

# PALAU

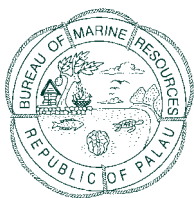
## DOMESTIC FISHING

L A W S  
2002



Produced by

the Bureau of Marine Resources (BMR)  
of the Republic of Palau



and

the Information Section  
of the Marine Resources Division  
of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)



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# FOREWORD

This information is presented to acquaint commercial and pleasure domestic fishermen with the main National laws pertaining to fishing in domestic waters of the Republic of Palau. It does not include the State laws applying to fishing and the National laws applying to foreign fishing.

This document is not a legal text. References to the legal texts are given with each law cited. The full text of the laws and rules is available for review at the Bureau of Marine Resources offices. This information is current at the date of printing (June 2002) and subject to change. If questions arise concerning this document, please contact BMR (see contact on p. 48).

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# The Bureau of Marine Resources

The Bureau of Marine Resources' (BMR) work is mainly focused on marine resources within Palau's barrier reef. Corals, sea cucumbers, crabs, lobsters, aquarium fish, commercial fish species, sea turtles, dugongs, and all their habitats, fall under the Bureau's mandate to manage and develop Palau's marine resources.

The Bureau's duties can be divided into four categories:

- resource management;
- resource development;
- marine and aquaculture research; and
- community and outreach services.

## Resource management

BMR manages Palau's living marine resources and their habitats. BMR is also responsible for monitoring environmental impacts on all of Palau's marine resources including impacts caused by development, poaching, overexploitation and disease.

BMR works towards the conservation of Palau's marine resources for future generations by recommending the passage of laws and regulations such as the ones explained in this booklet.

## Resource development

BMR staff work to develop fisheries which will benefit Palauan fishermen, cooperatives and related businesses.

BMR sponsors or provides training, gear and site development to interested fishermen to ensure their successful entry in any new fishery.

## Marine and aquaculture research

BMR operated the world's largest giant-clam hatchery as a site for research and education. BMR, through the Micronesian Mariculture and Demonstration Center (MMDC), is known worldwide for its success in farming giant clams.

Recently, following an executive order from the President of the Republic of Palau, the Center was renamed Palau Mariculture and Demonstration Center (PMDC). Beside giant clams, the Center is now farming hard and soft corals, trochus, coral trout, rabbitfish and grouper.

BMR also invites scientists from all over the world to conduct needed research in Palau, and coordinates all marine and aquaculture research efforts in compliance with the Marine Protection Act of 1994.

## Community and outreach services

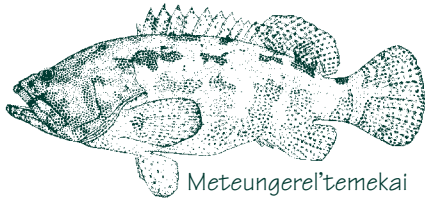
BMR provides a wide range of services to the community. The Bureau:

- provides advisory services to states for marine resources development and management;
- provides technical assistance and advisory services on the purchasing, handling, marketing and processing of fish and other marine products;
- maintains an active public education program;
- responds to requests from communities and individuals for assistance, and utilizes, when appropriate, the services of regional organizations such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP);

# Regulated species

- *advises the community of any regulatory measures and other actions taken towards marine conservation in the Republic;*
  - *maintains a library which is available to the public and visiting scientists; and*
  - *produces technical reports which are available to the public at cost.*
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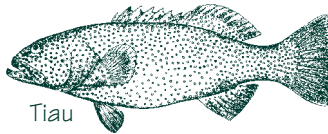
# Groupers



Meteungerel'temekai  
(*Epinephelus fuscoguttatus*)



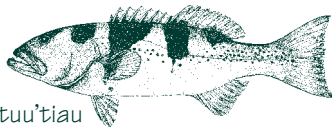
Ksau'temekai  
(*Epinephelus polyphkadion*)



Tiau  
(*Plectropomus areolatus*)



Mokas  
(*Plectropomus laevis*)



Katuu'tiau  
(*Plectropomus laevis*)



Tiau  
(*Plectropomus leopardus*)

From April 1 to July 31 inclusive, it is against the law to buy, sell, or fish for any of the following species of groupers:

- meteungerel'temekai (*Epinephelus fuscoguttatus*),
- ksau'temekai (*Epinephelus polyphkadion*),
- tiau (*Plectropomus areolatus*),
- mokas, katuu'tiau (*Plectropomus laevis*),
- tiau (*Plectropomus leopardus*)

Ref. 27 PNCA 1204

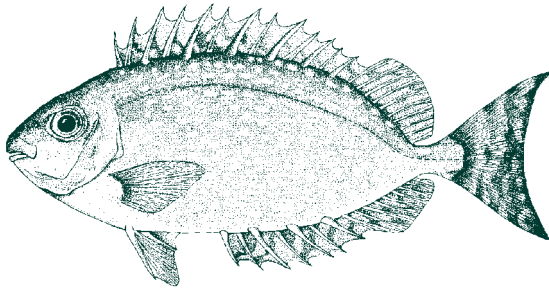
Many coral reef fishes, including groupers, aggregate in large numbers in specific locations, seasons and moon phases in order to spawn.

