

## MAIN PROGRESS IN THE FISHING SECTOR

### ***Sport fishing***

1. For the first time a formal approach is made between ARAP and the sport fishing subsector. In 2016, a group of work was organized to discuss the existing problems, and the subsector was incorporated in the journeys of the Dialogue for a Sustainable Fishing.
2. The Action Plan for a Sustainable Fishing, take into account the sport fishing subsector.
3. With the support of Conservation International, the Characterization of Sport Fishing in Panama was carried out, providing relevant information for the management of the activity.
4. The proposal of the new fishing law approved last month by the Council of Ministers and the President, incorporate sport fishing, which actually is not regulated.
5. Advances have been made in matters of specific interest for the subsector, such as the roosterfish regulation, banning of harpoons in the reserved area of Bahía Piñas, among others.
6. A Cooperation Agreement between ARAP and the Tourism Authority of Panama (ATP) was signed to promote sport fishing tourism, including the small scale activity developed by artisanal fishing boats. Progress are made in a working plan with contributions from committed stakeholders.

### ***Measures to improve aquatic resources populations***

#### *Protected areas:*

7. ARAP is working on a map that incorporates all georeferenced areas with specific restrictions for fishing, marine protected areas, coastal marine management zones and special marine protection zones in jurisdictional waters of the country, in order to release the information among fishing community.
8. Likewise, ARAP plans to incorporate co-management areas with fishing communities: Pixvae (Veraguas), Otoque and Taboga.

#### ***General prohibitions:***

9. Use of dynamite.
10. Use of poisonous substances.
11. Fishing with systems that inhibits navigation or use of docks and ports.
12. Fishing with sharp objects and with diving tanks.
13. Anglers and spearfishing catches cannot be sold.

#### ***Restrictions for authorized fishing gear in Panama:***

14. Gill nets (trasmallos): snappers fishing is banned. Mesh opening is regulated as well as total extension of the net.
15. Purse seine: not authorized for tuna. Only for anchovies, herring, orquetas and cojinua.
16. Longline: the amount and size of hooks is regulated.
17. Trawl fishing: for shrimp and the use of TED (Turtle Excluder Device) is required to protect them.

#### ***Close Seasons:***

18. Sea cucumber: permanent ban. "Extraction, possession and commercialization are banned".
19. Conch (*Strombus* spp.): Its capture, possession and commercialization is banned. It has two consecutive periods of 5 years. The second period extends for 5 years until 2020.

20. Shrimp: the close season periods include the whole country. Two periods of restriction are established. A first period from February 1 to April 11 (70 days) and the second period from September 1 to October 11 (41 days).
21. Caribbean lobster: March 1 to June 30.
22. Pacific Lobster (within the ZEMM of the Las Perlas Archipelago).
23. Dorado: August 15 to October 15 (only for longline fishing).

***Protection of other species:***

***Sharks***

24. Since 2006, Panama established a ban on the following fishing practices: shark finning; keeping on board, transport or land shark fins that are not partially naturally adhered.

This rule also consider the non-increase of fishing effort, which means that new permits or licenses for shark fishing cannot be issued.

25. In May 2018, the “National Action Plan for the Conservation and Management of Sharks and Rays Fisheries in Panama, 2017” is adopted.

***Billfish:***

26. Reserved to sport fishing. Commercial fishing, capture, processing and exploitation are prohibited.

***Parrot fish:***

27. Catch and export of fish from coral areas is prohibited.

***Other actions:***

***Ghost gear:***

28. ARAP developed the Ghost Gear Project with the objective of extract, collect and clean marine garbage, specifically ghost gear, and recover areas of fishing interest, through a participatory process.

ARAP is working in partnership with the Panamanian Association of Underwater Fishermen (APPES).

29. Panama was the first country in Latin America to subscribe to the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI) in June 2017, and is a leading country in Latin America.

***Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU) Controls.***

30. Panama, through a national law, ratified the MERP Agreement (Port State Measures), since 2016.
31. The country has been included in the World Register of Vessels and is one of the member countries that with the support of FAO, is part of the Network for Exchange of Experiences and Information against Illegal Fishing in Latin America and the Caribbean, which already has 11 members and is coordinated by Peru.
32. Through the project "Support for the implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures and related instruments to combat IUU fishing", supported by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Panama is reviewing and adjusting its policies, legislations, institutional

arrangements and monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) systems and operations, to deal with IUU fishing.

### ***Control and Surveillance***

33. The use of the Satellite Monitoring System is implemented in order to monitor the national and international fishing fleet.
34. Continuous training is offered to the body of inspectors and work is carried out in collaboration with SENAN.
35. However, due to the lack of an adequate budget, which limits the availability of better trained personnel and equipment, ARAP cannot perform a more efficient action of surveillance and law enforcement.

Therefore it is an area that needs to be reinforced strategically, as it is more a police task.

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