

har2-Samantha

From: Graydon Keala [lokoia.consulting@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2012 9:15 AM
To: WLOtestimony
Subject: Support HCR 87-Hawaiian Green Sea Turtles

April 12, 2012

To: House Water, Land and Ocean Resources Committee
From: Buddy Keala, Kalihiwai, Kauai
Support HCR 87 Hawaiian Green Sea Turtles

As a subsistence fisherman I have noticed an increase of Hawaiian Green Sea Turtles and also the sharks that follow them.

I support State management of the HGST based on good data. Those who say the HGST is still endangered and should not be de-listed should also produce their data.

har2-Samantha

From: Heidi Better [Heidibetter@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2012 10:38 AM
To: WLOtestimony
Subject: Oppose HR 87 and HR 61 - Save the Honu

Dear Mr.

Dear Chairman and Committee,

I am writing to oppose HCR 87 and HR 61, which urge the federal government to remove the honu from the threatened species list, and actively manage the species (meaning allow hunting and taking of the species).

- I do not think honu populations have recovered to the point of being removed from the threatened species list.
- There are too many major threats to the long-term survival of the green sea turtle globally and in Hawai'i, including the loss of nesting beaches resulting from sea level rise, invasive algae, disease, interactions with fishing gear, ingestion of and entanglement with marine debris, ocean acidification, and coral bleaching. These threats have not been eliminated nor mitigated in any significant way.

The green sea turtle of Hawaii is an iconic animal that is loved by people around the world. It is wrong to remove them from protections so that the fishing industry and hunters can benefit at the expense of an ancient and endangered species.

Please vote "no" on HR 87 and HR 61 and oppose the delisting of the Hawaiian honu until they have reached all recovery goals.

Heidi Better
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Honolulu, HI 96821

LATE TESTIMONY

Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Water, Land and Ocean Resources
Representative Jerry Chang, Chair
Representative Sharon Har, Vice Chair

Thursday April 12, 2012
Conference Room 325 11:30 am

RE: Opposed to HCR 87/HR61 – Opposed to Delisting the Endangered Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle

Aloha Chair Jerry Chang, Vice Chair Sharon Har and Members of the House
Committee on Water, Land and Ocean Resources:

Thank you for the time to speak to you about the Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle's plight to survive. I am here today to ask you to terminate this resolution because it is a deceptive initiative and will not benefit Hawaii's people. This deception is being steered by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (Wespac), a federal funded large scaled fishing industry organization, that spends taxpayer's money to distract Pacific ocean communities from real ocean ecosystems issues.

The real issue here is that currently long liners are taking too many green sea turtles as "by-catch" and breaking fishing rules and ESL laws. And I remind you that Wespac employees are restricted from lobbying at the State legislature on issues pertaining to federal laws. Wespac's illegal lobbying effort at the Hawaii legislature was the primary reason for the GAO investigation of Wespac in 2006-2007.

Wespac is not acting responsibly in its management of the long line industry's taking of Hawaii's Green Sea Turtle, a protected endangered marine species. Rather than do its job with care and diligence, Wespac has systematically agitated a handful of older people in Hawaii, my generation and older that still has a taste for turtle flesh. Wespac rallied this group at a Wespac fishers forum last summer and gave them "sound bites" to encourage them to think it is OK to admit to poaching and consuming turtles. This is an irresponsible use of public funds, and just plain sad exploitation of the aging, as well as being a cruel and illegal campaign to consume life going extinct.

Many people in the Pacific are aware of Wespac's reputation of using devious political methods to compensate for their negligence of duties, such as overfishing and going beyond the legal limits of by catch of endangered marine life. It would be extremely irresponsible for the State of Hawaii to join in this irrational game to exploit Hawaii's vulnerable ocean species.

It is difficult to delist any of our unique Hawaiian ocean species at this time because neither the state nor the federal government has yet to address the common denominator of Hawaiian species epidemic decline in ocean and terrestrial habitat due to human encroachment. For this reason we remain the extinction and endangered species capitol of the world and we will continue to have that dubious

distinction until we face reality and make a serious plan to resolve this complex problem. We have allowed more species to go extinct than anywhere else on earth and resolutions like this only add more injury to our already incredibly tarnished past of bad behavior.

In order to delist any species from the endangered species list, there needs to be evidence showing that threats to the species have been resolved. I have not seen the evidence showing that nesting and near shoreline haul out habitat have been secured for this endangered turtle species. We should all be concerned that the NWHI, French Frigate Shoals in particular, is going under water and that 90% of all Hawaiian green sea turtles depend on the north west islands for their nesting.

This fact alone is alarming and it is significantly impacting the Hawaiian green sea turtle's hope for recovery. However this is not the only alarming threat to Hawaii's green sea turtles. I have not seen scientific evidence resolving the many other threats to this species. Has the State of Hawaii produced the science to prove that marine debris, disease such as fibropapilloma tumors, the degradation of foraging habitat, alien species, water pollution, poaching, human consumption, climate change altering Main Hawaiian Islands habitat and the continued human encroachment on shorelines throughout Hawaii have been adequately addressed in the recovery of this species? I know we have not sufficiently addressed these threats.

Honu numbers have increased somewhat since they were listed in 1978, but populations are still small. Improving a species numbers is only one part of a species recovery. We are well aware that a few thousand turtles can decrease rapidly if other threats are not secured. There are too many other threats, such as by-catch by the long line industry and marine debris and disease and human encroachment on habitat are even more prevalent today than in 1978. As keiki o ka aina, we can't be so cavalier about negating the many threats to delist this endangered marine species.

The younger generations of Hawaii are extremely affectionate to our Honu. Most of the young people born during the 70's, 80's 90's, and into the new millennium embrace this species as their hope for a healthier and green future in Hawaii. The Honu has become the younger generations cultural icon, that is spiritually sacred. Many teachers in Hawaii use the Honu as a visual icon for our keiki to learn how to make our island home a healthy place to live in harmony with other life forms. It is more important for our keiki to learn these concepts and for our society to embrace this hope, than it is for my "old generation" to consume more flesh products. It is a contradiction in values to tell multiple new generations that it is urgent and important to save a species going extinct and then at a whim, flash back to the 70's and start killing these very human friendly animals.

We need to work harder to bring back more Hawaiian species we have nearly killed off. And we need to develop higher standards for securing species health. And we need to work harder in our cultural transformations in upgrading ocean ecosystems

management. The turtle has become the icon of the possibility of doing that, which is PONO, bringing life back to Hawaii. The degradation of our aina is a constant burden to those who love Hawaii and although human beings are violent creatures who have proven they will consume everything until there is nothing left, it is our goodness that we rely on to counter this burden.

Please do not make an uneducated guess of whether a species is ready to be delisted from its protected status. I don't think there was unbiased scientific evidence provided to you to understand the status of this species. Please do not get used by the long line fishing industry, that covets Hawaii's ocean resources, and could care less about the fragile balance of ecosystems and endangered species.

The Green Sea Turtle is a species that brings us a glimmer of hope and joy. Do not kill this little light of goodness. Kill this resolution instead.

Mahalo nui loa,

Keiko Bonk

PONO Project

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