

Belize's Annual Report of Internal Action Review in accordance with Res. C-11-05 Para. 5

24 February 2025

As of December 2024, Belize had no fleet actively operating in the IATTC Convention area.

The oversight and management of fishing vessels registered under the Belize flag is a collaborative effort between two key entities: the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) and the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU). IMMARBE has responsibility for the registration and safety of all fishing vessels, ensuring that fishing vessels meet the necessary requirements and standards. The BHSFU assumes responsibility for monitoring, control and surveillance of all fishing vessel activities and serves as the focal point for all RFMO matters. Their primary objective is to ensure compliance with relevant regulations, including conservation measures and other monitoring and control measures. With a shared commitment to effective management and regulation, IMMARBE and the BHSFU collaborate closely to ensure the proper functioning and compliance of fishing vessels flying the Belize flag.

Currently.

1. Belize's domestic fishing fleet, which operates solely in Belize's territorial waters falls under the jurisdiction of the Belize Fisheries Department within the Ministry of Blue Economy.. The distant water fleet that operates on the high seas is managed by the BHSFU. While it is not mandatory for the owners of the distant water fleet to be Belizean nationals, applicants for fishing licenses must disclose beneficial ownership information and appoint a legal representative in Belize. These requirements aim to ensure effective oversight and enforcement fostering responsible fishing practices in accordance with national and international regulations.
2. Vessels seeking registration and authorization to operate within the IATTC area must meet specific criteria established by IMMARBE and the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU). One of the key requirements is verifying that the vessel has no previous history of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities or any affiliation with IUU vessel owners, as well as ensuring no association with sanctioned countries or entities.

In addition, the vessel must fulfil various conditions to obtain a fishing license. These conditions include the installation of a vessel monitoring system that adheres to standard RFMO specifications and national regulations. By implementing these measures, the BHSFU aims to ensure that only vessels with a clean record and compliant operations are granted registration and authorization to operate in the IATTC area. This approach contributes to the prevention of IUU fishing activities and promotes responsible fishing practices in line with international and national regulations.

3. Fishing vessels operating under Belize are obligated to maintain a fully functional Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). Failure to comply with this requirement may lead to disciplinary actions or even the denial or revocation of fishing authorization.

In cases of Force Majeure or unforeseen circumstances, the vessel operator is expected to return to port and provide manual position reports until the VMS unit is operational again. This ensures that the vessel's activities can be properly monitored and regulated, even during exceptional circumstances. By enforcing these measures, the administration aims to maintain effective oversight and control overfishing activities and ensure compliance with regulations.

4. During the licensing process, we ensure that vessel owners/operators are provided with comprehensive information regarding the conservation and management measures applicable to their area of operation. These measures are typically communicated through legally binding circulars or are included as conditions within their license authorization.
5. Our Administration employs two primary methods for catch reporting; manual logbooks and monthly electronic submission of catch and effort as well as landing reports. These traditional methods ensure accurate documentation of fishing activities on board the vessel.
6. As part of our regulatory framework, it is important for all vessels to possess valid and original copies, or electronic versions, of their registration documents and fishing authorizations while operating at sea. These important documents serve as proof of compliance with our regulatory requirements and demonstrate that the vessel is authorized to engage in fishing activities.
7. In accordance with our HSFA, 2013, Belize administers sanctions through our Sanction Regulations. These regulations serve as the framework for implementing and enforcing sanctions in a fair and consistent manner. By adhering to these regulations, we aim to ensure the effective enforcement of sanctions and uphold the principles of accountability and compliance.

As part of our commitment to transparency and effective management, we diligently report to the IATTC in accordance with their data and vessel reporting measures.

Actions that have been taken or are being taken as a result of our internal review.

1. Since the implementation of our revised HSFA in 2013, no further modifications have been made to our legislation. However, in line with our strategic objectives, we have set a ten-year review cycle for all our legislation, starting from the date of adoption, to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. As part of this process, we are scheduled to review and

potentially amend our Act and its subsidiary regulations in 2025. This review is aimed at ensuring that our legal framework keeps pace with technological advancements and other industry developments, providing a solid basis for the evolving needs of the sector.

