encompass approximately 741,000 square miles.

Sustainable Fisheries Division

The Sustainable Fisheries Division is responsible for reviewing, recommending approval or disapproval, and implementing approved fishery management plans for commercial and non-commercial fisheries in the U. S. Pacific Islands, as authorized under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and in close cooperation with the WPFMC. There are five fishery management plans within the Pacific Islands Region, all with the primary goal of ending overfishing and rebuilding and maintaining sustainable fisheries for long-term economic and social benefits to the nation from living marine resources.

The Division's core responsibilities are to provide support to the WPFMC to facilitate the development of management measures to achieve optimum yield from fisheries; draft, review and implement fishery management regulations consistent with the recommendations of the WPFMC and the requirements of the MSA, NEPA and other applicable laws; appropriately administer fisheries throughout the year (e.g. permits and catch monitoring); and advise fishermen on the interpretation of federal fishing regulations.

Protected Resources Division

The Protected Resources Division is responsible for protecting and recovering endangered and threatened species and marine mammals as mandated by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Through management, conservation and species-

specific recovery efforts, and public outreach and education, the Division promotes the survival and recovery of the protected marine species of the Pacific Islands Region for future generations.



The Division's core responsibilities are to evaluate the status of species to determine whether they meet the definition of threatened or endangered. Once a species becomes listed as threatened or endangered, the next steps for the Division are to engage in recovery planning, critical habitat designation, and other management and conservation activities that promote species recovery. This responsibility includes consulting with other Federal agencies to ensure their activities do not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species and working closely with partners to achieve recovery for listed species. The Division also implements several programs to conserve and protect populations of marine mammals in the Pacific Islands Region, including efforts to reduce the take of marine mammals in commercial fisheries and maintain a robust Marine Mammal Stranding and Response Network.

Habitat Conservation Division

The Habitat Conservation Division is responsible for protecting, restoring and promoting

stewardship of marine and coastal habitat that support fisheries and conserve protected resources for future generations. The Pacific Islands Region is unique in that it encompasses a large percentage of the nation's coral reef ecosystems and the Division works through partnerships and technical assistance with stakeholders and other federal and local partners to support the management of these complex coastal ecosystems.

The Division's core responsibilities are to conserve Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) through the fishery management process of the MSA and consult with federal agencies whose actions may adversely affect EFH and other living marine resources. The Division provides recommendations on ways that federal actions can avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts on these living marine resources.

International Fisheries Division

The International Fisheries Division together with other government agencies is responsible for negotiating and implementing the provisions of international fisheries agreements in the Pacific Ocean. Regional fisheries management organizations play a critical role in the global system of fisheries governance and through these organizations the Division achieves effective and responsible marine stewardship and ensures sustainable fisheries management globally. The Division promotes international cooperation, across the Pacific, in the management of highly migratory species, such as tuna and billfish, which have a wide geographic distribution, both on the high seas and inside the EEZ of many nations, including the United States.

The Division is also responsible for the management of the administration of the Multilateral South Pacific Tuna Treaty and the U.S. distant water purse seine fishery operating in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). This fishery is among the nation's largest with an annual economic value approaching \$500 million.



Fisheries Observer Program

The Fisheries Observer Program is responsible for deploying fisheries observers on U.S. longline fishing vessels to collect data on fishing effort and catch and the incidental take of protected species, including sea turtles and marine mammals. The fisheries observers also collect and process selected specimens for scientific investigations. The observer's data is used to calculate official estimates of protected species interactions and produce technical reports. The Division places fisheries observers on all Hawaii based longline vessels targeting swordfish (shallow set) and on 20% of the Hawaii and American Samoa based longline vessels targeting tunas (deep set).

