

Cultural Observation 8/11/03.  
Capt. Paul Clark

The Limahuli Reef monitoring team arrived at Ke'e beach by the Limahuli stream mouth around 9am. We found a group of four "local" fishermen that had their truck and small boat on a trailer stuck in the sand. We proceeded to assist the group by helping them push their truck out of the sand. Once the truck and boat were free, the team was asked if we would like to help empty the nets of their catch. The reef crew pulled the nets from the boat and removed mostly "akule", *Selar crumenophthalmus*, from the nets. After removing the fish and placing them in buckets, the team was instructed in proper fin removal and gutting techniques. I photo documented the event with the Sony underwater camera.

While the team was cleaning the fish, I had an opportunity to explain what we were doing on the reef, and how we were learning and teaching reef monitoring techniques so that one day the fishing rules could be made and enforced by "locals." I asked the fisherman what they thought about marine protected areas, and areas that were closed off for 5 years so that the fish stocks could replenish and "seed" other areas. The fishermen all thought this was a good idea, and that they would like to be a part of enforcement and designing of these kinds of areas.

The fishermen were also aware of the attempt to make more protected areas on Oahu, and that it had been "shot down" by lawmakers and the public. They had heard this information through the local "fishing news." They emphasized that they did not like to have people come into their fishing areas and tell them "how it was going to be", but they were interested in forming groups to "talk story" about ways that we might protect the reef and our valuable resource of fish stocks.

The team and the fishermen took the fish into the ancient taro lo'i where they cooked the fish that they had helped clean, and feasted as they learned about the lives and backgrounds of the fisherman.

By working and talking with local fisherman like the ones that we met, we have a unique opportunity to design marine protected areas that work for everyone to replenish fish stocks and protect the reef for generations to come.