2. Our Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) requirements align with the specifications and measure mandated by the relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) . In addition to meeting the minimum standards, we have made updates to our VMS to enhance its capabilities.

These updates include 24-hour reporting, geo-fencing features for RFMO areas, restricted fishing areas, designated port areas, fisheries closure zones, and exclusive economic zone (EEZ) zones. We have also introduced new functionalities such as sorting position data by statistical areas to match catch and effort data with VMS history, estimating fishing activities based on vessel movement (speed, course variations), recording port-to-port trips, implementing an effort management system, ensuring fish stock traceability and catch certification, and most notably, developing a new electronic catch reporting system.

Furthermore, we are actively working on further improving our VMS compliance and measures to incorporate new and advanced technologies. As part of our efforts to enhance transparency and monitoring capabilities, we have also implemented the Global Fishing Watch (GFW) platform. This platform utilizes Automatic Identification System (AIS) technology to track vessels worldwide. Through the utilization of GFW, the position data of Belize's fleet can now be publicly viewed, enabling our Fisheries Monitoring Center (FMC) to closely monitor the activities of our fleet and its interactions with other fishing or fishing-related vessels. These tools not only enhance transparency but also serve as a deterrent against illegal fishing activities.

3. Belize adopted its National Plan of Action to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing for its high seas fleet on May 20th, 2014. This comprehensive document serves as a guideline for effectively implementing the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) International Plan of Action to prevent, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing.

The NPOA-IUU specifically focuses on Belize's distant water fisheries and outlines the measures necessary to combat IUU fishing activities. It aligns with the general measures outlined in the FAO-IPOA and incorporates those measures that are relevant and applicable to Belize's high seas fleet. The document emphasizes both short-term and long-term strategies that Belize has adopted and will continue to adopt to prevent, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing by its high seas fleet. Through the implementation of this NPOA-IUU, Belize demonstrates its commitment to sustainable fishing practices and to fulfilling its international obligations in combating IUU fishing.

4. In our commitment to effective monitoring and compliance, we have entered a partnership with Capricorn Fisheries Monitoring Company (CAPFISH) to deploy observers on our vessels. The agreement with CAPFISH was signed on March 14th, 2014. This collaboration

allows us to enhance our monitoring efforts and ensure the presence of trained observers on our vessels.

To provide a comprehensive framework for our observer program, we have developed a national observer policy. This policy serves as the foundation for our National Observer Program, ensuring standardized procedures and guidelines for the deployment and activities of observers. Through this program, we aim to strengthen our monitoring capabilities and promote sustainable fishing practices in line with international standards.

Since the commencement of our observer program, the first observer deployment on our Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) fleet took place on March 20th, 2015. In 2015, we conducted a total of two official deployments, followed by one deployment in 2016 and another in 2017. However, no observer deployments were carried out in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021. Belize had no fleet in the area in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

5. To ensure compliance with our MCS Regulations, Belize-flagged fishing vessels are prohibited from conducting transshipment operations at sea. Instead, all transshipment activities must be carried out at designated ports. This regulation is in place to promote transparency and accountability in the fishing industry.

Furthermore, transshipment operations may only be conducted under specific circumstances, such as when authorized by the Director or as part of a regional observer program. These measures are implemented to ensure the traceability and legality of transshipment activities, contributing to sustainable fishing practices and the preservation of marine resources.

6. In line with our commitment to effective control and management of our fleet, we have developed a comprehensive fleet policy. This policy serves as a guiding framework for managing our fleet capacity and ensuring optimal control over our operations. The fleet policy outlines specific guidelines and criteria for determining the appropriate size and composition of our fleet. It takes into consideration factors such as sustainability, resource availability, market demand, and operational efficiency. By adhering to this policy, we aim to strike a balance between meeting the needs of our industry and safeguarding the long-term health and sustainability of our fisheries.
7. On March 12th, 2015, Belize adopted its National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks specifically for its high seas' fishery. This plan aligns with the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing and its overarching objectives for sustainable fishing practices. It also adheres to the guidelines set forth in the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks).
8. Belize adopted its National Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in its Long-Line High Seas Fisheries in 2016, aligning with the International Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds (IPOA-Seabirds) developed by the United Nations

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The plan aims to implement comprehensive mitigation measures to reduce unintentional seabird capture by the high seas fishing fleet. On December 7th, 2023, Belize updated its regulations to minimize the impact of fishing activities on seabird populations, demonstrating its commitment to responsible fishing practices and marine biodiversity conservation.