In several places of the Pacific, groupers have been virtually eliminated because of intensive fishing of these spawning aggregations.

In Palau, spawning aggregations of groupers have been observed all year round. To protect them and make sure the groupers have a chance to reproduce in large numbers, it has been decided to fully close the fishery during the peak spawning aggregation period, from April 1 through July 31.

Groupers in Palau, as in many other places in the world, are considered to be amongst the most fascinating fish in the water. By respecting these regulations, we will give a chance to our grandchildren and the following generations, to know what groupers are like.

# Rabbitfish



Meyas  
(*Siganus canaliculatus*)

From March 1 to May 31 inclusive, it is against the law to buy, sell, or fish for rabbitfish (meyas, *Siganus canaliculatus*)

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1204*

Rabbitfish (meyas) are herbivorous but they also occasionally feed on small invertebrates. They usually swim in schools in coral reef areas and shallow coastal waters.

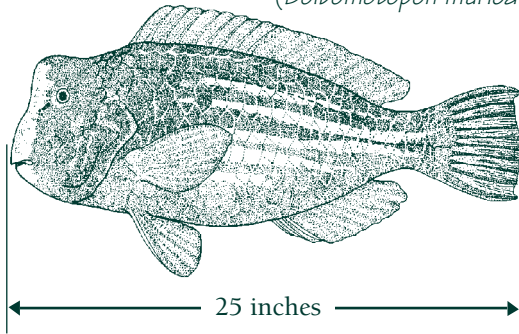
The spawning season of rabbitfish in Palau waters is believed to last from the beginning of March to the end of May.

When a fishery is believed to be over-exploited, the first and most efficient measure to take is to protect them while they reproduce.

In Palau, fishermen and scientists observed that the number of rabbitfish were declining. So it was decided to fully close the fishery, every year from March 1 through May 31.

# Humphead parrotfish

Berdebed, kemedukl  
(*Bolbometopon muricatum*)



It is against the law to fish, buy, or sell the humphead parrotfish (berdebed; *Bolbometopon muricatum*) of less than 25 inches in length (measured from beak to center end of tail).

It is against the law to export, or to fish for, buy or sell with intent to export any humphead parrotfish (berdebed, kemedukl; *Bolbometopon muricatum*), whatever the size.

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1204*

The humphead parrotfish (berdebed, kemedukl) lives in coral areas and can occasionally be seen in large schools. It feeds on corals and algae. It is the biggest of all parrotfishes and some exceptional specimens have been reported to attain 55 inches and 165 pounds. It uses its hump to break the corals before crunching them with its teeth.

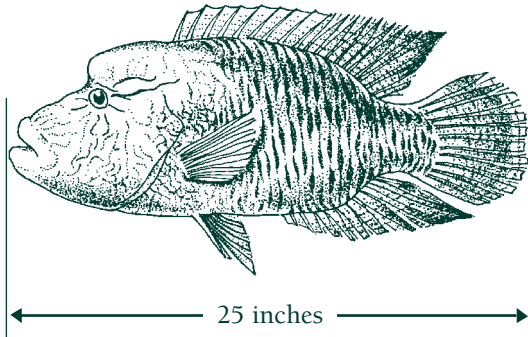
Humphead parrotfish grow slowly and take many years to attain adult size. By protecting the young specimens of less than 25 inches we increase their chances of reproduction before they are captured.

Palau's population of humphead parrotfish is relatively small and fragile. Forbidding the export is another measure taken to protect the resource and give a better chance to local consumers, whether they be Palauan people or tourists, to have a bite of this delicacy.



# Napoleon wrasse

Ngimer, maml  
(*Cheilinus undulatus*)



It is against the law to fish, buy, or sell a Napoleon wrasse (ngimer; *Cheilinus undulatus*) of less than 25 inches in length (measured from tip of snout to end of tail)

It is against the law to export, or to fish for, buy or sell with intent to export any Napoleon wrasse (ngimer, maml; *Cheilinus undulatus*), whatever the size.

Ref. 27 PNCA 1204

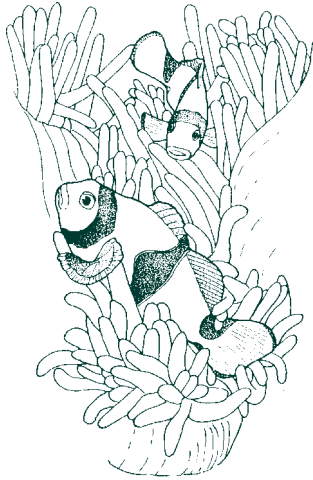
The Napoleon wrasse (ngimer, maml) is a solitary fish that lives in the vicinity of coral reefs from shallow to deeper (20 fathoms) waters. It feeds mostly on shellfish such as urchins, crustaceans and molluscs. It can attain 80 inches and more than 280 pounds. It is the largest of all wrasses and one of the biggest of all coral reef fish in the world.

Like the humphead parrotfish, Napoleon wrasse grow slowly and take many years to attain adult size. By protecting the young specimens of less than 25 inches we increase their chances of reproduction before they are captured.