Operations, Management and Information Division

The Operations, Management and Information (OMI) Division is responsible for supporting all of the PIRO programs through budget planning, formulation and execution; financial services, procurement and grant administration; human resources management (including equal employment opportunity and diversity); oversight of administrative functions; management of information, information technology and communications systems; and management of environmental compliance, facilities, safety and personal property.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Overview of Goals, Objectives and Strategies

PIRO's strategic goals are written as a concise statement of action that represents the long term and highest level statement of purpose. These goal statements bring five key themes to the forefront, which are highlighted by a single word or phrase as a means to identify the themes. Collectively, these goal statements say what PIRO will do to advance our mission.

The objectives listed under each strategic goal are more detailed statements of the outcome, impact or end state that we must achieve to demonstrate the accomplishment of each goal. Measurement of the progress toward and accomplishment of these objectives will be developed and will guide the annual planning process.

The strategies listed under each objective describe the approaches and activities that we will undertake to reach the objectives. This list is not exhaustive of all PIRO activities and each year we will identify specific actions to carry out.

PIRO's Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1—Ensure a prepared and innovative workforce poised to meet policy and management challenges and opportunities

PIRO will maintain an adequately sized and structured diverse workforce where satisfied, high performing employees share experiences, learn from each other across PIRO and NOAA, and are empowered to offer and implement solutions to workplace issues. Employees will

have the necessary skill sets to meet their work requirements, and continuity and succession planning are appropriately considered in workforce decisions.

Objective 1A— PIRO employees share experiences, learn from each other and are empowered to implement solutions to workplace issues.

Strategy 1 - Establish a mentoring program that provides career development support for PIRO employees.

Strategy 2 - Maintain an active Employee Council empowered to work with staff and management to provide solutions to workplace issues.

Strategy 3 - Establish a multifaceted program to promote knowledge sharing among staff that features in-person networking (e.g., brown bag events), electronic networking (e.g., a dedicated Intranet page), and focused staff community-building activities.

Strategy 4 - Establish an on-boarding program to support new employee integration into the PIRO workplace.





Objective 1B — PIRO employee satisfaction and performance are high.

Strategy 1 - Publicly recognize exceptional performance regularly.

Strategy 2 - Facilitate staff development for career advancement, including consideration of the need to expand or change skill sets to take advantage of higher-level positions.

Strategy 3 - Provide training to managers on the requirements and tools needed to deal with poor performers.

Strategy 4 - Train and guide supervisors and staff in giving and receiving feedback, with an emphasis on performance improvement and personal growth.

Strategy 5 - Maintain flexible work options and encourage employees to take advantage of them (e.g., telework, alternative work schedules, etc.).

Strategy 6 - Encourage innovation in professional development for staff that expands skill sets and enables staff to engage in new topics and explore new ways of getting work done.

Objective 1C — PIRO employees have the necessary skills to meet their work requirements.

Strategy 1 - Establish both formal training and on-the-job mentoring, for select employee tracks (e.g., Section 7 biologists).

Strategy 2 - Require an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for all employees.

Strategy 3 - Foster opportunities for rotational assignments that include assignments at other NOAA and regional resource agency offices.

Strategy 4 - Allocate 1.5% of salary expenses for training activities and account for commitments annually.

Objective 1D — PIRO's workforce is sized and structured to meet regional requirements.

Strategy 1 - Establish cross-divisional teams where applicable to address key region-wide issues and where appropriate, work with PIFSC and other NOAA offices.

Strategy 2 - Fully staff territory and neighbor island field offices.

Strategy 3 - Maintain an up-to-date five-year PIRO workforce staffing plan, including annually revisiting the plan.

Strategy 4 - Periodically revisit the PIRO organizational framework to ensure alignment with the mission and organizational efficiency.

Strategy 5 - Participate, as appropriate, in available opportunities to align workforce to the mission.

Strategy 6 - Develop best practices for evaluating vacant billets.

Objective 1E— A diverse workforce represents a range of work and life experiences at all levels of the organization.

Strategy 1 - Develop a program to focus outreach/recruitment efforts at graduate programs that offer degrees relevant to PIRO workforce needs and feature a diverse mix of graduates.

Strategy 2 - Promote careers in marine management and science at primary and secondary schools through support at science fairs, science camps and career day programs.