9. In 2016, Belize took significant steps to mitigate the impact of fishing on sea turtles. Through a legally binding circular, measures were implemented to address and minimize the impact of fishing activities on sea turtle populations. These measures were designed to ensure the conservation and protection of these vulnerable marine species.

Furthermore, in our ongoing commitment to the preservation of sea turtles, an update to the circular was made on February 24th, 2021. This update reflects our dedication to staying current with scientific research, best practices, and evolving conservation strategies.

10. On December 8th, 2023, we updated and disseminated legally binding fishing vessel circular addressing the incidental catch of Mobulid Rays, particularly by Purse Seiners.

Recognizing the importance of safeguarding these species, Belize ensures that its flagged fishing vessels exercise due caution and care in handling and safely releasing Mobulid Rays. The circular emphasizes the need for responsible fishing practices to minimize the accidental capture of these rays and mitigate any potential negative impacts on their populations.

11. In our continuous efforts to enhance our monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems, Belize is actively pursuing the implementation of electronic monitoring on board our vessels. This technological advancement will serve as a valuable complement to our existing MCS measures.

By integrating electronic monitoring systems, we aim to improve the accuracy and efficiency of data collection, as well as enhance transparency and accountability in our fishing operations. This innovative approach will enable us to monitor fishing activities in real-time, ensuring compliance with regulations and promoting sustainable fishing practices. Belize also participates in the EMS working group to ensure that the work of this group clearly recognizes the data needs of the Scientific Advisory Committee and aligns the minimum EMS standards adopted to the EMS domestic program that will be implemented by Belize.

By taking a three-step phased approach to implementing EMS on our fleet, we foresee its full implementation to be completed by 2026. Through this initiative, we seek to further strengthen our MCS capabilities and contribute to the sustainable management of our marine resources. Steps that we have taken so are listed below:



- Belize has received funding from the Belize Fund to help to facilitate this initiative. We have received technical and financial support from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) as TNC will be paying for our data review and provide technical guidance.
- We have selected two (2) service providers through a Request for Proposal process.
- We have developed a Revolving Fund for finance permanence for the program.
- We have selected both long line and purse seine vessels to partake in the pilot program.
- We have deployed the equipment to the selected vessels.

Phase 1 which will be the Pilot phase will commence mid-March to August 2025 for a span of six months. This phase will allow the testing and effectiveness of the program design and determine the kind of information received.

Phase 2 will allow the expansion of the coverage to fleet engaging in sensitive fisheries such as regulated species that are under conservation and management measures.

Phase 3 will be the full implementation of the program to all fishing vessels by 2027.

12. To ensure the effective implementation of conservation measures adopted by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), Belize takes proactive steps to domesticate these measures. We achieve this by issuing legally binding fishing vessel circulars that enshrine these conservation measures into our national regulations.

By domesticating these measures, we align our fisheries management practices with international standards and commitments. This allows us to effectively regulate and monitor fishing activities within our jurisdiction, ensuring compliance with the conservation measures prescribed by the RFMOs.



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5th March 2024

As of December 2023, Belize had no fleet actively operating in the IATTC Convention area.

The oversight and management of fishing vessels registered under the Belize flag is a collaborative effort between two key entities: the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) and the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU), both operating under the Ministry of Finance. IMMARBE has responsibility for all registration and vessel safety matters, ensuring that fishing vessels meet the necessary requirements and standards. Conversely, the BHSFU assumes responsibility for monitoring, control and surveillance of all fishing vessel activities and acts as the focal point for all RFMO matters. Their primary objective is to ensure compliance with relevant regulations, including conservation measures and other monitoring and control measures. With a shared commitment to effective management and regulation, both IMMARBE and the BHSFU collaborate closely to ensure the proper functioning and compliance of fishing vessels flying the Belize flag.

Currently.

