Permits in Fisheries Management

Caribbean Council Meeting – December 2023

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Background – *Caribbean Federal Permit Discussions*

- Permits Discussed from 2013-2016
  - Scoping Hearings in March 2015 (all Islands) and 2016 (Puerto Rico)
  - Action tabled in 2016

- Documents Developed:
  - 2014 White paper – general aspects of fishing permits and two permit opportunities: Commercial trap fishery St. Thomas and St. John and Commercial Snapper Unit 2 fishery Puerto Rico.
  - 2015 Scoping Document Caribbean Permits (*see Support Doc. 1 179th Mtg. Briefing Book*)
  - 2016 White Paper for Lobster USVI; Scoping Paper for Deep-Water Snappers EEZ Puerto Rico (*see Support Doc. 2 179th Mtg. BB)*

- Permits Discussion Re-opened during August 2022 meeting
  - See Permits Presentation 179th Mtg. BB)
  - Need for Council to narrow the scope for the development of permits in the U.S. Caribbean EEZ
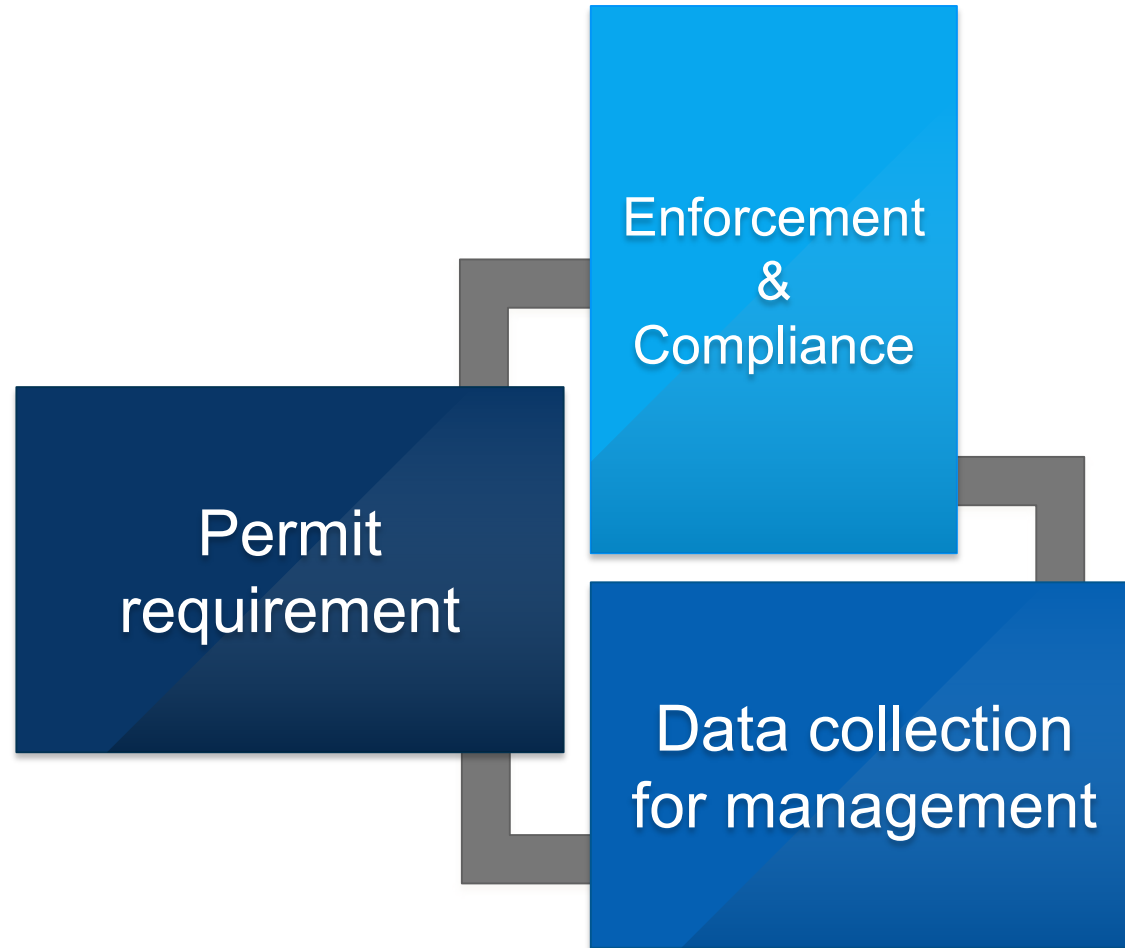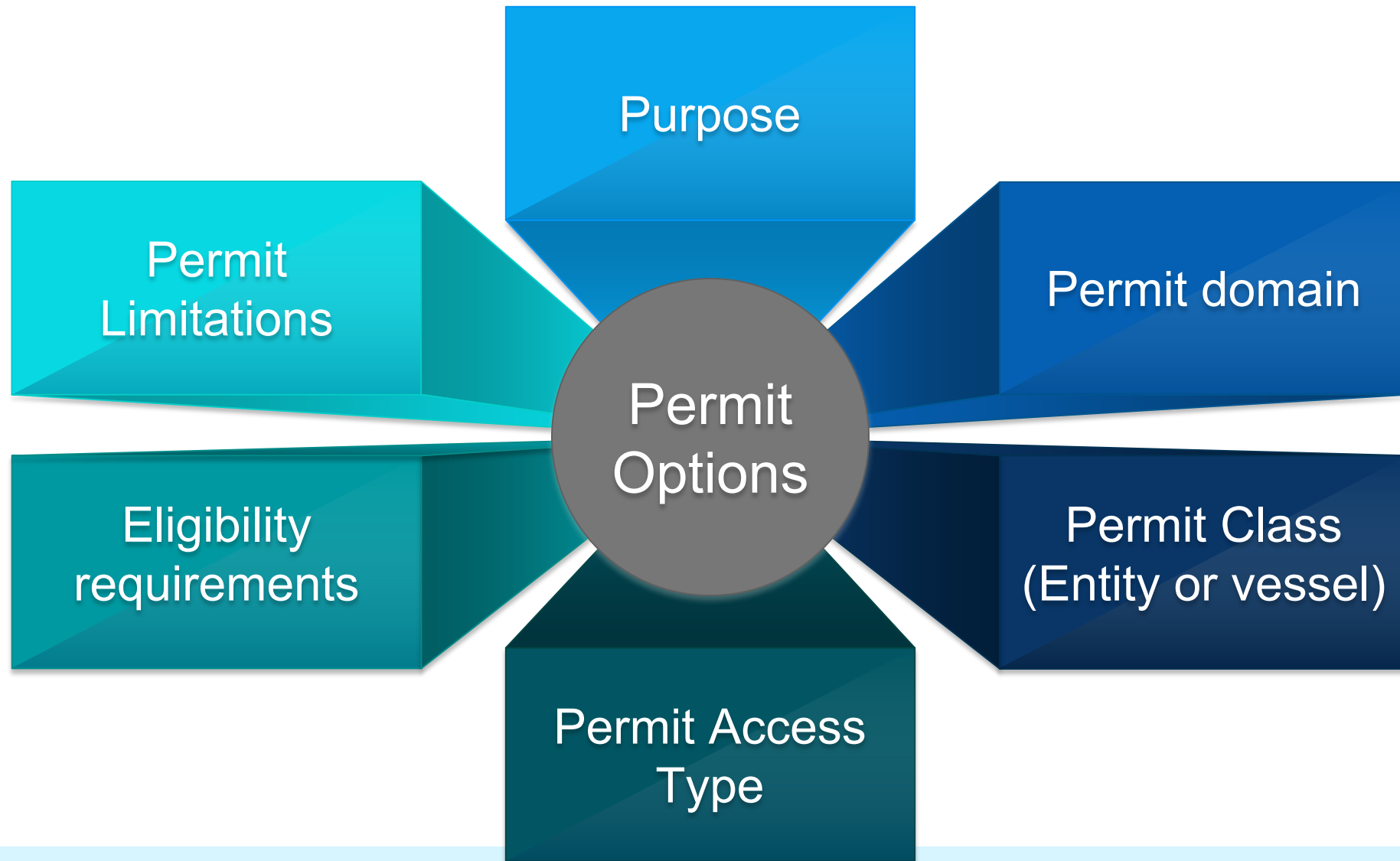
Permits

