



NOAA
FISHERIES
Pacific Islands
Regional Office

Regulation Summary

American Samoa Pelagic Longline Fishing

(revised November 2018)

This guide summarizes regulations for the American Samoa pelagic longline fishery, including the limited entry program. This guide applies only to owners and operators of vessels permitted to fish in the American Samoa fishery. Specific regulations implementing the American Samoa longline limited entry program are in **50 CFR 665.816**.

Longline gear means fishing gear consisting of a mainline longer than 1 nm suspended horizontally in the water column, anchored, floating, or attached to a vessel, and from which branch or dropper lines with hooks are attached.

For the complete official fishing regulations, refer to Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts **229, 300, 404, 600, and 665**. Regulations are subject to change, and any discrepancies between this summary and the regulations will be resolved in favor of the regulations published in the *Federal Register* and the CFR.

For more information or to obtain additional copies of this guide please contact:

Sustainable Fisheries
NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office
1845 Wasp Blvd., Bldg. 176
Honolulu, HI 96818

Tel: 808-725-5000

Fax: 808-725-5215

Website: www.fisheries.noaa.gov

Fishing Permits and Certificates

If you use longline gear to land or transship tunas, swordfish or any western Pacific pelagic management unit species (see pg. 6) in federal waters of the U.S. Exclusive Zone (EEZ) around American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands (CNMI), or the Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIA), you must have the following permits and certificates, and they must be current and on board the vessel. Please visit the [NOAA Fisheries permits page](#) and download fishing permit applications or contact PIRO to obtain Federal permits or certificates (see Contact Information).

American Samoa Longline Limited Entry Permit: Permit registered to the vessel in the name of the vessel owner. *Expires three years from issuance.* American Samoa longline permits are issued to four vessel size classes. Length overall is the length of the hull, measured parallel to the waterline, from the tip of the bow to the end of the stern, not including projecting parts like bowsprits, rudders, outboard motor brackets, or other accessories (see [50 CFR 665.12](#)).

| Vessel Size Class | Vessel Length Overall |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A | less than or equal to 40 ft (12.2 m) |
| B | over 40 ft (12.2 m) to 50 ft (15.2 m) |
| C | over 50 ft (15.2 m) to 70 ft (21.3 m) |
| D | over 70 ft (21.3 m) |

Western Pacific Receiving Vessel Permit: A U.S. vessel must be registered for use with a valid receiving vessel permit if that vessel is used to land or transship, shoreward of the outer boundary of the EEZ around American Samoa, Hawaii, Guam, CNMI, or PRIA, any western Pacific pelagic management unit species harvested with longline gear. *Expires March 3rd of each calendar year. Expires March 3rd of each calendar year.*

High Seas Fishing Compliance Act Permit: You must have this permit if you fish outside the EEZ (outside 200 nm from shore).

Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Convention Area Endorsement: A supplemental registration is required to fish in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Convention Area (click [here](#) for map of convention area).

Marine Mammal Authorization Program Certificate: Certificate issued by PIRO and registered to the vessel owner *Expires on March 3rd of each calendar year.*

Protected Species Workshop Certificate: Certificate issued in the name of the vessel operator (See Protected Species Workshop section on page 3). *Expires one year from date of issuance.*

Marine National Monuments: Commercial fishing is prohibited within the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument, Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, and the Islands Unit of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument. Generally, no fishing is allowed within 50 nm of the monuments.

Reporting, Monitoring, and Vessel and Gear Identification

NMFS Western Pacific Daily Longline Fishing Log. The vessel operator must complete a log sheet within 24 hours of the end of each fishing day, and maintain the log sheet on board the vessel. The completed and signed log sheets must be submitted to NMFS within 72 hours of returning to port. Instructions are provided with the log sheet. Contact the PIRO American Samoa Field Office to request blank log sheets (see Contact Information).