1. Belize's domestic fishing fleet, which operates in Belize's jurisdictional waters only is managed by the Belize Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation. The distant water fleet which operates on the high seas is managed by the BHSFU. While it is not mandatory for the owners of the distant water fleet to be Belizean nationals, applicants for fishing licenses must provide beneficial ownership information and appoint a legal representative in Belize. These measures ensure effective control and enforcement and promote responsible fishing practices in accordance with national and international regulations.
2. Vessels seeking registration and licensing to operate in the IATTC area must meet specific criteria set by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU). One of the key requirements is ensuring that the vessel has no previous history of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities or any affiliation with IUU vessel owners.

In addition, the vessel must fulfil various conditions to obtain a fishing license. These conditions include the installation of a vessel monitoring system that adheres to standard RFMO specifications and national regulations. By implementing these measures, the BHSFU aims to ensure that only vessels with a clean record and compliant operations are granted registration and licensing to operate in the IATTC area. This approach contributes to the prevention of IUU fishing activities and promotes responsible fishing practices in line with international and national regulations.

3. Fishing vessels operating under Belize are obligated to always maintain a fully functional Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). Failure to comply with this requirement may lead to disciplinary actions or even the denial of fishing authorization.

In cases of Force Majeure or unforeseen circumstances, the vessel operator is expected to return to port and provide manual position reports until the VMS unit is operational again. This ensures that the vessel's activities can be properly monitored and regulated, even during exceptional circumstances. By enforcing these measures, the administration aims to maintain effective oversight and control overfishing activities and ensure compliance with regulations.

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 8. As part of our commitment to transparency and effective management, we diligently report all our vessels authorized to operate within the jurisdiction of the IATTC. This includes any changes or updates to the authorized vessels.
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Actions that have been taken or are being taken as a result of our internal review.

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5. To ensure compliance with our MCS Regulations, Belize-flagged fishing vessels are now prohibited from conducting transshipment operations at sea. Instead, all transshipment activities must be carried out at designated ports. This regulation is in place to promote transparency and accountability in the fishing industry.

Furthermore, transshipment operations may only be conducted under specific circumstances, such as when authorized by the Director or as part of a regional observer program. These measures are implemented to ensure the traceability and legality of transshipment activities, contributing to sustainable fishing practices and the preservation of marine resources.

6. In line with our commitment to effective control and management of our fleet, we have developed a comprehensive fleet policy. This policy serves as a guiding framework for managing our fleet capacity and ensuring optimal control over our operations. The fleet policy outlines specific guidelines and criteria for determining the appropriate size and composition of our fleet. It takes into consideration factors such as sustainability, resource availability, market demand, and operational efficiency. By adhering to this policy, we aim to strike a balance between meeting the needs of our industry and safeguarding the long-term health and sustainability of our fisheries.
7. To ensure compliance with national and international obligations, Belize has established a Belize High Seas Inspection Plan in accordance with our MCS (Monitoring, Control, and

Surveillance) Regulations. This plan was adopted on August 1st, 2014, with the primary objective of inspecting Belize-flagged vessels and their products.

The Belize High Seas Inspection Plan is designed to maintain rigorous oversight and enforcement measures. Inspections are carried out either by inspectors appointed by Belize or by qualified organizations, as determined by signed agreements between Belize and other parties or states. These inspections aim to verify compliance with relevant regulations and ensure adherence to our national and international obligations.

8. On March 12th, 2015, Belize adopted its National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks specifically for its high seas' fishery. This plan aligns with the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing and its overarching objectives for sustainable fishing practices. It also adheres to the guidelines set forth in the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks).

Currently, we are working in collaboration with the Belize Fisheries Department to develop a consolidated National Plan of Action for Sharks (NPOA-Sharks) that encompasses both domestic and high seas fisheries. This consolidated plan will ensure a comprehensive and unified approach to the conservation and management of sharks across all fishing activities in Belize.

9. Belize adopted its National Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in its Long-Line High Seas Fisheries in 2016, aligning with the International Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds (IPOA-Seabirds) developed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The plan aims to implement comprehensive mitigation measures to reduce unintentional seabird capture by the high seas fishing fleet. On December 7th, 2023, Belize updated its regulations to minimize the impact of fishing activities on seabird populations, demonstrating its commitment to responsible fishing practices and marine biodiversity conservation.
10. In 2016, Belize took significant steps to mitigate the impact of fishing on sea turtles. Through a legally binding circular, measures were implemented to address and minimize the impact of fishing activities on sea turtle populations. These measures were designed to ensure the conservation and protection of these vulnerable marine species.

