

DRAFT V0.9 - FOR REVIEW

Fisheries, food security, and buffer-zone design

A briefing on protecting the fishery if OCS activity proceeds - draft for review

Summary

American Samoa's economy and diet lean heavily on fishing, from the cannery to subsistence catch. This draft sets out why fisheries protection is the community's first question, and how a buffer zone could reduce risk if federal activity proceeds.

What is at stake

- The cannery is one of the Territory's largest private employers.
- Subsistence and artisanal fishing are central to food security and culture.
- Sediment plumes and noise could affect larval tuna and migratory species.

Buffer-zone design

Congresswoman Radewagen has suggested a 50+ mile buffer if the U.S. proceeds. A buffer analysis should consider distance from fishing grounds, prevailing currents that carry plumes, and the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument.

Recommendation

A buffer zone is a risk-reduction tool, not a substitute for baseline science and consultation. Lived community knowledge of the fishery should be part of the evidence base alongside the science.

Sources & further reading

Pacific Community / SPC FAME working papers; NOAA fisheries data; community testimony entered into the consultation record.