- Permits are one tool in fishery managers' toolbox for sustainability managing fisheries

- Permits can assist in:
  - Identifying participants and their different characteristics
  - Controlling access to the fishery
  - Creating a mechanism to enforce compliance with fishery regulations
  - Provide a mechanism to require data collection

Permit Connections

Permit requirement

Enforcement & Compliance

Data collection for management

- Permits provide a framework for data collection
- Data collection provides information for management by providing information on fishing activities
- Enforcement of permit and reporting compliance can assist controlling access to the fishery
  - Withhold permit renewals for non-reporting compliance
  - Permit sanctions for repeated fishery violations

Permit Configuration and Options

Purpose

Permit Limitations

Permit domain

Permit Options

Eligibility requirements

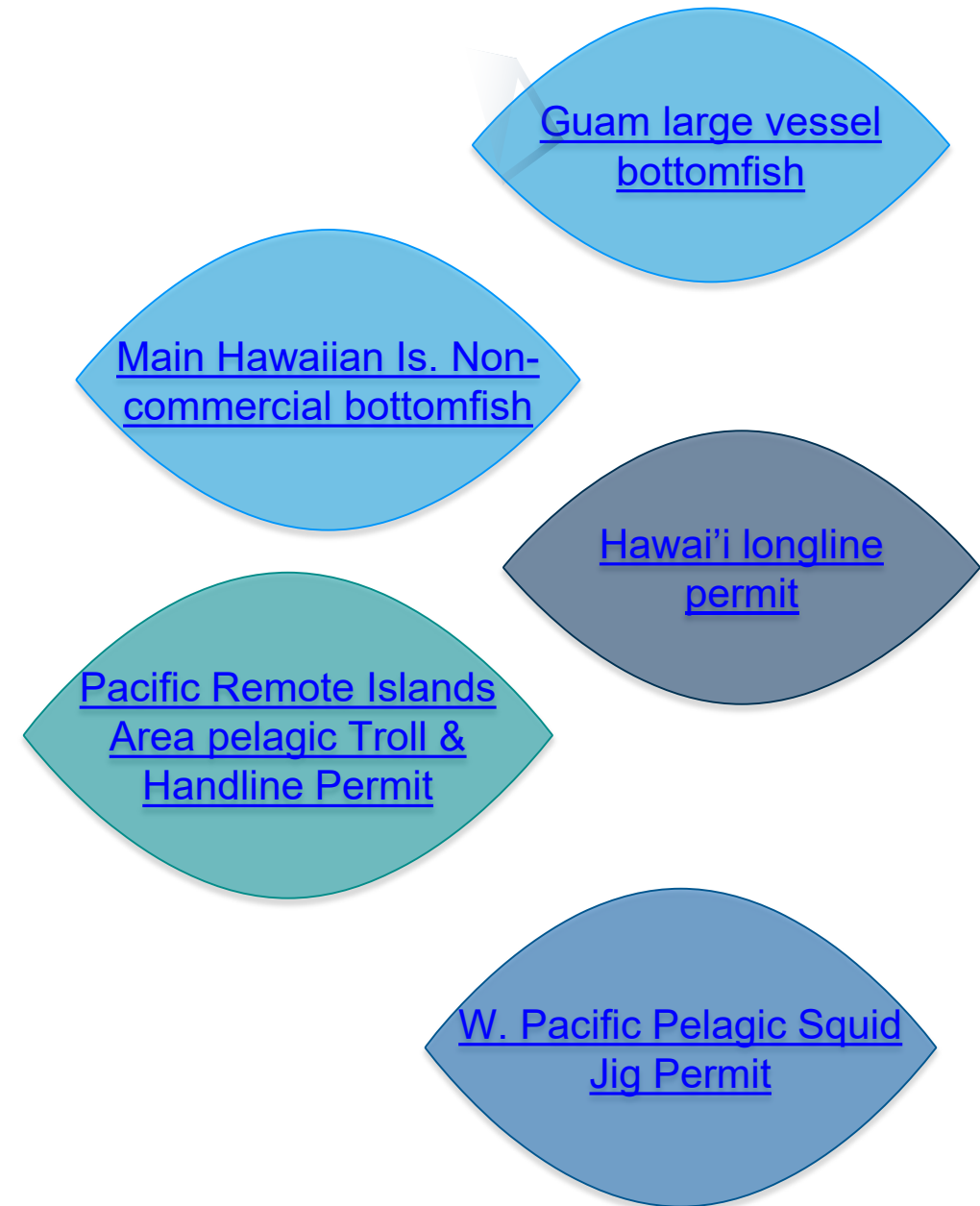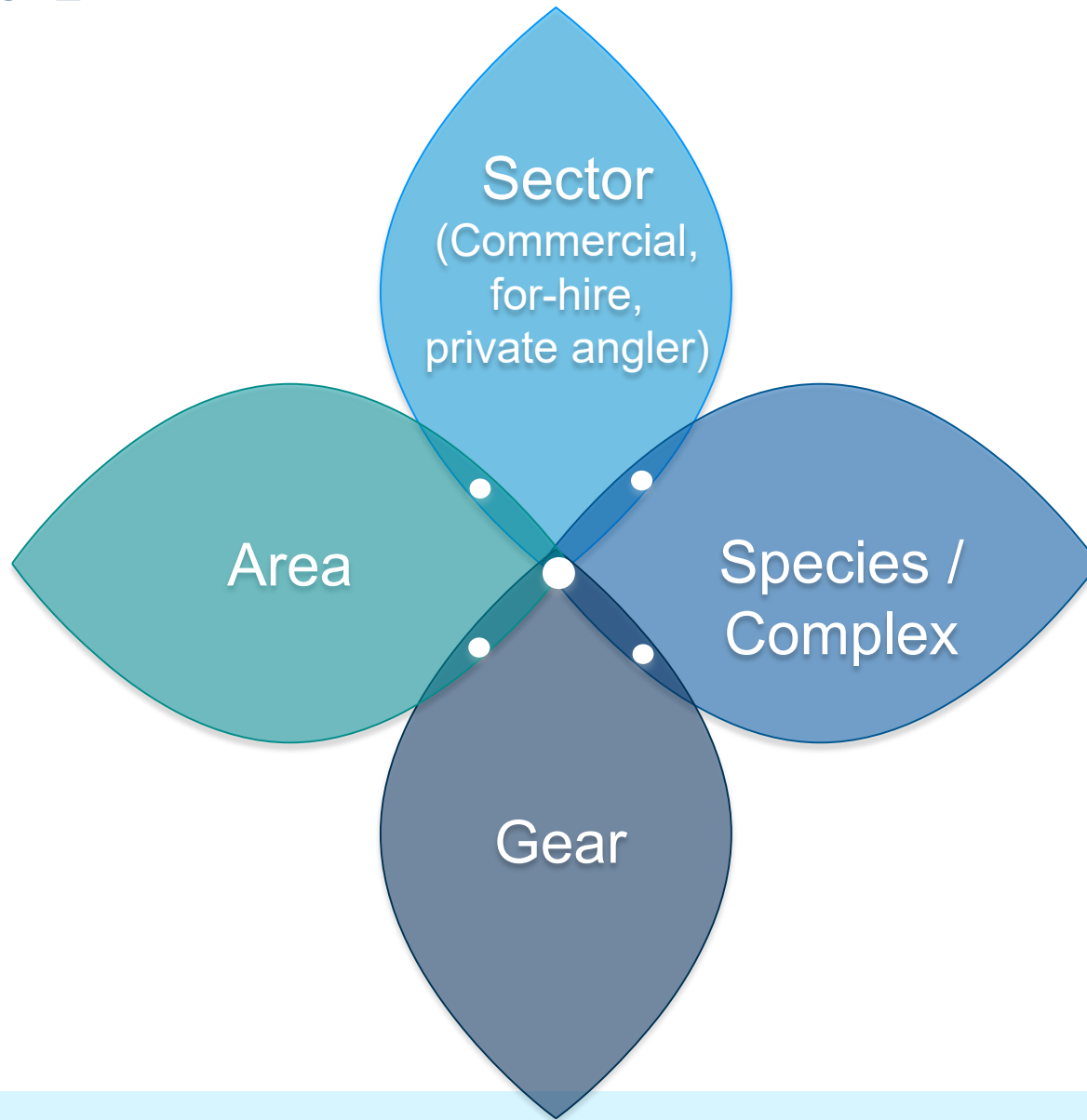Permit Class (Entity or vessel)