A big Napoleon wrasse, alive in the wild, is a sight that divers from all over the world would like to encounter. So, as a diving attraction, a live Napoleon wrasse can bring a lot more money to the Palauan people than if it is caught and sold for food consumption.

Palau's overall population of Napoleon wrasse is small and fragile. To protect it further, export is forbidden.

# Aquarium species



Aquarium species are defined in a list prepared by the Marine Resources Division and named in the Regulated Marine Species Register.

Any person who takes more than five (5) specimens or pieces of aquarium species in a single day must have an Aquarium Collecting Permit issued by the Minister or his designee.

Only Palauan citizens can apply for an Aquarium Collecting Permit.

No person may export aquarium species unless he has an Aquarium Collecting Permit or a Marine Research Permit issued by the Minister or his designee.

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1205, 1206  
and Regulations on the Collection of  
Marine Resources for Aquaria and Research*

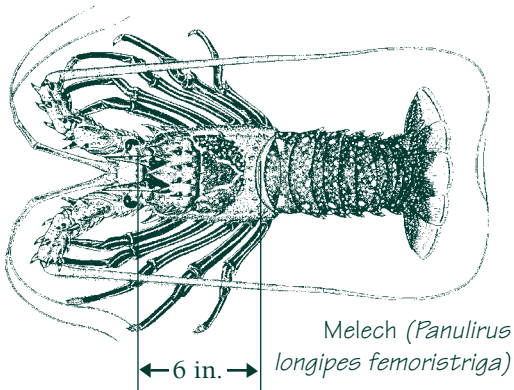
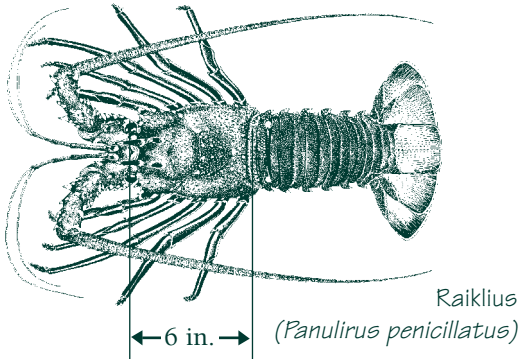
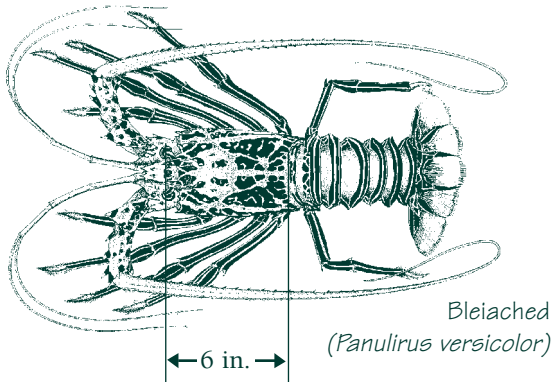
Aquarium species include dozens of fish species but also anemones, jellyfish, sponges, crustaceans, and molluscs.

They are usually the first species encountered by snorkelers in shallow waters and as such, they are extremely important to the tourist industry of Palau.

However, if carefully managed, a sustainable industry based on the collection of aquarium species can be developed. To control the number of people entering this fishery, a system of permits has been put in place. At present, a maximum of twenty (20) Aquarium Collecting Permits can be issued every year.

All permit owners must submit quarterly catch reports on their activities to the Bureau of Marine Resources, including total numbers of specimens or pieces taken, places where they have been taken, and number of fishermen involved. All this information is used by the Bureau of Marine Resources to manage the fishery. Analyzing these data will allow the Bureau to evaluate the state of the fishery and to decide whether the number of permits issued can be increased or decreased.

# Rock lobsters



It is against the law to fish, sell or buy any egg-bearing female of rock lobster (cheraprukl) whatever the size.

It is against the law to fish, buy, or sell the following species of rock lobsters (cheraprukl) if less than six (6) inches in total length of the carapace (measured from the tip of the rostrum midway between the eyes to the end of the carapace):

- bleiached (*Panulirus versicolor*)
- raiklius (*Panulirus penicillatus*)
- melech (*Panulirus longiceps femoristriga*)

It is against the law to export, or to fish for, buy or sell with intent to export, any rock lobster (cheraprukl) of the same three species, whatever the size.

Ref. 27 PNCA 1204

Rock lobsters (cheraprukl) live in narrow reef crevices. They feed, mostly during the night, on animal and plant debris helping to keep the reef clean.

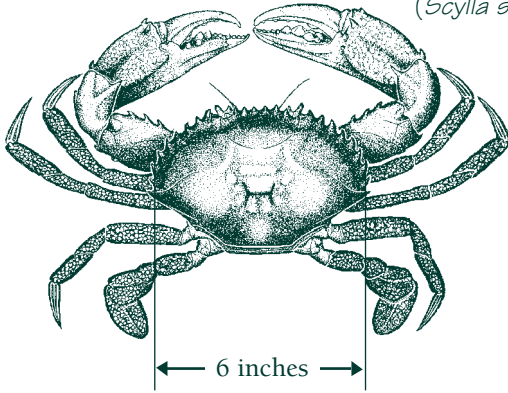
When released by the females, the rock lobsters' eggs drift in the open ocean while going through the different stages of development. Only a tiny number of the hundreds of thousands of eggs released survive and are carried back to a reef for shelter.