NMFS Transshipment Log Report. The operator of a receiving vessel must submit a NMFS transshipment log report to NMFS within 72 hours of the end of the trip. Issuing and receiving of the transshipment logs is handled by the PIRO American Samoa Field Office (see Contact Information).

Marine Mammal Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form: If a marine mammal interaction (hooking or entanglement) occurs, the vessel operator must complete and mail this pre-addressed, postage paid form to NOAA/NMFS within 48 hours after the end of the trip. Forms are available from PIRO (see Contact Information).

Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). If your vessel is longer than 50 ft (15.2 m), you must also carry an operational VMS unit owned and installed by NMFS. The VMS transmits your vessel's position to NMFS for monitoring compliance with prohibited areas and other regulations. Contact the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement in Honolulu (see Contact Information).

Vessel Identification: Either your international radio call sign or official number must be displayed on the hull and deck. For detailed marking requirements, view the [Compliance Guide for Vessel Identification Requirements for Western Pacific Pelagic Fishing](#).

Gear Identification: Your vessel's official number must be displayed on every longline buoy and float. Markings must be legible and permanent, and must be of a color that contrasts with the background material.

Notification and Observer Placement

If your vessel is longer than 40 ft (12.2 m):

- The vessel owner, permit holder, designated agent, or operator must notify the PIRO American Samoa Observer Program at least 72 hours before leaving on a trip so PIRO can determine if an observer will be placed on your vessel (see Contact Information).
- The vessel is required to carry a NMFS observer if requested by PIRO.
- You must follow the observer guidelines provided to you at the pre-trip observer placement meeting.

Protected Species Workshop

Each year, owners and operators of longline vessels registered to an American Samoa longline permit must complete the Protected Species Workshop (PSW) conducted by PIRO on identification, bycatch mitigation, and safe handling and release techniques for sea turtles, seabirds and marine mammals.

- The PSW is offered in person and online (see Contact Information).
- PIRO will issue a PSW Certificate that is valid for one year. The certificate can be renewed before it expires.
- The owner of an American Samoa longline vessel must maintain and have on file a valid PSW Certificate to maintain or renew their permit.
- The captain must have a valid PSW Certificate (or a readable copy) in his/her name, on board the vessel.

Sea Turtle, Seabird, and Marine Mammal Safe Handling and Mitigation Measures

You are required to carry and use specific equipment for handling and releasing sea turtles, seabirds, and marine mammals, and/or to follow specific procedures if you hook or entangle these animals. Please refer to the Protected Species Identification, Handling and Release Guidelines placards provided at the Protected Species Workshop. These placards, the quick guide to gear setting regulations, the short-tailed albatross recovery data form, and other information are provided at the PSW.

SEA TURTLES

You are required to carry and use specific equipment for handling and releasing sea turtles and to follow specific procedures if you hook or entangle a sea turtle. View the [sea turtle compliance guide](#).

Vessels with freeboard of 3 ft (0.91 m) or less must carry line clippers capable of cutting fishing line or leaders within approximately 1 ft (0.3 m) of the eye of an embedded hook, and wire or bolt cutters capable of cutting through hooks. Freeboard is the distance between the vessel's deck and the sea surface.

- Vessels with freeboard more than 3 ft (0.91 m) must have the following turtle handling/dehooking gear on board:
 1. Long-handled line clipper
 2. Long-handled dip net
 3. Long-handled dehooker for ingested hooks (may substitute for item 4)
 4. Long-handled dehooker for external hooks
 5. Long-handled device to pull an “inverted V”
 6. Car tire
 7. Short-handled dehooker with bite guard for ingested hooks (may substitute for item 8)
 8. Short-handled dehooker for external hooks
 9. Long-nose or needle-nose pliers
 10. Wire or bolt cutters
 11. Monofilament line cutters
 12. At least two of the following mouth openers and gags:
 - Block of hard wood
 - Large avian oral speculum
 - Set of two sturdy canine chew bones
 - Set of four PVC splice couplings
 - Hank of rope
 - Set of three canine mouth gags
 - Set of two rope loops covered with hose
- Vessels that shallow-set north of the Equator must use:
 - Size 18/0 or larger circle hooks and, if the hook is offset, it must be offset by no more than 10°
 - Mackerel-type fish bait only (sardines, sanma, mackerel) – no squid

SEABIRDS

You are required to carry and use specific equipment for handling and releasing seabirds and to follow specific procedures if you hook or entangle a seabird. View the [seabird compliance guide](#).

