

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEMS LOGBOOK
AND REPORTING
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0462**

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson Act) established regional fishery management councils, including the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), to develop fishery management plans for fisheries in the United States (U.S.) exclusive economic zone (EEZ). These plans, if approved by the Secretary of Commerce, are implemented by Federal regulations, which are enforced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), in cooperation with State agencies to the extent possible. The fishery management plans are intended to regulate fishing to ensure sustained productivity and achievement of optimum yield from the resources for the benefit of the United States.

The Council prepared, and the Secretary partially approved and implemented through regulations at 50 CFR Part 665, a Fishery Management Plan for Coral Reef Ecosystems of the Western Pacific Region (FMP). Among other things, the regulations require the operators of vessels registered to a Coral Reef Ecosystems Special Permit to submit completed National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) daily catch report forms after the completion of each fishing trip. These reporting forms document the identity and amount of species caught during the trip. The operator of a vessel registered to a receiving vessel permit must submit a transshipment report to NMFS after landing or transshipping any potentially harvested coral reef taxa or coral reef ecosystem management unit species harvested in a low-use Marine Protected Area (MPA).

The reporting requirements are crucial to ensure that NMFS and the Council will be able to monitor the fishery and have fishery-dependent information to establish maximum sustainable yields for potentially harvested species and develop an estimate of an Annual Catch Limit(s) (annual Total Allowable Catch) for target coral reef species, evaluate the effectiveness of management measures, determine whether changes in fishery management programs are necessary, and estimate the impacts and implications of alternative management measures.

In addition, special permit holders must notify NMFS enforcement in American Samoa, Guam, and Hawaii at least 24 hours before landing any coral reef ecosystem management unit species harvested under a special permit, of the port of landing and the estimated date and time of landing.

This request is for an extension of OMB Control No. 0648-0462.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

The NMFS daily catch report logsheet is used to obtain information on fishing activity. The information consists of catch, fishing effort, and discards by species, location, time, and other fishery-dependent data, such as lost gear. Information on wind speed and direction, sea surface temperature, and depth of fishing are collected because they reveal the condition of the ocean, i.e., sea state, as well as fishing strategy, which may affect catch and catch per unit of effort. Drastic changes in catch per unit effort (CPUE) are often indicators of significant shifts in the size and structure of the stock, suggesting that changes may be appropriate in management measures in order to respond to declines or increases in stock sizes.

Also, the vessel operator, who is responsible for furnishing the information, must report protected species observations. These data are needed for determining the health of the coral reef ecosystem stocks that are currently being targeted for harvest, and of coral reef management species that have potential for harvest and use in the future. The daily logbooks also provide a “heads-up” to NMFS concerning interactions between fishing operations and protected species.

The daily logsheet must be completed within 24 hours after the end of each fishing day. Completed logsheets must be submitted to NMFS within 30 days following the vessel’s return to port from each fishing trip. The 30-day period for submitting logsheets addresses a potential situation where a fishing vessel would put into port at one of the U.S. Pacific remote island areas following several fishing trips and was not able to submit the completed logsheets to NMFS until the vessel returned to Hawaii. The annual status reports on the fishery, prepared by the Council and submitted to NMFS, depend on the availability of catch and effort data from the log reports.

Transshipment logbook information is used to ensure full reporting of all landings of coral reef resources. It is needed to evaluate the magnitude and distribution of impacts from changes in management regulations. Data from these logs include identification of the fishing vessel, species and amount (number and weight of catch) received. Operators of receiving vessels are required to complete the transshipping logsheets within 24 hours after completion of each transshipment operation and the logsheets must be provided to NMFS within 7 days of landing the coral reef ecosystem resources in port.

Pre-landing notification requirements are needed to direct enforcement efforts for ensuring compliance with management measures. The operator of a vessel registered for use with a special coral reef ecosystem fishing permit (or a designated agent of the permit holder) must notify NMFS enforcement at least 24 hours before landing any coral reef ecosystem management unit species harvested under the permit. This information consists of the name of the port and approximate date and time at which coral reef management unit species harvested on the trip will be offloaded.

The information will not be disseminated to the public except in non-confidential or aggregate form in summary and analytical reports. Any information that might be used to support publicly

disseminated information would first be aggregated and/or summarized to maintain the confidentiality of the information pertaining to the individual vessels.

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 Federal law and regulations, and NOAA policies for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 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. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a 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.

At this time, the information will be collected on paper forms mailed to each permit holder by NMFS, and the collection of information does not require any knowledge of automated, electronic, mechanical or other forms of information technology.

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 would meet the record keeping and reporting requirements of the FMP.

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 coral reef fisheries to be managed under the FMP, 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 conducted less frequently, NMFS and the Council will be unable to make management decisions effectively and in a timely manner to conserve coral reef resources and sustain the economic health of the fisheries on a long-term basis.

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

None.

8. Provide information on 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.

A Federal Register Notice published on September 3, 2008 (73 FR 51445) solicited public comments on this submission. No public comments were received.

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 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended in 2006, and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, information submitted in accordance with regulatory requirements under the Act is confidential. This includes personal and proprietary information contained in the logbooks and sales reports. Assurance of confidentiality is provided on the information collection forms.

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 sensitive questions are asked.

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

	Annual Burden:	
	Responses	Hours
(a) At-sea notification: 5 vessels x 10 trips/year x 3 min/trip	50	3
(b) Catch reports: 5 vessels x 10 trips/year x 15 days/ trip x 30 min/day	750	375
(c) Transshipment reports: 3 vessels x 5 trips/year x 1 day/trip x 15 min/day	<u>15</u>	<u>4</u>
Totals:	815	382

The total annual personnel cost to respondents is estimated to range from \$3,820 to \$7,640 per year. This was derived by multiplying the number of hours of burden per year (382 hours) times an hourly cost rate ranging from \$10 to \$20, the estimated range of hourly wage rates for fishers harvesting coral reef resources in the western Pacific region.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

There is no “start up” capital cost for complying with this requirement. Paper forms provided by NMFS will be used by the respondents for providing information. The maximum estimated cost to respondents for postage, faxes, copies, etc., related to this collection is \$100 per year.

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

The estimated annual cost to the Federal government to administer this collection is \$500 per year, which includes the cost for printing special permit coral reef management species daily catch log forms and the cost of staff time for receiving and transmitting the report forms to appropriate NMFS personnel for analysis.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

N/A. Note: in ROCIS, the cost appears to have changed from \$0 to \$100. The current cost is in fact \$100, but it was rounded off to zero when the information collection request was migrated to ROCIS.

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. NMFS and the Council will use the data (primarily in an aggregated, non-confidential format) for developing management reports and fishery management plan amendments and evaluations. 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.

N/A.

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

N/A.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

No statistical methods are employed.