

From: [George Pereira](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:38:45 AM

I am totally against depleting our fish population on our shorelines by aquarium fishermen for the sole purpose of money. I am an avid net fisherman and to be honest our icebox is empty, not like it used to be. It will and has affected my mo'opuna fishing rights. It is shameful and senseless act our kupuna would be saddened by this.

It is about food preservation not deprivation. Remember the saying, Give a man a fish and he will eat for that day but Teach him how to fish, he will eat for the rest of his life". Malama our Ocean!

From: [Joe Wat](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:38:34 AM

Aloha mai kākou,

I am writing in support of Moana ‘Ohana and the Ko‘olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Clubs letter requesting rulemaking to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

My name is Joe, I am grateful to work alongside many amazing kia‘i ‘āina. The give and take of the relationship with ‘āina is always at the core of our work. How can we feed the soil so it, in turn, feeds us.

Regarding the aquarium trade, this mutualistic care and dependency is obviously missing. When taking these fish to feed a bottomless international market, there is no sense of "enough" or when to stop. Damage to our reefs and ecosystems are a weight held by subsistence fishers, recreational snorkelers, and the general public while the only benefit goes to the aquarium fish collectors.

Aloha nō,
- Joe

From: [Ethan Chang](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:03:54 PM

Aloha,

My name is Ethan Chang, and I'm a current resident of Mānoa who was born and raised in Kailua. I support a rule ending commercial aquarium collection.

The collection of reef wildlife for aquarium pet trade undermines Kanaka lifeways that value being in good, sustainable relations with the ocean, corals, and marine wildlife. This extractive approach to aquarium collection also directly opposes pono fishing practices.

I strongly urge members of the board to ensure our reefs and marine wildlife remain protected today and for future generations.

aloha,
Ethan

From: [Nikola Rodriguez](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:58:23 AM

Aloha,

My name is Nikola Rodirugez. I live in Hilo, Hawaii. I am writing in support of the end of commercial aquarium collection in the Hawaiian Islands. Commercial aquarium collection was the cause of the yellow tang collapse on SW O‘ahu and the continued island-wide depletion of upwards of 90% of those and other species targeted by the trade. Coral reef is damaged during collection by collectors breaking the coral to capture Potter’s angelfish and other species that hide in it. Coral is protected in Hawaii and the end of the commercial aquarium collection will help protect coral.

The commercial aquarium trade is not pono and conflicts with native Hawaiian values and practices.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Nikola Rodirugez

From: [Ryan Chang](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:58:05 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho‘okena Beach Park, Moana ‘Ohana, Ko‘olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau‘ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

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Ryan Chang

From: [Angela Britten](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:10:45 AM

Aloha,

My name is Angela Britten and I live in Kailua on Oahu. I am writing testimony to petition DAR to ban the aquarium trade, which has massive detrimental effects on our coral reef ecosystems. The main reason is that our reefs are of paramount importance to our islands as they provide the first line of defense against sea level rise and high wave events.

Further examples of the need to permanently ban the AQ trade:

- South west O‘ahu’s collapse of yellow tang populations 35 years ago and the continued **island-wide depletion of upwards of 90% of those and other species targeted by the trade**
- West Hawai‘i reefs open to the trade experiencing an **80% decline in yellow tangs** as recently as 2016, the last full year of AQ collection before the court temporarily ended it
- AQ collector’s **intentional breaking of coral** – sometimes with crowbars – in the capture of Potter’s angelfish and other species which hide within the reef
- Widespread illegal **poaching that the AQ trade admits continues to this day**, and at least 7 AQ collectors who were charged with poaching more than 1,000 fish
- The trade inherently **conflicts with local culture and native Hawaiian values**, including pono fishing practices to only take what is needed
- Published cost/benefit analysis shows **residents receive ZERO benefits from the AQ trade**, but suffer ALL the costs
- The AQ trade’s persistent disregard for important facts as well as for public comments opposing their conclusions in their **deeply flawed and skewed Environmental Impact**

I urge you to ban the aquarium trade to ensure our reefs and their creatures remain protected today and for future generations!

Mahalo,
Angela Britten

From: [Angel Seery](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 6:49:56 AM
Attachments: [F.3AQ.docx](#)

Aloha BLNR and Dar,

I'm Angel Seery residing in the kekaha lands of Kailua-Kona on the island of Hawai'i. I fully support the petition to permanently close the commercial aquarium collection trade in Hawai'i. As an avid diver and snorkeler of the area, I have come to be completely enthralled with life on West Hawai'i's reefs. Watching manini "march" to foraging grounds, schools of raccoon butterfly fish moving in sync with each other, and rare endemic fish like the fire dart fish or bicolored anthias flash their fins are some of my most cherished encounters underwater. Because of these meaningful moments, I am driven to speak on the behalf of the tropical fish of Hawai'i.

I humbly ask for your support in the F.3 Agenda Item.

Mahalo,

Angel L. Seery

B.S. Biological Sciences - Marine Biology, Minor - Sustainability
Florida Institute of Technology

315 - 767 - 5739

seery.angel22@gmail.com

From: [hai on](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:17:17 PM

Aloha Board Members,

My name is Hai On. I reside here in Kalopa, near Honokaa 96727 on the Big Island.

Please vote to end aquarium collecting forever.

We had thought this was decided a while ago. The aquarium-collecting trade does not benefit the local fish population or help people.

Those who took fish and destroyed what belonged to all are a different breed of criminals. If there is a loophole in the law, it will be exploited.

Thank you,

Hai Van On

kawaihaereef.org | hai@kawaihaereef.org | 808 333 0081

From: [Keith Neal](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:24:52 AM

Agenda Item F.3 Testimony

I support Hawai'i's Board of Land and Natural Resources to enact a rule to prohibit collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium pet trade.

This is vanity practice of collecting wild Hawaiian reef creatures for the aquarium pet trade, and it must stop. Hawaiian reef ecosystems are challenged significantly, and aquarium trade collectors compound those challenges. Why do we allow this exploitation such that wild reef fishes live out their lives in a glass box on the mainland (of those that make it)!? Furthermore, the trade inherently conflicts with local culture and native Hawaiian values, including pono fishing practices to only take what is needed.

The collection of wild Hawaiian reef creatures for the aquarium pet trade is an ugly vanity trade, as is shark fining.

Ban aquarium pet trade collecting in Hawaiian waters.

Keith Neal
Waimea, 96743

From: [Nina Monasevitch](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:50:37 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I strongly support the petition submitted by Kalanihale, For the Fishes, Moana ‘Ohana, KUPU Friends of Ho’okena Beach Park, and Ko’olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club to end commercial aquarium collection in Hawai‘i and urge the board to approve this vital initiative. It’s imperative that we prioritize the protection of natural and cultural resources over commercial activities that have caused severe harm.

The proposal to prohibit the collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium pet trade is not only necessary — it’s vitally urgent. The evidence is clear that this trade has led to detrimental impacts on our marine ecosystems. For instance, in West Hawai‘i, the aquarium trade historically took more herbivores critical for coral reef health than subsistence, recreational and commercial food fishers combined. This alone underscores the urgency for a permanent ban on the aquarium trade. But there’s more: The trade has led to a decline in yellow tang populations, widespread coral damage, and illegal poaching — yet the trade completely disregard the public’s concern about it all. As a 45 year resident who has been SCUBA diving and long distance ocean swimming in Hawaii these past 45 years, I am horrified by the catastrophic degradation I have witness in marine life and water quality in Hawaii’s near shore waters. The commercial aquarium trade is incompatible with Native Hawaiian values, which emphasize sustainable and respectful fishing practices.

I urge the board to make a decision that will safeguard Hawai‘i’s precious reefs and their inhabitants for current and future generations and the wellbeing of ALL marine life and the future of our planet. Approve this petition and direct the Division of Aquatic Resources to begin the necessary rulemaking process to ban commercial aquarium collection in Hawai‘i. The wellbeing of Hawai‘i’s marine environment, the preservation of its Native culture and our planets climate balance depend on it.

Malama Pono!

Sincerely,
Nina Monasevitch

Nina Monasevitch
oceanmana@hawaiiantel.net
Lihue, Kauai
808-246-4457

From: [MauiMercer](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3 Testimony
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:58:25 PM

I urge **the Board to approve this petition and direct DAR to begin rulemaking.**
There are so many reasons to protect our coral reefs:

- It's the pono thing to do.
- It protects a valuable resource for both locals and tourist.
- Hawai'i's reefs that are open to the AO trade experiencing an **80% decline in yellow tangs.**
- Published cost/benefit analysis shows **residents receive ZERO benefits from the AQ trade**, but suffer ALL the costs.

Again I urge the Board to approve this petition and direct DAR to begin rule making now!

Mahalo,

Janet Mercer

From: slambert@hawaiiantel.net
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F.3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:16:58 PM

Aquarium Fish Collection Trade Testimony:

Sally & Steve Lambert, who live in West Hawaii, Kona on Hawaii Island, are continually reminded as the rest of Kona residents are, that the aquarium fish collection (theft) trade does not care to live by any rules and Pono fishing practices mean nothing to these individuals.

This "trade" has continually shown us that the islands' resources, in this case fish, are up for grabs even if that means poaching. The cost to the reef and beaches will not be recoverable when the fish are mostly gone. Then it will be too late. We are resoled that the temporary end to the aquarium fish collection by the court should be made permanent.

Steve & Sally Lambert
77-258 Maliko Street
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

From: kaipuna@aol.com
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F-3 - Support, BLNR Meeting December 7-8, 2023
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:50:12 PM

Agenda Item F-3: Kalanihale's, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park's, Moana 'Ohana's, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club's, and For the Fishes' Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes (With Exemptions)., BLNR Meeting December 7-8, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

Aloha BLNR,

I am in **support** of agenda Item F-3: Kalanihale's, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park's, Moana 'Ohana's, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club's, and For the Fishes' Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes (With Exemptions).

It makes no sense that we continue to allow the take of our limited resources for monetary gain by an industry that could be supporting itself through controlled land-based farming (in tanks) of the fish/marine life they wish to buy/sell. Taking them from our reefs not only hinders the health of our marine ecosystems, it puts a dent in our fishing resources and goes against our traditional and customary practices.

I would like to see the rulemaking process happen to address the potential prohibition of the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes (with exemptions).

Mahalo nui for your consideration,

Jenny Lynn

From: [leslee.cook](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F-3 Testimony of Support for Rulemaking to Prohibit Commercial Aquarium Collection in Hawai'i
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:51:55 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources

I am a trauma focused psychotherapist living in Holualoa. I have been coming to this island for 35 years. I have seen the fish dwindling from the pollution as well as the raping of our oceans for salt water tanks in the US. I now reside here and though I don't surf or fish I do love to swim and it breaks my heart to see the white dead reefs and very few colorful fish as I saw in the 80's.

We are in CRISIS – many reef fish are in huge decline and, without them, our coral reefs are projected to begin dying even more within the next decade. I am answering the call for action and plead with you for your help.

Our local fish also known as the herbivore species perform a critical function on our coral reefs that we, as humans, can not be a substitute for. We need all reef species in abundance for more than just food, we need them in vast numbers to increase coral resilience to climate change impacts and pollution from our sewage. The very survival of our island ecosystem is dependent upon this.

Coral reefs are protective barriers to our nearshore and a crucial host in an ecosystem that generates photosynthesis, **producing up to 70% of all oxygen.** That is every other breath we take, no matter where we live. Culturally, we know how significant ko'a (coral) are – its foundation in the order of life of our marine ecosystems.

I beg you, plead with you to be courageous and continue to uphold the Department of Land and Natural Resources policy code, **Hierarchy of Uses Principle** – preserving and protecting the cultural and natural resources as your highest priority.

I urge the Board to approve the petition and direct the Division of Aquatic Resources to begin rulemaking to ban aquarium collection PERMANENTLY in Hawai'i, in 2024.

Aquarium collection is not a cultural practice. What started over 5 decades ago has decimated populations of herbivores, and weakened our critically important coral reefs. We let these companies pay off a few people to exploit our reef fish and we need this to stop now.

It must stop now and with your wisdom and courage and your vote **this exploitation and degradation of our cultural and natural resources will no longer be allowed!**

On December 8th, 2023, collectively you will be able to answer to this call for action – to preserve and protect our marine ecosystem and cultural landscape, making Hawai'i a global example of what culturally grounded and regenerative leadership looks like. **Approve the petition before you to prohibit aquarium collection.**

Mahalo nui loa, respectfully yours,
Leslee D Cook, LMFT

Holualoa, Big Island

From: [Crystal Dudoit](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F-3 Testimony of Support for Rulemaking to Prohibit Commercial Aquarium Collection in Hawai'i
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:05:27 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources

My name is Leilani Huihui. I reside in Kailua Kona. My family and I spend most of our days in the ocean and it's sad to see the changes that have affected our reefs. From dumping of sewage, to the selling of our reef fish.

We are in CRISIS – many herbivore species are in huge decline and, without them, our coral reefs are projected to begin dying within the next decade. I am answering the call for action and need your help.

Herbivore species perform a critical function on our coral reefs that we, as humans, can not be a substitute for. We need all reef species in abundance for more than just food, we need them in vast numbers to increase coral resilience to climate change impacts. The very survival of the ecosystem is dependent upon this.

Coral reefs are protective barriers to our nearshore and a crucial host in an ecosystem that generates photosynthesis, producing up to 70% of all oxygen. That is every other breath we take, no matter where we live. Culturally, we know how significant ko'a (coral) are – its foundation in the order of life of our marine ecosystems.

I am asking you to continue to uphold the Department of Land and Natural Resources policy code, Hierarchy of Uses Principle – preserving and protecting the cultural and natural resources as your highest priority. I urge the Board to approve the petition and direct the Division of Aquatic Resources to begin rulemaking to ban aquarium collection PERMANENTLY in Hawai'i.

Aquarium collection is not a cultural practice. What started over 5 decades ago has decimated populations of herbivores, and weakened our critically important coral reefs.

Do not allow this exploitation and degradation of our cultural and natural resources to continue further. On December 8th, 2023, collectively you will be able to answer to the call for action – to preserve and protect our marine ecosystem and cultural landscape, making Hawai'i a global example of what culturally grounded and regenerative leadership looks like. Approve the petition before you to prohibit aquarium collection.

Mahalo
Leilani Huihui
Village of La'iohua
Moku O Keawe

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Lynn M. Azar](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F-3 Testimony of Support for Rulemaking to Prohibit Commercial Aquarium Collection in Hawai'i
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:38:22 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources << I>> We are in CRISIS – many herbivore species are in huge decline and, without them, our coral reefs are projected to begin dying within the next decade. I am answering the call for action and need your help. << SHARE A STORY THAT TESTIFIES TO THE DECLINE OF FISH OR CORAL REEFS DYING >> Herbivore species perform a critical function on our coral reefs that we, as humans, can not be a substitute for. We need all reef species in abundance for more than just food, we need them in vast numbers to increase coral resilience to climate change impacts. The very survival of the ecosystem is dependent upon this. Coral reefs are protective barriers to our nearshore and a crucial host in an ecosystem that generates photosynthesis, producing up to 70% of all oxygen. That is every other breath we take, no matter where we live. Culturally, we know how significant ko'a (coral) are – its foundation in the order of life of our marine ecosystems. I am asking you to continue to uphold the Department of Land and Natural Resources policy code, Hierarchy of Uses Principle – preserving and protecting the cultural and natural resources as your highest priority. I urge the Board to approve the petition and direct the Division of Aquatic Resources to begin rulemaking to ban aquarium collection PERMANENTLY in Hawai'i. Aquarium collection is not a cultural practice. What started over 5 decades ago has decimated populations of herbivores, and weakened our critically important coral reefs. Do not allow this exploitation and degradation of our cultural and natural resources to continue further. On December 8th, 2023, collectively you will be able to answer to the call for action – to preserve and protect our marine ecosystem and cultural landscape, making Hawai'i a global example of what culturally grounded and regenerative leadership looks like. Approve the petition before you to prohibit aquarium collection. Mahalo, Lynn Azar>> << 'Ohana/Community, Island >>

From: [Alohi Nakachi](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F-3 Testimony of Support for Rulemaking to Prohibit Commercial Aquarium Collection in Hawai'i
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:30:09 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources

My name is 'Alohi Nakachi, I am from the Island of Hawai'i born and raised in the mokus of Kona and Kohala. I have grown up in and around the ocean all over the Island of Hawai'i, being blessed with a boat captain for a father and having a deep love and kuleana for the ocean instilled within me from a young age. This love and kuleana led me to where I am now living on the Island of O'ahu finishing my PhD in Natural Resources and Environmental Management.

