



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
SIXTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

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

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**WCPFC-SC16-AR/CNM-34**

**PANAMA**

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

**2019**

**PART I**

**INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS**

**REPUBLIC OF PANAMA**

## 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 2019 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, between 7°12'07" and 9°38'46" North latitude, 77°09'24" and 83°03'07" West longitude, with coasts on the Caribbean and the Pacific. It has about 1,581 islands and islets, and the territorial waters extend to about 200 nautical miles wide, over which the Republic of Panama has sovereignty and sovereign rights, as in 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.

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 be installed in order to obtain an international fishing or support fishing license.

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

In the context of 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. Also, Panama is contracting party of the International Commission for the Conservation of the Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT), approved by Law No. 74 of 1998.

In the same way to cooperate and comply with the RFMO's measures, Panama is a cooperating non contracting party (CNCP) of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), The South Pacific Regional Fisheries Commission (SPRFMO), The North Pacific Fisheries Commission and North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission.

Panama has taken significant measures within its Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP) – the responsible national authority for international fisheries. ARAP has taken specific actions to ensure that it can, and does, comply with all WCPFC obligations and deadlines. This has included wholesale changes to

ARAP's internal structure, with dedicated personnel assigned to relevant work areas (e.g. vessel register, VMS, transshipment, WCPFC reporting, vessel consultation). These steps are outlined in further detail below and, together, 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 International Technical Cooperation and High Seas Affairs Office, dealing specifically with international cooperation and obligations. This team is responsible for reporting and engagement in the WCPFC and now provides continuity in staff (experience and contact points) to aid with effective and timely reporting.

Panama recognizes the importance of providing its financial contributions to the WCPFC. Noting this, we will continue to provide our financial contributions in full, including by any required dates (and at least by TCC). We acknowledge that in previous years our contributions were provided late and we strongly recognize the importance of this, specifically outlines our engagement with ARAP's Administrative and Financial Department, that is responsible for organizing Panama's financial contribution.

It is of critical importance that Panama engages at its fullest extent in the different meetings and processes of the Convention. Panama takes its WCPFC 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 FAO<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 2019 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 167 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 Convention<sup>2</sup>.

### 4. Flag State Reporting

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

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
No. of Active Vessels As Support Fishing Vessels	96	90	124	84	167 <sup>3</sup>

### 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

<sup>2</sup> Under Executive Decree No. 162 of 2013

<sup>3</sup> List of vessel <https://arap.gob.pa/listado-embarcaciones-apoyo-y-captura/>

imports low-priced products, such as canned tuna and canned sardines, which are important products for the country's food security<sup>4</sup>.

## **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 catch fishing vessels transshipment, and submitted for verification, showing information regarding position, date, sets and species. All the operations are verified by our FMC.

## **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.

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<sup>4</sup> 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 transhipped by carrier vessels:***

a) Offloaded and Received	b) Transhipped in port (FSM)	c) Transhipped inside / outside the Convention Area	d) Caught inside / outside Convention Area	e) Species	f) Product Form	g) Fishing gear
<b>Offloaded</b>	4397		N/A	<b>ALB</b>		N/A
	1299		N/A	<b>BET</b>		N/A
	0		N/A	<b>BUM</b>		N/A
	0		N/A	<b>MLS</b>		N/A
	122715		N/A	<b>SKJ</b>		N/A
	0		N/A	<b>SWO</b>		N/A
	12333		N/A	<b>YFT</b>		N/A
	51199		N/A	<b>OTH</b>		N/A
<b>Received</b>	1109	9548	N/A	<b>ALB</b>		N/A
	7430	10196	N/A	<b>BET</b>		N/A
	148	9020	N/A	<b>BUM</b>		N/A
	2876	2338	N/A	<b>MLS</b>		N/A
	614076	48000	N/A	<b>SKJ</b>		N/A
	9168	4949	N/A	<b>SWO</b>		N/A
	81783	51949	N/A	<b>YFT</b>		N/A
	8895	82580	N/A	<b>OTH</b>		N/A

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

<b>Offloaded and Received;</b>	<b>Transshipped in port, at sea in areas of national jurisdiction...</b>	<b>Transshipped inside / outside the Convention Area</b>	<b>Caught inside / outside Convention Area</b>	<b>Fishing gear</b>
<b>Offloaded</b>	61		N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
<b>Received</b>	1205	399	N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A
			N/A	N/A



**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