

Title: **Economic and Social Characteristics of the Hawaii Small Boat Fishery**

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Abstract: More than half of the world's annual marine fish catch are landed by small scale fisheries. However, most small-scale fisheries have not been routinely or comprehensively managed. Understanding the social and economic characteristics of small scale fisheries is the first step towards enhancing their management and governance. To this end, a socioeconomic survey was conducted on Hawaii small boat fishing vessel operators during 2007-2008. The Hawaii small boat fishery is a complex fishery comprised of mixed-motivation fishers and diverse scales of fishing activity. Fisher classification complicates management of the fishery as existing regulatory frameworks do not consider cultural motivations for fishing, and legal definitions do not adequately describe fishing activity, motivations, and attitudes. As the United States moves towards quota management and catch share systems, the heterogeneity of this fleet may create unintended consequences from regulatory proposals including issues of reduced food security, restrictions in community social development, erosion of fishing cultures and lifestyles, and a failure to provide a subsistence way of life for those participating in small-scale and traditional fishing practices. It is important to ensure that small-scale fishing is not marginalized. Based on the results of the statewide survey, we characterize the fishery on numerous factors such as catch level, market participation and access, and indicators of social importance. The findings from this study will have important implications for small-scale fisheries facing similar challenges.