I am an Indigenous researcher and Native Hawaiian social scientist seeking to better acknowledge and represent diverse values and ways of knowing, particularly Indigenous knowledge systems within research, management and academia. Management institutions within Hawai'i only prioritize one anthropocentric way of knowing that excludes the diverse values and relationships people hold for their surrounding environments. This perpetuates a slew of justice and equity issues.

The Aquarium trade is particularly representative of these injustices and lack of consideration for diverse values and knowledge systems. The ongoing impacts of the aquarium industry have been allowed by the state of Hawai'i under the premise that this trade provides economic benefits to Hawai'i. However, without even looking at the different values and peoples impacted by this trade, the economic costs from this trade outweigh the benefits. In a study by Schaar and Cox 2021, they show that the economic benefits of the trade are limited to permit holders in the state (the EIS proposes 22 permit holders) and the rest of the economic benefits exist outside of the state where an estimated 95% of the fish are exported. Meanwhile the costs of the trade of administering permits would be burdened upon taxpayers ([Schaar and Cox, 2021](#)).

While Hawai'i management focuses on economic interests and a utilitarian perspective commodifying our environment, other values get completely ignored and unaccounted for. The diverse values and worldviews that people hold for include a kincentric worldview foundational to many Indigenous nations including Native Hawaiians ([Hernandez, 2022](#); [Osorio, 2018](#); [Salmón, 2000](#); [Topa and Narvaez, 2022](#)). Foundational to Native Hawaiian practices and culture is the notion that humans and our surrounding environment are related as the elements, 'āina and all its inhabitants were birthed before us and humans were born as the youngest of this extended family to steward and appreciate all the gifts provided by those non-human relatives that come before us ([Andrade, 2013](#); [Kame'eleihiwa, 1992](#); [Kikiloi, 2010](#); [Kikiloi et al., 2017](#); [Kurashima et al., 2018](#)).

Allowing the continuation of a trade that benefits an industry outside of the pae 'āina of Hawai'i conflicts with Native Hawaiian practices of mālama, or the need to care for our ancestors and non-living relatives, as well as directly impacts and competes with fishing practices as the majority of fish collected for the industry are important food fishes. I am asking you to continue to uphold the Department of Land and Natural Resources policy code, Hierarchy of Uses Principle – preserving and protecting the cultural and natural resources as your highest priority. I urge the Board to approve the petition and direct the Division of Aquatic Resources to begin rulemaking to ban aquarium collection PERMANENTLY in Hawai'i.

Hawai'i and the world in general are constantly under threat from compounding impacts particularly those from climate change. As we have seen continuously over the past few years from coral bleaching, an ongoing global pandemic, increased storm events and king tides, and devastating fires, we need to do everything we can to prioritize our place-based resilience. This includes limiting harmful or unnecessary practices, increasing food security, looking more towards place-based management, and investing more in Indigenous knowledge systems and stewardship. Indigenous stewardship remains a beacon of hope in times of impending threats as Indigenous peoples currently maintain and take care of what is estimated to be around 80% of the global biodiversity presently ([Hernandez, 2022](#)).

It is long overdue that Native Hawaiian knowledge systems and stewardship practices be given an equal footing and recognition within management systems and processes within Hawai'i. The knowledge has long been there of how we may maintain resilience and care for the 'āina of Hawai'i we need only listen and engage with it. That includes reciprocal practices of caring for place and not allowing extractive and harmful practices such as the aquarium trade that do not even benefit the people of Hawai'i.

Do not allow this exploitation and degradation of our cultural and natural resources to continue further. On December 8th, 2023, collectively you will be able to answer to the call for action – to preserve and protect our marine ecosystem and cultural landscape, making Hawai'i a global example of what culturally grounded and regenerative leadership looks like. Approve the petition before you to prohibit aquarium collection.

Mahalo

'Alohi Nakachi

Kona, Hawai'i

PhD Candidate NREM, UH Mānoa

References

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From: [Lenley Lewis](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda item F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:55:26 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am writing to urge you to approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit taking marine life for sale to commercial aquariums.

Reef fish are essential to the health of our endangered coral reefs. Commercial aquarium collection can have adverse effects on reef biodiversity function. It has not yet been properly managed or curtailed.

Enacting the rule-making process to prohibit taking marine life for sale by commercial aquariums will help protect the reefs that help to protect us from storms and coastal erosion, and which foster biodiverse marine life for food and the general enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Sincerely,
Lenley Lewis
Laupahoehoe

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Laura Koch](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda item F3-Chair Chang, and BLNR
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:28:50 AM

Dear Chair Chang and BLNR,

It has come to my attention that there is a motion to ban aquarium fishing. As a visitor who has family there and has enjoyed the Islands since the early 2003 with more than a dozen trips, I have followed this with interest for many years.

This is an upsetting situation especially since I have met many hardworking families following Hawaii rules, that protect the reef and seas and truly love Hawaii; while snorkeling companies such as Snorkel Bob's make millions off unskilled and untrained snorkelers that tread all over the Hawaiian reefs every year. They will sell and rent snorkeling gear to anyone, then taking the dollars to fund campaigns that hurt hard working families trying to make a living from the sea. Fishing has always been a huge and special part of Hawaii. Many of the native Hawaiian stories talk about the importance of the seas and fishing. Why is Hawaii hurting its own Ohana? Meanwhile visitors can come and go and big business tycoon's ruin the Aloha Kai. Support your fishing working class in Hawaii!

Do not ban aquarium fishing, manage it. It has been verified as sustainable and the science and people of Hawaii support it. OPPOSE agenda item F3.

Sincerely,

Laura K. Davis

From: [Ross Davis](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda item F3-Chair Chang, and BLNR
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:43:57 AM

Dear Chair Chang and BLNR,

It has come to my attention that there is a motion to ban aquarium fishing. As a visitor who has enjoyed surfing, snorkeling, hiking and fishing the Islands since the 90's with more than 2 dozen trips, I have followed this debate for many years. My uncle is a lifelong farmer who was invited by the corn farmers of Niihau to assist them in maturation issues there a few years back. Hawaii will always have a special place in my family's heart.

It is of particular note and interest that one of the main detractors of fishing is Snorkel Bob's organization who in my opinion has done more to damage the inner coastal reefs of Hawaii than any other. The very notion that a few hand net aquarium fishermen could do more damage to the reefs and fish populations than the millions of unskilled and untrained snorkelers that tread all over the Hawaiian reefs every year is ludicrous. They will sell and rent snorkeling gear to anyone, then taking the dollars to fund campaigns that hurt hard working families trying to make a living from the sea.

Do not ban aquarium fishing, manage it. To my knowledge, it's been verified as sustainable and the science and people of Hawaii support it. OPPOSE agenda item F3.

Sincerely,

Ross C. Davis

Ross C. Davis
Co-Owner/Senior Coach
Swim Streamline LLC
Spring, TX 77379
346-225-5688

From: [Pete Wilson](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Aquarium fish collection petition
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:18:03 PM

Agenda item: F-3

What is happening: Community groups including Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho‘okena Beach Park, Moana ‘Ohana, Ko‘olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes, have petitioned the Department of Land and Natural Resources to establish rules prohibiting the taking of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

The commercial take of marine life for the aquarium market has been a concern of Kānaka Maoli subsistence communities, ecologists, recreational fishers, and reef enthusiasts for decades. However, the DLNR has been unable to properly manage this industry, with O‘ahu rules that are not about environmental protection but to reduce waste, and West Hawai‘i Island rules that were continually violated until a recent lawsuit invalidated all commercial aquarium collection permits, albeit temporarily. These community groups have finally said that enough is enough, and that a commercial aquarium collection ban is the only way to prevent this industry from further impacting our coral reefs.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy nearshore ecosystem. They help to maintain the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from rising seas and coastal erosion; are a critical component of traditional fishing practices; have cultural and spiritual significance; and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike. Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau‘ipalā, herbivores that are critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

Community groups across the islands have long fought to stop the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes. This is your opportunity to support these groups and help protect our precious life sustaining coral reefs for generations to come!

--

Pete Wilson
13-927 Kahukai Street
Pahoa HI 96778
808-557-8108

From: [Darren Ota](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Aquarium Fishing Ban Bill
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:34:55 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

Good evening Chair Chang,

I am writing to you to say that I am in favor and support of “Sustainable Fisheries” and oppose the proposed ban on Aquarium Fishing.

I am born and raised in Kona and remain connected with the community as I go back often for both work and family.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on this matter.

Darren Ota
VP & Commercial Banking Assistant Manager

**CENTRAL
PACIFIC
BANK**

MAIN COMMERCIAL BANKING CENTER
220 S. King St., 4th Floor, Honolulu, HI 96813
Mobile: 808.292.4445 | e-Fax: 808.544.5687
darren.ota@cpb.bank | cpb.bank



From: [Taryn Manago](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Aquarium Fishing
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:51:02 PM

To whom it may concern,

I oppose the bill banning aquarium Fishing and support sustainable fisheries.

Thank you,
Taryn Manago
Captain Cook, Hawaii

From: [farshad Bonakdar](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Attention Chair Chang
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:16:56 PM

I oppose the Aquarium fishing ban bill. Pleas support fisheries that are sustainable.

Thank you very much.
Farshad Bonakdar.
Kealakekua HI.

From: kawika.cruz.13@gmail.com
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Attention Chair Chang
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:27:03 PM

I oppose aquarium fishing ban bill.
I support sustainable fisheries.
Kawika Cruz, Kealakekua

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Daren 2](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Attention Chair Pang
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:20:09 PM

Chair Chang:

I oppose the aquarium fishing ban bill.
I support sustainable fisheries.

Daren Katayama
Kealakekua, Hawaii

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Julia Costa](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Attention: Chair Chang
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:09:18 PM

Please oppose aquarium fishing ban bill. Support sustainable fisheries. Julia costa, kailua-kona.

Mahalo
Julia Costa

From: [Caelly Shiraki](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] ATTN CHAIRMAN CHANG
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:25:53 PM

Please oppose the bill on ban on aquarium fishing. I support sustainable fisheries.

Caelly Shiraki
Kealakekua, Hawaii

From: [La"á Poepoe](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] dlnr meeting agenda 12/7/2023 testimony
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:55:34 PM

offering written testimony on item F3 in support of a petition for rulemaking.

From: [Roni Cobb](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DO NOT BAN FISHING
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:10:21 PM

Attention: Chair Chang

I oppose F3

DO NOT BAN FISHING

Manage it!!!

Roni Cobb

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Kathy Cobb](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do not ban fishing!
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:55:40 AM

Kathy Cobb

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kevin Weng](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] F 3. Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes. NO
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:50:01 PM

F 3. Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes. NO

It does not make sense to manage fisheries based on the market for the products, we should manage fisheries based on the sustainability of the harvest. All fisheries should have sustainable harvest caps, as well as science-based approaches such as size limits and seasons. To manage a fishery we must know the harvest, so we should know the number of participants and how much each person is taking. So we should look at all fisheries in Hawai'i and (1) monitor the harvest level, (2) determine if this level is sustainable, and (3) reduce the harvest if over the sustainable level. In which fisheries are we closest to accomplishing these three steps? The aquarium fish fishery has better monitoring than the eating fish fisheries (and a much smaller harvest, and thus smaller ecological impact).

The aquarium fish fishery has both permit and reporting, thus allowing DLNR to quantify the harvest. Thus there is evidence that DLNR can accomplish steps 1 through 3, and allow sustainable aquarium fish collecting with monitoring, science-based rules, and enforcement.

Establishing similar monitoring systems for the eating fish fisheries would be a strong step toward understanding sustainability of that harvest, which is much larger than the aquarium fish harvest, and for which DLNR lacks adequate information to accomplish steps 1 through 3. DLNR has permitting and reporting for commercial, but not recreational catch, so DLNR is missing an important data source to understand the harvest levels. The unreported harvest of both reef fishes and bottomfishes is very large. We would be much better off if we had better monitoring and reporting for these eating fish fisheries (in which I am a participant). The eating fish fisheries are lagging behind the aquariumfish fishery in terms of permitting and reporting, and since eating fish fisheries have much larger harvest, we should invest effort on these sectors in order to achieve sustainability and healthy reefs.

Establishing no-take zones or MLCDs would be a great idea to build in a margin of safety for climate change and other impacts, and such no-take zones should apply to all fishing with any method and for any purpose. No-take zones should be considered as an important management tool as they allow fishes to reach larger sizes and older ages, and thus become high output spawners, to replenish the rest of the system. No take zones should apply to all fishing methods, such that a no-take zone for aquarium fish fishing should also prohibit me from spearfishing. In addition to no-take zones, more customized management systems should be created through the CBSFA system, which, in addition to improving sustainability for fishes, can add value in the teaching and perpetuation of cultural knowledge and practice.

Kevin Weng
spearfisherman

Fish biologist
Palolo

From: [Laila Kaupu](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] F-3 Testimony in Support to Prohibit Commercial Aquarium Collection
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:35:19 PM

Aloha, my name is Viola Kaupu and I'm a descendent of Omoka'a, living in Miloli'i-Ho'opuloa on Hawai'i Island.

I support prohibiting commercial aquarium collection in Hawai'i waters.

While growing up with fishermen for kupuna, fishes of all kinds were plentiful. No matter what kinds of fish, they were plentiful then.

Sure! People need to make money, but fishes don't belong in aquariums to bring joy and entertainment to those who catch, sell, and buy. What about our reefs?

Growing up, my kupuna taught us to always mālama the kai. What you take, you give back. I strongly believe that these people have never given back to the spaces they took from, let alone be taught this cultural code of conduct.

Our children and grandchildren are going to carry the burden, if you, BLNR & DAR do not put an end to this trade. Yes, climate change is also a factor in this but our future generation is who we need to look forward to for the survival of our culture, ohana, 'āina and our kai.

'A'ole AQ!

Viola M.H. Kaupu
Descendent of Omoka'a & Miloli'i

From: [Steven Williams](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] F3
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:37:38 AM

Subject line: Testimony for agenda item F-3

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Steven Williams

From: [Norton Chan](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:14:19 PM

Dear Chair Chang and BLNR board,

I would like to submit testimony. I am a spearfisherman, fisherman, and a coral biologist.

F.3. Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes NO

The aquarium fishery has data to back the sustainability of the take of aquarium fish and has a permit and monitoring program in place. This rule should not be based on emotional feelings. Compare this to the commercial and recreational fisheries, the commercial fishery has a reporting program and limited data while there is no reporting system at all for the recreational fishery. There are more individuals taking fish recreationally and commercially that surpass the amount of fish collected in the aquarium fishery.

aloha,

Norton Chan

Coral Restoration & Mitigation Specialist
Division of Aquatic Resources, DLNR
Anuenue Fisheries Research Center
1039 Sand Island Parkway
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

From: [Dawn Webster](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Agenda item F 3--Testimony in STRONG support of a permanent ban on commercial Aquarium collection
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:27:40 PM

I have seen the passion and commitment of native Hawaiian fishing communities up close through my work helping them with media matters.

There is increasing recognition nationally that indigenous leaders know best how to ensure proper stewardship of the land and the waters.

Is Hawaii ready to act in a way that is consistent with that recognition? I hope so, for all our sakes.

BLNR should heed the call to ban commercial aquarium collection. Local fishers who know the waters have seen the terrible damage caused. They have seen the disregard for native Hawaiian cultural practices. They have seen greed trump care for the oceans and the fish that feed these communities.

Please listen to the wisdom of those who have proven they know how to be good stewards. Seize the moment to end the deeply damaging practice of commercial aquarium collection now.

It is within your power to act for the well-being of generations to come. We cannot pass up this opportunity to stop the damage that is being done through commercial aquarium collection and allow the best practices of native Hawaiian fishers to guide us. Please act now.

Mahalo.

*Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.
Communications & Issue Advocacy
1, Keahole Place, #3501, Honolulu, HI 96825
www.dawnmorais.com
808-383-7581*

From: [KC](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Harvesting Our reef fish for profit
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:31:13 PM

Stop allowing the harvesting of our reef fish!!!

From: oceanwindows2@yahoo.com
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose Agenda Item F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:59:02 PM

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose the ban proposed for aquarium fishing and believe the fishery should be reopened.

