

Got Fish?

by Robin Baird,
Cascadia Research Collective



A rough-toothed dolphin (*Steno*) with a mahimahi.

■ The Cascadia Research Collective is undertaking a study of the ecology of a number of species of dolphins and whales in Hawai'i. We are looking for very small (1/2-inch by 1/2-inch cubes) muscle samples from both pelagic and nearshore fish for use in this study. We are analyzing skin biopsies of 12 different species of dolphins and whales for carbon and nitrogen stable isotopes, which will allow us to examine differences in feeding ecology among the species as well as potentially assessing variation by age and sex. Having "prey" samples from as many fish in the food web as possible will help in interpreting the results.

We are hoping to get at least five samples from each of a couple of dozen species of fish. The species we are hoping to get samples from include pelagic game fish like 'ahi, mahimahi, ono, marlin, aku, albacore (*tombo*), shortbill spearfish (*hebi*), sailfish, opah, monchong and rainbow runner, as well as various prey fish like needlefish, 'opelu and flying fish. We are also hoping to obtain samples from near-shore game fish like 'o'io (*bonefish*) and different species of ulua. If you are regularly catching other species and are willing to contribute them, we would welcome those, as well.

Each sample should be put in a resealable bag and labelled with the species of fish, the date and location caught, and the size of the fish, and then frozen. Please contact me at rwbaire@cascadiaresearch.org or (425) 879-0360 if you are willing to contribute samples to this study.

Mahalo.

. . . Robin

Increasing Knowledge About the Hawaii Small-Boat Fishery

by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council



Small-boat fishermen get ready to fish in the early morning. Photo credit: Josh DeMello.

■ If you have a vessel that is not a longliner and you go fishing, you're part of the small-boat fishery in Hawai'i. Whether you troll, handline or palu-'ahi, you participate in a fishery for which there is little data. Some of you have commercial marine licenses (CMLs), which allow some data to be generated about the commercial sector. But what about the noncommercial (recreational, subsistence, sustenance) fishery? Fishery managers need to know about you folks, too!

Who Are We?

We are the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (the Council). We manage fisheries seaward of state waters (zero to three miles) around Hawai'i (and American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the Pacific Remote Island Areas). Because most of the small-boat fishing for pelagic species (e.g., tuna, billfish, ono, mahimahi) occurs outside of state waters, it's important for us to know how the fishery operates so we can ensure that it can continue to operate.

What Do We Know?

Our science providers at the NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center have found that fishers in the small-boat fishery are mostly folks who are employed elsewhere full-time. This suggests that there is a moderate reliance on fishing as a livelihood from this fishery overall. From the State of Hawai'i's CML report, we know that participation in both the number of fishers and days fished have declined in the last decade. We also know that while the Hawai'i commercial longline fishery catches a larger volume of fish, the small-boat commercial sector catches a significant volume of tuna (10 to 15 percent of the reported bigeye, yellowfin, skipjack and albacore catch) and operates primarily offshore.

What We Don't Know

While we know quite a bit about the small-boat commercial sector, what about those without a CML that go holoholo on the weekends and the aunts and uncles who fish for *kaukau*?

continued. . .