Permit Access Type

Example Permit Purposes

- Protect resources and habitats by *controlling effort*
  - Permits may be specific to a sector, fishery, area, season, or gear

- *Quantify* vessels able to harvest
  - Permits set the maximum potential of vessels harvesting
  - Not all permitted vessel will fish – data collection tells you actual number of vessels harvesting

- Provide a *framework* for data collection (reporting requirements)

- Assist in *enforcement* of fishing regulations

- *Characterize* fishing fleet
  - Vessel information
  - Homeport location
  - Operator information (captain or permit holder)

Purpose Considerations

- What is the problem that needs to be addressed using permits?
- Is the problem the same across fisheries?
  - Not all fisheries will require the same solution

Types of Permit Domains

Sector
(Commercial, for-hire, private angler)

Area

Species / Complex

Gear

[Guam large vessel bottomfish](#)

[Main Hawaiian Is. Non-commercial bottomfish](#)

[Hawai'i longline permit](#)

[Pacific Remote Islands Area pelagic Troll & Handline Permit](#)

[W. Pacific Pelagic Squid Jig Permit](#)

Permit Class

Is the permit assigned to an entity (person or business), to a vessel, or combination?

Entity Only Permit

- Restricted to an individual person or business
- Individual/business is the responsible party for regulatory violations
- Permit travels with entity – does not require ownership of a vessel
- Fishing history attached to the entity regardless of which vessels they operated
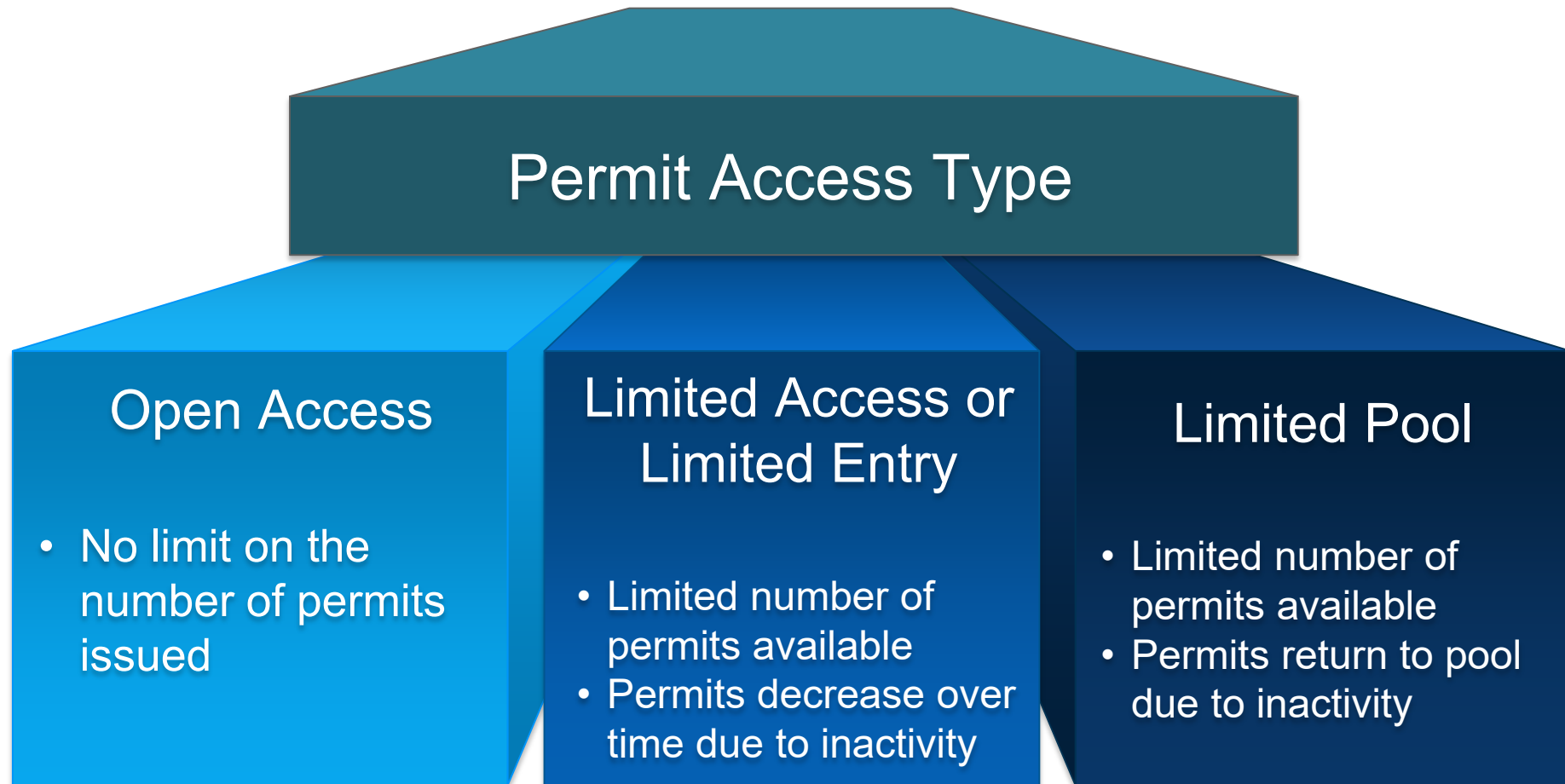- Potential to create 'operator' permits for vessel helpers