Mahalo,
Luci Price

From: [Matt Brown](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose agenda item F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:21:45 PM

Attn: Chair Chang, and BLNR

Please do not ban aquarium fishing, manage it.

Sincerely

Matt Brown

From: [Mike Vitousek](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose ban on aquarium fishing
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:55:53 PM

Aloha,

I am writing to express opposition to an outright ban on aquarium fishing. I believe that management and conservation is much better solution than banning the fishery.

Currently Hawaii does not manage its aquatic resources very well. There is no limit to the number of fish that can be harvested for non aquarium purposes. And no laws that prevent waste of harvested fish. To my knowledge it would be legal to catch 10,000 yellow tang in a day then throw them all in a rubbish can.

It would seem that our limited resources would be best used to create an overall management plan for the nearshore waters that allows a variety of conservation strategies rather than targeting one fishery that has a limited impact.

Mahalo
Mike Vitousek

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Eric Moennich](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose DAR Item F3 (Petition to Prohibit Aquarium Fishing)
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:10:28 AM

To whom it may concern:

I am strongly opposed to DAR Item F3 (Petition to Prohibit Aquarium Fishing).

Please do not pass DAR Item F3.

I feel it would be very prejudicial and unfair to aquarium fishermen to take away all hope and ability to get back to fishing by allowing those that oppose aquarium fishing to petition the BLNR for rule making to place a moratorium on aquarium fishing.

At this time there is already no aquarium fishing being allowed.

The courts have outlined a fair and just path for aquarium fishermen to try and get back their permits back by first completing the now required HEPA and EIS, which aquarium fishermen have been and currently are, diligently working on at this time.

Please don't allow all the hard work, time, and money aquarium fishermen have been spending on the HEPA and EIS to be wasted.

I have always been a proponent of regulation, bag / take limits, and open or closed areas, in order to keep the fish stocks sustainable. This allows both parties, those for and those against aquarium fishing, to have some form of compromise and not allow the ocean to be used by just one user group.

A moratorium on aquarium fishing does not strike a fair and just balance between both user groups, those for and those against aquarium fishing. In fact it completely excludes one user groups pursuit of happiness in life and allows the other user group full and complete happiness.

The ocean should not be exclusive to one user group, it should be fairly and justly shared by all.

Please don't place a moratorium on aquarium fishing, instead please use all the data and science that you have and will continue to have, to regulate and find a fair and just balance for both the group that's for aquarium fishing and the group that's against aquarium fishing.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Eric Moennich

From: [Jenny Overby](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:37:43 PM

Attn Chair Chang and BLNR
Do not ban fishing, manage it

Thank you for your consideration,
Jennifer Overby

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [Samuel Bales](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:26:05 PM

Attn Chair Chang and BLNR
Do not ban fishing, mange it.

-Samuel Bales

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Jill](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose F3
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:26:37 PM

Attn: Chair Chang and BLNR

Do not ban fishing, manage it.

Oppose F3

Jill Hill

From: [Carlos Mendoza](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:46:22 PM

Attn Chair Chang and BLNR,

Do not ban fishing, manage it

Best Regards,
Adam

From: [Buddy Driskill](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:26:30 PM

Attn Chair Chang and BLNR
Do not ban fishing, manage it

Dwayne Driskill

From: [Kalaë Hickcox](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose tropical fish ban
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:04:20 AM

Sent from my iPhone. I oppose the tropical fish ban it is a sustainable fishery.

From: [Kira Cobb](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] OpposeF3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:27:15 PM

Attn Chair Chang and BLNR
Do not ban fishing, manage it

Kira Nicole cobb

From: ekoch492@gmail.com
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Agenda Item F3 regarding aquarium fishing
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 6:25:22 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and the Board,

I write to you today in strong opposition to agenda item F3 regarding the ban of aquarium fishing. As a commercial fisher in Hawaii who has for my entire adult life derived my livelihood from the sea, think this attempt by earthjustice and these outside influences to now push for a BAN via BLNR AFTER they forced the fishers to do HEPA is OUTRAGEOUS and BAD FAITH!! They forced the environmental review, the science and the record has prevailed and proven that they are wrong, and now, they're unhappy with result so they want to eliminate their opponent no matter what. If the board facilitates this you make a mockery of science, you slap local families and fishers like me and my ohana right in the face! This can not be done.

The BLNR needs to recognize their role is to manage resources, not ban them!!

This fishery is the most studied, most managed, and most valuable inshore fishery in the state of Hawaii. No other fishery has this much science and oversight and if any fishery was forced to be scrutinized like the AQ fishery, they wouldn't make it through an environmental review. Just because other fisheries are deemed "food" doesn't mean it's a free for all, no oversight required yet this is what happens. The BLNR may pass some minimal regulation but the problem is YOU GUYS HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IS GOING ON OUT THERE BECAUSE THERE IS NO SCIENCE!!! At least with AQ fishing, there are comprehensive studies and valid management. The double standard is maddening. As far as the cultural issues I'd say (and science says) there's plenty of yellow tangs in the sea. No Hawaiians will be impacted by fishers collecting yellow tangs. I live in Hawaiian homelands and my next door neighbors are kānaka maoli. They are also Lawai'a. When I talk story about yellow tangs and aquariums they don't mind it at all. The yellow tang is not important in the slightest. They don't rely on this fish, they don't eat it at all. In fact, most don't even know anything about this fish. Some that do, consider it a nuisance fish when they throw net.

Every year the opponents of the aquarium fishery try to ban it via the legislature, and every year the legislature sees right through their lies and misstatement of facts. The legislature is wise to this very small group of paid activists (Mike Nakachi and Kaupiko Ohana, Rene Unberger, Snorkel Bob etc) don't be deceived by these liars! Banning is a legislative act, your job is management!

Please do what's pono, reject this petition, follow YOUR agency (DAR) recommendations, support the aquarium fishermen, understand the struggle we have been through, see that we have completed in good faith what the BLNR has required of us.

Mahalo
Eric
Waiohinu Kāū

From: [YAHOO](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Agenda Item F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:52:47 PM

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose a ban on aquarium fishing-agenda item F3.

Mahalo,
Cristina Tiongco

From: [Ted Bohlen](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Petition for Aquarium Fishing Rules, F3. Kalanihale's, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park's, Moana'Ohana's, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club's, and For the Fishes' Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquar...
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:18:29 PM

To: Board of Land and Natural Resources

From: Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Petition for Aquarium Fishing Rules, F3. Kalanihale's, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park's, Moana 'Ohana's, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club's, and For the Fishes' Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes (With Exemptions).

Date: December 5, 2023

Aloha Board members:

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) is a group of scientists, educators, filmmakers and environmental advocates who have been working since 2017 to protect Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean. **The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition STRONGLY SUPPORTS adoption of the petition (Petition) for rules governing the commercial aquarium trade (with exemptions).**

Rules on herbivore takes for the commercial aquarium trade are not just a fishing issue. Restricting takes of herbivores for the commercial aquarium trade is essential for future coral survival! In particular, to protect the reefs, the Department's rules should prohibit takes by the commercial aquarium trade of herbivores such as yellow tang and kole.

*Hawai'i's coastline, recreation-based economy, beaches, and lifestyle all depend on healthy coral reefs. But, our coral reefs face a grim future with a warmer and more acidic ocean and land-based pollution including nutrients that fertilize macro algae seaweeds that choke the reefs. We need to protect our fragile coral reefs now so they have a chance of surviving the coming stresses by, among other things, ensuring abundant and diverse stocks of herbivores, which clean the reefs by consuming seaweeds. **Yellow tang and kole are among the herbivore species that provide coral reef ecosystems with the best opportunity to persist under climate change.***

It is inconsistent with proper reef protection and native Hawaiian values (pono practices) to allow voluminous takes of yellow tang and kole. The

Department Staff response to the Petition indicates that yellow tang (*Zebrasoma flavescens*) constituted approximately 72% of the total statewide finfish aquarium catch by number of pieces from 2008-2017 of herbivores! Thirty-five years ago, yellow tang populations collapsed in the south west Oahu fishery, where yellow tang were targeted by the **commercial aquarium** trade. There was an 80% decline in yellow tang in West Hawai'i in 2016, the last full year of commercial aquarium collection before the Court temporarily ended it. While there always seems to be a need for more data, the Department's rules should **follow the precautionary principle**, which the Hawaii Supreme Court has recognized as an inherent attribute of the Public Trust Doctrine, especially given the risks to coral and other aquatic public trust resources of herbivore depletion. ^[1]

I served as a Deputy Attorney General for Hawai'i for fifteen years. The fact that past Legislatures have considered and to date have not adopted a ban on the taking of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes and have authorized permits under certain limited conditions (H.R.S. Sec 188-1) does not constitute a legislative direction to the Department not to pass rules banning commercial aquarium fishing as a matter of law.

Please grant the Petition!

Mahalo for your service and for taking action to protect our reefs,

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen of Manoa on Oahu)

^[1] Gonzales-Laxe 2005, "**The precautionary principle in fisheries management.**"

From: [Jared2](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Oppose aquarium fishing ban bill
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:18:01 AM

Attention Chair Chang
Please Oppose aquarium fishing ban bill.
Support sustainable fisheries.
Jared Ushiroda - Kealakekua

From: [Henry Matsuo](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Oppose aquarium fishing ban bill
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:22:41 AM

Attention Chair Chang
Please Oppose aquarium fishing ban bill.
Support sustainable fisheries.
Mahalos Henry Matsuo- Kealakekua

From: [Kevin Kohen](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please opposed Agenda Item F3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:18:33 PM

Dear Chair Chang and BLNR,

I am writhing today as a concerned citizen regarding agenda item F3.

I urge your to not ban aquarium fishing in Hawaii, but rather continue to manage the fishery, which is the most well studied and managed fishery in the world. The DAR and AG oppose this measure and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) used sound scientific practices which was accepted.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kevin Kohen

From: [上村豊和](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: F3 petition
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 3:00:26 AM

Aloha My name Is Toyokazu Uemura

I am opposed to F3 petition to ban the aquarium fishery. The fishery has done everything right. That is why it is considered a “model fishery”. It has worked with the state to create act 306, FRA system, worked for decades with WHFC (West Hawaii Fishery council) to create management laws, worked with DAR researchers to do more rules making 2015 management laws, all to ensure sustainability and low environmental impacts.

Not only has the fishery been deemed sustainable but also, takes only small fish leaving breeders, leaves all large eating fish for Hawaiians, has bag limits, gear restrictions, 33% FRA West Hawaii Closures, does not affect corals, has not impacted herbivore populations, and has been scientifically proven to be sustainable with 20 years of fish counts. Fish populations overall were increasing for all major targeted species.

Please do not pass DAR item F3

Thanks, Toyo

iPhoneから送信

From: [Diane Sawatzki](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: comments to Board of Land and Natural Resourcesmeeting Dec. 7
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:30:22 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to comment on Agenda items F-1 and F-3:

In regards to F-1 (Ocean Stewardship Fee) I strongly urge you to pass this proposal to generate more funding for marine resources.

In regards to F-3 (Aquarium Fish Collection) I strongly urge passage of rules prohibiting commercial take of marine life for commercial market,

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely

Diane Sawatzki

pdpmark@hotmail.com

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From: [Colleen Wann](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Strong support of BLNR December agenda item F-3
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:36:59 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and BLNR members,

On behalf of the Hui Maka'ainana O Makana of Ha'ena, Kaua'i stand in strong support of agenda item F-3 pertaining to the Aquarium trade on a cultural, traditional and moral basis. Our herbivore fish, especially, play a vital role in a healthy coral environment supported by the report by Friedlander, Hixon, Kosaki, and Winter referred to in BLNR December agenda item F-5. We stood in support of DAR's recommendation on agenda item F-5 but found these two agenda items conflicting and that both should be supported. Mahalo Presley Wann(currently President for the Hui Maka'ainana O Makana)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Colleen Heyer](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for 12/7-8/2023 agenda item F3:
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:02:18 AM

Testimony for 12/7-8/2023 agenda item F3: Petition for Rule Making to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes.”

I am writing in favor of the petition. I am in favor of a total ban on any marine life taking. Our reef ecosystems are struggling as it is, with climate change, over fishing, and harmful sunscreens being dumped by too many ocean goers. It is DLNR’s responsibility to protect the public trust. DLNR needs to protect the reefs for everyone, not just for the profit of a few. Aquarium trade people have proven in the past to be greedy. They take too many fish and coral with no regard for the maintaining a balance. For the fish they take, the mortality rate is extremely high, which makes it all the more heartbreaking. We don’t need the aquarium trade. We need healthy reefs for everyone.

Colleen Heyer
Diamond Head, O‘ahu

From: nan.harter
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item F-3
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 5:38:39 AM

Email: blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Subject line: Testimony for agenda item F-3

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

I have lived on Maui most of my life and am in the ocean everyday. I've seen a large decline in our reef fish and much is due to aquarium collection. Please ban all commercial aquarium collection to protect and maintain our vulnerable reef fish and resources.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Nancy Harter

From: [Arnie Kotler](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item F-3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:37:24 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Arnold Kotler
Kihei, Maui

From: [Bobbie Best](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item F-3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:03:51 AM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho‘okena Beach Park, Moana ‘Ohana, Ko‘olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau‘ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

Conservation, ecology and the environment are of utmost importance to me.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Mahalo for your consideration of this important matter.

Bobbie Best
280 Hauoli
Wailuku

From: [True](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for Agenda Item F-3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:05:17 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience. I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Mary True

28-1141 Mamalahoa HWY

Pepeekeo, HI 96783

From: [Lory Ono](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item F-3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:06:21 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho‘okena Beach Park, Moana ‘Ohana, Ko‘olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau‘ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

Aquariums are absolutely unnecessary. Catching fish for aquariums is detrimental to the marine life that are caught and bought just for us humans to look at. The ocean already has less fish than it should due to overfishing, and taking even more fish to be sold to people or businesses with aquariums is just irresponsible. Fish belong in the ocean, not in tanks.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Lory Ono

From: [Marilyn Mick](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item F-3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:28:30 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Aloha, Marilyn Mick, Honolulu

From: [Greg Puppione](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for agenda item F-3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:11:05 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Greg Puppione
Honolulu, HI

From: [Local I"ā](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for aquarium fishing regulations
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:20:49 PM

Aloha Chair Chang and Board members,

I strongly approve all regulations on aquarium collection of any species in Hawaiian waters. All take for aquarium trade should be illegal. Our reefs are dying because algae is taking over. We need our fish to stay on the reef or feed our people, not be in people's tanks for a while and then die without reproducing to help our reef's resilience.

Mahalo for your time

Ashley Watts

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Helen White](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] testimony for gender item F-3
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:46:09 AM

My name is Helen White of Hawi Hawii. I am a frequent snorkeler and photographer in the area around Mahukona and Koai'e Cove which is part of the Marine Life Conservation District off Lapakahai State Historical Park.

I have previously submitted a request to support the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiiin Civic Club and For the Fishes , to enact the administrative rulesmaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

I have personally witnessed the elimination of flame angel fish and a massive reduction in potters angel fish in the Marine Life Conservation District in the past 5 years and it breaks my heart to not be able to photograph these beautiful fish anymore. I can only assume this massive decline is not from natural causes and it seems likely to have been from poaching for the aquarium. Such as shame to not have these species available for local and tourist snorkelers to enjoy.

I felt the need to resubmit as the meeting has been postponed until Dec 7th.

Aloha

Helen

From: [L.Osterer](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for Land Board meeting 12/7/2023
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:58:52 PM

In favor of Ocean stewardship fee **Agenda item: F-1** and Aquarium fish collection petition **Agenda item: F-3**
(In addition to earlier email testimony **Land Agenda Item D-6**)

F1: I support the board in approving the final adoption of the Ocean Stewardship Fee rules. This fee will help generate much needed funds to support Hawai'i's marine conservation and protection. A \$1 nominal fee would not impact tourist business. It would support reef education and sustainability.

F3: Reef fish are essential components of our ocean ecosystem. Commercial aquarium collection has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. To date the DLNR has not been able to properly manage this industry. West Hawai'i Island rules were continually violated until a recent lawsuit temporarily invalidated all commercial aquarium collection permits. A commercial aquarium collection ban is the only way to prevent this industry from further impacting our coral reefs. Aquarium fishing usurps our tourist attractions, clearly more important to Hawaiian commerce.