Strategy 3 - Participate in Department of Defense and Veterans job fairs and hiring programs.

Strategy 4 - Ensure that cultural awareness and community experience are considered in hiring decisions.

Strategy 5 – Annually refine recruitment activities to focus on underrepresented groups.

Strategy 6 - Institutionalize a process for regular evaluation of alignment of employees’ duties with their professional series and grade.

Objective 1F— Continuity and succession planning are appropriately considered in workforce decisions.

Strategy 1 - Institutionalize succession planning and regularly evaluate plans at the division level.

Strategy 2 - Institutionalize cross-training and establish Standard Operating Procedures to reduce the impact of staff departures.

Strategy 3 - Adhere to records management requirements to ensure continued access to important information.

Strategy 4 - Establish an entrance/exit survey program to determine primary reasons for employees joining and departing PIRO.

Strategy 5 - Provide opportunities for retirement training for staff at the new employee, mid-career, and end-of-career levels.

Goal 2— Foster the sustainable use of marine resources

PIRO will engage with our science partners to advance domestic and international conservation and management of Pacific marine resources and the ecosystems that support them. We will involve our management partners and ocean users and take action to manage risk and ensure the sustainability of all marine uses, whether extractive or not. We will provide effective guidance to all involved.



Objective 2A— Rigorous science drives the management of marine resources that meets legislative mandates, national policies, WPFMC recommendations, and international obligations.

Strategy 1 - Implement efficient stock assessment prioritization and review processes and develop a firm protocol for stock status determinations. Improve annual Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation reports and use them to inform management actions.

Strategy 2 - Identify and focus efforts on those fish stocks in need of conservation and management.

Strategy 3 - Increase support for cooperative research (universities, state and local governments and community organizations) in the region.

Strategy 4 - Review existing data collection programs to better target needed data elements and focus analytic effort.

Objective 2B — PIRO is a recognized leader in promoting international cooperation in the conservation and management of fisheries in the Pacific Ocean.

Strategy 1 - Serve in leadership roles in regional fisheries management organizations.

Strategy 2 - Lead the implementation of equitable and transparent compliance processes in regional fisheries management organizations to eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing and level the playing field for U.S. fisheries.

Strategy 3 - Coordinate to ensure consistent measures for management of highly migratory species in the WCPFC and Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission areas.

Strategy 4 - Improve management of the U.S. purse seine fishery in the WCPO responsive to changes to the South Pacific Tuna Treaty.

Strategy 5 - Provide technical assistance and build international capacity to strengthen policy and science frameworks in the region.

Objective 2C — There are greater opportunities for responsible aquaculture.

Strategy 1 - Work with the industry and research partners to develop, evaluate and transfer appropriate offshore aquaculture technologies.

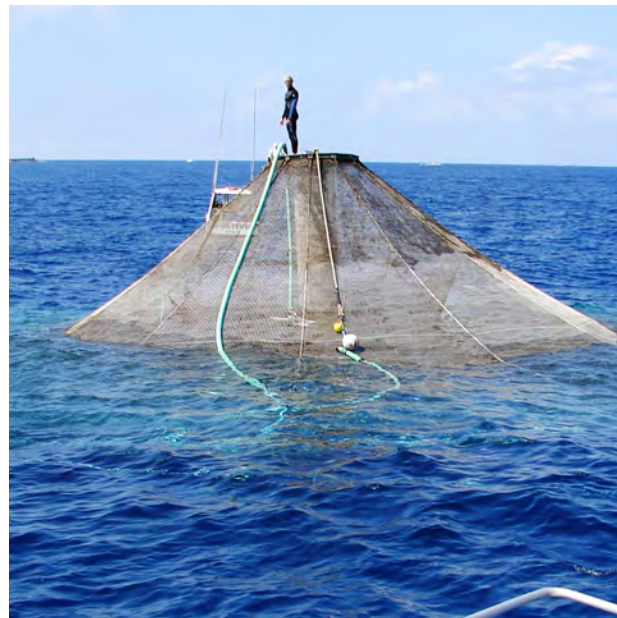
Strategy 2 - Promote simplified regulatory processes in cooperation with state and other responsible federal agencies.