Vessel Only Permit

- Restricted to the vessel
- Vessel owner is the responsible party for any regulatory violations
- Fishing history attached to the vessel regardless of who fished on the vessel

Entity and Vessel Person

- Current SERO process
- Applies to a vessel and a permit holder in a given time period
- Allows for vessels to be leased from the vessel owner to the permit holder
- Permit holder is the responsible party for regulatory violations
- Fishing history is for the permit holder on that vessel

Permit Access

Permit Access Type

Open Access

- No limit on the number of permits issued

Limited Access or Limited Entry

- Limited number of permits available
- Permits decrease over time due to inactivity

Limited Pool

- Limited number of permits available
- Permits return to pool due to inactivity

Permit Access Type

Open Access

- No limit on permits
- No 'renewals', simply apply for a new permit each year.
- Not helpful for enforcement of compliance or tracking of landings history.

Limited Access

- Limited number of permits. All permits are numbered.
- Permits that are not renewed or transferred are terminated (removed from fishery forever).
- Once all permits are issued, a replacement fisherman must obtain a permit from someone exiting the fishery.

Limited Access Pool

- Limited number of permits. All permits are numbered.
- Permits that are not renewed or transferred are returned to the pool.
- Once all permits are issued, a replacement fisherman must obtain from someone exiting the fishery or from the pool.

Selection of permit access type should consider overcapacity, access (cost), and compliance applicability.

Limited Access & Limited Pool Considerations

- Consider present and expected fishery participation
  - Limited access and limited pool address overcapacity issues
  - Limited access/pool may more directly affect effort and fishing pressure than using quota management or trip limits

- Historical fishing and dependence on the fishery
  - Is there a baseline of current effort?
  - Will permits shift effort to other fisheries?

- Economic and social impact
  - Will limited access or pool provide stability within the fishery?
  - What is the economic impact for future replacement fishermen that need to obtain a permit from an exiting participant?
  - Will this have an impact on the communities where fishing occurs?

Eligibility for a Permit

- Requirements to process and fulfill a permit
  - Contact information for applicant (e.g., address, phone)
  - Economic questions such as ownership of businesses, small business questions
- How do state licenses work with the permit?
  - Guarantee you a federal permit?
  - State permit substitutes for the federal permit – note would need similar reporting requirements and shared data streams
- Renewal requirements?
  - Up to date submission of logbooks – if reporting is required
  - Proof of minimum activity within the fishery – intent to ensure permits are being used to harvest not just being held
  - Income requirements – used to ensure majority of income is from fishers thereby keeping permits with active fishermen

Permit Limitations

Other limitations?

Permit transferability rules

Education requirements

Permit stacking

Permits for different trip limits

What do Permits NOT do?

- Without reporting requirements they do assist in gaining insights to catch and effort.

- Do not solve at-sea enforcement issues
  - At-sea enforcement is best done through observers or monitoring (vessel monitoring systems)

What requirements might aid enforcement and compliance?

Vessel Monitoring System

Carry appropriate permits on board the vessel

Logbook reporting within 72 hours of return to port

Observer program (notify 72 hours prior to departure)

