

# HOLOMUA: MARINE 30X30

Newsletter brought to you by Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources

JULY 2021

## Dive deeper into the Marine 30x30 Initiative:



World Oceans Day



Marine Management Areas (MMAs)



Statewide Herbivore Management

## World Oceans Day leads to legislative strides for ocean conservation

On June 8, 2021, World Oceans Day, Governor Ige signed nine bills into law that will improve management of nearshore areas and contribute to Holomua: Marine 30x30 goals. The new laws include:

**Act 45/HB1018 Lay Net Permits:** Authorizes DLNR to establish rules for lay net permits for use or possession and the ability to withhold or revoke permits for violators. Requires annual permit renewal. Lay nets are one of the more indiscriminate fishing methods used in Hawai'i catching a wide variety of reef fish in large quantities, as well as many species not targeted such as sharks, turtles, and monk seals. While many local fishers use lay nets responsibly, permits and associated rules will help to monitor their use and establish consequences for those not complying with pono practices for this gear type, strengthening management of nearshore waters.

**Act 46/HB1019 Ocean Stewardship Special Fund:** The Ocean Stewardship Special Fund will collect \$1 per person from passengers or customers of commercial ocean operators to generate new revenue to be deposited into a special fund administered by DAR to support protection, restoration, and management of nearshore resources. This fee requires visitors to support the active management and restoration of our nearshore waters and helps offset some of the impacts that they have on marine resources. Depending on tourism numbers, the user fee could generate anywhere from \$14 million to more than \$30 million over 15 years. Protection and restoration is one of Holomua's four pillars. This fund will help to increase capacity for priority restoration projects statewide, giving many areas critical opportunity for recovery. This fund will also provide resources to help our nearshore ecosystems to meet the new and expanding threats caused by climate change.

**Act 49/HB1020 Adaptive Management:** Authorizes the Board of Land and Natural Resources to implement adaptive management measures in response to rapidly changing conditions, such as coral bleaching events, with temporary rules, such as size and bag limits, closed seasons and gear restrictions when needed. This new law will help implement effective management strategies that can be flexible and adjusted as necessary to respond to changing environmental conditions.

**Act 47/HB1022 Natural Resource Inspections:** Authorizes DLNR Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) officers to inspect coolers or other containers which could carry regulated aquatic life. This change increases officers' ability to enforce existing regulations and thereby encourages pono harvesting practices. Regulations reflect pono practices and are one part of effective nearshore management as they help prevent unsustainable harvest and allow the resource to replenish. When implemented, the key to effective regulations is voluntary compliance, supported by enforcement. This bill gives DOCARE an important tool, one shared by enforcement agencies in several other states, to help ensure compliance and enforce existing regulations, so that the resources are harvested sustainably.

For a complete list of newly passed laws relating to aquatic resources from Hawai'i's 2021 legislative session, [click here](#). You may also access official language as well as the legislative history of each of the bills from the State of Hawai'i's legislature website [here](#).

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## Evaluating our MMAs

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Holomua: Marine 30x30 is committed to working with partners and communities to create networks of Marine Management Areas comprising 30% of nearshore waters around each main Hawaiian island. To ensure these networks are designed to achieve ecological, social, and cultural goals, DAR is working with partners to create a framework of ecological and socio-cultural design principles to guide DAR and communities in designing new MMAs, and indicators to track ecological and social change with management.

### Socio-cultural Design Principles and Indicators—How are we designing new MMAs to strengthen connection to place?

This spring, the Holomua: Marine 30x30 Team worked closely with a UH graduate student to host 4 online workshops with kūpuna, cultural practitioners, community members, and resource users to share what social and cultural value nearshore resources hold to them and determine how to measure that value for their nearshore place. The workshops were divided up by O'ahu, Maui Nui, and Kaua'i with Hawai'i Island, followed by a fourth session including all invited participants to review all principles and indicators. The indicators developed will be used to evaluate MMAs from a social and cultural perspective by showing the benefits that nearshore resources provide to communities. They will help DAR and communities to track whether resource use for cultural and social purposes, people's connections to place, are improving with management. These design principles and indicators will be shared at this summer's Hawai'i Conservation Conference next month and will be available on the website following the conference.



**Ecological Design Principles:** DAR biologists, in collaboration with subject matter experts, have developed a robust set of ecological design principles that aim to maximize ecological objectives by taking into account key biological and physical processes (including resilience to climate change) to guide the design of MMA networks. Design principles are scientific guidelines about how to create a network of marine management area (MMAs) networks that include the right mix of habitats and are sized and spaced appropriately to work individually and as an ecologically connected network to achieve ecological goals such as more and bigger fish.

