

# **Protecting Areas in the Marine Environment under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Management and Conservation Act (MSA)**

**Caribbean Fishery Management Council  
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# Presentation Overview

- **Who we are** – CFMC roles and responsibilities under the MSA
- **What we do** – MSA authorities for protecting areas in the marine environment
- **Some broader context (brief)** – Recent Executive Order 14008 and the Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful Initiative



## Who We Are – Caribbean Fishery Management Council

- Established by the MSA Section 302(a)(1)(D)
- Has authority over fisheries in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean seaward of Puerto Rico and the USVI, except for Highly Migratory Species within the jurisdiction of more than one Council

Magnuson-Stevens Act



## What We Do

- Each Council shall, for each fishery under its authority that requires conservation and management, prepare and submit to the Secretary, a fishery management plan (FMP), MSA 302(h)(1)

Magnuson-Stevens Act



## An FMP must:

- Contain conservation and management measures to prevent overfishing, rebuild overfished stocks, protect long-term health and stability of the fishery, MSA 303(a)(1)
- Describe and identify essential fish habitat (EFH), and minimize, to the extent practicable, adverse effects caused by fishing on EFH, MSA 303(a)(7)





## **FMP provisions, therefore, can protect particular areas**

- Protections could be necessary to promote the long-term stability of the fishery
  - Example, closed area to protect spawning
- Protections could be necessary to minimize adverse effects on EFH by fishing
  - Example, seasonal or areal restrictions on use of gear; closing areas to all fishing during particular times or year round to protect species life history functions



## An FMP may:

- Designate zones or time periods when fishing is limited or prohibited, or permitted only with certain vessels or certain types and amount of gear, MSA 303(b)(2)(A)
- Designate zones to protect deep sea corals from physical damage from fishing gear or prevent loss or damage of gear from interactions with deep sea corals, MSA 303(b)(2)(B)



## **Areas Closed to All Fishing – Ensure the Closure:**

- Is based on the best scientific information available;
- Includes criteria to assess the conservation benefit of the closed area;
- Establishes a timetable for review of the closed area's performance relative to its purpose; and
- Is based on an assessment of the benefits and impacts of the closure
- MSA 303(b)(2)(C)