MARINE MAMMALS

NMFS distributes recommended guidelines for handling of marine mammals at the PSW. Animals must be handled carefully to minimize further injury, and returned to the ocean unless directed otherwise by NMFS personnel, contractor or official observer, or otherwise authorized by a scientific research permit held by the operator. You must report marine mammal interactions on a *Marine Mammal Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form*, even if an observer was aboard, within 48 hours of the end of a fishing trip.

Shark Finning and Landings

- You may possess and land shark fins only if they are naturally attached to the corresponding shark carcass, meaning attached to the carcass through some portion of uncut skin.
- You may land a shark carcass only if its fins are naturally attached.
- You may transfer or receive fins between vessels at sea only if the fins are naturally attached to the corresponding carcass.
- While at sea, you may not remove any of the fins of a retained shark, including the tail.

Exception -- Silky and oceanic whitetip sharks in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Convention Area:

- You may not retain or land any part of any silky shark or oceanic whitetip shark caught in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Convention Area.
- You must release all silky and oceanic whitetip sharks as soon as possible after catching them, taking reasonable steps for releasing them carefully without compromising human safety.

- You must allow and assist in collecting samples from these sharks if an observer requests you to, and if it is safe.
- Please refer to the compliance guide *Fishing Restrictions related to the Oceanic Whitetip Shark, the Silky Shark and the Whale Shark*: <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0086-0047>.

American Samoa and South Pacific Longline Gear Requirements

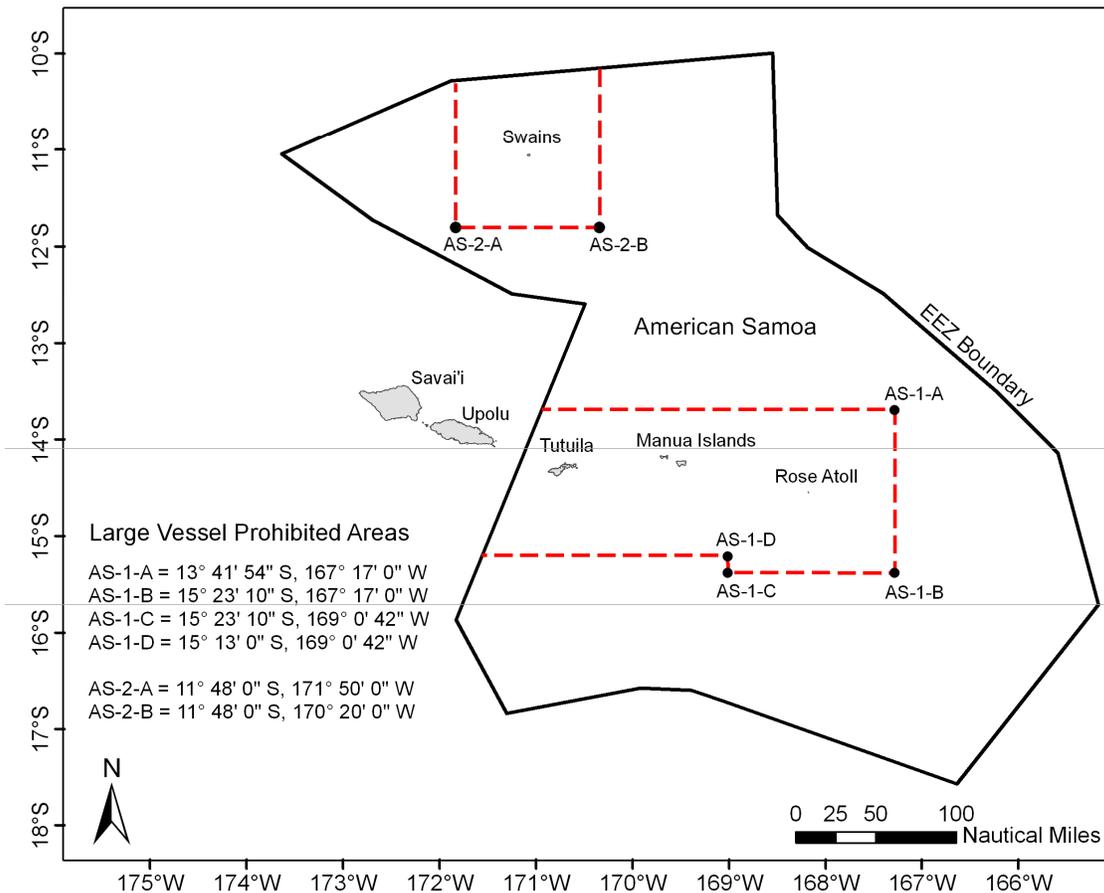
To reduce interactions with green sea turtles, permitted U.S. longline vessels that are longer than 40 feet (12.2 meters) must meet the following conditions when fishing south of the Equator (see [50 CFR 665.813](#)).

