



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF747]

Pacific Island Fisheries; Western Pacific Stock Assessment Review; Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and NMFS will convene a Western Pacific Stock Assessment Review (WPSAR) of the stock assessment update for American Samoa bottomfish management unit species (BMUS). The review will be conducted virtually.

DATES: The WSPAR meeting will be held May 18-19, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held by web conference via WebEx. Audio and visual portions for all web conferences can be accessed at <https://www.wpcouncil.org>. Web conference access information and instructions for providing public comments will be posted on the Council website at <https://www.wpcouncil.org>. For assistance with the web conference connection, contact the Council office at (808) 552-8220.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah Malloy, (808) 725-5000, or sarah.malloy@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) developed a benchmark stock assessment for the American Samoa BMUS in 2023. PIFSC developed an update to this assessment, and the purpose of this WPSAR meeting is to convene an expert panel to conduct a peer review of the updated assessment. The 2026 assessment update uses the same modeling methodology as the 2023 benchmark assessment with updated data through 2025. The 2026 assessment update will provide new information to inform management pursuant to the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, including updates on biomass and fishing mortality relative to thresholds used to determine stock status, and new projections to inform recommendations of catch limits. Public comment periods will be provided in the agenda. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meetings will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

Meeting Agenda for WPSAR Review

The meeting schedule and agenda are as follows:

Day 1

Monday, May 18, 2026 (11 am - 5 pm Hawaii Standard Time) /

Monday, May 18, 2026 (10 am - 4 pm Samoa Standard Time) /

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 (7 am - 1 pm Chamorro Standard Time)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Objectives and Terms of Reference

3. Overview of Previous Benchmark Stock Assessment and Management Framework
4. Presentation on Updates and Data Additions to the Assessment
5. Questions to Presenters
6. Public Comment

Day 2

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 (11 am - 5 pm Hawaii Standard Time) /

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 (10 am - 4 pm Samoa Standard Time) /

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 (7 am - 1 pm Chamorro Standard Time)

1. Panel Presentation on the Review Results and Recommendations
2. Questions to Reviewers
3. Public Comment
4. Closing Comments and Adjourn

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Please direct requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids to Sarah Malloy, (808) 725-5000 (voice) or (808) 725-5215 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: May 1, 2026.

Kelly Denit,

Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2026-08729 Filed: 5/4/2026 8:45 am; Publication Date: 5/5/2026]