



CAMPAIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Fishing is key to our island lifestyle and depends on maintaining a healthy ocean. But our coral reefs and fish populations are in a downward spiral. There are several threats facing our ocean, including heavy fishing pressure, pollution and runoff, and invasive species. However, scientists and most fishermen agree that overfishing is one of the most serious problems. *Fair Catch* is a campaign to restore Hawaii's nearshore ocean by encouraging responsible fishing practices and supporting actions that protect our reefs and fishes from further decline.

Responsible Fishing: Some fishing practices are kinder to the ocean environment than others. Fishing by throw net, pole and line, hand line, and breath-hold spear fishing can be done in a sustainable way if we take only what we need, avoid damaging the reefs, and release the large fishes that are so critical to replenishing our reefs. Use of certain harmful methods should be avoided, such as monofilament lay gill nets, which are indiscriminate and take many fish at once; night spearing that targets resting fishes; and SCUBA fishing for native species in their deep water refuges.

Policy Change: We recommend a statewide ban on the use of monofilament lay gill nets and support the Department of Land and Natural Resources' new restrictions as a step in the right direction. But given the serious decline in our nearshore fish populations and the indiscriminate and wasteful nature of lay gill nets, we believe stronger action is needed. All fishery regulations should affirm native Hawaiian gathering rights.

Fisheries Enforcement: We recommend the State enhance enforcement of fisheries regulations and dedicate more financial and human resources toward this effort. Hawaii's conservation enforcement capacity is under funded and understaffed given its broad responsibility. The result is that many natural resource violations go undetected and unpunished. Additional enforcement funding has been provided by the State Legislature, but more is needed to ensure full compliance, including prosecuting violations and imposing strict penalties when needed.

Scientific Monitoring: We recommend expanded partnerships among local scientists, state and federal agencies, NGOs, fishermen, educational institutions and communities to increase scientific monitoring of our nearshore resources. This is critical to better understanding the health of fish populations and the state of the reefs, and to determining the effectiveness of fisheries regulations.

Public Participation and Education: We urge coastal communities to participate in fisheries management and enforcement by joining the DLNR's new *Makai Watch* program. Communities can help monitor compliance with laws, gather data on the health of our marine resources, and identify solutions for other threats to the ocean.