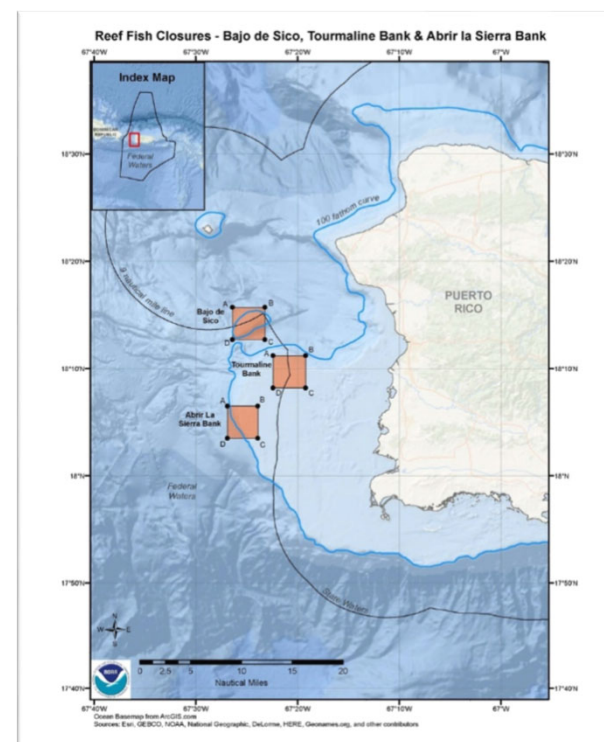
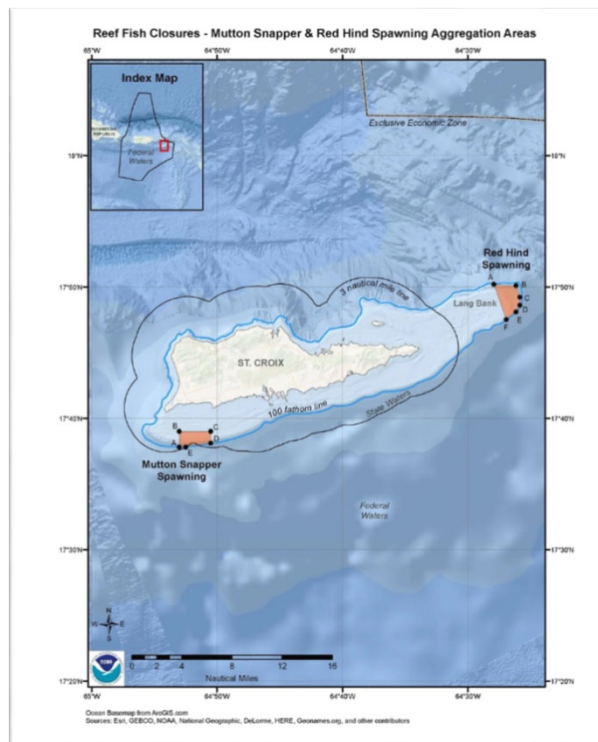
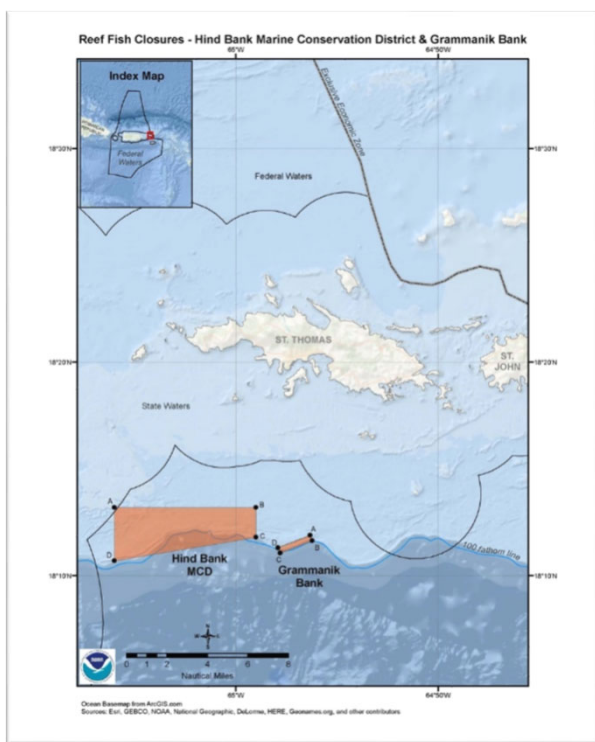


Area	Island	Closure Period	Seasonal Prohibition	Year-round Prohibition
Hind Bank Marine Conservation District	St. Thomas	Year-round	See next column	Fishing for any species and anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round.
Grammanik Bank	St. Thomas	February 1 - April 30	During the closure period, no person may fish for or possess any species of fish, except highly migratory species*	Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited year-round.
Mutton snapper spawning aggregation area	St. Croix	March 1 - June 30	Seasonal closure for all fishing	Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited year-round.
Lang Bank (red hind spawning aggregation area)	St. Croix	December 1 - <b>last day of February</b>	Seasonal closure for all fishing	Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited year-round.
Tourmaline Bank (red hind spawning aggregation area)	Puerto Rico	December 1 - <b>last day of February</b>	Seasonal closure for all fishing	Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited year-round.
Abrir La Sierra (red hind spawning aggregation area)	Puerto Rico	December 1 - <b>last day of February</b>	Seasonal closure for all fishing	Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited year-round.
Bajo de Sico	Puerto Rico	October 1 - March 31	During the closure period, no person may fish for or possess any Caribbean reef fish**	Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited year-round.  Anchoring by fishing vessels is prohibited year-round.

## U.S. Carib Time/Area Closures



# U.S. Caribbean Time and Area Closures





## **Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad and the America the Beautiful Initiative**

- Goal: conserve at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030
- Ongoing discussions about MSA protected areas
  - Council Coordination Committee subcommittee on area-based management preparing a report on area-based management under the MSA
  - Evaluating what conservation means
  - Understand baseline protections

**30 by 30 and MPAs**





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