Strategy 3 - Develop a programmatic environmental impact statement for aquaculture in the U.S. EEZ in support of the WPFMC aquaculture amendment to its archipelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plans.

Strategy 4 - Facilitate improved regulatory guidance for Loko I'a (fishpond) practitioners.

Objective 2D — Efficient permitting processes are in place.

Strategy 1 - Develop integrated and robust internal permitting processes for PIRO-issued permits and optimize the use of the National Permitting System.



Strategy 2 - Facilitate simplified and “one-stop-shop” for external applicants seeking inter-agency permits (Monuments, aquaculture, etc).

Strategy 3 - Develop shared protocols with our partners to improve consistency and timeliness of agency-to-agency issued permits.

Strategy 4 - Improve access to permit information in the U.S. Pacific Island territories.

Objective 2E — Local knowledge informs decisions regarding the conservation and management of marine resources.

Strategy 1 - Collect and integrate local and traditional ecosystem knowledge to enhance science-based management of marine resources.

Strategy 2 - Develop and implement an outreach effort to enhance collaboration between local ocean users and NOAA Fisheries science and management programs.

Strategy 3 - Use advisory bodies to increase public participation, as appropriate.

Strategy 4 - Expand marine education and training programs to increase the participation of Pacific Islanders in marine industry and marine conservation occupations and increase their role and participation in management and science activities.

Goal 3—Protect and restore at-risk marine resources

PIRO will use science-based approaches to conserve, protect and where appropriate, restore at-risk marine resources and their habitats. Special places, including the marine national monuments and designated critical habitat and essential fish habitat will be preserved while appropriately considering all actions in the midst of changing climate conditions.

Objective 3A— Measurable improvements made in the health and status of protected species populations.

Strategy 1 - Implement existing recovery plans for ESA-listed species with a focus on “Species in the Spotlight.”

Strategy 2 - Develop and update recovery plans for new ESA-listed species.

Strategy 3 - Reduce harmful human-induced impacts to protected species and their habitat.

Strategy 4 - Increase the capacity to respond to stressed, sick, injured and stranded marine species.

Objective 3B— PIRO has an active and influential role in international conservation and management of marine resources and ecosystems.

Strategy 1 - Increase collaboration in sea turtle conservation with international partners.

Strategy 2 – Coordinate the recovery of listed species with international partners.

Strategy 3 - Improve international collaboration in marine resource conservation, including marine protected area partners.

Strategy 4 - Support improvements in marine resource monitoring and facilitate technology transfer to international partners.

Objective 3C— PIRO is a leader in the conservation and restoration of marine and coastal habitats.

Strategy 1 - Increase capacity to conserve and enhance EFH.

Strategy 2 - Develop and implement plans to improve coordination of conservation efforts in the designated Habitat Blueprint focus areas.

Strategy 3 - Consider and appropriately designate critical habitat for new ESA-listed species.

Strategy 4 - Establish collaborative coral assessment and mitigation methodologies and tools.

Strategy 5 - Increase the effectiveness of coral reef conservation programs in the region.

Objective 3D— Cooperative management is active for all Pacific Marine National Monuments.

Strategy 1 - Develop and implement management plans for the Pacific Marine National Monuments with clearly defined objectives and effective management measures based on sound scientific guidelines.

Strategy 2 – Support active state and territory agency participation in management.

Strategy 3 - Improve collaboration among management partner agencies.

Strategy 4 - Increase the scientific understanding of these large marine ecosystems to benefit the global community.



Objective 3E— Changing climate conditions is effectively integrated into all management decisions.

Strategy 1 - Establish and facilitate a cross-divisional team to improve internal coordination and external participation in regional climate organizations.

Strategy 2 - Improve guidance on integrating climate information into regional and national decision-making.

Strategy 3 - Support increased training for staff on integrating climate information into marine resource management and conservation planning.