Thank you for your consideration,
Lorraine Osterer, longtime Kauai resident and registered voter

From: sylviedahl@aol.com
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony Opposed to DAR Item F 3- Petition to Prohibit Aquarium Fishing
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:39:20 PM

Friday Oct. 8, 2023 - 9am BLNR Meeting
Opposed to DAR Item F 3. (Petition to Prohibit Aquarium Fishing)

blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Sylvia Dahlby and I am a resident of Hilo.

Please do not pass DAR Item F3 and shut down another small business in Hawaii Island.

The current Petition against the aquarium fish collection business is full of misinformation under the guise of environmental protection. The Petitioner ignores or distorts scientific facts, discounts an extensive CIA and cultural assessment, and uses old 2009 DAR reports quoted in the petition. The [2020 Report to the Legislature](#) showed significant increased fish counts not shown in the 2009 report,

The Hawaii Aquarium Fishery (HFA) is the most studied fishery in the world. 21 leading marine biologists support peer-reviewed scientific proof that the Hawaii Island fishery is sustainable, citing research from DAR with thousands of fish counts spanning decades and exhaustive DLNR reports to the legislature every 5 years.

The data and scientific reports show no significant differences in the health of coral reefs in HFA collection areas as opposed to the system of protected Fish Replenishment Areas where no collection is allowed.

The petition does not provide enough scientific basis, no quoted journals or peer reviewed science, and no cultural assessment to counter the 6-year exhaustive West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery HEPA passage by the BLNR, and previous decisions in the Legislature, Governor's office, and Supreme Court.

In addition, the cultural argument against HFA is specious at best. Many Native Hawaiians are in favor of HFA because it maintains their right to fish and support their families. Fish collecting is in harmony with kanaka maoli values of living in sustainable balance with nature, and in a way, is similar to the ancient fishponds.

Furthermore, aquariums benefit public education. Here in Hawaii and in aquariums around the world, students, tourists and the general public can all visit fish in public aquariums to learn about Hawaiian reef fish and ocean biology. Every home aquarium hobbyist gains awareness of Hawaii's beauty, culture and ecosystem science. The HFA

does not kill fish but wants them to survive humanely in well cared for environments.

In fact, close examination of the evidence and the arguments in favor of the aquarium fishing industry clearly show that the Petition lacks enough legal merit, subject matter, cultural proof, scientific proof and rationale for seeking the adoption of F3.

From: [Marva Chun](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Cc: [Marva Chun](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony to preserve our ocean
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:15:42 PM

Subject line: Testimony for agenda item F-1

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge the board to approve the final adoption of the Ocean Stewardship Fee rules. With millions of people visiting and enjoying our ocean waters every year, when implemented, this fee will help generate much needed funds to support Hawai'i's marine conservation and protection, and importantly the Department of Land and Natural Resources' work.

I'm in the water almost every day, surfing, kayaking, swimming, and walking the beaches.

Our nearshore waters are a key foundation of Hawai'i's environment, culture, climate resiliency, and economy and deserve proper management to ensure our island's health for generations to come.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Marva Chun

Aquarium fish collection petition

Agenda item: F-3

What is happening: Community groups including Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes, have petitioned the Department of Land and Natural Resources to establish rules prohibiting the taking of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

The commercial take of marine life for the aquarium market has been a

concern of Kānaka Maoli subsistence communities, ecologists, recreational fishers, and reef enthusiasts for decades. However, the DLNR has been unable to properly manage this industry, with O‘ahu rules that are not about environmental protection but to reduce waste, and West Hawai‘i Island rules that were continually violated until a recent lawsuit invalidated all commercial aquarium collection permits, albeit temporarily. These community groups have finally said that enough is enough, and that a commercial aquarium collection ban is the only way to prevent this industry from further impacting our coral reefs.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy nearshore ecosystem. They help to maintain the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from rising seas and coastal erosion; are a critical component of traditional fishing practices; have cultural and spiritual significance; and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike. Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau‘ipalā, herbivores that are critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

Community groups across the islands have long fought to stop the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes. This is your opportunity to support these groups and help protect our precious life sustaining coral reefs for generations to come!

Testimony:

Email: blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Subject line: Testimony for agenda item F-3

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I kindly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho‘okena Beach Park, Moana ‘Ohana, Ko‘olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to

enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion, and are a critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

I stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Marva Chun

Herbivore rules

Agenda item: F-5

What is happening: The BLNR will consider granting final approval to a set of rule changes intended to better steward our coral reefs, by establishing greater protections for certain herbivorous surgeonfish and uhu (parrotfish).

Herbivorous fish play key roles in the health and maintenance of our reef ecosystem, particularly in “grazing” algae and limu that can smother coral or prevent coral from growing. This in turn helps to enhance our climate resilience and reduce coastal erosion, while ensuring a healthy and abundant ecosystem for fishers, cultural practitioners, ocean enthusiasts, and all who have a stake in our ecological and cultural integrity.

By increasing size limits for kole and manini, setting more reasonable bag limits for kala (unicornfish) and uhu (parrotfish), and establishing annual commercial catch limits and additional commercial restrictions on the take of kala and uhu, these rules will help to better steward essential building blocks of a healthy coral reef ecosystem. These modest proposals will also still allow fishers to harvest more than enough of the targeted species to feed their families (and maybe a neighbor or two).

There has been some concern about the final proposed draft rules not including stricter bag limits on kala, a highly sought-after and long-lived species (studies on wild fish have shown that they may attain over 50 years of age), nor a ban on the taking of “blue” uhu that can disrupt reproductive cycles and lead to diminished reproductive output.

Testimony:

Email: blnr.testimony@hawaii.gov

Subject line: Testimony for agenda item F-5

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I support, with amendments, the proposed rule changes to better protect herbivorous fish species that play a vital role in our reef ecosystems.

By increasing size limits for kole and manini, setting more reasonable bag limits for kala (unicornfish) and uhu (parrotfish), and establishing annual commercial catch limits and additional commercial restrictions on the take of kala and uhu, these rules will help to better steward critical species that are essential building blocks of a healthy coral reef ecosystem.

I appreciate that there have been many changes made to these rules since they were originally proposed, including the removal of nenu, wana, and several surgeonfish species from potential regulation, and the removal of bag limits for kole and manini. I do respectfully ask that the board consider reinstating the original proposed bag limit of 2 for kala - a long-lived and highly sought after species that may merit stronger protections. In addition, I also ask that you consider reinstating the proposed protection of “blue” uhu or supermales, given that the taking of these individuals can have a

disproportionate impact on reproductive cycles and reproduction rates of these particularly important species.

Accordingly, I ask that you vote in favor of adopting these rules, with the amendments requested above. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
Marva Chun

Fines for illegal beach modifications

Agenda items: K-1 and K-5

Position: Support proposed fines and penalties

What's happening (from our friends at Surfrider O'ahu): The Board of Land and Natural Resources will be evaluating recommendations from the Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands to bring fines and penalties against homeowners who have ignored notices of violation and expired temporary permits. Although Hawai'i has a strong policy against shoreline hardening, it is only in more recent years that OCCL has taken a stronger stance in ensuring that private property owners are held accountable for their actions. One of the homeowners on the agenda is Joshua VanEmmerik who laid rebar and poured concrete on the public beach in the fall of 2022. [Read more from Surfrider O'ahu here.](#)

From: [Kimberly Jeffries](#)
To: [DLNR.Testimony](#); [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony on Issues
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:37:06 PM

****Dawn Chang, Chair****
****Hawai'i Board of Land and Natural Resources****

Aloha Chair Chang and Land Board Members,

As an underwater cinematographer and professional diver with global experience, deeply dedicated to the preservation of coral reef ecosystems, I express my concern about the current state of resource protection and management in our island chain. At our current state, we lag far behind many developing nations in regulation and preservation of the ocean, when instead we could be an example of sustainable management.

****Preserving the Health of the Reef for Future Generations:****

Preserving the health of the reef for future generations is paramount. Regarding the Division of Aquatic Resources, I address critical issues:

- ****Ocean Stewardship User Fee (F 1):**** I support this fee to provide much-needed funding to DLNR. Funds must go to DLNR and should not be diverted into the general or other categories of the state budget. Tour companies must be transparent about visitor numbers, given the current conflicts at Mala Boat Ramp and Maunaloa Bay's ramps, beyond capacity with commercial and subsistence fishers.

- ****Molokini Shoal (F 2):**** I endorse the protection of Molokini Shoal, especially considering the increased pressure of ocean conditions following the disaster in Lahaina.

- ****Prohibit Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes (F 3):**** While I understand the need for sustainable harvest caps, managing fisheries based on market demand is not the solution. We should focus on science-based approaches and management for all fisheries, including monitoring, size limits, and seasons.

- ****Papahānaumokuākea (F 4):**** I support continued efforts to preserve Papahānaumokuākea. Effective management of local fisheries is crucial before considering commercial industries in this delicate ecosystem. Many of our fish come from PMNM. Increasing pressure there will result in a collapse of fisheries here.

****Regulating Taking and Selling of Certain Marine Resources (F 5): Replenishing Herbivore Populations (F 5):****

I strongly advocate for the replenishment of our severely depleted populations of coral reef herbivores, specifically addressing the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) proposed herbivore fishing rules (F 5). These species play a vital role in maintaining reef surfaces, promoting coral growth, and combating water quality issues.

****Stronger rules are needed to reduce the take on kala and uhu species for the benefit of future generations. I propose:****

1. ****Reduce Total Allowable Commercial Catch (F 5):**** The DAR proposed limits, "~75% of the 5-yr. average reported sales (2017-2021)," have led to depletion. Please reduce the total allowable catch to no more than 25% of recent reported sales.
2. ****Reinstate Commercial Daily Bag Limits (F 5):**** Reinstating daily catch limits would spread the removal of fish throughout the year, allowing regional stocks to better absorb exploitation.
3. ****Reinstate Blue Uhu Protections (F 5):**** The depletion of blue uhu disrupts the harem-like mating system and hampers the crucial role of these large herbivores in maintaining reef cleanliness and facilitating coral growth. I propose prohibiting the take of Blue Uhu until positive results are observed.

These measures are crucial not only to preserve the health of our reefs but also to ensure the sustainability of marine resources for future generations.

This issue transcends environmentalists vs. fishers; it is about the long-term protection of those who care about the future of our valuable coral reefs vs. the short-term perspective of those who would continue to allow the unsustainable depletion of our most valuable resources.

Preserving the health of the reef for future generations is our Kuleana.

Mahalo,

Kimberly Jeffries

From: [Carrie Ota](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Attention Chair Chang - I oppose the aquarium fishing ban
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:10:32 PM

Dear Chair Chang,
I support sustainable fisheries and oppose the ban on aquarium fishing.
Thank you for your time and attention regarding this manner.
Respectfully,
Carrie Ota
Mililani, HI

Testimony Re: Agenda Item F.3 December 5, 2023

The Honorable Dawn Chang, Chairperson
Board of Land and Natural Resources

We are writing to reaffirm our support for the West Hawai'i Aquarium fishery. In 2020 we joined our colleagues in a letter published in West Hawai'i Today outlining why we accept the data demonstrating that this fishery is clearly sustainable. Since that time, nothing has changed to alter that conclusion.

In this era of social media, it has become easy to affect public opinion with campaigns of disinformation, hyperbole, and untested hypotheses presented as facts. The public is often confused or unwilling to critically evaluate such statements, and too often accept false evidence on face value. The West Hawai'i Aquarium fishery has been under assault by such a campaign for many years, even though the populations of key aquarium species, such as the Yellow Tang and Kole, have increased over the past twenty years. The fishery has not been without fault during its 50 years in existence, but these incidents have been the exception and do not, in our experience, represent the high ethical standards that these fishermen exercise during the collection, care and handling of live fishes.

The BLNR has a rare opportunity to turn this controversy into a teachable moment for the public. You have access to decades of data methodically collected by DLNR biologists, as well as detailed reports presented every five years to the Legislature. Compare these data, analyses and conclusions to the statements made by opponents to the fishery. They have no comparable, long-term data sets and therefore resort to using anecdotes, fear, and untested hypotheses to support their agenda. At this pivotal moment, you can act in the public interest to separate facts based on data, from arguments that are data-free and therefore baseless.

Science can provide conclusive evidence supporting this fishery as sustainable. There is also ample evidence that the fishermen act ethically in their treatment of the animals from the moment they are collected until they are shipped to their destination. Philosophical, moral, and cultural arguments are mostly beyond what science can resolve. However, we feel that the fishermen and their advocates have provided an excellent review of these topics in their EIS. In addition, we find it difficult to justify shutting down a fishery that strives to keep fishes alive and in good health, while continuing to permit many of the same species to be killed and eaten. We do not contest the argument that killing fish for food is acceptable (provided it is done sustainably), but aquariums also have significant value, as evidenced by the number of aquatic biologists who were inspired by their home aquariums to pursue careers in science. It is hypocritical to claim killing fishes is moral but keeping them in aquariums is not.

Please take the time to study the data reports prepared by your staff biologists based on thousands of transects that required many, many hundreds of man-hours to collect and to analyze. They did not set out to demonstrate that the fishery is sustainable but that is clearly the conclusion after 20+ years of effort. Campaigns of disinformation should be recognized and rejected. Use your authority to establish a process whereby data and science become the basis for decisions. Permanently closing what many consider the best monitored and regulated inshore coral-reef fishery in the world, would be a precedent with significant implications for all other Hawai'i fisheries.

Bruce A. Carlson, Ph.D.
Richard Pyle, Ph.D.
William J. Walsh, Ph.D

The 1998 law which established the West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area (WHRFMA) required the DLNR/DAR to present a report to the Legislature every five years on the effectiveness of the WHRFMA. To do so it was necessary to study how the new regulations were working. To accomplish this, DAR in association with the University of Hawai'i Hilo, established a rigorous, scientific monitoring program in 1999 to track changes in reef fish populations and coral reef benthic communities. Over the past 20 years, 82 survey divers have conducted over 2,100 underwater surveys for this monitoring project. Additionally, a number of other scientists have conducted research in West Hawai'i relating to aquarium issues and/or targeted species.

The monitoring data show that the regulations put in place have been very effective in managing aquarium collecting in West Hawai'i. The West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area is among the best studied and most effective fishery management efforts to date, and scientific data clearly show that management is working with population increases of the primary targets. For example, as noted in the 2019 DLNR/DAR legislative report, the populations of the two most heavily collected species of West Hawai'i aquarium fish, Yellow Tang and Kole, which collectively made up 92% of total aquarium catch in (FY17/18), more than doubled over the past two decades. Their populations even increased in the areas open to collecting likely due to spillover from protected areas.

Concern expressed about the threat of climate changes such as coral bleaching on reefs warrants extreme caution in reviewing activities such as aquarium collecting. This concern over coral bleaching is certainly warranted but somewhat surprising given that the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) leadership has not implemented the 2017 Coral Bleaching Recovery Plan which was developed by DAR and the University of Hawai'i based on the input of over 100 scientists and resource managers from around the world. The goal of the Recovery Plan was to implement management actions to promote coral recovery after bleaching in Hawai'i and the scope of the Plan was much more comprehensive than just focusing on aquarium collecting.

As experienced Hawai'i marine science researchers with a direct/intimate understanding of this issue, we want to re-emphasize that the strong support we are expressing for the fishery is due entirely to the survey efforts and results of the DAR research team. There is a huge amount of data and other information showing that the aquarium fishery is sustainably managed and that the system works. This type of science-based management should be a model for other fisheries in Hawaii.

William Walsh Ph.D.	Cynthia Hunter Ph.D.
Ivor Williams Ph.D.	Brian Bowen Ph.D.
Brian Tissot Ph.D.	Brian Zgliczynski Ph.D.
Leon Hallacher Ph.D.	Jeff Ebel Ph.D.
Bruce Carlson Ph.D.	Alan Friedlander Ph.D.
Charles Birkeland Ph.D.	Kosta Stamoulis Ph.D.
Jeremy Claisse Ph.D.	Delisse Ortiz Ph.D.
Mark Christie Ph.D.	Jan Dierking Ph.D.
Richard Pyle Ph.D.	Rob Toonen Ph.D.
Leighton Taylor Ph.D.	Jim Beets Ph.D.
Randy Kosaki Ph.D.	.