- Each float line must be at least 30 meters (m) long.
- There must be at least 70 m of blank mainline (without hooks attached) before and after all floats with hooks between them.
- When hooks are deployed, there must be at least 15 branch lines attached between each float.
- Each branch line must be at least 10 m long.

You may not keep or land more than 10 swordfish during a fishing trip.

Large Vessel Prohibited Areas

Vessels 50 ft and longer are prohibited from fishing for pelagic fish in specific areas around Tutuila, the Manua Islands, Rose Atoll, and Swains Island. NMFS revised the prohibited area around Tutuila, the Manua Islands, and Rose Atoll in July 2012 to match the boundaries of the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument. See the map below for the updated coordinates.



The solid line indicates the boundary of the U.S. EEZ around American Samoa.
The dashed lines show the boundaries of the large vessel prohibited areas.

Exemption from Large Vessel Prohibited Areas for Large US Longliners

U.S. pelagic longline vessels that are 50 ft and longer may fish in specific areas within the large vessel prohibited areas, except that no large vessel may fish within the following three areas:

(1) EEZ waters around Tutuila Island enclosed by straight lines connecting the following coordinates (the datum for these coordinates is World Geodetic System 1984 (WGS84)):

| POINT | S. LAT. | W. LONG. |
|-------|-------------|--------------|
| TU-1 | 14° 01' 42" | 171° 02' 36" |
| TU-2 | 14° 01' 42" | 170° 20' 22" |
| TU-3 | 14° 34' 31" | 170° 20' 22" |
| TU-4 | 14° 34' 31" | 171° 03' 10" |
| TU-5 | 14° 02' 47" | 171° 03' 10" |
| TU-1 | 14° 01' 42" | 171° 02' 36" |

