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**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION
PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS**

WCPFC-SC17-AR/CCM-36

PANAMA

REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WESTERN & CENTRAL PACIFIC
FISHERIES COMMISSION (WCPFC)**

2020

PART I

INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

Date of Submission: July, 2021

Information on Fisheries, Research and Statistics

Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission.	Our participation as CNM status 2020 was with support fishing vessels activities. No scientific data to report
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1. Abstract/Summary

The Republic of Panama is located in Central America, an isthmus with coasts in the Caribbean and the Pacific. It has some 1,581 islands and islets, and its territorial waters extend up to 200 nautical miles wide, over which the Republic of Panama has sovereignty and sovereign rights, as well as over the seabed. A large upwelling in the Gulf of Panama influences this area. Panama has done a major management control of the fishing vessels since 1997, when it established the obligation to obtain a fishing license for fishing vessels on the high seas, for all fishing vessels and support fishing vessels.

Since 2008, the Republic of Panama has established a vessel monitoring system (VMS) through Executive Decree No. 17 of June 30, 2008 and it is mandatory to install it on board vessels to obtain an international fishing license or support.

In the same year, the Republic of Panama approved the National Maritime Strategy and through Executive Decree No. 98-A of November 17, 2009, the National Action Plan to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing was approved.

Regarding Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, Panama is a contracting party of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), approved by Law No. 24 of 1954, and also ratified the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP), approved by Law No. 75 of 1998. Likewise, Panama is contracting party of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), approved by Law No. 74 of 1998 and has adopted the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) by Law No. 1 of 2013.

In addition, from the perspective of cooperating and complying with RFMO fisheries management measures, Panama is a cooperating non-contracting party (CNCP) to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Commission (SPRFMO), the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) and is in the process of applying to the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) for the period 2022.

Panama has taken significant steps within the Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP) to ensure compliance with all WCPFC obligations and deadlines. This has included large-scale changes to the internal structure of the ARAP, with staff dedicated to relevant areas of work (e.g., vessel registration, VMS, monitoring and control, transshipment reporting, reporting to the WCPFC, vessel consultation, among others). These measures have enabled Panama to strengthen its internal processes to a level sufficient to meet its WCPFC obligations.

Panama established a new Technical Compliance Committee within ARAP's Office of Technical Cooperation and International Fisheries Affairs, which deals specifically with international cooperation and obligations. This team is responsible for reporting and participation in WCPFC compliance matters and provides continuity in staffing (expertise and points of contact) to assist in effective and timely reporting.

Regarding the financial contribution, Panama recognizes the importance of providing its financial contributions to the WCPFC's Commission. Noting this, Panama has provide its financial contribution for the 2021 period and within the period established by the Commission, thus improving our commitment in accordance with previous years.

It is of critical importance that Panama continues to participate at its fullest extent in the different meetings and processes of the Convention. Panama takes its responsibilities seriously and therefore has committed to taking all required action (reporting, engagement, communication and attendance) in WCPFC processes. This commitment will shape our present and future endeavors and participation. We acknowledge our previous shortcomings, and have taken decisive internal actions and measures to ensure Panama's compliance with all of its WCPFC obligations.

In relation to the commitment to fight against illegal, undeclared, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, Panama approved by Law No. 43 of September 14, 2016, the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA) of FAO¹.

Panama, through the recently approved fishing Law No. 204 of March 18, 2021, regulate fishing activities, aquaculture, related activities and activities related to fishing. This new law updates the legislation dating from 1959, promotes sustainable fishing methods, and introduces measures to ensure the sustainability of fishing activity and the preservation of marine resources for new generations.

¹ Point of contact and List of Port under PSMA are already registered in FAO

ANNUAL FISHERIES INFORMATION

2. Tabular Annual Fisheries Information

Our participatory right during 2020 in the WCPO are limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels; vessels that supply food, water and spare parts to carrier vessels that engage in transshipment activities.

3. Background

The Republic of Panama is Cooperating Non-Contracting Party of WCPFC, the number of vessels operating in this convention area are 163 Support Fishing Vessels. All of our vessels are licensed to operate in the WCPFC in compliance to the commission's recommendations and requirements with responsibilities to exercise effective control of the vessels, taking measures to ensure that vessels, comply with the provisions of the Convention².