Furthermore, in our ongoing commitment to the preservation of sea turtles, an update to the circular was made on February 24th, 2021. This update reflects our dedication to staying current with scientific research, best practices, and evolving conservation strategies.

11. On December 8th, 2023, we updated and disseminated legally binding fishing vessel circular addressing the incidental catch of Mobulid Rays, particularly by Purse Seiners.

Recognizing the importance of safeguarding these species, Belize ensures that its flagged fishing vessels exercise due caution and care in handling and safely releasing Mobulid Rays. The circular emphasizes the need for responsible fishing practices to minimize the accidental capture of these rays and mitigate any potential negative impacts on their populations.

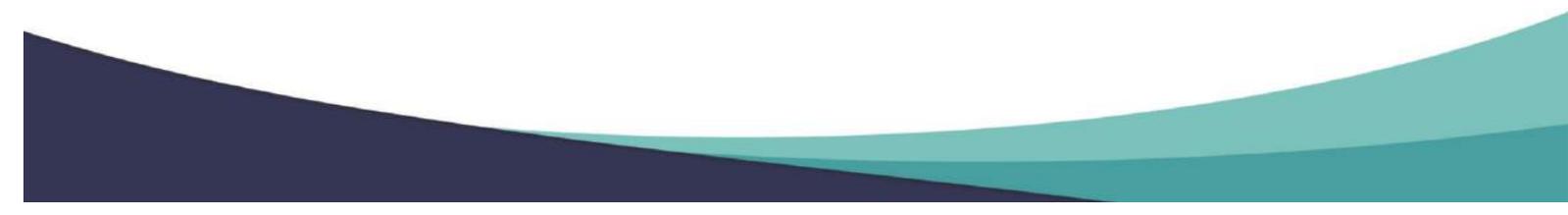
12. In our continuous efforts to enhance our monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems, Belize is actively pursuing the implementation of electronic monitoring on board our vessels. This technological advancement will serve as a valuable complement to our existing MCS measures.

By integrating electronic monitoring systems, we aim to improve the accuracy and efficiency of data collection, as well as enhance transparency and accountability in our fishing operations. This innovative approach will enable us to monitor fishing activities in real-time, ensuring compliance with regulations and promoting sustainable fishing practices.

The planned implementation of electronic monitoring in 2024 reflects our commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements in fisheries management. Through this initiative, we seek to further strengthen our MCS capabilities and contribute to the sustainable management of our marine resources.

13. To ensure the effective implementation of conservation measures adopted by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), Belize takes proactive steps to domesticate these measures. We achieve this by issuing legally binding fishing vessel circulars that enshrine these conservation measures into our national regulations.

By domesticating these measures, we align our fisheries management practices with international standards and commitments. This allows us to effectively regulate and monitor fishing activities within our jurisdiction, ensuring compliance with the conservation measures prescribed by the RFMOs.



C-21-04	Tuna conservation in the EPO 2022-2024	By 15 July, according to resolution C-22-05	Belize had no active fleet operating in the Convention area in 2022 and does not operate a purse seine fleet.
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Belize's Annual Report of Internal Action Review In accordance with Res. C-11-05 Para. 5

18th May 2022

During 2021, there was one long line fishing vessel which commenced operations in early January for a few days within the IATTC Convention area. Due to the financial impact of the pandemic, the vessel was unable to continue operations and was laid up for the remainder of the year.

The Registration of fishing vessels is carried out by the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) in accordance with the Registration of Merchant Ships Act 2010. The management of fishing vessels to ensure compliance with conservation and management measures and other MCS measures is carried out by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU) of the Ministry of Finance in accordance with our High Seas Fisheries Act 2013 and its subsidiary regulations. Matters of policy regarding fishing vessels are determined jointly by both institutions.