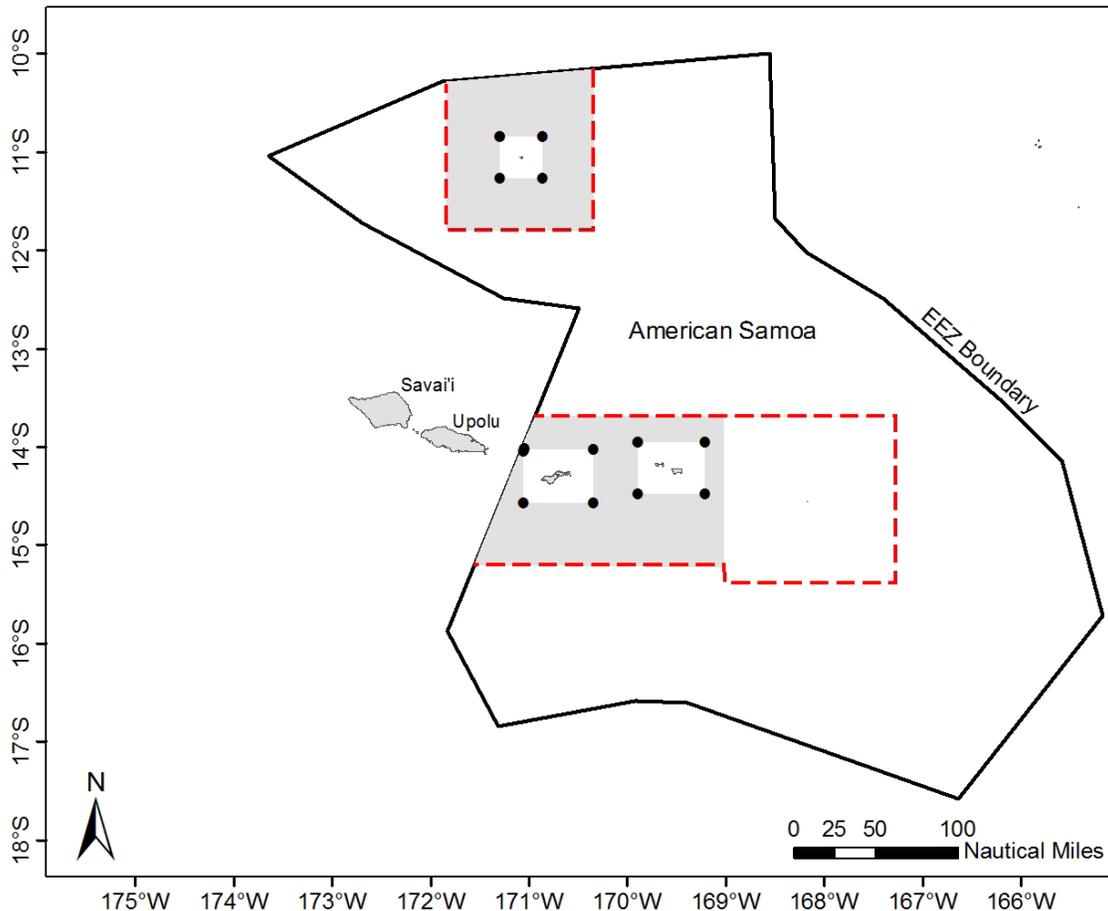
(2) EEZ waters around the Manua Islands enclosed by straight lines connecting the following coordinates (WGS84):

| POINT | S. LAT. | W. LONG. |
|-------|-------------|--------------|
| MA-1 | 13° 57' 16" | 169° 53' 37" |
| MA-2 | 13° 57' 16" | 169° 12' 45" |
| MA-3 | 14° 28' 28" | 169° 12' 45" |
| MA-4 | 14° 28' 28" | 169° 53' 37" |
| MA-1 | 13° 57' 16" | 169° 53' 37" |

(3) EEZ waters around Swains Island enclosed by straight lines connecting the following coordinates (WGS84):

| POINT | S. LAT. | W. LONG. |
|-------|-------------|--------------|
| SW-1 | 10° 50' 42" | 171° 17' 42" |
| SW-2 | 10° 50' 42" | 170° 51' 39" |
| SW-3 | 11° 16' 08" | 170° 51' 39" |
| SW-4 | 11° 16' 08" | 171° 17' 42" |
| SW-1 | 10° 50' 42" | 171° 17' 42" |

This map shows the exempted areas:



The solid line indicates the boundary of the U.S. EEZ around American Samoa.
The dashed lines show the boundaries of the large vessel prohibited areas.

