

Kaua'i Herbivore Scoping Meetings

November 17, 2020, 5:30pm – 7:30pm via Zoom: 8 attendees

December 1, 2020, 5:30pm – 7:30pm via Zoom: 32 attendees

Purpose of Meeting: Statewide meetings were held to listen, learn, and collect input from various stakeholders about how best to manage key herbivorous species throughout Hawai'i. DAR presented concerns for climate change-induced threats to our coral reefs, such as warming ocean temperatures causing catastrophic coral bleaching events, and the key roles that healthy populations of herbivores contribute to reef resilience and recovery.

General Comments:

Participants agree that public education and communication with local fishermen and harvesters should be promoted. They recommended doing in-field interviews with fishers to supplement these meetings because they may be unaware of their occurrence and that more community members that gather attend these meetings. They have seen lots of tourists present in Hanapepe where fishers harvest wana and emphasize that the blame should not be put on subsistence gatherers. In addition, there were concerns about night divers and suggested a night diving restriction, but also mentioned the need for more enforcement. They suggested DAR recognize and understand historical trauma natives have experienced and include those sentiments in their decision-making moving forward. Fishers do not see themselves as the problem, which causes more resentment towards the agency.

Urchins:

Participants have witnessed overharvesting of urchins in the summertime leading to a seasonal decline along with general declines observed on the east and north shore. Participants expressed an interest in DAR's data on urchin population declines. Currently, Hā'ena has rules in place for bag limits and they suggested focus be placed on education through place-based programs like Makai Watch. Urchins are mainly place-based and participants supported bag limits, sharing they only take enough to eat and are looking at ways to use wana to repopulate reefs.

Nenu:

Participants felt nenu are more difficult to catch, which makes their populations more plentiful. They expressed that the main concern was netting of schools. They suggested a one rod and reel gear restriction or a netting restriction to address efficient gear concerns. Participants also felt that a bag limit of 2 was too little and suggested a weight limit in lieu of a bag limit or a bigger bag limit of 4-6 nenu.

Surgeonfish:

The surgeonfish topic sparked participants to share that they haven't seen any aquarium fishers on the north shore, but that two used to rotate areas. They think surgeonfish should be managed in a place-based way, because fish in the north shore differ from those in the south shore and different species are caught at different times of the year. Some participants spoke about the problems of netting taking large amounts



in a small amount of time. In addition, only few adult kala are seen, but some community members have seen increases in Hā'ena. Participants observed rarities in lau'ipala as well as manini and kole on the east side. However, nenu and manini populations seem to be doing well in the north.

Uhu:

Participants expressed concern for uhu populations and suggested the no-take of male uhu rule be adopted and additional place-based management. Some suggested implementing seasonal closures based on their spawning seasons. However, they also noted that more education is needed to share the effectiveness of the no-take rule on blue uhu and slot limits.

Public feedback above was compiled and summarized by DLNR Division of Aquatic Resources. DAR will be considering the input from these meetings in the next steps of our process.