My Turn: **We expect better from DLNR leadership**

William Walsh Ph.D., Ivor Williams Ph.D., Brian Tissot Ph.D.; Leon Hallacher Ph.D.; Bruce Carlson Ph.D.; Charles Birkeland Ph.D.; Jeremy Claisse Ph.D.; Mark Christie Ph.D.; Richard Pyle Ph.D.; Leighton Taylor Ph.D.; Randy Kosaki Ph.D.; Cynthia Hunter Ph.D.; Brian Bowen Ph.D.; Brian Zgliczynski Ph.D.; Jeff Ebel Ph.D.; Alan Friedlander Ph.D.; Kosta Stamoulis Ph.D.; Delisse Ortiz Ph.D.; Jan Dierking Ph.D.; Rob Toonen Ph.D.; and Jim Beets Ph.D.
My Turn | Thursday, June 25, 2020.

Last month, the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) unanimously rejected the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on aquarium collecting in West Hawaii. What is particularly distressing and demoralizing about the BLNR decision was that it clearly was not based on the best available science and relevant monitoring data. Other than a single preliminary question, neither the chairperson nor board members asked any questions or solicited any input from the four Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) staff members, including three aquatic biologists, who attended the meeting. The DAR staff certainly could have provided science-based information and background on the issues being discussed and used as rationale for the FEIS denial.

For example, Chairwoman Suzanne Case stated that a lack of data regarding the number of fish that would be collected was of particular concern and there really are no limits on the numbers that can be taken. DAR has over 40 years of West Hawaii aquarium catch and permit data and it is clear that the amount of catch has tightly tracked the number of collectors. Catch and the number of permits have been significantly correlated so there is little justification to assume that there are no limits on the number of fish that would be taken given that the FEIS suggests limiting the number of permit holders

to 10. Based on the clear evidence from the existing dataset, the projected total yearly take by these 10 aquarium permit holders would be substantially less than the take by the yearly average of 49 permit holders working in the period since the no-aquarium collecting Fish Replenishment Areas (FRA) were established in 1999.

Similarly, concern was expressed about the threat of climate changes such as coral bleaching on reefs, which thus warrants extreme caution in reviewing activities such as aquarium collecting. This concern over coral bleaching is certainly warranted but somewhat surprising given that the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) leadership has not implemented the 2017 Coral Bleaching Recovery Plan which was developed by DAR and the University of Hawaii based on the input of over 100 scientists and resource managers from around the world. The goal of the plan was to implement management actions to promote coral recovery after bleaching in Hawaii and the scope of the plan was much more comprehensive than just focusing on aquarium collecting.

The chairperson and the board also had issues with the aquarium take of Achilles tang referring to it as highly depleted. Aquarium fishers in West Hawaii are the only ones in Hawaii who have a bag limit for this species (10 fish/person/day). This limit was based on an earlier effort to implement islandwide size and bag limits for a wide range of fish species for which there were management and community concerns. A total of 15 public meetings involving over 380 people were conducted from January to June 2009 and a consensus was achieved on the management rules. All this effort was thrown asunder when the DLNR chairperson at the time refused to allow implementation of the rules.

The 1998 law, which established the West Hawaii Regional Fishery Management Area (WHRFMA), required the DLNR/DAR to present a report to the legislature every five years on the effectiveness of the WHRFMA. To do so, it was necessary to study how the new regulations were working. To

accomplish this, DAR in association with the University of Hawaii at Hilo, established a rigorous, scientific monitoring program in 1999 to track changes in reef fish populations and coral reef benthic communities. Over the past 20 years, 82 survey divers have conducted over 2,100 underwater surveys for this monitoring project. Additionally, a number of other scientists have conducted research in West Hawaii relating to aquarium issues and/or targeted species.

The monitoring data show that the regulations put in place have been very effective in managing aquarium collecting in West Hawaii. The West Hawaii Regional Fishery Management Area is among the best studied and most effective fishery management efforts to date, and scientific data clearly show that management is working with population increases of the primary targets. For example, as noted in the 2019 DLNR/DAR legislative report, the populations of the two most heavily collected species of West Hawaii aquarium fish, yellow tang and kole, which collectively made up 92% of total aquarium catch in (fiscal year 2017-18), more than doubled over the past two decades. Their populations even increased in the areas open to collecting likely due to spillover from protected areas.

As experienced Hawaii marine science researchers with a direct/intimate understanding of this issue, we find the disregard for the science-based management initiatives of DAR and island communities demoralizing and counterproductive. We expect better from DLNR leadership. We want to re-emphasize that the strong support we are expressing for this fishery is due entirely to the survey efforts and results of the DAR research team. There is a huge amount of data and other information showing that the aquarium fishery is sustainably managed and that the system works. This type of science-based management should be a model for other fisheries in Hawaii. The truth is out there, it needs to be embraced.

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

I live in Kona and I support science backed, sustainable fisheries. The Aquarium Industry is clearly not depleting the resource and should be allowed to continue using the current management policies that the DLNR have in effect.

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

Mondor Esayan



BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

December 7, 2023, 9:15 AM, Room 132

RE: SUPPORT – Item F. 3 Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes (With Exemptions)

Dear Chair Chang and Board Members,

For the Fishes is a Maui-based non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of reef wildlife. We are one of the five petitioners seeking rulemaking to prohibit commercial aquarium collection and urge your support of the petition, for the plethora of reasons discussed therein. This supplemental testimony is provided to specifically refute DAR's attempted rationale for its recommendation to deny the petition and to address several other inaccurate/misleading points made elsewhere in DAR's submittal.

Board Authority to Prohibit Commercial Aquarium Collection

First, both the Board and the legislature have equal authority to prohibit commercial aquarium collection. The legislature empowered DLNR to prohibit, via rulemaking, any activity that *may* disturb, degrade, or alter the marine environment (HRS 190-3). This statute also provides that the rules “*shall supersede any state laws inconsistent therewith.*”

Notably, and contrary to a statement in DAR's submittal, the statute **does not** require “clear evidence that the sustainability of all species harvested is threatened by the activity at all levels of take,” only that the activity *may* disturb, degrade, or alter the marine environment. This important rulemaking authority points directly to the legislature's understanding of the critical importance of, and need for a healthy marine environment and DLNRs utmost responsibility to ensure this.

Furthermore, state legislators, including leadership from relevant subject-matter Committees, have underscored DLNR's authority to prohibit aquarium collection for some time, stating in writing that “*the aquarium collection issue is a policy decision for the Board of Land and Natural Resources, not a legislative decision based on politics.*”¹

We agree that this issue is equally a policy decision for the Board, and with the petition's massive public support, it's time to initiate the formal rulemaking process.

Justification for the Proposed Rule

We strongly disagree with DAR's claims that the petition doesn't justify the need for the proposed rules. The aquarium trade has been disturbing, degrading and altering the coral reef/marine

¹ Rep. David Tarnas, Judiciary Chair, former chair of WTL in emails to constituents and letter in Kohala Mountain news

environment for decades. The harm caused by aquarium collecting is well-documented and well-described in the petition and cited reference materials, which include DLNR's own scientific and legislative reports. Fish populations have been altered – possibly forever – corals have been broken and destroyed with crowbars and tickle [sic] sticks to aid fish capture, and pummeled to form trenches for collection nets. These are not impacts that *may* occur, they have already occurred, continue to persist today, and would worsen should aquarium collection ever resume.

Furthermore, DAR states that not all species targeted by the trade are herbivores, but admits that 90% are. By now the Board is well acquainted with the importance of herbivores and the urgent need to increase their abundance as quickly as possible. However, regardless of the ecosystem function provided by the targeted species, whether they are algae eaters, coral or fish cleaners, sand shifters or other, all species taken by the trade are vulnerable to over-exploitation and over the decades, many have been depleted – some upwards of 80 – 90%. That alone justifies the need for the proposed rules.

Additionally, DARs statement that in West Hawai'i areas where they were collected, yellow tang and kole are relatively abundant compared to the rest of the state, completely distorts the most relevant fact: in those collected areas, their abundance is *significantly less* than it is in the West Hawai'i areas where they were not collected. For example, in DARs last report to the legislature:

“Yellow Tang abundance is lower in the Open Areas relative to the FRAs (49.8% for 2017/2018) because aquarium collecting occurs in these areas.”

Importantly, even in the above example, DAR failed to disclose that 2018 saw the single largest increase in yellow tang abundance ever recorded – but *ONLY* in the areas recently closed to collection. Had DAR made the comparison using 2016/2017 data, before the collection shut-down, and when collecting was still occurring, that difference would have been close to 75%.

The figure below, also included in DARs report to the legislature, shows the extent to which aquarium collecting has depleted the most heavily targeted species, the yellow tang, where in the areas open to collecting, from 2006 – 2016, their population was reduced by 80% or more.

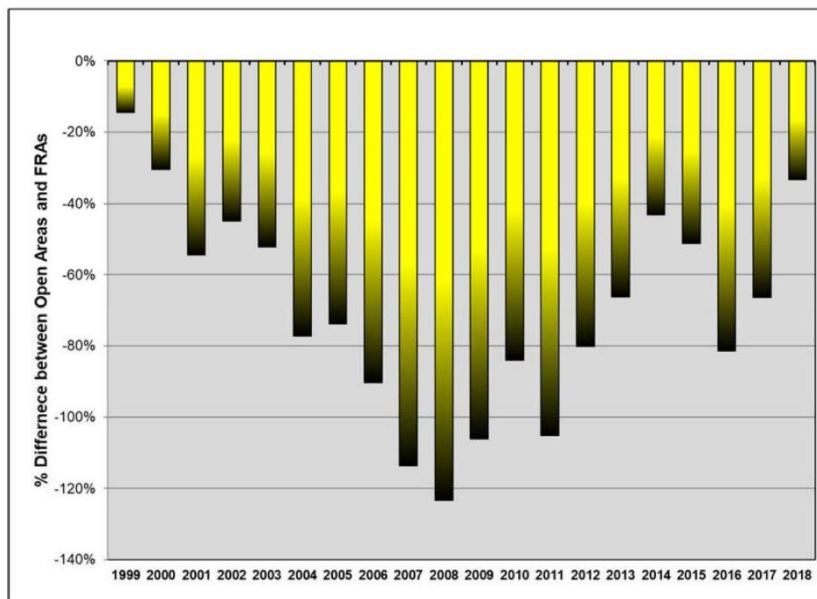


Figure 6. Difference in mean Yellow Tang abundance in West Hawai'i Fish Replenishment Areas (FRAs, n=9) relative to Open Areas (n=10). Bars represent the % difference in abundance for each year from 1999 to 2018. Bars *below* the x axis indicate greater abundance in the FRAs than the Open areas.

Additionally, the above data serve to highlight how the HEPA process has failed the resource, the public, and the Board: the aquarium trade's EIS completely omitted all the clear evidence of significant collection impacts, even with DAR's clear data and easy to understand graph above, which shows the impact. Rather than correcting this tremendous omission of critical information, DAR echoed the trade's false claim that collection activity doesn't cause clear and significant impacts, even ignoring DAR's own reports to lawmakers and grant-makers. DAR went even further in its recommendations that the Board accept the EISs, despite the most fundamental legal requirement that EISs MUST adequately disclose and describe identifiable environmental impacts.

Examples of DAR's inaccurate submittal statements, contradicting their own findings:

DARs claim that "there has been no indication of widespread population decline or stock collapse associated with the aquarium fishery" is proven completely false by DARs statement and figure above which represents a single species – many more have been heavily impacted, as well. The areas open to aquarium collecting encompass approximately 64% of West Hawai'i reefs and are spread across the entire coastline, with pockets of no-take areas interspersed throughout. How much more of a decline, and how many more compromised reefs would DAR need to document before it would acknowledge the massive loss of abundance of a heavily targeted species on the majority of West Hawai'i reefs?

Additionally, as presented in the petition, it's not just Hawai'i Island that has experienced widespread depletion. O'ahu has suffered as well from the trade's over-collection of species, to the point of "aquarium fishery collapse", along O'ahu's leeward coast between Honolulu Airport and Ka'ena Point, according to a paper by DAR and UH researchers.

Next, DARs claim that functional redundancy reduces the likelihood of substantial ecosystem impact where aquarium collecting has depleted herbivores seems to make sense until we look at

the data. For example, yellow tangs are grazers with a natural abundance that has helped keep Hawai‘i’s reefs healthy for eons. That natural abundance has been slashed by aquarium collecting over the last 50 years.

According to data in DLNR’s reports to the legislature, year after year, the aquarium trade has reduced populations of five herbivorous surgeonfishes that graze on turf algae – the primary threat to Hawai‘i’s corals – and none more so than the yellow tang and paku‘iku‘i which have been depleted by upwards of 80 – 90%.

In the West Hawai‘i open areas, yellow tangs are estimated to have been reduced by over 3.1 million fish, and kole are estimated to be reduced by over 2.5 million fish, based on DAR monitoring data as of 2017/2018 published in their report to the legislature.

DAR seems to suggest that the mere presence of other grazers and detritivores reduces the substantial ecosystem impact from reduced yellow tang and kole. However, neither logic, nor best available science supports that. A recent Hawai‘i study, based on DAR’s own data, concluded that the number of fish, not the size of fish (or their mere presence), determines where turf algae is most abundant.² More mouths on the reef significantly reduces turf algae.

Therefore, for those other redundant herbivores to make a difference, substantial increases in their natural abundance would need to occur in order to fill the 5.6 million fish void described above, caused by aquarium collection. We are unaware of any such substantial shift in reef fish assemblages, especially given that those other species are likely heavily targeted as food fish (e.g. manini). However, should such an unnatural increase occur, it would be yet another example of a severely altered ecosystem caused by aquarium collecting.

This rulemaking proposal will facilitate an increase in the numbers of these and other important species, all without creating any additional sacrifice for our food fishers, who are already being asked to do their part, and more.

DAR claims that some level of aquarium collection can be sustainable. However, DARs subjective definition of “sustainable” is completely in conflict with what coral reef ecosystems need to thrive, and what the vast majority of Hawai‘i residents want. For example, DAR claims that taking 200,000 yellow tangs would be sustainable, yet past reported take of a similar number of yellow tangs reduced abundance in collected areas by upwards of 60%. With the Miloli‘i CBSFAs now protecting an additional 18% of West Hawai‘i reefs from the trade, concentrating the take of 200,000 yellow tangs in the remaining open areas, would result in even greater depletion than in the past. Yet, DAR would still call it “sustainable” as they did when the reduction exceeded 80 – 100%.

Furthermore, it appears that for DAR, even total collapse translates to “sustainable,” as aquarium collection reports confirm that fish abundance never returned to those leeward O‘ahu reefs, yet DAR allowed ongoing collection to continue there.

² Foo and Asner 2021.

The environmental, biological and cultural impacts of aquarium collection are clear. Looking at the economic impacts of the trade also reveal that taxpayers are subsidizing the trade at a loss of \$300,000 – 500,000 annually for DAR to administer the permits for 20 aquarium collectors, an amount that excludes enforcement costs, yet aquarium license fees and excise taxes offset those costs by less than 1%.

These fundamental questions must be asked of DAR:

- What is the rationale for supporting a commercial activity that is proven to provide zero benefits to anyone other than a handful of trade members in the state, while the entire population of Hawai‘i pays the price of reduced fish abundance, reduced marine life biodiversity, and weakened coral reef ecosystems?
- What is the rationale for asking the Board to require Hawai‘i’s subsistence and other food fishers to sacrifice for the greater good and future of Hawai‘i’s reefs and to substantially reduce their take of herbivores, while at the same time standing up for and defending the aquarium trade, which historically took more herbivores than all food fishers combined?

Hawai‘i’s subsistence and other food fishers should not be the first to make these sacrifices, and the Department’s own policy on commercial activities on state owned and managed lands and waters clearly agrees: when restrictions or controls are needed, “[they] should first be levied on commercial operators. The general public is the last group to have restrictions and controls imposed on them” (see policy excerpt below):

If public and commercial activities are occurring, and resource impacts indicate that restrictions or controls need to be imposed, these should first be levied on commercial operators. The general public is the last group to have restrictions and controls imposed on them.

This rulemaking request is further justified because it is aligned with DLNR policy and ensures the burden to restore and protect Hawai‘i’s reefs is borne by those least harmed: those businesses and individuals whose interests lie outside Hawai‘i. Expecting Hawai‘i’s public to continue to sacrifice and suffer from reduced ability to feed their families, and the reduced ability for our reefs to survive climate change, because the mainland aquarium pet trade wants our wild fishes – with profit margins far greater than those from aquacultured fishes – is a longstanding and unjustified burden on Hawai‘i.