Pacific Pelagic Management Unit Species

| COMMON NAME | | SAMOAN NAME | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Tunas | Albacore | Apakoa | <i>Thunnus alalunga</i> |
| | Bigeye tuna | Asiasi, To'uo | <i>Thunnus obesus</i> |
| | Kawakawa | Atualo, Kavalau | <i>Euthynnus affinis</i> |
| | Pacific bluefin tuna | | <i>Thunnus orientalis</i> |
| | Skipjack tuna | Atu, Faolua, Ga'oga | <i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i> |
| | Yellowfin tuna | Asiasi, To'uo | <i>Thunnus albacares</i> |
| | Other tuna relatives | | <i>Auxis</i> spp., <i>Scomber</i> spp., <i>Allothunus</i> spp. |
| Billfishes | Black marlin | | <i>Istiompax indica</i> |
| | Pacific blue marlin | Sa'ula oso | <i>Makaira nigricans</i> |
| | Sailfish | Sa'ula lele | <i>Istiophorus platypterus</i> |
| | Shortbill spearfish | Sa'ula gutu pu'u | <i>Tetrapturus angustirostris</i> |
| | Striped marlin | | <i>Kajikia audax</i> |
| | Swordfish | Sa'ula malie | <i>Xiphias gladius</i> |
| Sharks | Bigeye thresher shark | | <i>Alopias superciliosus</i> |
| | Blue shark | Malie | <i>Prionace glauca</i> |
| | Common thresher shark | | <i>Alopias vulpinus</i> |
| | Longfin mako shark | | <i>Isurus paucus</i> |
| | Oceanic whitetip shark | Apoapo | <i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i> |
| | Pelagic thresher shark | Malie | <i>Alopias pelagicus</i> |
| | Salmon shark | | <i>Lamna ditropis</i> |
| | Shortfin mako shark | Aso polota | <i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i> |
| | Silky shark | | <i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i> |
| Other pelagic species | Mahimahi, Dolphinfish | Masimasi | <i>Coryphaena</i> spp. |
| | Moonfish, Opah | Koko | <i>Lampris</i> spp. |
| | Oilfish | Palu | family Gempylidae |
| | Pomfret | Manifi moana | family Bramidae |
| | Wahoo, Ono | Paala | <i>Acanthocybium solandri</i> |
| Squids | Diamondback squid | | <i>Thysanoteuthis rhombus</i> |
| | Neon flying squid | | <i>Ommastrephes bartramii</i> |
| | Purpleback flying squid | | <i>Sthenoteuthis oualaniensis</i> |
| | Neon flying squid | | <i>Ommastrephes bartramii</i> |

Contact Information

Fishing Permits, Certificates, MMAP Report Forms, Compliance Guides and Other Information

Sustainable Fisheries
NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office
1845 Wasp Blvd., Bldg. 176
Honolulu, HI 96818
Phone: (808) 725-5190
Fax: (808) 725-5215
Email: piro-permits@noaa.gov
Web: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permits-and-forms

American Samoa Field Office
Pago Plaza, Suite 202
Pago Pago, Tutuila
Phone: (684) 633-5325

Protected Species Workshop

NMFS Pier 38 Service Center
1139 N. Nimitz Hwy, Suite 220
Honolulu, HI 96817
Phone: (808) 944-2300
American Samoa Field Office: (684) 252-2567
Email: piropsw@noaa.gov
Web: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pacific-islands/commercial-fishing/pacific-islands-protected-species-workshops

Vessel Departure Notification or Observer Placement

American Samoa Observer Program
Phone: (684) 633-5325

Obtain or Submit Logbooks

American Samoa Field Office
Phone: (684) 633-5598

American Samoa DMWR
Phone: (684) 633-4456

VMS, Enforcement Information, or To Report a Violation

NOAA Office of Law Enforcement
1845 Wasp Blvd., Bldg. 176
Honolulu, HI 96818
Phone: (808) 725-6100
VMS: (808) 725-6110
Confidential hotline: (800) 853-1964
Fax: (808) 725-6199
Web: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/enforcement