Hawai'i Longline example
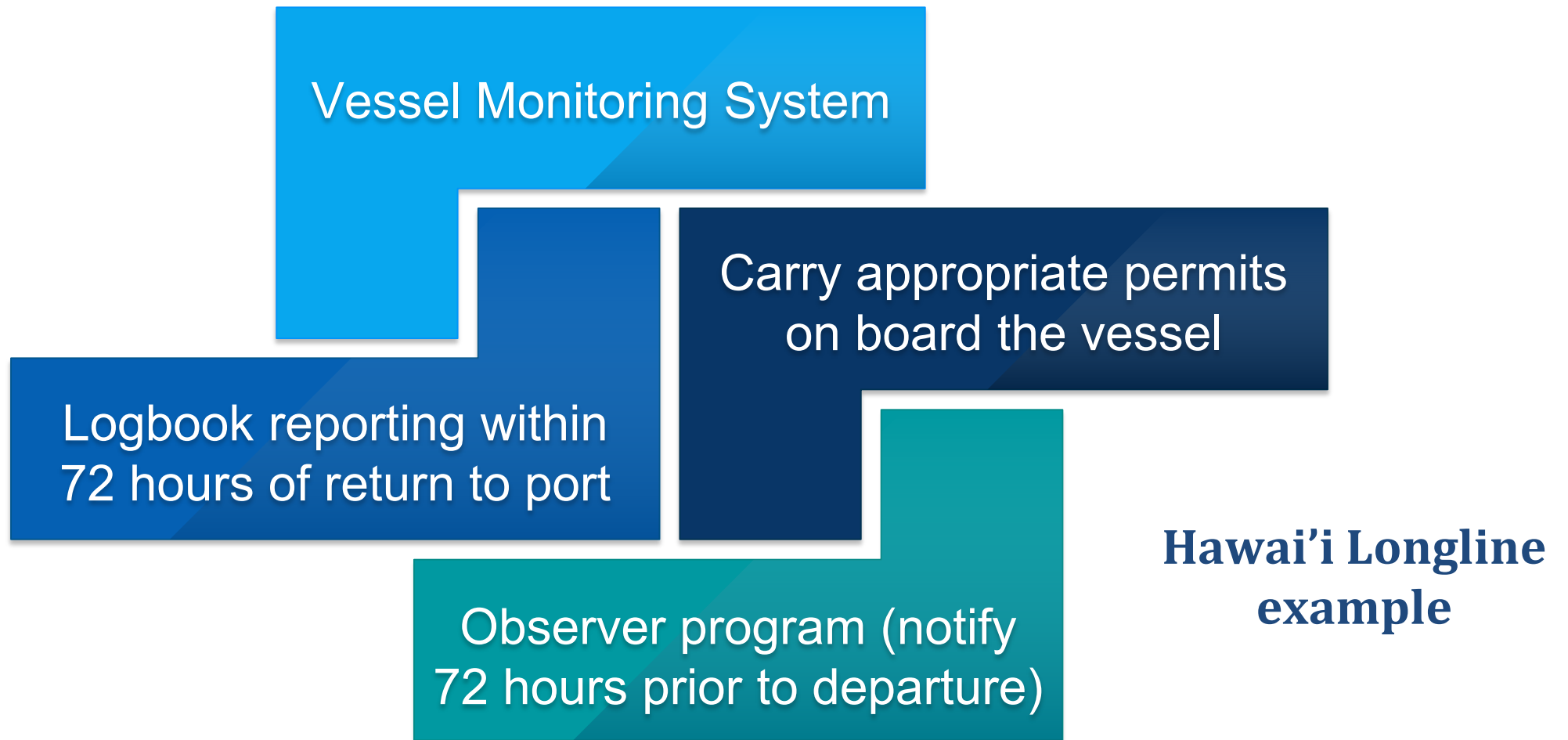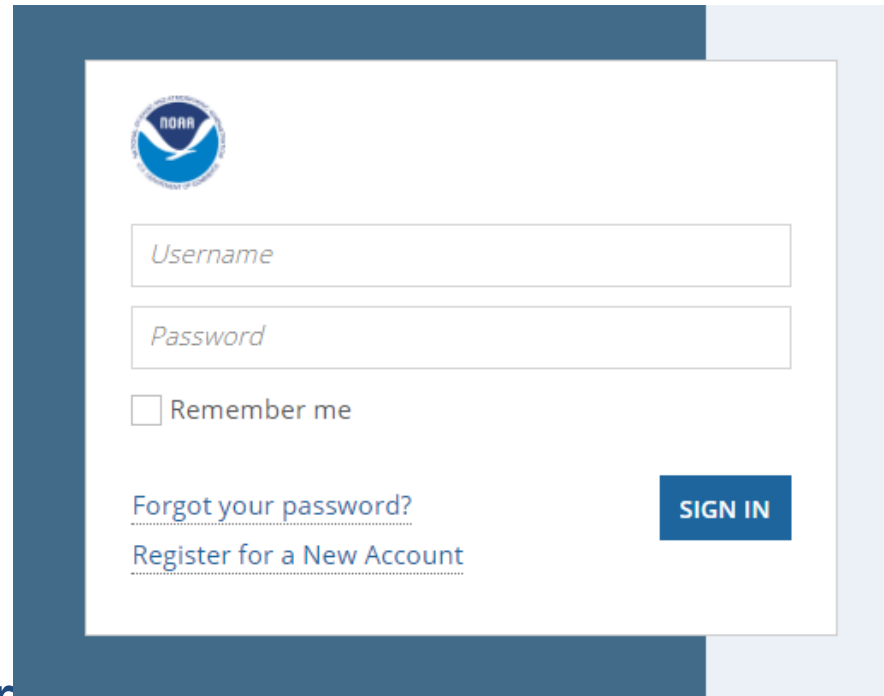
SERO Permit System Demo