Currently;

1. Belize's domestic fishing fleet operates within the jurisdictional waters of Belize only and is managed by the Belize Fisheries Department, under the newly established Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation. The commercial fleet which operates on the high seas is managed by the BHSFU. Pursuant to our HSFA, 2013, it is not mandatory for owners of the high seas fleet to be citizens of Belize for registration purposes. However, for the purpose of ensuring that control or punitive actions can be effectively taken against appropriate entities, an applicant for fishing license must provide beneficial ownership information on the owners of the vessel as well as a legal representative located in Belize in accordance with our national regulations.
2. The Registration and Licensing of vessels to operate in the IATTC area is granted only after the BHSFU has established that the vessel has no previous IUU history or is affiliated with IUU vessel owners and have met the requirements for the obtainment of a fishing license, which inter alia, includes the installation of a mobile transceiver unit (MTU) in accordance with standard RFMO specifications and national regulations.
3. Vessels are required to maintain a functional MTU at all times, failure of which results in the imposition of disciplinary measures or the denial of a fishing authorization.

4. At the time of licensing, vessel owners/operators/ charterers/master are provided with all relevant conservation and management measures applicable to the IATTC area of competence. These are normally issued through legally binding circulars or form part of the conditions of their license authorization.
5. Maintaining a manual logbook onboard the vessel and the submission of catch and effort reports monthly is our primary catch reporting method. This is complimented by our electronic catch reporting system where data is received at the FMC on an hourly basis.
6. It is a mandatory for all vessels to keep on board valid original or copies of their registration documents and fishing authorizations including issued logbooks. Ad hoc inspections are carried out to ensure compliance with this measure, among others.
7. Pursuant to the HSFA 2013, sanctions are administered in accordance with our Sanction Regulations.
8. All our vessels authorized to operate in the IATTC or changes thereto are reported to the Secretariat.

Actions that have been taken or are being taken as a result of our internal review;

1. Since the adoption of our revised HSFA in 2013, no additional changes have been made to our legislation. However, as part of our strategic objective, the review and amendment of all our legislation shall take place every five years from the date of their adoption. As a result, our Act and its subsidiary regulations will be reviewed in 2023 respectively.
2. Our VMS requirements are in line with the specification required by the relevant RFMO measures. Apart from the minimum standards required, our VMS has been updated to ensure 24 hours reporting, geo fencing for RFMO areas, restricted fishing areas or areas of interest, designated port areas, fisheries closure zones as well as EEZ zones. New features have been added for position data to be sorted by statistical area for Catch/effort data to be matched with VMS history, estimates of fishing (compared to vessel movement i.e. speed, course variations), Port to port trip recording, effort management system, fish stock traceability and catch certification and most importantly a new platform has been created for an electronic catch reporting system. In addition, we are also in the process of further developing our VMS compliance and measures in line with new and more advanced technologies.

3. The implementation of our e-log system allows for the ease of transmission of daily catch and effort reports. The new system, includes, among others, trip reports, daily catch activity report, area entry/exit reports, transshipment reports, unloading reports etc.
 4. Our NPOA IUU for the high seas fleet was adopted on May 20th, 2014. This document outlines Belize's NPOA-IUU for its distant water fisheries. It is intended to support the effective implementation of the FAO's International Plan of Action to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU. Belize's NPOA-IUU focuses on the general measures indicated in FAO-IPOA and reflects only those measures that are applicable to the High Seas fleet. This document focuses on the long- and short-term measures that Belize has and will adopt to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing by its High Seas fleet. Additionally, this document will be reviewed bi-annually or may be updated as may be appropriate.
 5. We have contracted the services of Capricorn Fisheries Monitoring Company (CAPFISH) to utilize their services for the deployment of observers to our vessels. It is also our intention to utilize CAPFISH provide training to our nationally appointed observers in the future. This agreement with CAPFISH was signed on March 14th, 2014, renewable every two years. Our first observer deployment on our IATTC fleet was conducted on March 20th, 2015 and there was a total of three official deployments done in 2015, one in 2016, one in 2017. No deployment was carried out in in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. We have developed a national observer policy, which now provides the platform for our National Observer Program.
 6. In accordance with our MSC Regulations, Belize flagged fishing vessels are no longer authorized to carry out transshipment at sea. All transshipment operations must now be conducted at a port, under a Regional Observer Program or as authorized by the Director.
 7. We have developed a fleet policy in respect to our fleet capacity which will allow for the improved control and overall management of our fleet.
 8. In accordance with our MCS Regulations, Belize has developed a Belize High Seas Inspection Plan on August 1st, 2014 for the inspection of Belize flagged vessels and their products. The focus of the Plan is to ensure compliance with national and international obligations. Inspections shall be conducted by Belize appointed inspectors or by appropriately qualified organizations in accordance with signed agreements between Belize and other parties or States.
 9. Belize adopted its National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks for its high seas fishery on March 12th, 2015. This plan is in the context of the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing and its general objectives for sustainable fishing and follows the guidelines of the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks). We are currently collaborating with the Belize Fisheries
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Department for the adoption of a consolidated NPOA-Sharks which will include both domestic and high seas fisheries

