

## MMC Annual Meeting 2019

### Session Summary - Overview of the Hawaiian Islands

In this opening session of the meeting, we were given an orientation to Hawaiian Island oceanography and cetacean abundance to provide background on ecosystem trends that would lay the foundation for the rest of the meeting. It began with a broad overview of the key physical and biological characteristics of the North Pacific Subtropical Gyre and pelagic food web, which vary due to spatial and temporal physical and biological drivers. The first presentation, given by Jeff Polovina, also covered bottom-up and top-down ecosystem impacts with specific focus on the Hawaii-based longline fishery and its projected ecosystem and fisheries impacts from climate change. The second presentation, given by Erin Oleson (Lead Scientist, Cetacean Research Program, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center), updated the Commission on the current status and trends on cetacean abundance and distribution in the region and primary threats facing marine mammals, e.g. fishery interactions, marine debris, pollutants, etc. The Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center is responsible for assessing 121 different stocks of 25 different cetacean species known to occur in the Pacific Islands Region and this session provided the foundation for what was discussed in the proceeding sessions.