Southeast Region Online Permit System
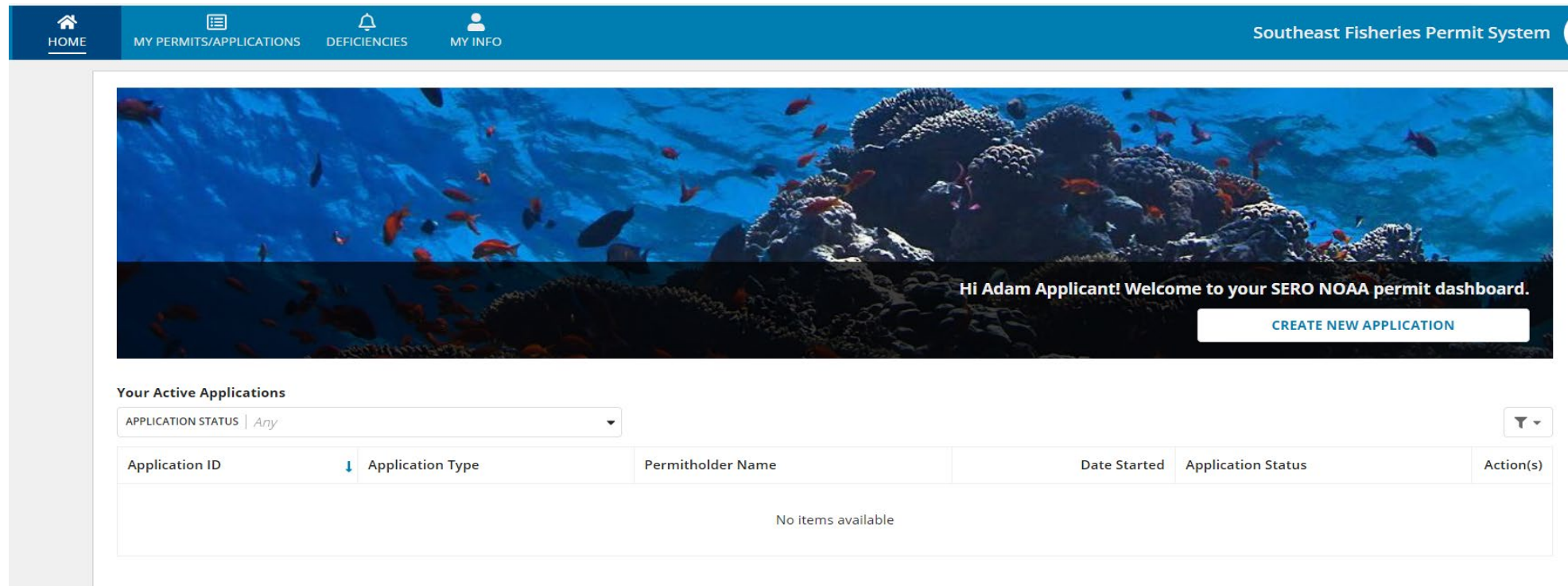
- Application system has moved to an electronic format.

- Application link is available on multiple pages for the Southeast Region.

- Any user can register for an account

What can you do in the system?

- Renew, transfer, or request new permits, resolve deficiencies on a submitted application, or view previous applications.

Application Process

- Options under the "*Create New Application*" button.

IMPORTANT: If you are attempting to renew your permits, your renewal application will be generated 60 days prior to your permits expiring. This renewal application will appear on your home page. If you do not see your renewal application on your home page and your permits expire in less than 60 days, please call the Permit Office at (877) 376-4877 option 8 M-F from 9 am - 12 pm and 1 pm - 4 pm, excluding federal holidays.

Vessel (Transfer Permits)	Vessel (New Permits)	Dealer
Apply to transfer Limited Access permits. NOTE: You can also add new Open Access permits during the transfer process	Apply for new Open Access permits.	Apply for new Dealer permits
Duplicate	**Operator Card**	**Wreckfish**
Apply for Duplicate permit(s) for a single Vessel	Apply for a new Operator Card	Apply for new Wreckfish permit

CANCEL

Application Process

- To transfer or request new permits, you would start by entering the vessel number you want to put the permits on.

Preliminary Questions

Please get started by entering the official number as it appears on the U.S. Coast Guard Documentation of the vessel you are looking to transfer permits to or request new permits on. In accordance with **USCG Regulations**, you may only use a State Registration number if your vessel is less than 5 net tons (volume). To obtain fishery or coastwise permits, vessels over 5 net tons (volume) must be USCG Documented. If you are unsure whether or not your vessel is over 5 net tons (volume), you can visit the **USCG PSIX Search Page** to look up your vessel information.

Enter the information for the new vessel you are attempting to transfer or request new permit(s) on.

Official Number From USCG Certificate Of Documentation *

[   ] [🔍 SEARCH VESSEL]

☐ Check here if this vessel is state registered

[CANCEL]   [💾 SAVE & START APPLICATION]

Application Process

- The system steps you through the required information needed to issue a permit.

Application Process

- Once the application is submitted and reviewed for accuracy if the permit can be issued, it will be "Digitally Issued" and available to the permit holder in their online account to download and use immediately.

Active Permits

Permit	Status	Exp Date	Tracking No. or Download
HMS COMMERICAL CARIBBEAN SMALL BOAT (CCSB)	DIGITALLY ISSUED	5/31/2025	View Permit for Download

Southeast Region Online System

- Since July 2022, the Southeast Region Permit Office has been processing applications in near-real time. This is compared to an average wait time for an application to get reviewed from 2019 to 2022 of almost 30 days.

Questions to consider

Purpose and Need

- How will one or more permits serve to assist in managing fishing effort in the Caribbean?
  - Permit domain (sector, gear, area, species/complex, or combination of these)

- Which permit configurations work best with your purpose and need?
  - Permit class (entity, vessel, entity/vessel combo)
  - Permit access (open, limited, pool)

- What additional requirements might work with a permit?
  - Reporting requirements?
  - Observers?

