

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION LOGBOOK FAMILY OF FORMS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0214**

INTRODUCTION

This Supporting Statement describes requirements to be added to the existing information collection under OMB No. 0648-0214. The figures in OMB 83-I, blocks 13 and 14 are comprehensive for the collection.

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) established regional fishery management councils, such as the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC), to develop fishery management plans (FMPs) for fisheries in the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ). These plans, if approved by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), are implemented by Federal regulations and enforced by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and U.S. Coast Guard, in cooperation with State agencies to the extent possible. FMPs regulate fishing to ensure the long-term productivity and optimum yield of the resources for the benefit of the U.S.

The WPFMC has management jurisdiction over fisheries in the Pacific Ocean seaward of American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI), and the Pacific remote island areas (PRIA).¹ WPFMC has prepared, and the Secretary has approved and implemented through regulations, FMPs for crustacean, precious coral, pelagic, and bottomfish/seamount groundfish fisheries and coral reef ecosystems in the western Pacific region. The regulations include, but are not limited to, permit requirements, gear restrictions, temporal and spatial closures, harvest guidelines, reporting requirements, and protected species mitigation measures.

This clearance request is for a revision to the currently approved collection of information under the Pacific Islands Region Logbook Family of Forms (OMB No. 0648-0214). It is necessitated by Amendment 9 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Bottomfish and Seamount Groundfish Fisheries of the western Pacific region: “Measures to limit large-vessel fishing effort in the bottomfish fishery in federal waters around Guam,” and Amendment 8 to the Bottomfish and Seamount Groundfish Fisheries Management Plan, Amendment 12 to the Crustaceans Fisheries Management Plan, and Amendment 6 to the Precious Corals Fisheries Management Plan of the western Pacific region entitled: “New Permit and Reporting Requirements Following the

¹Howland, Baker, Jarvis, Wake and Palmyra Islands, Johnston Atoll and Kingman Reef

Inclusion of Fisheries under Federal Management Plans in the Western Pacific Region.” The latter three amendments are collectively referred to as the Omnibus amendment.

The objectives of Amendment 9 are to: ensure that adequate information is routinely collected on the bottomfish fishery taking place in federal waters around Guam, including the export-oriented activity targeting onaga (*Etelis coruscans*); maintain adequate opportunities for small-scale commercial, recreational, and subsistence bottomfish fishermen in the federal waters around Guam; provide for sustained community participation in the Guam bottomfish fishery; and encourage consistent availability of locally caught bottomfish products to Guam consumers. Clearance for the permit collection of information is being submitted under a separate request for OMB Control No. 0648-0490.

The objectives of the Omnibus amendment include: improving the database for future bottomfish management decisions through data reporting requirements and cooperative Federal, State, Territory data collection programs (Bottomfish FMP); to collect and analyze biological and economic information about lobster fisheries and improve the statistical base for conservation and management (Crustaceans FMP); and to encourage the acquisition and analysis of new information concerning the distribution, abundance, and ecology of precious corals (Precious Corals FMP). Clearance for the permit collection of information is being submitted under a separate request for OMB Control No. 0648-0490.

This collection of information is needed to monitor fisheries, determine whether the management measures are having the intended effects, and evaluate the benefits and costs of changes in management measures.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used.

Logbooks are used to obtain information on daily fishing activity. Information in the Guam and PRIA bottomfish logbooks consists of catch, fishing effort, and other methods of fishing used. Information on wind speed and direction, wave height, current speed and direction, and depth range of fishing are collected because they reveal the condition of the ocean, i.e., sea state, and fishing strategy which may affect catch and catch per unit of effort. Information in the PRIA and NMI crustacean and the NMI precious coral logbooks include types of quantity of gear used, units of gear set, time at start and end of set, numbers and pounds of species kept, numbers released, catch from other methods of fishing used, area(s) fished, length of the trip, average weather conditions, depth of area fished, and observed damage to the coral reef. Also, the vessel operator, who is responsible for furnishing the information, must report protected species observations. The daily logbooks provide a heads up to NMFS on interactions between fishing operations and protected species.

Catch and effort information in the logbook must be completed within 24 hours of completing the daily fishing activities; completed logsheets must be submitted to NMFS within 72 hours following the vessel’s return to port from each fishing trip. WPFMC annual reports on the

bottomfish, crustacean, and precious coral fisheries depend on the availability of catch and effort data from the logbooks.