Strategy 4 - Improve coordination between climate science and management functions.

Goal 4—Institutionalize the use of innovative technologies in our work

PIRO will leverage innovation and technology to both streamline PIRO's internal work processes and maximize the quality, accessibility, and timeliness of information and services to external partners and stakeholders in support of sustainable marine ecosystem management.

Objective 4A— The best-integrated, most-appropriate, cost-effective technologies are used to observe, assess, conserve and manage marine resources.

Strategy 1 - Implement fisheries observer electronic reporting into the Pacific Islands Region Observer Program System platform.

Strategy 2 - Implement the Pacific Islands Region Electronic Reporting and Electronic Monitoring Plan.

Strategy 3 - Increase the number of electronic systems to log, store, manage and internally share access to data, including evaluating use of mobile device applications and tablets or other devices to collect field observations.

Strategy 4 - Support the development of technologies to reduce or mitigate effects on protected resources from interactions with fishing operations.

Objective 4B— Mission focused information technology and services are accessible throughout the region.

Strategy 1 - Increase the use of the suite of information technology products and services available.

Strategy 2 - Provide a robust Virtual Private Network experience for all staff to ensure access by all field offices and telework locations.

Strategy 3 - Enhance face-to-face communications capability, including leveraging mobile devices and services to improve the effectiveness of telework.

Strategy 4 - Increase timely access to key empirical and primary data, as well as secondary data sources (e.g., periodicals).

Objective 4C— Information technology resources are protected from internal and external cyber-security related threats.

Strategy 1 - Create a culture of information technology security within the user community regarding information technology policy, risks, vulnerabilities, and protection requirements.

Strategy 2 - Identify areas of highest risk/vulnerability for information technology security and prioritize and implement actions to reduce risk.

Strategy 3 - Form partnerships, share expertise and leverage best practices between the various NOAA entities within the Inouye Regional Center campus in the area of cyber security.

Objective 4D— Technology and processes maintain high integrity in using and accounting for appropriated funds.

Strategy 1 - Implement a National Archives and Records Administration-approved, enterprise-wide, electronic records management system to improve the collection, consumption and compliance of electronic records.

Strategy 2 - Fully implement the NOAA Fisheries Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Clearwell Project to ensure PIRO's ability to process, analyze,

review, and produce repeatable, defensible, releasable FOIA documents in a thorough and timely manner.

Strategy 3 - Automate OMI service delivery processes to enhance efficiency, reduce errors, and enable analysis of processes to increase their effectiveness.

Objective 4E—An effective digital presence enhances internal and external communications.

Strategy 1 - Design and implement an intranet that meets the needs of staff and management for effective and efficient internal communication.

Strategy 2 - Integrate the PIRO website into the redesigned 'mobile first' NOAA Fisheries website.

Strategy 3 - Regularly assess and evolve our digital presence (e.g., internet, social media and other tools) to respond to how stakeholders access and use digital information available on those platforms.

Strategy 4 - Support the ongoing development and implementation of digital systems that provide seafood consumers the best information available regarding seafood choices.

Goal 5—Strengthen and develop relationships with the public and our strategic partners to achieve our mission

PIRO will create a network of partnerships to achieve conservation and management objectives in innovative ways while effectively maximizing the generation of science that supports management decisions.

Objective 5A—Key partnerships that maximize benefits to PIRO are identified and used effectively.

Strategy 1 - Identify federal, state and territory government agencies and non-governmental organizations best suited to support NOAA Fisheries management efforts.



Strategy 2 - Appropriately invest in partnerships where the returns meet the investment.

Strategy 3 - Expand partnerships as opportunities, resources and priorities evolve.

Objective 5B—An engaged network of partners maximizes the generation of science to support management decisions.

Strategy 1 - Increase engagement and coordination with PIFSC as the principal science provider to meet PIRO's conservation and management goals.

Strategy 2 - Engage with the WPFMC academic institutions and other science generators to meet our science needs for management.

Strategy 3 - Increase opportunities for cooperative research partners in the region.