4. Flag State Reporting

Number of active fishing vessels in WCPFC Area as support fishing vessels.

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No. of Active Vessels As Support Fishing Vessels	96	90	124	84	167	163 ³

5. Socio-economic factors

The Republic of Panama has achieved an average growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 7.9% in the period 2010-2015, basically focused on services. This approach is also reflected in the budgetary allocations of government entities in charge of the activities that make up the primary sector. These budgets generally cover the operation, but do not allow more activity in research, investment and development of human capital.

The benefits obtained to flag in Panama are in the country and generates many jobs also with the flag registry, crews of the ships as well as the company profits that are in the country.

Panama is an important center of international fish trade, including imports and re-exports of fish products, such as tuna. The country also exports significant quantities of shrimp, to the United States and the EU. Panama is a net exporting country and the value of exports is 2.5 times greater than the value of imports. The country imports low-priced products, such as canned tuna and canned sardines, which are

² Under Executive Decree No. 162 of 2013

³ About 141 cargo reefer vessels and another 22 bunker ships.

important products for the country's food security⁴.

6. Disposal of Catch

We don't have catch fishing vessels in WCPFC Convention area.

7. Onshore Developments

Panama is not a Coastal State, nor does it have facilities or processing plant or support facilities in WCPFC Convention area.

8. Future Prospect of the Fishery

We are in the position to keep our participatory rights in the future with support fishing vessels and purse seine with no participatory rights in high seas. All fishing capacity will be in accordance with CMM 2009-11 and CMM 2017-01 or its replacement measure.

9. Status of the Tuna Fishery data collection systems

Long sheet data collection and verification – Transport and support vessels are required to submit data on their area operations based on format for such reporting which include a detailed fishing vessels transshipment, and submitted for verification, showing information regarding the transshipment activities as date, location, species and quantity.

10. Research Activities Covering Target and non-Target species

Fisheries Information System: Panama reports statistics for all activities in the areas of Ports, Seafarers and discharge data of fishery products in domestic and international ports of the Republic of Panama.

The Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP) is responsible for verifying the information of catch, landing, export and import of fishery products, biometric information of the target species, which are important to support the country's fisheries development.

No research activities were covering on target and non-target species in WCPFC Convention Area.

⁴ FAO Fishery Country Profile of the Republic of Panama

CMM 2009-06 [Transshipment], Para 11 (ANNEX II)

Annex II (a): Total quantities, by weight, of highly migratory fish stocks that were transshipped by carrier vessels:

a) offloaded and received;	b) transshipped in port, transshipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and transshipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction	c) transshipped inside the Convention Area and transshipped outside the Convention Area;	d) caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area;	e) Species	f) Product Form	g) Fishing gear
offloaded	21,120	8,983,352		ALB		
	3,950,117	645,630		BET		
	27,046,564	458,784		YFT		
	10,217	97,789		SWO		
	107,552,151	46,186		SKJ		
	2,612	60,515		MLS		
	166,591	2,206,168		OTH		
received	1,313,322	11,397,273		ALB		
	10,802,765	6,318,248		BET		
	80,120,000	3,763,647		YFT		
	25,014,105	555,382		SWO		
	398,389,151	115,761		SKJ		
	17,045	141,138		MLS		
	10,877	680,031		BUM		
	1,260,676	3,161,114		OTH		

Annex II (b): Number of transshipment involving highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure by carrier vessels ... broken down by

a) offloaded and received	b) transshipped in port, transshipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and transshipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction	c) transshipped inside the Convention Area and transshipped outside the Convention Area	d) caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area	e) fishing gear
offloaded	51	11		
received	733	411		

CMM 2019-03 [North Pacific Albacore], Para 3

No catches of albacore north of the equator and all fishing effort north of the equator in fisheries directed at albacore.

CMM 2010-07 [Sharks], Para 4

N/A

CMM 2011-03 [Impact of PS fishing on cetaceans], Para 5

N/A

CMM 2011-04 [Oceanic whitetip sharks], Para 3

N/A

CMM 2012-04 [Whale sharks], Para 06

N/A

CMM 2013-08 [Silky sharks], Para 3

N/A

Observer coverage (WCPFC 11 decision – para 484(b))

N/A

CMM 2015-02 [South Pacific Albacore] Para 4

N/A

CMM 2018-03: Seabirds

N/A