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# Status of Island-based Fishery Management Plans and Amendments

Caribbean Fishery Management Council  
179<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
August 11-12, 2022  
Isla Verde, Puerto Rico

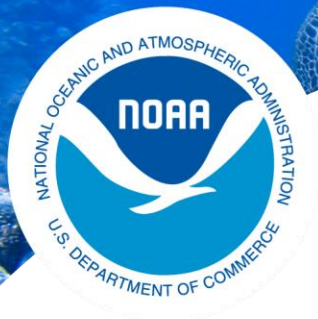


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# Island-based FMPs

- Proposed Rule – Published May 19, 2022
  - Comment period ended June 21, 2022
    - Two comments received
- Final Rule – Currently under NMFS review
- Expected publication date: Late Summer/Early Fall
  - 30 days cooling period



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## *Amendment to IBFMPs*



# Framework Amendment to the Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix FMPs: Modification of Spiny Lobster Management Reference Points

## Issues Addressed in this Amendment:

- Update management reference points for spiny lobster to account for the SEDAR 57 spiny lobster stock assessments and application of the Council's Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule.
- Revise the AM trigger for spiny lobster stocks.

**Status:** Council took final Action in August 2021.

NMFS is preparing proposed rule and associated documents.



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## Action 1: Modify spiny lobster overfishing limits (OFL), acceptable biological catch (ABC), and annual catch limits (ACL)

**Preferred Alternative** - Selected the constant-catch approach for specifying the OFL and ABC for spiny lobster, and used the constant-catch ABC to derive the spiny lobster constant-catch ACL. The preferred sub-alternative set the  $ACL = ABC \times 0.95$ .

ACL by Year	Puerto Rico	St. Thomas and St. John	St. Croix
2021-2023	369,313	142,636	140,667
2024+	366,965	126,089	120,830



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## Action 2: Modify the Spiny Lobster Accountability Measure Trigger

**Preferred Alternative** – Use the average of the most recent three years of spiny lobster landings to evaluate whether an AM is triggered. An AM is triggered if average landings exceeded average ACLs in place during those years. The years of landings used to trigger an AM can be adjusted to account for the best scientific information available.



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## *Amendment to IBFMPs*



# Amendment to the Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix FMPs: Modification to the Buoy Gear Definition and Use

## Issues Addressed in this Amendment:

- Modify the definition of buoy gear in federal regulations to allow for the use of up to 25 hooks to fish commercially.
- Limit the use of buoy gear to those fishing commercially.

**Status:** Council took final Action in Dec 2021.

NMFS is preparing proposed rule and associated documents.



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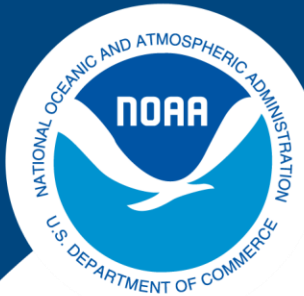


# Modification to the Buoy Gear Definition and Use

## Action 1: Buoy Gear Prohibition for Recreational Fishing

**Alternative 1.** No Action. Buoy gear is currently an authorized gear type for recreational harvest in the Caribbean as found in 50 CFR 600.725. Retain the authorized gear types for recreational harvest in federal waters off Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix.

**Alternative 2 (Preferred).** Prohibit the use of buoy gear for those fishing recreationally in federal waters off Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix.



# Modification to the Buoy Gear Definition and Use

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## Action 2: Modification of the Buoy Gear Definition

**Alternative 1.** No Action. The definition of buoy gear specified in 50 CFR 622.2 with respect to the number of hooks allowed would not be changed and the number of hooks would remain at 10.

**Alternative 2.** Modify the definition of buoy gear in 50 CFR 622.2 as it applies to the commercial sector fishing for managed reef fish in the EEZ off Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix to allow the use of up to 25 hooks connected between the buoy and the terminal end.

**Alternative 3 (Preferred).** Modify the definition of buoy gear in 50 CFR 622.2 as it applies to the U.S. EEZ in the Caribbean EEZ (i.e. the EEZ off PR, STT/STJ, STX) to allow the use of up to 25 hooks connected between the buoy and the terminal end for all authorized commercial fisheries.





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## *Amendment to IBFMPs*



# Amendment to the Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix FMPs: Trawl Gear and Other Net Gear in Federal Waters

## Issues Addressed in this Amendment:

- Prohibition on the use of trawling gear from within the marine protected areas (i.e., Council MMAs) of the U.S. Caribbean exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- Options to prohibit or regulate the use of gillnets, trammel nets, drift nets, and purse seines for harvesting fish in the U.S. Caribbean EEZ.

**Status:** IPT first meeting held; need to further develop the Purpose and Need and refine actions and alternatives.

Development of amendment for Council to discuss/choose preferred alternatives at December 2022 or Spring 2023 Meeting.