Objective 5C—Collaborative government partners are equipped to improve conservation and management of marine resources.

Strategy 1 - Provide adequate resources to the WPFMC to meet fisheries conservation and management goals.

Strategy 2 - Support government partners to accomplish marine resource conservation and management through various funding mechanisms.

Strategy 3 - Enhance relationships with partners through staff exchange opportunities.

Objective 5D— Communities are well-informed and involved.

Strategy 1 - Develop and implement a comprehensive community engagement campaign for all program areas.

Strategy 2 - Increase community participation in fishery management processes.

Strategy 3 - Increase community participation in habitat restoration projects.

Strategy 4 - Engage communities using a variety of media strategies.

Objective 5E— Management and regulatory processes are seamless.

Strategy 1 - Leverage agreements with partners to facilitate management functions.

Strategy 2 - Establish and follow collaborative processes with the WPFMC to facilitate the regulatory and management process.

Strategy 3 - Increase training opportunities including regulatory and NEPA training.

Strategy 4 - Use effective and appropriate public interactions to achieve publicly supported management decisions.



Appendix A: Glossary of Acronyms

AGM	Annual Guidance Memorandum
CNMI	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
DOC	Department of Commerce
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zones
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
IDP	Individual Development Plans
MMPA	Marine Mammal Protection Act
MSA	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOAA Fisheries	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service
OMI	Operations, Management and Information Division
PIFSC	Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
PIRO	Pacific Islands Regional Office
PRIAs	Pacific Remote Island Areas
U.S.	United States of America
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WCPO	Western and Central Pacific Ocean
WPFMC	Western Pacific Fishery Management Council

Appendix B: Alignment with Department of Commerce and NOAA Priorities

PIRO is one of five regions within NOAA Fisheries, a line office of NOAA, which is located within the Department of Commerce. The PIRO strategic plan was informed by the strategic plans and planning documents of DOC, NOAA, and NOAA Fisheries, as well as strategic plans developed by other regional offices, science centers and NOAA Fisheries headquarters offices.

Strategic plans and planning documents that currently guide PIRO:

- Department of Commerce Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2014-2018 (2014)
- NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan (2010)
- NOAA Annual Guidance Memorandum (2015)
- NOAA Fisheries Priorities and Annual Guidance for FY16 (2015)

The priorities relevant to PIRO are identified below.

Department of Commerce (DOC) Strategic Plan

DOC is comprised of 12 bureaus that work in five key areas: trade and investment, innovation, environment, data and operational excellence. NOAA furthers the Department's mission with stewardship of the ocean's resources, which contribute more than \$250 billion annually to the Nation's economy. Specifically tied to the NOAA mission in the Department of Commerce Strategic Plan (2014) are the following goal, objective, and key strategies:

The DOC Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Strategies Most Relevant to NOAA Fisheries

1. TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Expand the U.S. economy through increased exports and inward foreign investment that lead to more and better American jobs

DOC Objective 1.1

Increase opportunities for U.S. companies by opening markets globally

DOC Strategies for Objective 1.1

- Ensure U.S. commercial and economic interests are advanced in trade agreements and in other international for a: With greater interdependencies in global supply chains and the rise of cross-border issues, the global trading system and the international agreements that govern it have become more complex. Recognizing these complexities, effective U.S. participation in bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade agreements is critical. Multiple bureaus at the Department, including ITA, NTIA, USPTO, and NOAA, working alongside the Office of the U.S. Trade

Representative, ensure that U.S. negotiating objectives reflect the priority needs of U.S. industries competing in the global market. These priorities include new agreements with strong and effective disciplines on trade barriers. Additionally, NOAA participates in international agreements to promote policies that protect the environment. The playing field is leveled when businesses from all nations share responsibility for sustainability.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL

Ensure communities and businesses have the necessary information, products, and services to prepare for and prosper in a changing environment.

DOC Objective 3.4

Foster healthy and sustainable marine resources, habitats, and ecosystems through improved management and partnerships.