10. Belize has adopted its National Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in its Long-Line High Seas Fisheries on March 30th, 2016. This plan is developed in accordance with the provisions of the International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds), as developed by United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The objective of this plan is to implement full mitigation measures in an effort to reduce incidental catch of seabirds by our high seas fishing fleet. Our aim is to promptly adopt any new mitigation measures that have been introduced by regional fisheries management organizations.
11. In 2016, through legally binding circular, Belize also implemented measures to mitigate the impact of fishing for all fish stocks on sea turtles. This circular was updated on 24-February-2021
12. Through legally binding circulars we have implemented all Resolutions adopted by IATTC as it pertains to the operations of our fleet in this area.



Belize's Report of Internal Action Review In accordance with Res. C-11-05 Para. 5

16th June 2021

Belize had only one long line fishing vessel which operated during 2020, This vessel commenced operations in late September 2019 within the IATTC Convention region.

The Registration of fishing vessels is carried out by the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) in accordance with the Registration of Merchant Ships Act 2010. The management of fishing vessels to ensure compliance with conservation and management measures and other MCS measures is carried out by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU) under the Ministry of Finance in accordance with our High Seas Fisheries Act 2013 and its subsidiary regulations. Matters of policy regarding fishing vessels are determined jointly by both institutions.

Currently;

1. Belize's domestic fishing fleet operates within the jurisdictional waters of Belize only and is managed by the Belize Fisheries Department. The commercial fleet which operates on the high seas is managed by the BHSFU. Pursuant to our HSFA, 2013, it is not mandatory for owners of the high seas fleet to be citizens of Belize for registration purposes. However, for the purpose of ensuring that control or punitive actions can be effectively taken against appropriate entities, an applicant for fishing license must provide beneficial ownership information on the owners of the vessel as well as a legal representative located in Belize in accordance with our national regulations.
2. The Registration and Licensing of vessels to operate in the IATTC area is granted only after the BHSFU has established that the vessel has no previous IUU history or is affiliated with IUU vessel owners and have met the requirements for the obtainment of a fishing license, which inter alia, includes the installation of a mobile transceiver unit (MTU) in accordance with standard RFMO specifications and national regulations.
3. Vessels are required to always maintain a functional MTU, failure of which results in the imposition of disciplinary measures or the denial of a fishing authorization or withdrawal thereto.
4. At the time of licensing, vessel owners/operators/ charterers/master are provided with all relevant conservation and management measures applicable to the IATTC area of competence. These are normally issued through legally binding circulars or form part of the conditions of their license authorization.

5. Vessels are required to report their catches on a monthly basis on the required forms. Catch data can also be uploaded to the vessel's electronic catch reporting system where data is received at the FMC in real time. Maintaining a manual fishing logbook on board at all times is also a mandatory requirement for all our vessels.
6. It is a mandatory requirement that all vessels keep on board valid original or copies of their registration documents and fishing authorizations in hard copies and/or electronic copies. Pre-arranged inspections are carried out to ensure compliance with these measures, inter alia.
7. Pursuant to the HSFA 2013, sanctions are administered in accordance with our Sanctions Regulations.
8. All our vessels authorized to operate in the IATTC or changes thereto are reported to the Secretariat.