By setting up a minimum size limit, we protect the young lobsters and give them a chance to reproduce several times before entering the fishery.

Palau's population of rock lobsters is relatively small and fragile and there is a high demand on the local market for this delicacy. So, a ban on export is in place as a complementary protection measure.

# Mangrove crab

Emang  
(*Scylla serrata*)



It is against the law to fish, sell or buy any egg-bearing female of mangrove crab (emang, *Scylla serrata*) whatever the size.

It is against the law to fish, buy, or sell any mangrove crab (emang) if less than six (6) inches across the shell (carapace).

It is against the law to export, or to fish for, buy or sell with intent to export any mangrove crab (emang), whatever the size.

Ref. 27 PNCA 1204

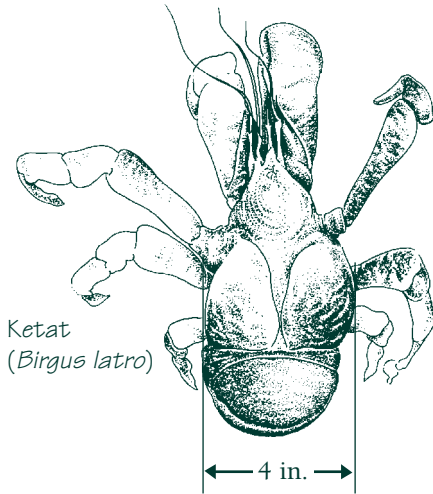
Mangrove crabs (emang) commonly inhabit mud flats and mangrove forests, favoring soft muddy bottoms, often below tide levels, although females carrying eggs are present in deeper waters up to 30 miles offshore.

The eggs need very favorable conditions to go through the larval stages and, as for any other crustacean, only a tiny number of the millions of eggs carried by the female will become adult crabs. This is why it is essential to protect the egg-bearing females.

In tropical waters, mangrove crabs are mature when they are about 18 months old, which corresponds approximately to a carapace width of 5 inches. If we only catch mangrove crabs of more than 6 inches of carapace width, we make sure that all the crabs caught have reproduced at least once.

Mangrove crabs are considered a delicacy in Palau both by local people and visiting tourists. Since the resource is scarce it has been decided to give the preference to the local market and ban all export of this species.

# Coconut crab



It is against the law to fish, sell or buy any egg-bearing female of coconut crab (ketat, *Birgus latro*) whatever the size.

It is against the law to fish, buy, or sell any coconut crab (ketat) if less than four (4) inches across the shell (carapace).

It is against the law to export, or to fish for, buy or sell with intent to export, any coconut crab (ketat), whatever the size.

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1204*

Coconut crabs (ketat) are the largest of the land crabs; they can grow up to a weight of 8 pounds. Adult coconut crabs live almost exclusively on land. However, as most species of crabs, the early stages of their life are aquatic.

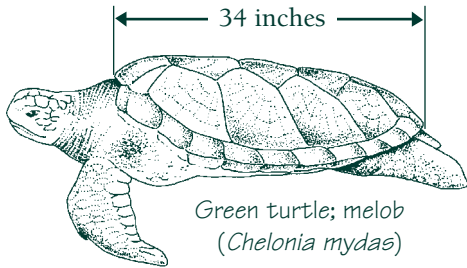
Females carry approximately 100,000 eggs for three weeks, a time during which they need to leave their 'normal' habitat to go back towards the shore where they look for the right place (high humidity, access to fresh and salt water, abundance of holes and crevices, protection from sun and wind). The eggs are released in the sea where they drift for several weeks before a very small number of newly formed crabs crawl back to the shore.

Coconut crabs grow very slowly and have a much greater longevity than most other crustaceans as they can live up to 60 years. This is why they really need to be protected.

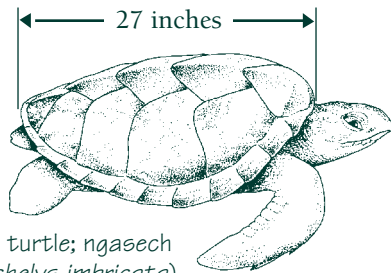
Individuals with a carapace narrower than 4 inches may be too young to have already reproduced. They must be fully protected.

The demand for coconut crab on the local market already exceeds the supply. Allowing export would put more pressure on an already fragile resource. This is why it is forbidden.

# Turtles



Green turtle; melob  
(*Chelonia mydas*)



Hawksbill turtle; ngasech  
(*Eretmochelys imbricata*)

It is against the law to:

- take any female turtle while she is on land,
- take turtle eggs at any time,
- take any turtle during the months of June, July, August, December and January,
- take, during the open season, green turtles (melob; *Chelonia mydas*) with a carapace length of less than 34 inches,
- take, during the open season, hawksbill turtles (ngasech; *Eretmochelys imbricata*) with a carapace length of less than 27 inches.