HEPA inadequate

The rulemaking request is further justified not only because HEPA review as conducted by the aquarium trade is completely inadequate, as described above and in the petition, but also because the purpose of HEPA review is to *allow* an activity, not to *prohibit* it. If the HEPA process resulted in the Board determining that commercial aquarium collection is inappropriate in Hawai‘i because it degrades Hawai‘i’s reefs and is incompatible with social and cultural values, for example, the Board could decide against issuing even a single permit. However, that would not be the end of it, as there would certainly be endless requests to reconsider in the ensuing months and possibly years, especially given DARs staunch support for the trade. We have already seen this with the trade’s EIS’s being repeatedly rejected by the Board, but each time DAR supporting the proposed EIS. Ultimately it was only on a split vote that the EIS for West Hawai‘i was accepted by default.

Scoping not necessary/already conducted

Furthermore, we disagree with the scoping recommendation DAR makes in the additional considerations section. We petitioners, our communities, and, what is likely, hundreds of residents who have testified in support of this rulemaking petition are affected stakeholders who have participated in decades of scoping, providing input and feedback on aquarium trade related rules, HEPA comments and interviews and other testimony year after year. Opposition to the trade is always overwhelming yet it goes ignored. Respectfully, if the Board is interested in considering a rule to prohibit commercial aquarium collection as contemplated by the Petition, the Board should approve the Petition and direct DAR to initiate formal rulemaking, which rightfully includes public input from every county.

Any legal trade serves only to provide cover for illegal trade

Finally, DAR claims in its submittal that rulemaking to prohibit aquarium collecting is unnecessary because no commercial aquarium collection is occurring anywhere in Hawai‘i. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Collection is happening, it’s just not legal.

On October 20, just one day after our petition was first filed, the aquarium trade’s attorney admitted in open court that poaching is occurring and that a simple internet search would reveal what he referred to as a thriving “black market” for Hawai‘i’s reef fish.

And unfortunately, he was right. A simple internet search revealed dozens of Hawai‘i’s endemic reef fishes currently for sale on an aquarium trade online store (list attached to testimony).

This new information, taken together with the three aquarium trade poaching operations that were prosecuted in 2020, shows how impossible it would be to enforce any take limits the Board might agree to in issuing any permits based upon DARs aquarium collecting management plan.

It exposes that the very suggestion of a regulated, enforceable limited commercial aquarium trade under any DAR plan, remains a fallacy. And, it reinforces the need for rulemaking to prohibit the trade. While catching poachers has proven to be quite difficult any legal trade would ONLY provide more cover for the illegal trade.

Conclusion

It is clear that in addition to being important for coral reef health, these reef creatures are incredibly important to the people of Hawai‘i. Yes, the mainland aquarium trade wants them – for their profits – and mainland aquarium hobbyists want them – to brighten up their tanks – but *only* Hawai‘i’s people actually *need* them.

While it is also clear that DAR’s position *assumes* there will always be aquarium collection, fortunately, this is not a decision for DAR but for the Board, which represents the interests of the peoples of Hawai‘i who have spoken out again and again and again.

Sincerely,



Rene Umberger,
Executive Director

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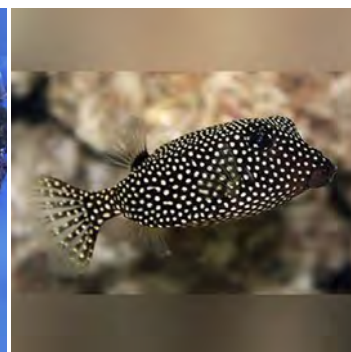
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Yellow Boxfish



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39.99



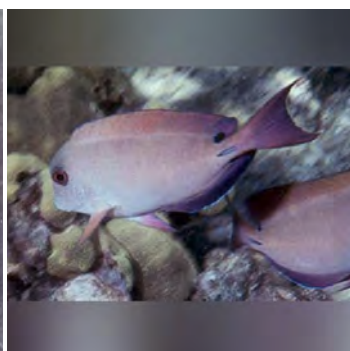
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Leaf Fish
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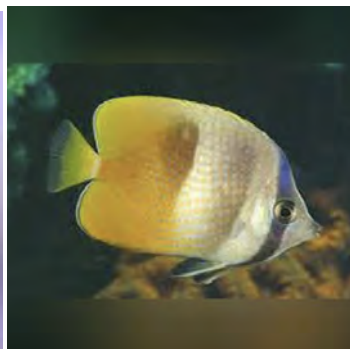
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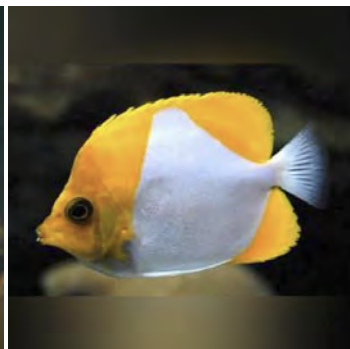
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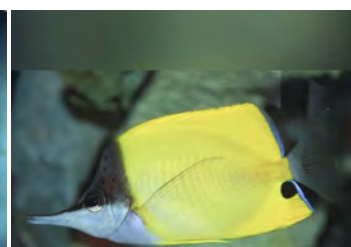
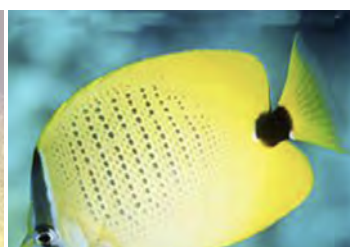
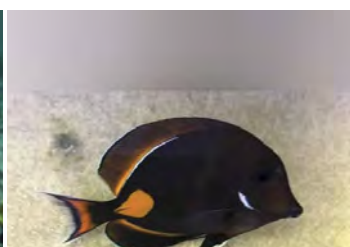
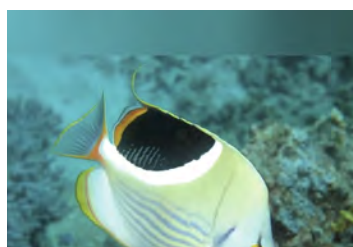
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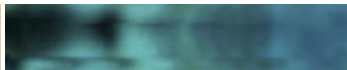
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Saddleback Butterflyfish
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From 464.49



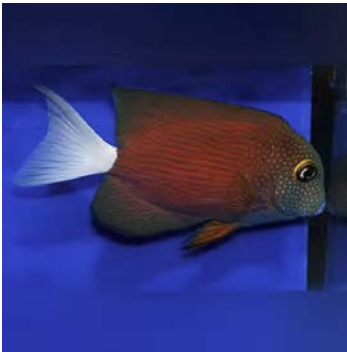
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Pebble Butterflyfish
From 81.99



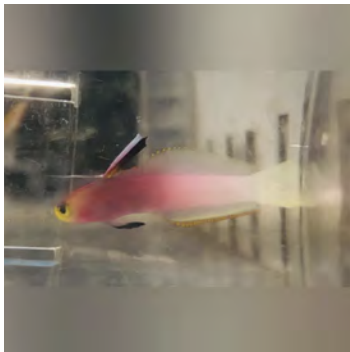
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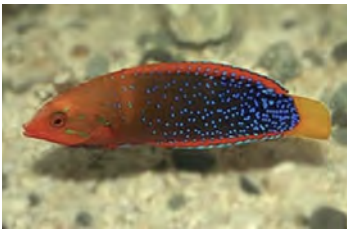
Orange Saddle Wrasse
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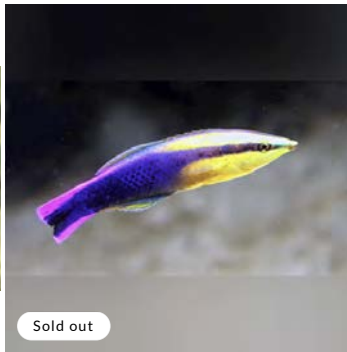
Page



Helfrichi Firefish Goby
184.99



Red Coris Wrasse ADULT
From 91.49



Hawaiian Cleaner Wrasse
145.49



Strawberry Crab
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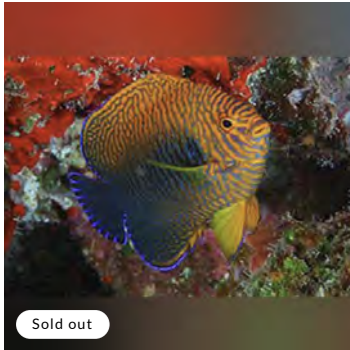
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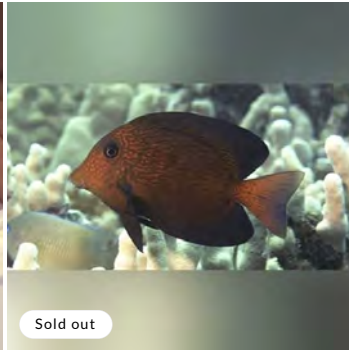
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Potter's Angelfish
From 218.49



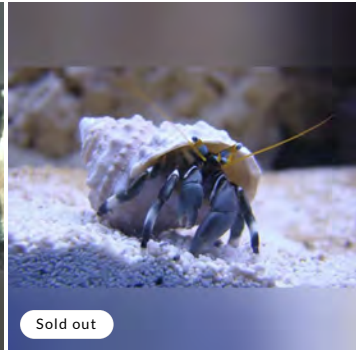
Sold out

Yellow Eye Kole Tang
From 137.49



Sold out

Chevron Tang
502.49



Sold out

Left Hand Zebra Hermit Crab
11.99



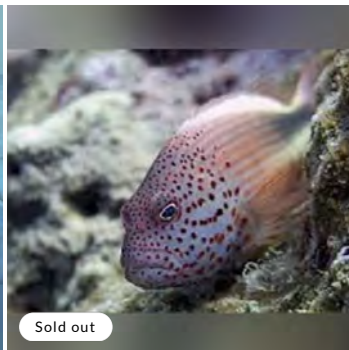
Sold out

Potters Wrasse
From 218.49



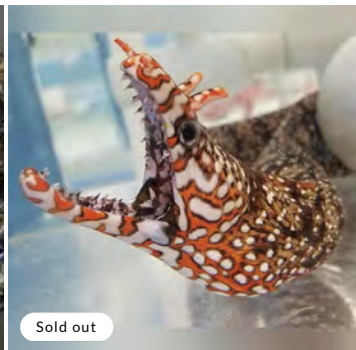
Sold out

Crosshatch Triggerfish Male
2,078.49



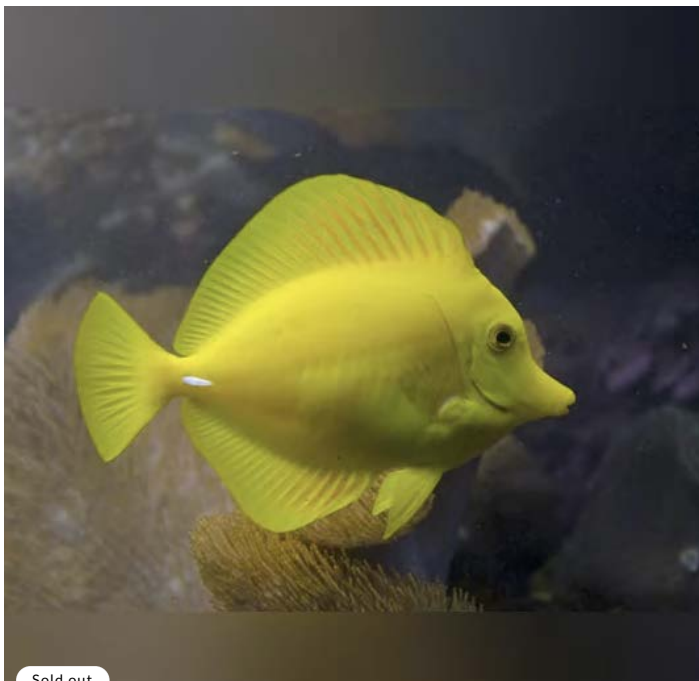
Sold out

Freckled Hawkfish
125.99



Sold out

Japanese Dragon Eel
1,732.49



Sold out

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FRIENDS of HANAUMA BAY

CONSERVE • PROTECT • RESTORE

*Dedicated to the conservation of coastal and marine environments,
emphasizing stewardship of the natural resources of Hanauma Bay*

Board of Land and Natural Resources
Meeting December 8, 2023

Subject: Strong Support of Agenda Item F3

December 5, 2023

Friends of Hanauma Bay **strongly supports** the November 9, 2023, petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to the Board of Land and Natural Resources seeking initiation of rulemaking to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes (with exceptions) that is being considered by the Board today as Agenda Item F3.

- South west O'ahu's collapse of yellow tang populations 35 years ago and the continued **island-wide depletion of upwards of 90% of those and other species targeted by the trade**
- West Hawai'i reefs open to the trade experiencing an **80% decline in yellow tangs** as recently as 2016, the last full year of AQ collection before the court temporarily ended it
- AQ collector's **intentional breaking of coral** – sometimes with crowbars – in the capture of Potter's angelfish and other species which hide within the reef

- Widespread illegal **poaching that the AQ trade admits continues to this day**, and at least 7 AQ collectors who were charged with poaching more than 1,000 fish
- The trade inherently **conflicts with local culture and native Hawaiian values**, including pono fishing practices to only take what is needed
- Published cost/benefit analysis shows **residents receive ZERO benefits from the AQ trade**, but suffer ALL the costs
- The AQ trade's persistent disregard for important facts as well as for public comments opposing their conclusions in their **deeply flawed and skewed Environmental Impact Statements**

The vast majority of Hawai'i residents have been strongly advocating and testifying that it is long past time to end the Aquarium Trade's cruel and needless traffic in Hawaii's precious reef wildlife for years. For years. **Please be the first Board of Land and Natural Resources to finally have the leadership and courage to listen to us - and do so.**

With Aloha,



Lisa Bishop
Friends of Hanauma Bay | President

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose an aquarium fishing ban.

F3

Thank you,
Leanna Gonzalves

Aloha Chair Chang and Board Members,

I'm testifying against agenda item number F3. Oppose a ban.

Mahalo,
Manu Townes

Aloha Chair Chang and Board Members,

I do not support the proposed ban here. Oppose F3.

Mahalo,
Amie Torrez

TO: Chair Chang and Board Members

RE: Agenda item F3

I oppose.

Thank you,
Hanan Wong

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose a ban- agenda item F3.

Thank you,
Mitchell Freye

Aloha Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Regarding agenda item F3, I strongly oppose any ban.

Thank you,
Stan Valken

Chair Chang and Board Members,

I oppose F3.

Thank you very much,
Nathan Jarvis

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources:

Agenda Item F3- Oppose

Thank you,
Eze Martinez

Chair Chang and Board Members,

I oppose item F3.

Thank you,
Kay Blust

Aloha Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose F3.

Mahalo.
Laverne Rivera

Aloha Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose the ban, agenda item F3.

Mahalo,
Matt Centino

Aloha Chair Chang and Board Members,

I oppose a ban.
Item number F3

Mari Solner

Dear Chair Chang and Board Members,

I'm against the fishing ban and oppose F3.

Mahalo,
Fredo Salas

Aloha Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose a ban (F3).

Mahalo,
Nua Cook

Aloha Chair Chang and Board Members,

I do not support a ban on aquarium fishing. Strongly oppose F3.

Thank you,
Cal Gomez

Chair Chang and Board Members:

Agenda Item F3 - I oppose.

Derick Russell

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose F3 relating to the fishing ban.

**Mahalo,
Tevita B.**

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose agenda item F3.

Ruth Turner

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

Regarding agenda item F3: I oppose a ban.

Dale Lin

Chair Chang and Board Members-

I oppose a ban-F3

Thank you,
Nelson L.

Aloha,

I oppose F3. There are no reasons that support a need for a ban.

Mahalo,
Anton Nguyễn



Aloha Chair Chang and Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources

My name is Maki Morinoue and I am representing HULI PAC (Help Uplift Leaders with Integrity PAC), a Political Action Committee (PAC) seeking to endorse leadership grounded in Hawaiian values to steer us in a regenerative and restorative direction before it is too late. Our volunteers and advisors live around Hawai'i Island, where we gather information and backyard knowledge about water from all Mokus of our island. I am personally four generations from Hōlualoa and know my Kona challenges well. This hits home as I have seen what has been done to our coral reefs in three generations. I spent most childhood birthdays snorkeling and playing at Kahalu'u Bay for hours. I still recognize the shape of the significant corals there, now practically dead or struggling. It reminds me of the biodiversity we once had that no longer exists. Overrun by tourism, sewage, and runoff from the land, it is no longer a safe place for locals and our ecosystem.