Actions that have been taken or are being taken as a result of our internal review;

1. Since the adoption of our revised HSFA in 2013, no additional changes have been made to our legislation. However, as part of our strategic objective, the review and amendment of all our legislation shall take place every five years from the date of their adoption.
2. Our VMS requirements and standards are in line with relevant RFMO measures. Apart from the minimum standards required, our VMS has been updated to ensure 24 hours reporting, geo fencing for RFMO areas, restricted fishing areas or areas of interest, designated port areas, fisheries closure zones as well as EEZ zones. New features have been added for position data to be sorted by statistical area for Catch/effort data to be matched with VMS history, estimates of fishing (compared to vessel movement i.e. speed, course variations), Port to port trip recording, effort management system, fish stock traceability and catch certification and most importantly a new platform has been created for an electronic catch reporting system. In addition, we are also in the process of further developing our VMS compliance and measures in line with new and more advanced technologies. Belize has recently signed an MOU with Global Fishing Watch establishing a framework for cooperation and collaboration for sharing of vessel monitoring system (VMS) and auto identification system (AIS) data. Through this new agreement we will be able to increase our vessel monitoring transparency efforts to better detect and prevent IUU fishing by utilizing additional platforms for vessel monitoring.
3. The implementation of our e-log system allows for the ease of transmission of daily catch and effort reports. The new system, includes, among others, trip reports, daily catch activity report, area entry/exit reports, transshipment reports, unloading reports etc.
4. Our NPOA IUU for the high seas fleet was adopted on May 20th, 2014. This document outlines Belize's NPOA-IUU for its distant water fisheries. It is intended to support the effective implementation of the FAO's International Plan

of Action to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU. Belize's NPOA-IUU focuses on the general measures indicated in FAO-IPOA and reflects only those measures that are applicable to the High Seas fleet. This document focuses on the long- and short-term measures that Belize has and will adopt to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing by its High Seas fleet. Additionally, this document will be reviewed bi-annually or may be updated intercessional as may be appropriate.

5. We have contracted the services of Capricorn Fisheries Monitoring Company (CAPFISH) to utilize their services for the deployment of observers to our vessels. It is also our intention to utilize CAPFISH for the provision of training in the future to our nationally appointed observers. This agreement with CAPFISH was signed on March 14th, 2014. Our first observer deployment on our IATTC fleet was conducted on March 20th, 2015, and there was a total of two official deployments done in 2015, one in 2016, one in 2017 and none in 2018, 2019 and 2020. We have developed a national observer policy, which now provides the framework for our National Observer Program.
6. In accordance with our MSC Regulations, Belize flagged fishing vessels are no longer authorized to carry out transshipment at sea. All transshipment operations must now be conducted at a port, under a Regional Observer Program or as authorized by the Director.
7. We have developed a fleet policy in respect to our fleet capacity which will allow for the improved management and control of our fleet.
8. In accordance with our MCS Regulations, Belize has developed a Belize High Seas Inspection Plan on August 1st, 2014, for the inspection of Belize flagged vessels and their products. The focus of the Plan is to ensure compliance with national and international obligations. Inspections shall be conducted by Belize appointed inspectors or by appropriately qualified organizations in accordance with agreements between Belize and other parties or States.
9. Belize adopted its National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks for its high seas fishery on March 12th, 2015. This plan is in the context of the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing and its general objectives for sustainable fishing and follows the guidelines of the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks). We are currently collaborating with the Belize Fisheries Department for the adoption of a consolidated NPOA-Sharks which will include both domestic and high seas fisheries.
10. Belize has adopted its National Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in its Long-Line High Seas Fisheries on March 30th, 2016. This plan is developed in accordance with the provisions of the International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds), as developed by United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The objective of this plan is to implement full mitigation

measures to reduce incidental catch of seabirds by our high seas fishing fleet. Our aim is to promptly adopt any new mitigation measures that have been introduced by regional fisheries management organizations.

11. In 2016, through legally binding circular, Belize also implemented measures to mitigate the impact of fishing for all fish stocks on sea turtles and have issued revised sea turtle handling guidelines
12. Through legally binding circulars we have implemented all relevant Resolutions adopted by IATTC as it pertains to the operations of our fleet in the EPO.