Ref. 24 PNCA 1201

The green turtle (melob) has long been a favorite Palauan food and the hawksbill (ngasech) has provided important shell products to our people. Because these traditional uses of turtles and their role in our cultural heritage are very important they should be maintained.

However, fishermen and research biologists in Palau and around the world have noticed a dramatic decrease in the numbers of sea turtles (uel), which are also considered in danger of extinction worldwide. We are currently at a point in the history of Palau where we are in danger of losing the turtles that we value so much. It is therefore essential that the regulations are known to all and respected by all.

Sea turtles come back to the place where they were born to lay their eggs. So turtles born in Palau will come back to Palau even after very long journeys to far distant waters. If we keep catching the females when they are on land and taking the eggs from the nests in the sand we put the future generations of Palauan turtles in great danger of extinction.

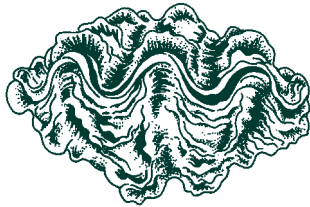
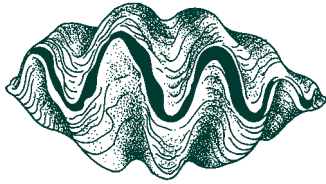
We must also respect the minimum size limits put in place to protect the turtles too young to reproduce and the closed seasons set to protect all the turtles during peaks of the mating and nesting seasons (June to August, and December to January).

Also, if we avoid the capture of adult females at all times, they can continue to contribute the thousands of young needed to replenish our diminishing turtle population year after year. So, if you encounter an adult female (females have a shorter tail than male adults) in the water or on the beach, please let her go in peace. She will return to Palau year after year and continue to supply us with turtles for generations to come.



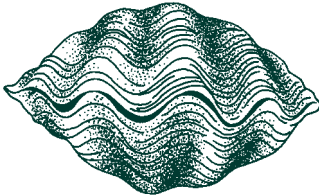
# Giant clams

Oktang  
(*Tridacna gigas*)



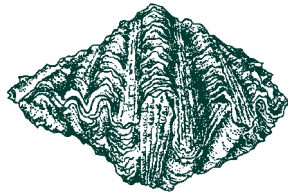
Ribkungal  
(*Tridacna squamosa*)

Kism  
(*Tridacna derasa*)



Melibes  
(*Tridacna maxima*)

Oruer  
(*Tridacna crocea*)



Duadeb  
(*Hippopus hippopus*)

Duadeb  
(*Hippopus porcellanus*)



It is against the law to export, or to fish for, buy, or sell with intent to export, any of the following species of clams (kim), or part thereof, except cultured ones:

- oktang (*Tridacna gigas*),
- ribkunga (*Tridacna squamosa*),
- kism (*Tridacna derasa*),
- melibes (*Tridacna maxima*),
- oruer (*Tridacna crocea*),
- duadeb (*Hippopus hippopus*), and
- duadeb (*Hippopus porcellanus*).

Ref. 27 PNCA 1204

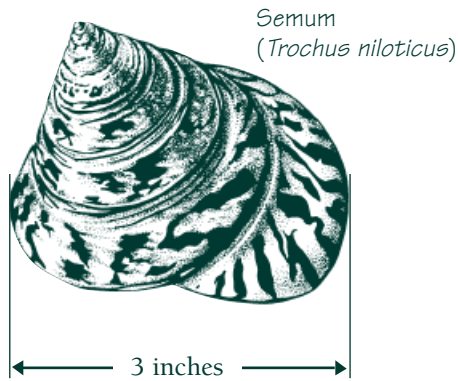
Giant clams are bivalves that feed by filtering seawater and cultivating microscopic algae within their tissues. To grow well they need clean seawater and plenty of sunlight.

Giant clams represent a traditional food source for the people of Palau. They have also been exploited occasionally by foreign boats coming from Asia. These two factors have contributed to the decline of giant clams in Palauan waters.

To protect them, on one hand, a ban on all export of wild-caught specimens has been put in place.

On the other hand, culture techniques have been successfully developed at the Micronesian Mariculture and Demonstration Center (MMDC) run by BMR. These techniques have been taught to local people and an export market for farmed giant clams has been established.

# Trochus



Except during open seasons that are designated from year to year by the Olbiil Era Kelulau and subject to further restrictions by each of the State Governments, the harvesting of trochus (semum, *Trochus niloticus*) is prohibited.

During open seasons, only trochus (semum) of more than three (3) inches in diameter at the base can be harvested.

Even during open seasons, certain areas can be declared closed by either the National or the States Governments.

*Ref. 24 PNCA 1243*

Trochus (semum) is mainly harvested for its valuable shell used to make buttons for top-quality shirts by the fashion industry in Europe and in Asia. It is also appreciated in Palau as a food source.

Because trochus lives in shallow waters and moves very slowly, it can be easily collected, hence overfished. This is why, in Palauan waters, this important commercial species has been protected by different regulations for more than eighty years.