This photo was taken **together with the presence of DLNR-DOCARE officers** in 2017. This alone and DLNR's acknowledgment to our CBSFA communities recognizing the dangers of our severely declining herbivore populations and the volatile industry killing over 50% of our reef fish they harvest for **visual pleasure!** You must **approve this petition** to save our coral reef health.



We are in CRISIS – many herbivore species are in *colossal* decline, and without them, our coral reefs are projected to begin dying within the next decade. I am answering the call for action, and there are residents on every island waiting to hear your results.

Herbivore species perform a critical function on our coral reefs that we, as humans, can not be a substitute for. We need all reef species in abundance for more than just food; we need them in vast numbers as nature designed them to be. Our elders spoke of Kona Gold, meaning they could identify massive schools of Yellow Tang from Hōlualoa, from elevation 1,400 feet from our shoreline! Sadly, those elders no longer live to testify with us. Today, when I take my son snorkeling to understand what to protect, and there is, if we are lucky, just a tiny



school of Yellow Tang sometimes, we see just four swimming together in many places. The yellow tang invites biodiversity to the coral reefs as the expert cleaners, along with the other herbivore species.

Taking the outdated western scientific data from the 1990s is illogical. It disregards the Hierarchy of Uses Principle and is a catastrophic failure in data to support current critical thinking and problem-solving on our coral reefs. It blatantly ignores the cultural practitioners' long-standing about 100 years of knowledge of our coral ecosystem and specific herbivore species, let alone multigenerational knowledge about our reef from the 1960s into the 1980s. During the aforementioned time period, the aquarium trade increased so much the reefs began to stress to extremely noticeable levels to finally alarm DLNR to uphold and create the Hierarchy of Uses Principle on January 1st, 1998. So why DLNR continues to honor data that starts in the 90s is beyond HULI PAC's comprehension of logic.

Our leadership in all capacities must do all we can at this tipping point to increase coral resilience with the impacts of climate change. The very survival of the ecosystem in our ocean and on land is dependent upon this.

Coral reefs are protective barriers to our nearshore and a crucial host in an ecosystem that generates photosynthesis, producing up to 70% of all oxygen. That is every other breath we take, no matter where we live. Culturally, we know how significant ko'a (coral) is – its foundation in the order of life of our marine ecosystems.

I am asking you to continue to uphold the Department of Land and Natural Resources policy code, Hierarchy of Uses Principle – preserving and protecting the cultural and natural resources as ***your highest priority***. I urge the Board to ***approve the petition and direct the Division of Aquatic Resources to begin rulemaking to ban aquarium collection PERMANENTLY in Hawai'i.***

Aquarium collection is not a cultural practice. What started over five decades ago has decimated populations of herbivores and weakened our critically essential coral reefs.

Do not allow this exploitation and degradation of our cultural and natural resources to continue further. ***On December 8th, 2023, collectively, you will be able to answer the community's kāhea, our call for action – to preserve and protect our marine ecosystem and cultural landscape, making Hawai'i a global example of what culturally grounded and regenerative leadership looks like by approving this petition to prohibit aquarium collection in Hawai'i.***

Mahalo for reading HULI PAC's testimony. We await the results to make Hawai'i the global leaders we can be. We are so far degraded we must make radical changes to save our ecosystems on land to sea.

Maki Morinoue
HULI PAC, Chair
Hōlualoa, 96725
Hawai'i Island



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Hale o nā Luna Makaʻāinana

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 327
415 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Dawn N. S. Chang, Chairperson

Aimee Keliʻi Barnes, Oʻahu Member

Riley Smith, Hawaiʻi Island Member

Vernon Char, At Large

Doreen Nāpua Canto, Maui Nui Member

Wesley "Kaiwi" Yoon, At Large

Karen Ono, Kauaʻi Member

RE: Friday 12/07-12/08/23 Hearing, item F3 SUPPORT for Kalanihale's, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park's, Moana 'Ohana's, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club's, and For the Fishes' Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes.

Aloha Chair Chang and Honorable Members of the Board,

I represent House District 50 (Kailua, portions of Kāneʻohe Bay), where the commercial aquarium pet trade has taken millions of our important reef animals over decades. I strongly support the Board in directing DAR to initiate rule-making to prevent this destructive practice.

Some of you may remember the late and great Dr. Ruth Gates, former director of the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, and namesake of the Gates Coral Laboratory on Coconut Island. She dedicated her life and career to protecting Kāneʻohe Bay, and ocean ecosystems worldwide. I remember about a year before her untimely passing, I was in a meeting with her on Coconut Island where someone asked "if you had a magic wand - what is the single most important thing that should be done to protect the reef?" her answer, in her soft British accent, was "it's been suffering a death by a thousand cuts, so really anything and everything should be done to fix the myriad of different issues from sediments to acidification," but after a moment of silence she continued "the single most impactful thing would probably be to just **stop the taking**. If we

could only ***just stop taking any fish or wildlife from the reef***, for even just a year, that would make an incredible difference." I'm paraphrasing, of course, as I didn't have a dictation machine with me at the time, but it was almost her exact words and I remember it very clearly.

Protecting our fragile coral reefs -- and the critical role of herbivores, which are taken *en masse* by the aquarium fish trade -- **is our fiduciary duty under the public trust doctrine**. Both the Kailua and Kāneʻohe Neighborhood Boards have passed Resolutions calling for the end of this destructive and unnecessary activity. Research has shown that the top species collected by the trade on Oahu have been depleted by more than 90 percent (Grabowsky and Thornhill, 2020). With climate change impacts, such as coral bleaching, forecast by scientists to only increase in the coming years, we must do all we can to protect our reefs.

Mahalo for your consideration of your duty to uphold the public trust, and Dr. Ruth Gates' poignant plea.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'NHBB'.

Natalia Hussey-Burdick

Hawai'i State Representative

House District 50

Kailua – Kāneʻohe Bay

Office of Representative Natalia Hussey-Burdick

Proudly serving the 50th House District

415 S. Beretania St. Honolulu, HI 96813, Room 327

Phone: 808.586.6480 | Fax: 808.586.6481 | email: rephusseyburdick@capitol.hawaii.gov



December 5, 2023

Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR)
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Re: F-3 Testimony in Support for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes

Me ka ha'aha'a,

The Ka'ūpulehu Marine Life Advisory Committee (KMLAC) **strongly supports** the need for rulemaking to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

The KMLAC remains steadfast in our efforts to protect and manage our biocultural resources. Currently, no person may take or attempt to take any specimen of aquatic life while within the Ka'ūpulehu Marine Reserve (§13-60.4-5(d)(1)).

Prior to becoming the Ka'ūpulehu Marine Reserve, collection of aquatic life for aquarium purposes and the possession of aquarium collecting gear was prohibited within Ka'ūpulehu, which was designated as both a Fish Replenishment Area and Netting Restricted Area ((§13-60.4-5(b)(1-2)&(c)(2)). We have witnessed the increase in fish populations and the subsequent revitalized health of our nearshore waters as a result of our community-led management and rulemaking.

It remains our intention to encourage and work with other communities across the pae'āina to similarly protect and manage their waters to provide a sustainable resource for their tables, recreational enjoyment, and spiritual enrichment. This opportunity for statewide rulemaking will give all communities a chance to similarly protect their resources.

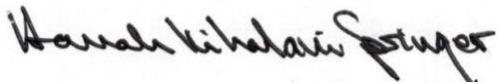
The hierarchy of priorities policy for the Department of Land and Natural Resources states that a commercial activity should only be allowed if, and only if, it can be done in a way that does not unduly damage the resource, and if it does not impinge on the resource or use by the general public. It is the belief of KMLAC that a rule to prohibit collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry will righteously restore the highest priority, which is to conserve the resource.

KMLAC values informed decision-making and has relied on the best available science to guide our management and rulemaking. The precautionary principle policy utilizes a wide variety of alternatives and the best available science to select an option that presents the least potential threat to the states's

natural systems. The best available science shows that places with community-led management have higher fish biomass than even fully protected areas without community-led management ([Friedlander et al. 2013](#)). The best available science also details various and dangerous declines in ocean health in areas open to aquarium collection (The large majority of West Hawai‘i was open to aquarium collection and found to have the lowest total fish biomass, lowest herbivore biomass, least amount of juvenile lau‘īpala, lowest coral cover, and highest algal cover in West Hawai‘i in 2003, 2017, and most years in between – [Gove et al. 2019](#)). It is the belief of KMLAC that according to the best available science and the precautionary principle policy, the state should be focused on prohibiting collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry.

KMLAC will continue to protect and manage our biocultural resources for generations to come, and we encourage the BLNR to move forward with rulemaking to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

‘O mākou nō me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,



Hannah Kihalani Springer,
For the Ka‘ūpulehu Marine Life Advisory Committee



Kaikea Nakachi,

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

The Aquarium Industry in Kona is the only ocean user group who has complied with the HEPA laws. The opposition ocean user groups have not even started the process yet. They are allowed to violate the HEPA law every day while claiming the Aquarium Industry is the cause of the destruction that they are responsible for in the areas that they alone frequent. It is time to stop blaming the fishermen and make these opponents follow the law.

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

Steve Kiefer

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

Public sentiment has been manipulated by the false narrative that the anti Aquarium group constantly puts out. The Aquarium Industry is not depleting the resource, does not use destructive collection methods and is only collecting a resource that has a life span of months if left on the reef. When is the Anti Aquarium group going to be held accountable for their defamatory statements?

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

Janelle Fiefer



December 6, 2023

Dawn Chang, Chair
Kalanimoku Building
1151 Punchbowl St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Approve Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes

Aloha e Chair Chang,

As the Executive Director for Kīpahulu 'Ohana, Inc., I kindly urge you to reject DAR's recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

The Kīpahulu 'Ohana is a grassroots Hawaiian 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1995 dedicated to the cultural sustainability of the Kīpahulu moku in East Maui through educational programs that incorporate local, national and international partnerships and projects. We envision families working in harmony together to preserve and enhance the traditional cultural practices of the Hawaiian people. To this end, we conduct culturally-based agricultural and resource management projects from mauka to makai.

Hawai'i has a rich cultural heritage deeply intertwined with the 'āina (land) and kai (sea). Prohibiting the collection of marine life for aquarium purposes demonstrates a commitment to cultural and environmental stewardship, reflecting the values of our native Hawaiian community. It is an opportunity to lead by example in pono and sustainable resource management. Over the decades, there has been an increase of opposition to aquarium fishing within the native Hawaiian community largely due to the aquarium pet trade's conflicting practices with Hawaiian traditions, values, and practices, yet it has not been properly addressed or managed. Hawaiian values of Mālama I Ke Kai and lawai'a pono include following simple kumu kānāwai (codes of conduct), including taking only what is needed for personal and 'ohana consumption, never taking from the same place too often (never overstay one's welcome), always ask permission before fishing in an area where one is not ma'a, holding oneself accountable, always thinking about the ability for future generations to meet their needs, and having respect for the 'āina, kai, and the people who steward the area.



By engaging in unsustainable practices, such as collecting young fishes prior to their ability to reproduce or collecting fishes in the masses, the aquarium pet trade practices conflicts directly with the kumu kānāwai embedded within the values of mālama i ke kai and lawai‘a pono.

Hawai‘i’s waters are home to a rich diversity of marine life, some of which are endemic and found nowhere else in the world. Reef fish are vital components to the health of near-shore ecosystems, and yet they are often targets of aquarium fish collection. Collection of fish, such as kole and manini (herbivores essential to the health of coral reef), can have detrimental impacts on reef biodiversity. Commercial take for aquarium pet trade purposes prioritizes profits over the well-being of our reef biodiversity, traditional and customary practices, food security, and beyond. It is time that the decades of community concerns are heard and pono action is taken to ensure protection of public trust resources.

In conclusion, I urge the board to reject the staff’s recommendation and approve the petition. By taking this important step, we can ensure a sustainable and thriving future for our oceans, people, and the generations that follow.

Mahalo nui loa for considering my testimony.

‘O ke aloha nō,

Kamalei Pico
Executive Director
Kīpahulu ‘Ohana, Inc.



**Ko'olauloa
HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB**

December 5, 2023

Aloha Chair Chang and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

We strongly urge you to reject the staff recommendation, and approve the petition submitted by Kalanihale, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park, Moana 'Ohana, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and For the Fishes to enact the administrative rulemaking process to prohibit the take of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

A critical component of traditional fishing practices, have cultural and spiritual significance, and are a precious resource for residents and visitors alike. Reef fish are essential components of a healthy near-shore ecosystem including the coral reefs that protect our shorelines from degradation by rising seas and coastal erosion.

Commercial aquarium collection, driven by the immense profit to be made by selling certain reef fish - such as kole and lau'ipalā, herbivores critical to coral reef health - may have a disproportionate impact on reef biodiversity and ecological function, yet has not been properly managed in spite of decades of concern. As our economy rebuilds, the temptation to see our reef fish as nothing more than swimming dollar bills will only entice more and more companies to enter the trade - even further impacting our ecological integrity, cultural practices, food security, and climate resilience.

We stand with the Kānaka Maoli and other community groups calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection and urge you to do the same. We remain hopeful that the BLNR will finally recognize what agency officials and policymakers have long dismissed—protections of the people and our sacred natural resources must be prioritized above profit.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Raynae Fonoimoana
President, Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club &
The Membership of Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club

**P.O. Box 532 Hau'ula, Hawaii 96717
Email: khcc532@gmail.com**

Aloha Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources Members,

I am strongly opposed to this Item.

The Aquarium Industry been working with in good faith with DLNR/DAR for over six years now to find a solution to this use conflict. Now that it is almost complete, our opponents are not happy about the outcome. This is a direct attempt to throw out years of work that has been done through this process.

Our opponents have tried to push their misinformation campaign through the West Hawaii fishery council, the Hawaii State Legislature, the Judicial system and the Hawaii County Council. All to no avail since these bodies are aware that 7 fishermen in Kona simply are not depleting the resource as our opponents claim.

We are the only fishery in the world where scientists can actually go under water and conduct fish counts and verify that we are not having an impact on the resource. Every adult female Yellow Tang lays over 1 million eggs a year and we have well over one million adult females on the Kona coast. This equates to tens of millions of new juvenile yellow tangs every year.

Everyone always says that we need to listen the science. All the data and science clearly show that we are not having an impact on the resource. This is not what our opponents want to hear so they will tell you not to listen to the scientist, that it doesn't matter. Please do not buy into that.

This is not a resource issue. This is a use conflict. We are already the most regulated fishery in Hawaii while our opponents have no restrictions or regulations. They are able to destroy their areas through over use with out anyone being concerned able the negative impact they have on our near shore resources. Where is their Environmental Assessment?. Why is it that they refuse to prepare one. Why is it that no one cares enough about the resource enough to ask them to be a part of this process?

Their constant false narrative have many people believing their position. Forthefishes.org currently has a post that says we use crowbars to collect fish. This is not only false but it is illegal to defame people. They also have a collected fish count running on the bottom of the page that claims we are currently collecting 72 fish per minute. They say their source is: collection reports submitted to the state by aquarium fish catchers. They are claiming that in the last six years we have collected 10's of millions of fish even though our industry is temporarily shut down. These illegal, defamation statements need to be stopped. This is what you do when the facts, truth and science do not support your position.

Please let the current HEPA process take it's course and not nullify years of work on this issue.

Vote no on F3

Thank You,
Jim Lovell
Kona Hawaii

Aloha Chair Chang and Board Members,

I oppose a ban, F3. Thank you.

Briget Lozano

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose a ban on aquarium fishing. Item number F3.

Thank you,
Mel Diep

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I oppose F3, no bans on fishing.

JJ Diep

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources:

I oppose a ban (item F3).

Thank you, Cary Garrett.

**Board of Land and Natural Resources
Department of Aquatic Resources
1151 Punchbowl St., Room 330
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813**

Date: December 5, 2023

Re: Agenda item F.3 testimony in support of enacting a rule to prohibit collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium pet trade.

