

There are very few, if any, pristine locations left in the ocean that are untouched by human activities, especially by the impacts of fishing. The most remote locations of the world, such as the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI), are not free from human interference. However, studying those locations may yield the best possible insight into the structure and natural functioning of unaltered ecosystems. Recent surveys conducted in the central Pacific off the coasts of the NWHI and Palmyra have provided comparisons to the ecosystems of the nearby inhabited Christmas and Fanning Islands and the heavily populated main Hawaiian Islands (MHI).^{11,12}