Nowadays, the Olbiil Era Kelulau (OEK) can decide, from year to year, to open the fishery for a limited period of time. To make its decision, OEK has access to the results of scientific surveys of the trochus resource. Even during these open seasons, OEK and the State Governments can designate certain areas as closed. For more information on the next open season, check with the nearest BMR office.

Even during open seasons, juveniles (trochus too young to reproduce) must be protected. It is estimated that it is only when they attain a size of three inches (measure taken across the base of the shell) that all trochus are mature. They are then approximately three years old.

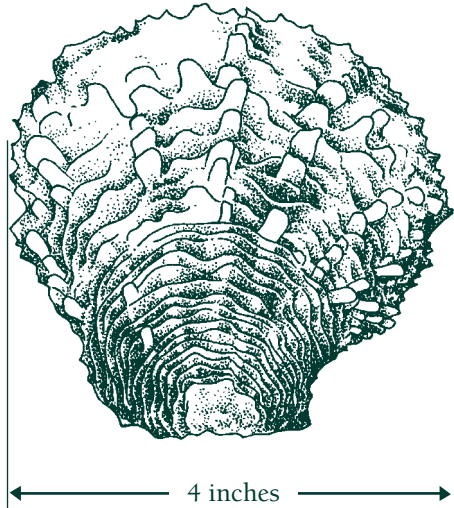
Because trochus shells can be stored for an extended period of time, they constitute one of the rare cash-income opportunities for fishing communities living in places where transport is scarce.

If we respect the closed seasons and leave the young trochus in peace, we will give this fragile resource a chance to last for future generations, continuing to bring a cash income to remote fishing communities.



# Blacklip pearl oyster

Chesiuch (*Pinctada margaritifera*)



No blacklip pearl oyster (chesiuch, *Pinctada margaritifera*) with a shell width of less than four (4) inches can be harvested at any time.

No blacklip pearl oyster of any size can be harvested during the months of August to December inclusive.

*Ref. 24 PNCA 1221*

Blacklip pearl oyster (chesiuch) can be found down to 25 fathoms depth, but is naturally most abundant just below low-tide level. To feed they filter the seawater. Their growth is related to the quality of the seawater in which they live.

Blacklip pearl oysters are generally mature when they reach two years of age (or approximately a shell width of 4 inches). Spawning can happen several times a year depending on the water temperature, but mainly occurs during the second part of the year (from August to December inclusive).

In ancient times, blacklip pearl oysters were fished for their shells, used in jewellery and for fishing lures. The occasional pearl found by fishermen was the 'cherry on the cake'.

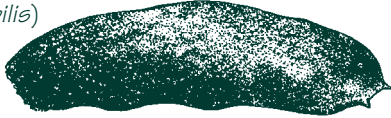
Nowadays blacklip pearl oysters are cultured for black pearls in several places of the Pacific with great success. To be able to start the same kind of industry in Palau, we need a natural stock in good shape to provide seed oysters.

Like any other marine organism, the presence of pearl oysters in our waters is essential. Pearl oysters of small value today could become treasures when a Palauan pearl-farming industry starts.

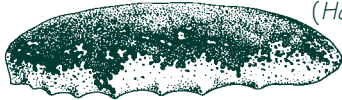
If we respect the minimum size and the closed season, we increase the chances for the pearl oysters to reproduce in good conditions.

# Sea cucumbers

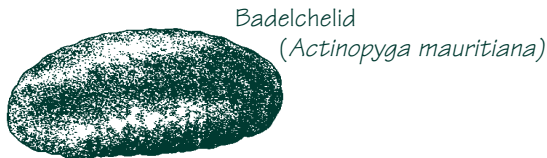
Bakelungal chedelkelek  
(*Holothuria nobilis*)



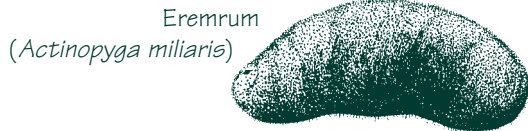
Bakelungal cherou  
(*Holothuria fuscogilva*)



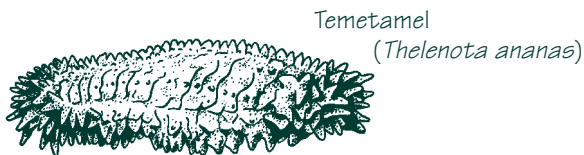
Molech  
(*Holothuria scabra*)



Badelchelid  
(*Actinopyga mauritiana*)



Eremrum  
(*Actinopyga miliaris*)



Temetamel  
(*Thelenota ananas*)

It is against the law to export, or to fish for, buy, or sell with intent to export, any of the following species of sea cucumbers:

- bakelungal chedelkelek (*Holothuria nobilis*),
- bakelungal cherou (*Holothuria fuscogilva*),
- molech (*Holothuria scabra*),
- badelchelid (*Actinopyga mauritiana*),
- eremrum (*Actinopyga miliaris*), and
- temetamel (*Thelenota ananas*).