DOC Strategies for Objective 3.4

- Strengthen capabilities to assess and monitor fish and protected resources: Ensuring sustainable populations of living marine resources is a key Departmental mandate. NOAA will increase the precision of stock assessments, performing more robust monitoring, and applying ecosystem-based management to ensure healthy, sustainable populations of living marine resources. NOAA will incorporate integrated biological, physical, and chemical data and ecosystem modeling into fish stock and protected species assessments. NOAA will also produce more advanced technologies for monitoring of living marine resources and ecosystems.
- Improve recovery of listed species through innovative partnerships: International, federal, state, local, tribal, and nongovernmental organizations play a role in conservation. NOAA will strengthen partnerships with these stakeholder groups to ensure greater collaboration toward the recovery and conservation of protected species in marine and coastal ecosystems. Greater collaboration will improve the development and implementation of effective recovery and conservation plans for marine mammals and endangered and threatened species.
- Enhance place-based conservation: Through its coastal management and place-based conservation programs, NOAA will expand protections at current sites, add protections at new sites, and work with public and private partners. This place-based approach will preserve the economic and environmental benefits of these special places to local communities. NOAA will implement efforts such as the Habitat Blueprint framework, which employs partnerships to improve habitat conditions for fisheries, and coastal and marine life, to achieve economic, cultural, and environmental benefits.

4. DATA GOAL

Improve government, business, and community decisions and knowledge by transforming Department data capabilities and supporting a data-enabled economy.

DOC Objective 4.1

Transform the Department's data capacity to enhance the value, accessibility and usability of Commerce data for government, business and the public.

DOC Strategies for Objective 4.1

- Increase capacity to make data accessible, discoverable, and usable by the public: The Department's Big Data vision will not be realized simply by making data available through conventional means. Through public-private partnerships, scientific data can be intelligently positioned in the cloud

and be co-located with easy, affordable access to computing, storage, and advanced analytical capabilities. Public-private partnerships have the ability to scale and surge at the pace of U.S. innovation, enabling new value-added services and unimaginable integration into the daily lives of the American public

5. OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE GOAL

Deliver better services, solutions, and outcomes that benefit the American people.

DOC Objective 5.1

Strengthen organizational capabilities to drive customer-focused, outcomes-driven mission performance.

DOC Strategies for Objective 5.1

- **Build a learning organization:** Developing the right skills and knowledge is critical for accomplishing the Department's mission, improving employee satisfaction, and growing the next generation of leaders. The Department is committed to transforming itself into a learning organization that excels in serving customers and delivering results by valuing learning as an ongoing creative process; continually developing, adapting, and transforming itself in response to changing conditions; and improving the core capabilities of its people at all levels, both individually and collectively.
- **Create a 21st century IT infrastructure:** The Department depends on high quality, reliable, and secure IT to carry out its mission. To create an IT infrastructure that employs developments and manages vulnerabilities, the Department will design and implement an integrated enterprise-wide IT architecture. The new architecture will deliver mission and business data anytime, anywhere through swift, seamless, and secure services on-demand to internal and external stakeholders.
- **Manage for results:** Managing for results requires aligning the Department's programs, people, and resources to the clearly defined goals, objectives, and measures of progress established in this strategic plan. Development and better utilization of outcome-based performance metrics will enable continuous improvement at all levels of the organization.

NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan (NGSP)

The NGSP (2010) conveys NOAA's mission and future vision, as well as the road map for achieving the vision as laid out through the long term goals, and objectives. With the release in 2010 of NOAA's Strategic Plan and Executive Summary, and in the 2013 Addendum, Dr. Kathy Sullivan, Acting Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, called on NOAA to focus on the following areas:

- **Climate:** Through collaborative strategies, continue to advance the observations, modeling, and research necessary to understand climate change and its impacts; and transition mature climate science into regular, reliable, and relevant information services;
- **Weather:** NOAA will build a "Weather-ready" nation by preserving and improving its ability to provide timely and accurate forecasts and warnings for the protection of life and property through science, technology, infrastructure improvements, and collaborative efforts with partners;
- **Oceans:** NOAA will advance our efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of marine fisheries and recovery of protected species and their habitats;
- **Coasts:** NOAA will deliver integrated data, information, products, and services needed to support resilient coastal communities and economies;