As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NMFS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response #10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Although the information collected is not expected to be disseminated directly to the public, results may be used in scientific, management, technical, or general informational publications. Should NMFS decide to disseminate the information, it will be subject to the quality control measures and pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

None of the information elements under this collection require sophisticated information technology. Currently, vessel operators must record and submit their logbook data on paper. However, in the future, Guam's large bottomfish vessels, the NMI's crustacean and precious coral vessels, and the PRIA's bottomfish and crustacean vessels, may become equipped with vessel monitoring systems (VMS) with on-board computers to report their daily logbook catch and effort data electronically to NMFS. Other than VMS, there are no known automated electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology tools that would make the reporting easier at this time.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

NMFS carefully considered whether there were other collections by other Federal agencies or state/territorial agencies that might meet the information needs presented above. It was concluded that no other collections, besides the requested collecting information, would meet the reporting requirements of the Bottomfish and Seamount Groundfish, the Crustacean, or the Precious Corals FMPs.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

All of the vessels in the federally-managed fisheries in the western Pacific region, including the bottomfish, crustacean, and precious coral fisheries managed under these three FMPs, are small business entities of similar sizes and are affected comparably. No special measures are needed to accommodate different sized businesses.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is

not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

Without this collection or if it is conducted less frequently, NMFS and the WPFMC will be unable to make management decisions effectively and in a timely manner to conserve bottomfish, crustacean, and precious coral resources sustainable, and economic health of the fisheries on a long-term basis may be compromised.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

This collection is considered to be consistent with the OMB guidelines.

8. Provide a copy of the PRA Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

During the proposed rulemaking process, public comment will be solicited on this revised collection to OMB No. 0648-0214, under proposed rules RIN 0648-AT94 and RIN 0648-AT95. Comments will be sought on the proposed information collection on Guam bottomfish large vessel logbooks, the NMI crustacean and precious coral logbooks, and the PRIA bottomfish and crustacean logbooks.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts are involved in this collection.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

Under Section 402b of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, information submitted in accordance with regulatory requirements under the Act is confidential. This includes confidential information contained in the logbooks. Personal and propriety information is not released to the public.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered

private.

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

Thirteen respondents will be added to the current 207 respondents, bringing the total to 220. The current number of responses per year is 1,032,132, for logbooks, sales and catch reports, dealer records, VMS monitoring, and pre-trip notices. An additional 84 responses per year will be added, bringing the total to 1,032,216.

For 5 vessels x 10 trips/vessel x 5 min per trip (Guam Bottomfish), and 34 total trips for 8 vessels x 5 min per trip (NMI Crustaceans and Precious Corals, and PRIA Bottomfish and Crustaceans), the annual additional burden will be 7 hours, bringing the total annualized burden from 2,483 to 2,490 hours.

Estimate of Logbook and Reporting Burden Minutes/Hours

	Number of Trips	Minutes per Logsheet	Burden Minutes
Guam/Bottomfish	50	5	250
NMI/Crustaceans	5	5	25
NMI/Precious Corals	2	5	10
PRIA/Bottomfish	25	5	125
PRIA/Crustaceans	2	5	10
TOTAL	84		420
			Burden Hours = 7

The annual personnel cost for the new respondents is estimated at \$175 per year. This was derived by multiplying the number of hours of burden per year (7 hours) times an hourly cost rate of \$25, the estimated range of hourly wage rates for fishermen harvesting bottomfish, crustacean, or precious coral management unit species (MUS) in the western Pacific region.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection.

There is no “start up” capital cost for complying with this requirement. The estimated cost to the new respondents is about \$20/respondent per year. This cost includes telephone charges and other incidental costs associated with transmitting the logbook forms to NMFS after each trip, bringing the total annualized cost for new respondents to \$260. For all respondents, the total cost would be \$4,400.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

The estimated annual cost to the Federal government to administer the collection of this additional information is \$1,680 per year, which includes the cost for printing daily bottomfish, crustacean and precious coral MUS catch log forms and the cost of staff time for receiving and transmitting the report forms to appropriate NMFS personnel for analysis (84 hours x \$20/hr).

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB 83-I.

This is a revision to a currently approved collection OMB No. 0648-0214, which requires burden hours and costs in addition to those of the current collection. The added requirements apply to 84 trips per year, requiring 5 minutes of recordkeeping per trip, totalling 7 burden hours and \$260 in logbook transmission costs annually.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

No formal scientific publications based on these collections are planned at this time. The data will be used for fisheries management and protected species reports, FMP amendments, and evaluations by NMFS and the WPFMC. However, subsequent use of the data collected over a series of years may include scientific papers and publications.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

The expiration date will be shown on the report forms used under this collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I.

There are no exceptions.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.