Ref. 27 PNCA 1204

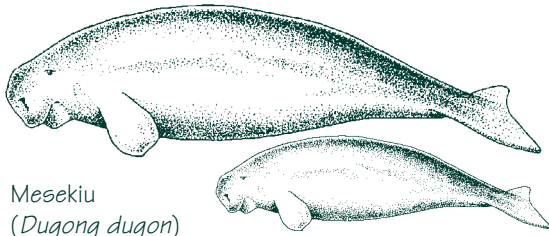
Sea cucumbers of Palau are mostly found in sandy or muddy bottoms. Like all sea cucumbers, they have separate sexes and reproduction occurs when males and females release their gametes simultaneously in surrounding seawater, so it takes many sea cucumbers gathering in the same place for the reproduction to be successful.

Sea cucumbers are important to the lagoon environment because they scavenge on the reef and turn over the sand on the lagoon floor, preventing the build-up of decaying organic matter and releasing nutrients that would otherwise be locked up under layers of sediment.

Sea cucumbers are a very easy target for fishermen and their over-exploitation might have severe consequences for the whole reef.

As they are a traditional food source for the people of Palau, it has been decided to limit their exploitation by putting a ban on all exports.

# Dugongs



Mesekiu  
(*Dugong dugon*)

It is against the law to kill, or possess dugongs (mesekiu, *Dugong dugon*).

*Ref. 24 PNCA 1231*

All dugongs (mesekiu) breathe air, feed their young milk and eat only sea grass. An adult dugong can reach a length of 11 feet and weigh over 1,500 pounds. They can live to be over 70 years old.

Palau's population of dugongs is the most isolated in the world. This means that dugongs from other parts of the world cannot come and help increase Palau's shrinking population (scientists estimate that only 50 to 200 dugongs are left in Palauan waters, compared with the 2,000 that used to live here).

A female dugong does not mate until she is at least 10 years old. On average she has a baby, called a calf, only once every 5 years. This very slow reproductive rate is the reason it will take the Palau population a long time to recover from being over-hunted.

However, in a few years, if this protection measure is successful, dugongs could become a big source of income for Palauans interested in taking tourists out for an evening Rock Island cruise and the opportunity to see dugongs alive in the wild.

A live dugong could one day be worth very much more than a dead dugong . . .

# Sponges, hard corals & marine rock



No sponges (any species of the phylum Porifera) may be exported.

No hard corals from the orders Scleractinia (stony corals), Hydrocorallina (fire corals), Coenothecalia (blue corals) and Stolonifera (organ pipe corals) may be exported.

No marine rock (any carbonated-based rock) may be exported.

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1205, 1206 and Regulations on the Collection of Marine Resources for Aquaria and Research*

Sponges contribute in important ways to the ecology of the reef. This living animal has a thin skin with thousands of invisible tiny holes. As water passes through these holes, the sponge filters out and consumes microscopic particles that might otherwise cloud the reef. Sponges also provide the perfect home for tiny fish, crabs and flatworms.

Hard corals are formed by tiny sea animals called polyps. Coral polyps extend their tentacles into surrounding waters and feed on microscopic plants and animals. Producing hard outer limestone skeletons over years and years, some of the hard corals form the very foundation of the reef. Coral reefs are essential to Palau for many reasons:

- They protect coastlines and coastal villages from large ocean waves made by storms and cyclones.
- They create a place where crabs, lobsters, clams and reef fish can live and provide food for nearby villages and towns.
- Coral skeletons over time will break down to rubble and sand which helps build up shorelines and beaches.
- Undamaged coral reefs attract tourists, thus providing a growing source of income to many local people.

Marine rock, or 'live' rock, is a coral debris on which new life (soft corals, algae, anemones, etc.) settles. It often provides a home for very small forms of marine life (crabs, worms, fish, etc.).

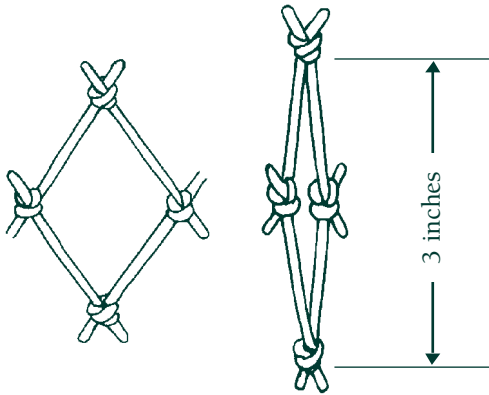
For all these reasons, sponges, hard corals and marine rock need protection. This is why a ban on export has been put in place.

# Other restrictions

## Gear restrictions

It is against the law to fish with a gillnet, surround net or kesokes net having a mesh size of less than three (3) inches measured diagonally.

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1204*



If we use nets with small meshes, we will kill many young fish before they have time to reproduce. These young fish are small so they don't have much value on the market anyway.

It is against the law to use any explosives, poisons or chemicals to catch marine life.

*Ref. 24 PNCA 1302*

When using explosives, poisons or chemicals to catch fish, poachers also destroy all the surrounding marine life, including smaller fishes, reef invertebrates and, most important, the corals themselves. It may take many years for this marine life to recover and create the right conditions for the big fish to come back. Furthermore, dead corals and the lack of big fish will make the place unsuitable for the development of a tourist diving industry.