Compliance questions

- How do you want to identify vessels or entities with permits (at sea or at the dock)?
  - Decal marking on the vessel (SERO requires this for Gulf for-hire vessels)
  - Permit on-board (paper or electronic equivalent)
  - Combination of these? Other alternatives?

- What requirements will there be to renew a permit?
  - Reporting requirements?
  - Minimum harvest requirements?
  - Updated contact information?
  - Required training for managed or protected species?

Additional Information

Permit Limitations

Other limitations?

Permit transferability rules

Education requirements

Permit stacking
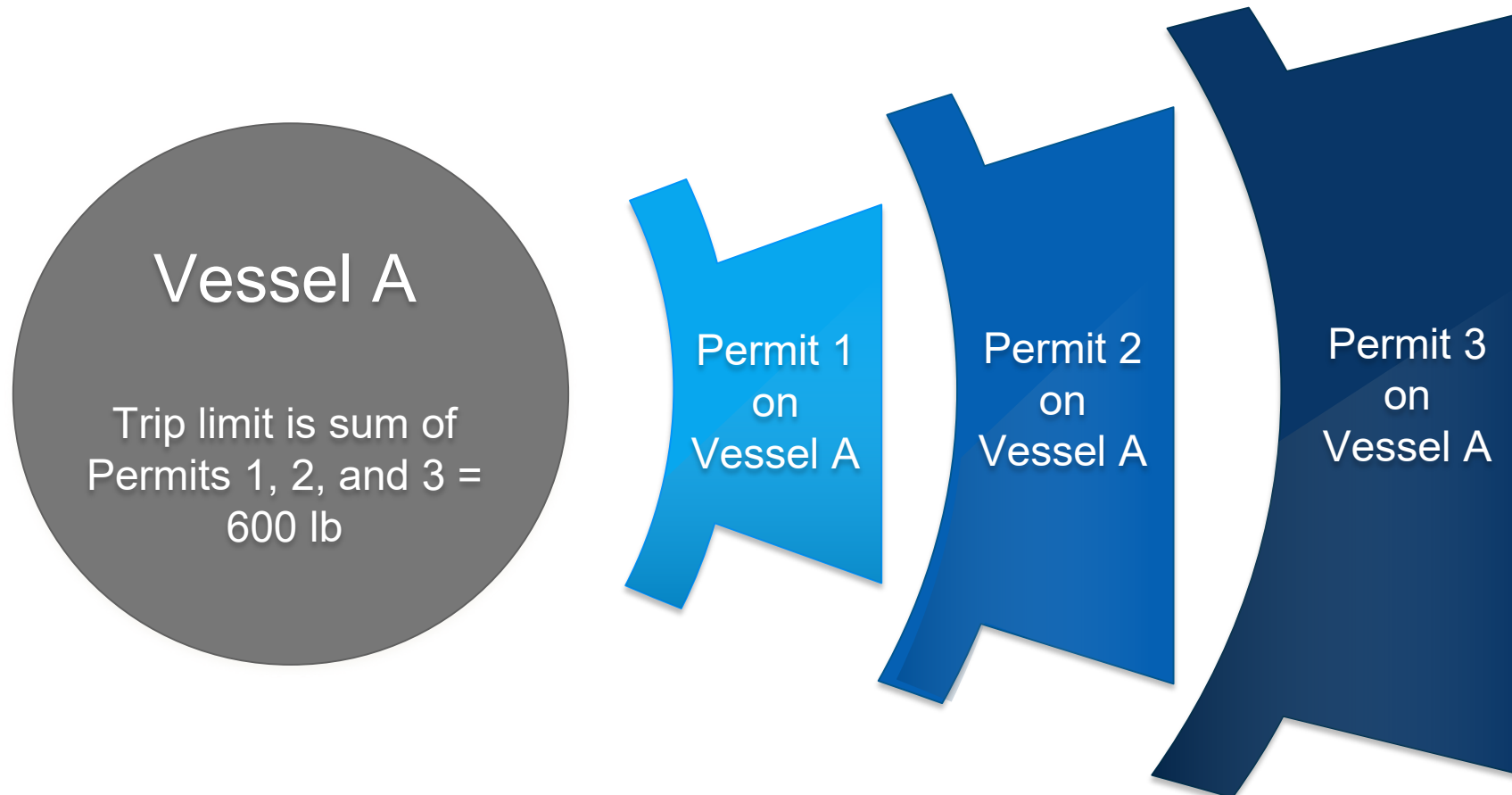
Permits for different trip limits

Permit Trip Limits Example

Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper permits where divided into two permits based on targeted fishing (Class 1) versus incidental catch (Class 2). These were limited access permits.

Class 1
2,000 lb limit
98 permits

Class 2
200 lb limit
456 permits

Permit Stacking Example

If a permit had a 200 lb trip limit, someone could 'stack' permits to fish more per trip.

Vessel A

Trip limit is sum of Permits 1, 2, and 3 = 600 lb

Permit 1 on Vessel A

Permit 2 on Vessel A

Permit 3 on Vessel A

Education: Hawai'i example

Hawai'i Longline Limited Entry Permit

Protected Species Workshop certificate

Marine Mammal Authorization program certificate