

Suzanne D. Case
Honolulu, Hawai'i
December 13, 2024
BLNR Agenda Item F-2 (Pāku'iku'i rule)
Testimony in Support

Aloha Board Members,

I submit testimony on the proposed pāku'iku'i rule in my personal capacity.

I **support** the proposed rule to extend for an additional two years (through December 18, 2026) the current moratorium on the take of any pāku'iku'i (“Achilles tang”) put into place on December 19, 2022.

The current moratorium has been invaluable, both to give the species the beginning of a chance to recover, and to provide an opportunity for research to understand some of the basic life history and population status of pāku'iku'i, to better inform rules in the future. Both need to continue.

I want to follow up on my testimony from September 27, regarding the baseline population of pāku'iku'i. DAR's F-1 submittal on that date stated:

- DAR's own surveys show **further declines in abundance, size and even presence of pāku'iku'i**.
 - o *“The average observed abundance of pāku'iku'i in DAR's shallow water surveys declined from 2008-2018 when the surveys were conducted....”*
 - o *“Pāku'iku'i presence on DAR surveys declined from 73% in 2008 to 38% in 2018....”*
 - o *“The trends observed in this data exploration were sufficient to **raise our level of concern** for the status of pāku'iku'i in West Hawai'i.”*

(Staff Submittal F-1, 9/13/24)

But in some locations the population had **already** steeply declined up to 90% by 2008:

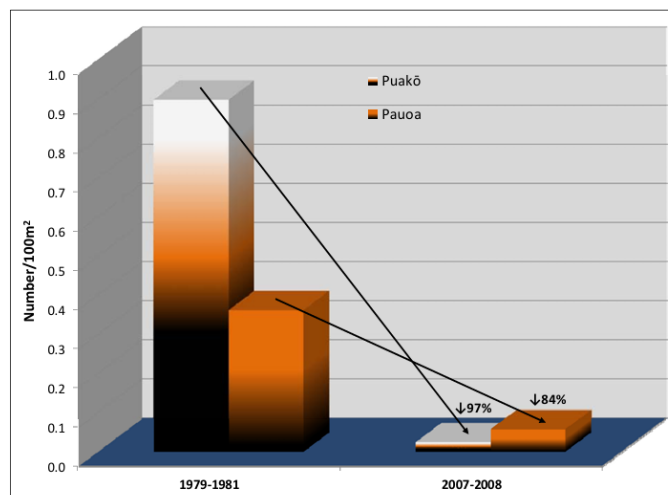


Figure 22. Long term changes in Achilles Tang populations at Puakō and Pauoa

- Report on the Findings and Recommendations of Effectiveness of the West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area, December 2014. https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dar/files/2015/01/ar_hrs188_2015.pdf

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.