Except as authorized by regulation or permit issued by the Minister, it is against the law to fish while using any form of underwater breathing apparatus other than snorkel.

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1204*

By putting a ban on scuba, hookah or any other underwater breathing equipment except a snorkel, we create a natural reserve area in deeper waters where marine life—especially the larger reef fish that can produce more eggs—is protected.

## Exporting marine resources

Prior to any export of marine resources out of the Republic of Palau, the person exporting shall complete and sign 4 copies of a Marine Export Declaration.

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1206, 1207  
and Regulations on the Reporting and  
Labelling of Exports of Marine Resources*

For each export out of the country, the person exporting shall provide all applicable information requested on the Marine Export Declaration form, including, but not limited to, the following:

For each species:

- the names (scientific, Palauan and/or English common names),
- the net weight (without ice or packing), and
- the country of origin.

For the export as a whole:

- the destination,
- the total gross weight, and
- the number of containers.

Exports may be inspected by authorized personnel of the Bureau of Revenue, Customs and Taxation or of the Ministry of Resources and Development.

Any person who exports any fish or other marine resources for commercial purposes shall submit to BMR a report on the catch of those marine resources, as well as of any other marine resources taken during the course of fishing for the marine resources being exported. This report shall include all information concerning the catch (including total numbers of specimens or pieces taken, places where they have been taken, number of fishermen involved, gear used, etc.).

## Marine research

All person engaging in any marine-resource-related research, including scientific, maricultural or medical research must have a valid Marine Research Permit issued by the Minister or his designee.




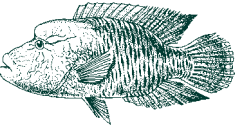

*Ref. 27 PNCA 1205, 1206  
and Regulations on the Collection of  
Marine Resources for Aquaria and Research*

Following the same principle applied for aquarium species, in order to monitor and encourage appropriate marine-related research, a Marine Research Permit system has been put in place. To engage in any marine-resource-related research, such as scientific, maricultural or medical research, one needs to apply for a Marine Research Permit and comply with any other applicable national or state law or regulation.

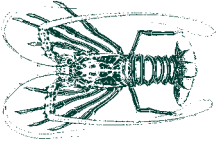


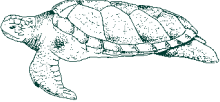

All permit owners must submit quarterly catch reports on their activities to BMR, including total numbers of specimens or pieces of each species taken, places where they have been taken, number of fishermen involved, etc.







Permit holders wishing to export specimens must comply with the 'Regulations on the Reporting and Labeling of Exports of Marine Resources'.

# Regulated marine species – summary

	Species	Minimum size	Harvesting season	Other restrictions
	<b>Groupers</b> Tiau; katuu'tiau; mokas; ksau'temekai; meteungerel'temekai	No	Closed April – July	
	<b>Rabbitfish</b> Meyas	No	Closed March – May	
	<b>Humphead parrotfish</b> Berdebed, kemedukl	25 inches	Open	No export
	<b>Napoleon wrasse</b> Ngimer; maml	25 inches	Open	No export
	<b>Aquarium species</b>	No	Open	Fishing and export restricted to people in possession of an Aquarium Collecting Permit



	Species	Minimum size	Harvesting season	Other restrictions
	<p><b>Rock lobsters</b> Cheraprukl; raiklius; bleyached; melech</p>	<p>6 inches total length of the carapace</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>No export; no taking of egg-bearing females whatever the length</p>
	<p><b>Mangrove crab</b> Emang</p>	<p>6 inches greatest distance across width of carapace</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>No export; no taking of egg-bearing females whatever the length</p>
	<p><b>Coconut crab</b> Ketat</p>	<p>4 inches greatest distance across width of carapace</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>No export; no taking of egg-bearing females whatever the length</p>
	<p><b>Green turtle</b> Melob</p>	<p>34 inches carapace length</p>	<p>Closed June – August and December – January</p>	<p>No taking of eggs; no taking of female while she is on shore</p>
	<p><b>Hawksbill turtle</b> Ngasech</p>	<p>27 inches carapace length</p>	<p>Closed June – August and December – January</p>	<p>No taking of eggs; no taking of female while she is on shore</p>

	Species	Minimum size	Harvesting season	Other restrictions
	<b>Giant clams</b> Oktang; ribkungel; kism; melibes; oruer; duadeb	No	Open	No export (except cultured specimens)
	<b>Trochus</b> Semum	3 inches basal diameter	Designated from year to year by OEK	State Governments can designate closed areas during open seasons
	<b>Blacklip pearl oyster</b> Chesiuch	4 inches diameter across the shell	Closed August – December	
	<b>Sea cucumbers</b> Bakelungal chedelkelek; bakelungal cherou; temetamel; badelchelid; molech; eremrum	No	Open	No export
	<b>Dugongs</b> Mesekiu	No	Closed	
	<b>Sponges, hard corals, &amp; marine rock</b>	No	Open	No export

# BMR contact

For more information about these regulations or any other topic related to marine resources of Palau, please contact the:

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