My name is Kaikea Nakachi from Moku 'o Keawe and I fully support this petition to enact a rule to permanently end commercial aquarium collection in Hawai'i.

I have personally witnessed the destruction and greed of the aquarium industry. In particular, I remember a sacred place with a name that included reference to a rare and endemic fish found there with a healthy population. I withheld its name and location in an attempt to protect it in the future from poachers and other potential threats. My family watched collectors anchor boats there for days to collect, we witnessed the broken coral left in their wake, and by 2005 noted there was not a single of the rare and endemic fish there any longer. We have fought against the industry at every opportunity to do our best to protect this and many other places. Even after a few small victories against the aquarium industry, this place continues to remain without the rare and endemic fish that gave the place its name. I do not wish for another place to be stripped of its identity, history, and unique life found nowhere else on the planet. Making a rule to end this destructive industry will be vital to preventing this from ever happening again.

The hierarchy of priorities policy for the DLNR regarding commercial activities in state waters ranks the conservation of the resource as the highest priority. If, and only if, the commercial activity can be done in a way that does not unduly damage the resource, should it be allowed. If so, then the next priority is for the use/activity of the general public. A commercial activity should only be considered if it does not impinge on the resource or use by the general public. Every fish that is removed from the reef by aquarium collectors is a fish that cannot contribute to conserve its own population, a fish that cannot fulfil its role in its ecosystem either as an herbivore or prey item, and is a fish that cannot be seen or fished for by Native Hawaiian subsistence fishers or any other member of the general public. Now multiply that impact by the hundreds of thousands and up to the millions of fish that are removed by aquarium fishers and it is evident that this commercial industry greatly impinges on the resource as well as the use by the general public. A rule to prohibit collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry will righteously restore the highest priority, which is to conserve the resource.

The precautionary principle policy is used to develop laws for a healthier and more just Hawai'i by looking at a wide variety of alternatives and the best available science to select the option that presents the least potential threat to the states's natural systems. The best available science shows several things. First it shows that palces with community-led management have higher fish biomass than even fully protected areas without community-led management (Friedlander et al.

2013; <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/holomua/files/2023/01/Friedlander-et-al.-2013-Customary-marine-resource-knowledge-and-use-in-contemporary-Hawai%E2%80%98i.pdf>).

Part of this is due to the prohibiting of aquarium collection by communities in their managed areas. Our best available science also shows the various and dangerous declines in the entire ecosystems and in species targeted and in areas open to aquarium collection (The large majority of West Hawai‘i was open to aquarium collection and found to have the lowest total fish biomass, lowest herbivore biomass, least amount of juvenile lau‘īpala, lowest coral cover, and highest algal cover in West Hawai‘i in 2003, 2017, and most years in between – Gove et al. 2019: <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/19771>; 93% depletion of lau‘īpala in areas open to aquarium collection on O‘ahu – Grabowsky & Thornhill 2020: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/bnbxjpi617a1gnx/Aquarium%20Fish%20Paper%20Grabowsky%20and%20Thornhill.pdf?dl=0>). Finally, the best available science is also developing methods for captive breeding. This method could provide more jobs than a mere handful of collectors while also preventing wild fish from being removed from our reefs. According to the precautionary principle policy, the state should be focused on expanding captive breeding and prohibiting collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry, since it is the alternative with the least potential threat to the state’s natural systems.

Our reef wildlife face unprecedented impacts that are only getting worse.

Increased storms and associated damage due to climate change, coral bleaching, pollution, sea level rise, ocean acidification, nutrient loading, habitat destruction, and trophic cascades all threaten our reef wildlife in Hawai‘i. Over harvest is one of the few impacts we can directly control. The state of Hawai‘i understands the need to protect wildlife and has even proposed protections to protect herbivorous fish with the intent to prevent over harvest and maintain their ecosystem services. Enacting a rule to prohibit the collection of reef wildlife accomplishes this intent and is a prime example for us to control the most direct human-induced negative impact on our marine life in Hawai‘i.

I have heard many attempts to define the aquarium collection industry as “sustainable” over the years, most of them voiced by foreign-born collectors. Here in Hawai‘i we have a unique and incredible definition of sustainable that is just as much of a lifestyle as it is a benefit to every animal in Hawai‘i, including us humans. This definition of sustainable is the cultural practice of lovingly taking care of your home and its resources to achieve ‘āina momona, where the environment is able to produce so much abundance that our human needs can be met from the generated excess. The definition of sustainable as the maximum amount of fish that can be killed or removed and still sustain a population is unacceptable and just as dangerous to our culture and way of life as it is to the resources that feed it. Not only does this false idea of sustainability ensure that ‘āina momona can never be achieved and all of the cultural practices associated with it impossible to do, but it also directly takes away from the health and wellbeing of subsistence Native Hawaiian fishermen while simultaneously increasing the burden on them to lovingly take care of the resources being so heavily impacted by others. Enacting a rule to prohibit the collection of reef wildlife in Hawai‘i empowers Native Hawaiian resource stewards and gives us a fair chance to foster ‘āina momona and utilize our traditions to benefit all marine life in Hawai‘i, including humans.

Me and my family made time to be interviewed for the Cultural Impact Statement (CIS) for the Hawai‘i Island Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by the pet trade. My grandfather was still alive then and spoke passionately on the need to protect our marine resources due to the declines he had witnessed since his birth in 1932. He, like me and my family as well as many others, stated that the removal of fish from the ocean by aquarium collectors goes against cultural practices and has no place in Hawai‘i. While my grandfather is no longer alive, his legacy is continued by me and my family, and through our cultural practices he lives on in the ocean in different forms. The burden of kuleana falls to me to uphold his values that were ignored and left out of the summarization of the CIS by the pet trade in their EIS. It is why I will continue to fight to defend the unique, beautiful, and life-giving marine life of Hawai‘i because it includes my grandfather and numerous other ancestors. It is why I support enacting a rule to prohibit the collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry in Hawai‘i.

The mission of DLNR is to “enhance, protect, conserve and manage Hawai‘i’s unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of the people of Hawai‘i nei, and its visitors, in partnership with others from the public and private sectors.” As I have described in my testimony I wholeheartedly agree on how unique and limited our natural, cultural and historic resources are. For the many reasons I have given I believe enacting a rule to prohibit the collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry in Hawai‘i is the best solution to enhancing, protecting, conserving, and managing these resources of Hawai‘i. I support this petition with every molecule of my being, every memory of my ancestors, and I humbly and desperately urge the board to support this pono cause as well.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a (humbly) and with great aloha,
Kaikea Nakachi



TESTIMONY OF THE PET ADVOCACY NETWORK
FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE HAWAII BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
IN OPPOSITION TO DAR ITEM F3
To be considered December 8th, 2023

December 5, 2023

Position: OPPOSED

DAR Item F3 is a job-killing and completely unnecessary proposal. Sound science, sound safety practices, and common sense all dictate that DAR Item F3 is nothing more than a renewed attack by environmental extremists on a small and easily targeted segment of the Hawaiian population; aquarium fishermen.

The Pet Advocacy Network appreciates the opportunity to offer our views regarding DAR Item F3, a bill that would enact a complete ban on aquarium fishing without any scientific rationale for doing so. As the country's largest pet trade association, representing the interests of all segments of the pet trade throughout the United States, the Pet Advocacy Network counts among its members national associations, organizations, corporations and individuals involved in the commercial pet trade. More specifically, PIJAC represents the interests of fishers, pet stores, suppliers, distributors, pet supply manufacturers, breeders, retailers and pet owners throughout the state of Hawaii and across the country.

Let me start by saying that nobody cares more about healthy and safe pets than the Pet Advocacy Network and its members. We have for many years provided a well-respected animal care certification program that is widely utilized by not only persons in the commercial pet trade but shelters, humane societies and institutes of higher education as well. Our association has long been recognized as the voice for a responsible pet trade, and we routinely advocate legislative and regulatory proposals establishing governmental mandates where appropriate to advance the public interest and welfare of pets and the environment. We work closely with US Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior to ensure effective enforcement of the federal Animal Welfare Act, management of threatened or endangered species and control of invasive species, and have since its inception. We regularly work with federal and state agencies as well as local governments to advance animal welfare and environmental interests.

The idea that the state of Hawaii would kill an entire trade and shut down Hawaiian businesses that have been responsibly operating for decades is unfathomable. To justify the killing of an entire industry, supporters of this proposal have abandoned even the attempts to cherry pick data to support an argument that the aquarium fishing is adversely impacting the environment. Advocates for a ban have realized that the data collected by the State over a period of 20 years, and is widely supported by the



scientific community, overwhelmingly supports the fact that the fishery is sustainable and are making one last, desperate, attempt to shut it down.

DAR Item F3 asserts that the existence of the aquarium fishery is not in harmony with nature or sustainability. As several Hawaiian organizations have pointed out, and a mountain of scientific data demonstrates, this is not the case (see <http://www.huntfarmfish.com/blog/>). Science has shown that the fishery operates in harmony with nature, and consistent with cultural values. The fishery operates sustainably and in close cooperation with state regulators to ensure that resources are not taken in a way that negatively impacts the ecosystem. Isn't this exactly what every industry in Hawaii should be doing?

We are also greatly concerned that the Land Board is being encouraged to take this action at this time. Opponents of the aquarium fishery are well aware that in-depth environmental impact statement and cultural assessment have recently been completed for West Hawaii strongly demonstrating its sustainability and are being conducted for Oahu at this time to identify any bonified cultural issues arising from the fishery. They are concerned that, as with fish population data, the facts will not support their argument, and they are desperate to regulate this sustainable fishery out of business before those facts come out.

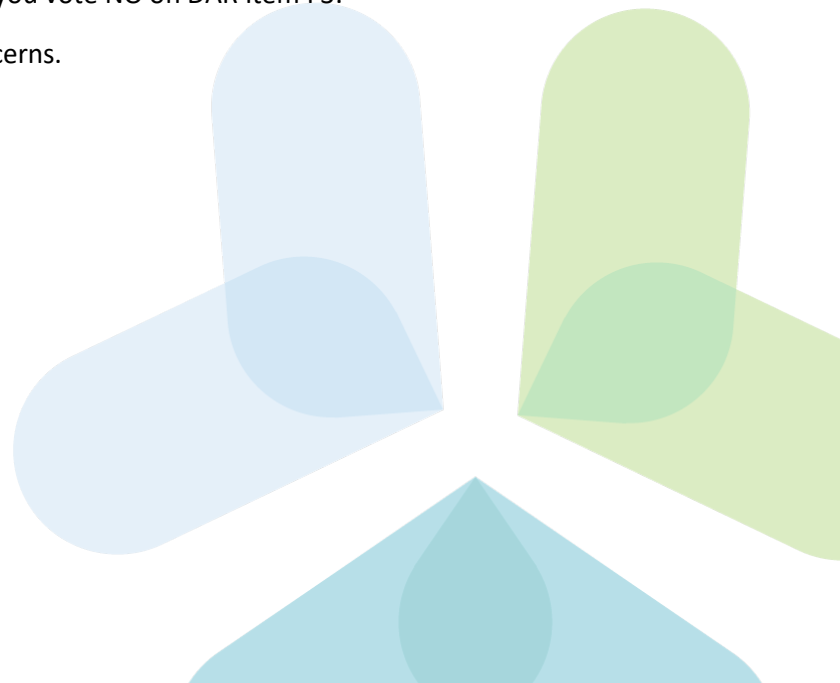
The responsible course of action is to withhold judgement of the impact of the Aquarium fishery until the studies have been completed. If there are legitimate conflicts between the fishery and Hawaii's practices, then the fishery is committed to addressing them and finding solutions.

Hawaii's aquarium industry is considered one of the best regulated near-shore fisheries in the world. The DLNR, pursuant to State law, submits a report every five years to the legislature entitled "Relating to the West Hawaii Regional Fishery Management Area." The 2015 Report found that the "The Hawaii marine aquarium fishery is currently the most economically valuable commercial inshore fishery in the State with FY 2014 reported landings greater than \$2.3 million." The regulatory mechanisms covering the Hawaiian aquarium fishery supports the tenets of the sustainable use of renewable natural resources supported in the IUCN's Policy Statement on sustainable use. The Pet Advocacy Network strongly opposes DAR Item F3 and asks the Hawaii Board of Land And Natural Resources to side with science over unfounded accusations. We ask that you vote NO on DAR Item F3.

Thank you for considering our comments and concerns.

Robert Likins
Executive Vice President
Pet Advocacy Network
bob@petadvocacy.org

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Petadvocacy.org



Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

I live on the Big Island and I support sustainable fisheries. Do not close the ocean the fishermen.

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

Alan Ryan

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

The facts and the science clearly show that this is a sustainable fishery. DLNR is charged with managing the resource, which is clearly being done well. It is not the job of DLNR to choose one user group over another.

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

Sandy Woods



SIERRA CLUB

HAWAI'I ISLAND GROUP

November 28, 2023

Board of Land and Natural Resources
P O Box 621
Honolulu, HI 96809

Re: F.3. - Strong Support for Petition for Rulemaking to Prohibit the Take of Marine Life for Commercial Aquarium Purposes (With Exemptions)



Welina mai Mr. Chair, Madame Chair and members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

With over eight hundred members, the Hawai'i Island Group of the Sierra Club of Hawai'i strongly supports the petition for rulemaking to prohibit the taking of marine life for commercial aquarium purposes.

The photo above depicts just one of the countless examples of the complex web symbiosis and life within our coral reef environments. The essential services that fish, such as the yellow tang (Lau'ipala) and gold ring surgeonfish (Kole), provide are part of nature's way of keeping an entire ecosystem healthy. Hawai'i's sea turtles aren't covered with barnacles and other parasites as in other places in the world where coral reefs have collapsed because our coral reefs have maintained one of their many essential functions, that of being the deep oceans' "cleaning stations".

In light of the many stressors and impending impacts due to climate change, the value of fish and other marine organisms on our coral reefs, both ecologically and economically, far exceeds any monetary gains that accrue to the few remaining collectors in the state.

The petition thoughtfully carves out reasonable exceptions for select 'takings' at the research, education, subsistence and even recreational levels. These user classes are made distinct and yet protected against the outsized impact of wholesale industrial style collecting operations that seek only to maintain a special profit-making privilege.


Approval of the petition would actually help local fishers and their families. Current history supports this contention along with evidence that since the time that a de facto commercial ban was put in place, a return in abundance of heretofore targeted fish for the aquarium trade, such as the yellow tang, has taken place in areas previously depleted by collecting. Such dramatic improvement in numbers in the last five years disproves the industry's claims that fewer fish were not a result of aquarium collecting in years past, because a similar increase has not occurred in areas long protected from collecting.

It's time to support nature's potential for resiliency. It's time to give reef wildlife the chance it desperately needs, and that we, the majority of Hawai'i's residents, have been asking for. It's time to end the commercial trade of our reef fish merely for ornamental purposes.

With climate change already causing harm to our essential and irreplaceable coral reefs, the rainforests of the oceans, we must take action now. Too much is at stake for the future health of our planet and children.

Please approve and accept this petition, then draft and propose rules to prohibit the take of marine life from Hawai'i's coral reefs, with exceptions for research, education, traditional and customary practices.

Mahalo,


Charles Flaherty, Chair

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

Everyone says we have to listen to the science but, when it contradicts our opinion, we say that it does not matter. The science clearly shows that this industry is sustainable and that is what we should be listening to.

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

Kristi Woodham, Kailua Kona

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

Study after study shows that this industry is not depleting to resource. This is the only fishery in the world where you can actually count the fish. The most heavily collect fish, the yellow tang, have increased by 3.4 million fish in the last 20 years. The second most collected fish, the kole tang, have increase by 5.2 million fish in the last 20 years. This information is from the '2020 report to the legislature" that is submitted every 5 years recapping the status of the resorce. It can be found at: <https://files.hawaii.gov/dlnr/reports-to-the-legislature/2020/AR20-WHRFMA-Rpt-FY19.pdf>

DLNR is charged with managing the resource not preventing access to it. Current management policies in place are clearly working.

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

David Woodham, Kailua Kona

Chair Chang and Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am opposed to item F3.

The aquarium industry is the most regulated fishery in Hawaii. Extensive studies over the last 20+ years, clearly show that the industry is not causing any depletion of the resource. The fish counts are higher now than they were in 2000.

Please vote no on this issue.

Thank You,

Mike Woods