**Biological Indicators:** DAR is working with monitoring partners and collaborators to measure the condition of nearshore ecosystems in Hawai'i and work with communities to identify areas most likely to benefit from management. A set of eight indicators (including fish biomass and percent coral cover) was developed by the Hawai'i Monitoring and Reporting Collaborative (HIMARC) with input from over 30 subject experts and resource managers in Hawai'i. The HIMARC database includes monitoring data from seven major monitoring programs (including DAR, NOAA, UH, and others), encompassing over 10,000 underwater surveys.

DAR will be sharing these principles and indicators with communities to help evaluate existing MMAs and design new ones to achieve Marine 30x30 goals.

## Marine Management Area (MMA) Updates



DAR conducted a public hearing regarding updated rules for Kahului Harbor in Maui on July 14, 2021. An amendment to include the Kapo'o tidepools as part of the Pūpūkea Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD) passed unanimously at the 6/10/21 BLNR hearing. [View the BLNR hearing here.](#) A testimony summary for the Mo'omomi Community Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) is [available here.](#) However, DAR is still having internal discussion as to next steps with the process. [View the public hearing here.](#)

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## Statewide Herbivore Management Update



DAR has been monitoring the condition of our coral reefs and have documented unprecedented coral loss due to climate change impacts such as warming ocean temperatures and coral bleaching. The best available data, direct observation from scientists and citizens, and recent bleaching events in Hawai'i support the need to adapt management strategies to address this pressing concern. Herbivorous fish are those that eat seaweed and algae and help keep reefs and corals healthy by maintaining the balance of algae and coral. Some of the most commonly known herbivores are uhu (parrotfish), nenu (chubs, and rudderfish), manini, kole, pualu, umaumalei, kala, and palani (surgeonfish). They have a key role on Hawai'i's reefs and in adequate numbers, help ensure more generations of corals, fish, and families who can subsist off of nearshore resources. DAR maintains that management action is required to prevent further degradation of coral reefs and has been taking steps to enhance herbivore management.

DAR appreciates all of our passionate local resource users, community groups, partners and collaborators for participating in DAR's scoping meetings to explore statewide herbivore management. Our initial scoping events took place in November and December 2020, and were useful, but lacked significant input from fishers. Following the first round of meetings, our DAR team decided to reach out to fishers across the state and attempted to schedule informal sessions to review conceptual materials and receive fisher feedback.

The March meetings had an enthusiastic turnout with upwards of 100 people in both the O'ahu and Kaua'i online gatherings. We are grateful for the fishers who took it upon themselves to spread the word and rally a large presence to give us the most accurate depiction of how herbivore regulations would affect those who rely on the resource most. DAR was especially pleased to host local resource users of all ages, from young ones who are still learning to seasoned fishers with a wealth of place-based knowledge. As a government agency, our intention is to work with the people of Hawai'i to manage, conserve, and restore the state's aquatic resources and ecosystems for present and future generations. A few of the meetings continued well past their scheduled time, demonstrating the need to open more lines of communication between DAR and local resource users.

During the meetings, it was evident that not enough information had been shared by DAR regarding the herbivore management effort and many concerns were brought up. Both rounds of sessions highlighted the differences in people's experiences with herbivores from different islands and we heard the need for considering some of these rules at a place-based level, as opposed to statewide.

We heard you. DAR is taking time to re-consider its approach to herbivore management to better address the needs and concerns of the people of Hawai'i. The next round of scoping meetings will be delayed until DAR has better informed you and readied ourselves to move forward. This delay does not denote DAR's abandonment of this effort. We will continue to engage with fishers about the essential benefits that herbivorous fish provide to nearshore reefs. These species play key roles on the reef to enhance resiliency and recovery in the face of climate change and land-based pollution.

Mahalo to all of the participants in these scoping meetings for investing your time and sharing your mana'o with us. DAR still intends to improve herbivore management for the protection of our coral reefs, but has decided to do more listening before proceeding with any herbivore administrative rules. Over the next few months, DAR staff will begin hosting regularly occurring talk story sessions with fishers in an open forum to discuss general issues or concerns as a way to improve transparency with DAR's management actions. These sessions are not intended as a continuation of herbivore management scoping, but a chance for DAR to discuss a wide range of fishing-related topics. Fishers are often the most directly affected by these decisions and these talk story sessions are intended to encourage open and candid dialogue between fishers and DAR. We look forward to working with you to bridge gaps between the community and DAR to create a brighter future for our keiki, nearshore resources, and Hawai'i.

See additional information about the effort here: [Herbivore Management](#) and sign up to be notified of future events [here](#).

### Holoholo (Fisher) Talk Story Sessions

It was a traditional custom for lawai'a (Hawaiian fishers) to avoid using the term to plan fishing trips so as not to scare the fish away. Instead, they would say "holoholo", a generic term for play but commonly in reference to fishing. The recurring talk story sessions announced above will be named the "Holoholo (fisher) talk story sessions" to honor the traditional and customary nature of the harvesting practice.