

I MINA'BENTE NUEBE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2007 (First) Regular Session

Executive Committee
Resolution No. 53

Introduced by:

J. V. Espaldon
E. J. B. Calvo
A. R. Unpingco

Relative to observing the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's Thirtieth (30th) Anniversary Celebration and to commending and congratulating the Council for their diligent efforts in the management of fisheries in the exclusive economic zone around the territories of American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and US Pacific island possessions, an area of nearly 1.5 million square miles.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF I
MINA'BENTE NUEBE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN:

WHEREAS, The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council is the policy-making organization for the management of fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ, generally 3 to 200 miles offshore) around the Territory of American Samoa, Territory of Guam, State of Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and US Pacific island possessions - an area of nearly 1.5 million square miles; and

WHEREAS, the Council is one of eight regional councils in the United States, which were established under the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976, otherwise known as the Magnuson-Stevens Act; and

WHEREAS, the Western Pacific Council has 13 voting and 3 non-voting members. Half of the members are appointed by the US Secretary of Commerce to

represent fishing and related community interests in the region, others are designated state, territorial and federal officials with fishery management responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the Council protects fishery resources and maintains opportunities for domestic fishing at sustainable levels of effort and yield by monitoring fisheries within its region on a continual basis; and

WHEREAS, the Council prepares and modifies fishery management plans as needed. The regulations are enforced jointly by the National Marine Fisheries Service, US Coast Guard and deputized state and territorial agents; and

WHEREAS, the Council encourages cooperative fishery management among the island and distant-water fishing nations throughout the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, the Council has been instrumental in adopting policy for Guam, the CNMI and American Samoa which led to the development of an archipelagic ecosystem fishery management plan which resulted in the establishment of regional ecosystem advisory committees (REACs) which include participation by fishermen, fish processors, local community leaders, local government officials, non-government organizations involved in conservation and individuals interested in the preservation of fish and fishing in the US Pacific Islands; and

WHEREAS, the council encourages community participation in natural resource management at the local, State and Federal levels by working with the Mayors in Guam, the Mayors and traditional chiefs in CNMI and the traditional Chiefs in American Samoa; and

WHEREAS, the council supports the Western Pacific Fishery Information Network (WPacFIN), the fishery data collection efforts of Guam in hopes of project encouraging fishermen to provide information, which gives further insight into local fishing habits and efforts and ensured that Pacific island fishery resources are managed for the benefit of indigenous people; and

WHEREAS, efforts by the council resulted the requirement that Longline operators carry and use specific mitigation gear to aid in the release of sea turtle accidentally captured via dip-nets, line clippers, bolt cutters and handling measures; and

WHEREAS, the Council championed the prohibition of drift gillnet fishing, bottom trawling and other non-discriminatory and destructive fishing methods throughout the 1.5 square mile jurisdiction in 1986 and successfully advocated legislation to include

highly migratory fish species, such as tuna, under federal management and many other milestones such as requiring fishing vessels to keep logbooks, and carry observers to monitor bycatch and protected species interactions, the creation of a 50 nm longline exclusion zone around the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to protect endangered Hawaiian monk seals; and

WHEREAS, the council assisted the United States in hosting four of the seven conferences that led to the first international fishery management treaty for the central and western Pacific and established the first international fishery commission to oversee migratory fish stocks within the region from 1998-2001; and

WHEREAS, further work by the council included a host of major international workshops on Pacific sea turtle conservation and environmental efforts and implementation of a sea turtle conservation plan that protects nesting beaches and reduces fishery interactions at coastal foraging habitats, and organized several international conferences to find ways to develop environmentally responsible longline gear for domestic and foreign fleets; and

WHEREAS, the council developed the nation's first ecosystem-based FMP, the Coral Reef Ecosystem FMP and Co-hosted international conferences to reduce the worldwide problem of marine debris; and

WHEREAS, In 1996 the Council successfully promoted national legislation through Congress under the MSA to protect the indigenous rights of native Pacific Islanders thru the Western Pacific Community Demonstration Project Program (CDPP) which is aimed at fostering and promoting traditional indigenous fishing practices and provides greater access for native communities to use federal programs effectively and efficiently to advance their customary, traditional, and cultural practices through grant writing, project planning, community organizing and more; and

WHEREAS, in Amercia Samoa, the Council established a longline limited entry program, an exclusion area that provides protection for smaller vessel fisheries by restricting operations by pelagic fishing vessel greater than 50 feet in length and established a no take MPAs around Rose Atoll; and

WHEREAS, in the American Samoa Archipelago CDPP Projects look to foster and usher in a new era of fishermen with the construction of a Cold Storage Installation

Project that will process tuna and bottom fish caught by local fisherman and for sale to local and export market; and

WHEREAS, in 2006 the Council successfully promoted enhanced recognition of indigenous Pacific Islanders fishery rights and heritage in the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, including a mandate to consider traditional knowledge as well as Western science in the management of fisheries as well as enhanced fisheries-related educational and training opportunities for indigenous Pacific Islanders; and

WHEREAS, in the CNMI, the council has developed a longline exclusion zone around the CNMI to provide a measure of protection from gear interactions for small boat fisheries; and

WHEREAS, programs are in development or ongoing in the CNMI that include the Saipan Traditional Fishing Education Project with community elder Lino Olopai teaching youth traditional fishing methods; and

WHEREAS, through the council, Negotiations are underway to locate a site for the Saipan Fishermen's Cooperative project. The project involves shore-based and boat fishermen who catch reef and pelagic fish. The project's goal is to increase opportunities and market access for these fishers; and

WHEREAS, the council is helping to restore traditional human fishing in Rota with the Traditional Fishing Practices for Chamorros and Carolinians-Rota Project whereby the project enables master fisherman Stan Taisacan to share his knowledge of this fishing style with youth, plus teach how to use traps and nets to catch fish, spearfishing techniques and how to manufacture gear; and

WHEREAS, on Guam the council helped modify the current 50-plus nautical mile longline exclusion area to promote growth of domestic longline fishery; and

WHEREAS, Through the CDPP, the Guam Fishermen's Cooperative Association received support for its Deep-Set Longline Project and funds received were used to purchase and outfit a 60-foot vessel to train local fishermen how to harvest pelagic fishing within allowable areas of the U.S. exclusive economic zone around Guam; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of *I Mina Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, join in the observation of the Thirtieth (30th) Anniversary of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council's formation and; be it further

RESOLVED, the Executive Committee of *I Mina Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam commend and congratulate the Council for their diligent efforts in the management of fisheries in the exclusive economic zone around the territories of American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and US Pacific island possessions, an area of nearly 1.5 million square miles; be it further

RESOLVED, that the Speaker and the Chairman of the Executive Committee certify, and the Secretary of the Legislative attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to Kitty Simonds, Executive Director, Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council; member representatives; and to the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, *I Maga Lahen Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
I MINA BENTE NUEBE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE ___ DAY OF
_____ 2007.**

MARK FORBES
Speaker and
Chairman, Executive Committee

RAY TENORIO
Senator and
Secretary of the Legislature