- Science and Technology: NOAA will focus on developing systems-level understanding of ecosystems and phenomena—across missions and disciplines—with the goal of increasing the resilience of ecosystems, economies, and communities;
- Engagement: NOAA will expand efforts to listen and respond to our customers’ and stakeholders’ concerns and better relate NOAA mission responsibilities and activities to those concerns; and
- Organization and Administration: NOAA will further capitalize on recent initiatives to cut costs and improve effectiveness.

As one of five NOAA line offices, NOAA Fisheries’ mission is most closely tied to the goal for Healthy Oceans identified in the Draft Goal Implementation Plan, 2012:

Healthy Oceans Goal: Marine fisheries, habitats, and biodiversity sustained within healthy and productive ecosystems.

The Healthy Oceans goal is to ensure that ocean, estuarine, and related ecosystems—and the NOAA trust resources that inhabit them—are resilient and sustainable in the face of increasing threats and changing conditions. A sound understanding of these ecosystems, communication of this knowledge to decision makers and stakeholders, and the capacity and resources to support key NOAA programs are critical to achieving this goal.

Strategic objectives for this goal:

- Improved understanding of ecosystems to inform resource management decisions
- Recovered and healthy marine and coastal species
- Healthy habitats that sustain resilient and thriving marine resources and communities
- Sustainable fisheries and safe seafood for healthy populations and vibrant communities

NOAA’s FY16 Annual Guidance Memorandum (AGM)

The purpose of the AGM is to focus the agency’s corporate attention on near-term execution challenges and a balanced implementation of NOAA’s strategy across mission areas, given our mandates, stakeholder priorities, and the fiscal outlook. The AGM is released on an annual basis, so the annual implementation plans for this strategic plan will reflect the most current guidance.

From the FY16 AGM Priorities:

NOAA Priority: Provide information and services to make communities more resilient.

- Implement Next Gen stock assessments for species within NOAA’s jurisdiction through advancements in monitoring and data collection.
- Make measurable progress on recovery protected species.
- Increase operational services that promote coastal resiliency.

NOAA Priority: Achieve organizational excellence

- Under the direction of the Chief Scientist, strengthen alignment of research and development activities to effectively and efficiently support NOAA’s operational missions, including accelerating research advances to application.

NOAA Fisheries Priorities and Annual Guidance for FY16 (2015)

NOAA Fisheries' annual guidance memo provides guidance to all NOAA Fisheries employees in executing our mission responsibilities by establishing a framework for development of annual priority milestones. These priorities consider the core mission functions in context of current fiscal conditions.

For fiscal year 2016, NOAA Fisheries will focus on the following core priorities:

- Ensure the productivity and sustainability of fisheries and fishing communities through science-based decision-making and compliance with regulations.
- Recover and conserve protected resources through the use of sound natural and social sciences.
- Improve organizational excellence.

All other NOAA Fisheries programs, projects, and investments should be designed and conducted in a manner that supports these two core mission functions. NOAA Fisheries' approach to these priorities and supporting functions will be guided by the following overarching principles:

- Advance innovative solutions to emerging challenges (science and stewardship): NOAA Fisheries will lead innovation and serve as a catalyst to spur innovation.
- Cultivate our partnerships: NOAA Fisheries will engage the expertise and capabilities of our partners from the international, federal, tribal and state communities, academia, and nongovernmental.
- Improve internal and external communications and raise awareness of the NOAA Fisheries mission: We will strive toward a "no surprises" approach to communicating with our stakeholders and, where practicable, build consensus on expectations and the identification of critical factors to measure success.
- Improve our decisions and knowledge by transforming data capabilities and access in order to support our mission. NOAA Fisheries will provide robust data and science utilizing the best available infrastructure and by anticipating customer's needs.



NOAA FISHERIES

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