Why are Data Buoys important?

In-situ real-time oceanographic and meteorological observations from data buoys are critical to a wide user community of federal, state, academic, and private industry stakeholders. These observations add value to a diverse spectrum of civil use applications, including severe and routine weather forecasting, tsunami warning forecast, improved coastal ocean circulation models, commercial and recreational marine transportation and fishing, and environmental and ecosystem monitoring and research. Sustaining the data buoy infrastructure that supports these observations is of the utmost importance to the user community and society as a whole.

Data Buoys benefit in our understanding of:

- Climate: Understanding, assessing, predicting, mitigating, and adapting to climate variability and change. El Niño & La Niña (El Niño-Southern Oscillation)
- Coastal and Marine Hazards, Disasters and **TSUNAMIS**: Reducing loss of life, property, and ecosystem damage from natural and human-induced disasters.
- Ocean and Coastal Energy and Mineral Resources: Improving the identification and management of energy and mineral resources.
- Human Health: Understanding environmental factors affecting human health and wellbeing.
- Ocean and Coastal Resources and Ecosystems: Understanding and protecting ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes populations and resources, including fisheries, aquaculture, and marine ecosystems.

Data Buoys benefit in our understanding of:

- Marine Transportation: Improving the safety and efficiency of all forms of marine transportation including COMMERCIAL and RECREATIONAL FISHING.
- Water Resources: Improving water-resource management through better understanding and monitoring of the water cycle.
- Coastal and Marine Weather: Improving weather information, forecasts, and warnings.
- Reference Measurements: Improving the fundamental measurement systems and standards.

What is Data Buoy Vandalism?

Interactions include, but are not limited to:

- "Encircling the buoy with fishing gear, tying up to or attaching the vessel, fishing gear, or any part or portion of the vessel, to a data buoy, or cutting its anchor line;"
- "Deploying fishing gear within one nautical mile of an anchored data buoy;"
- "Taking on board a data buoy, unless specifically authorized"
- "Directly interacting in any way with drifting data buoys;"

- *Resolution C-11-03 Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission*

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

82ND MEETING

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA (USA)
4-8 JULY 2011

RESOLUTION C-11-03

RESOLUTION PROHIBITING FISHING ON DATA BUOYS

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in La Jolla, California (USA), on the occasion of its 82nd Meeting:

Aware that many nations, including Members of the Commission, operate and deploy data buoys throughout the Eastern Pacific Ocean and oceans worldwide to gather information used to improve weather and marine forecasts, provide assistance to fisheries by collecting data on sea surface and subsurface temperatures, provide assistance to search and rescue efforts at sea, and collect critical data used to conduct research on meteorological and oceanographic topics and climate predictions;

Knowing that highly migratory species, in particular tunas, aggregate in the vicinity of data buoys;

Recognizing that the World Meteorological Organization and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission have determined that vandalism and damage to data buoys by fishing vessels are a significant problem in the Pacific Ocean and worldwide;

Concerned that vandalism or damage to data buoys results in significant loss of data critical to weather forecasting, to the study of marine conditions, to tsunami warnings, to support search and rescue efforts at sea, and that Members of the Commission expend considerable time and resources to locate, replace, and repair data buoys damaged or lost due to fishing activities or vandalism;

Alarmed that the loss of data critical to the study of marine conditions from vandalism or damage to data buoys undermines analyses by Commission scientists seeking better understanding of tuna habitat use and relationships between climate and tuna recruitment, and research by environmental scientists in general; and

Mindful that several data buoy programs publish information on the internet describing the type and location of such buoys;

Agrees:

To apply in the Antigua Convention Area the following measures regarding fishing on data buoys:

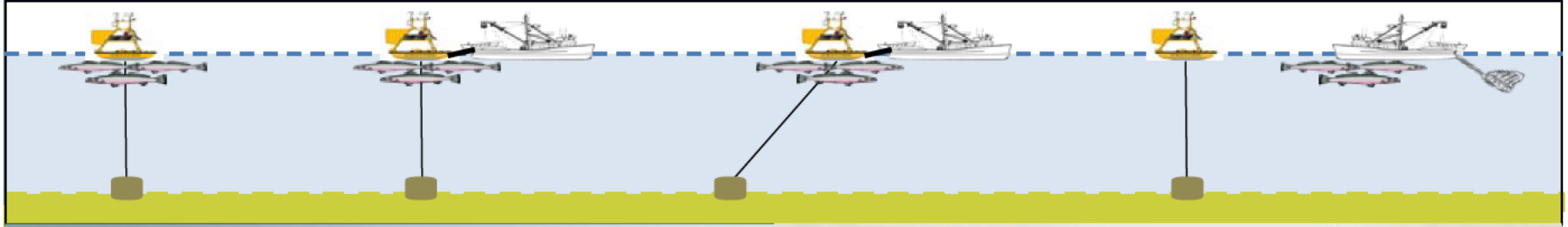
For the purpose of this Resolution, data buoys are defined as floating devices, either drifting or anchored, that are deployed by governmental or recognized scientific organizations or entities for the purpose of electronically collecting environmental data, and not in support of fishing activities, and which have been notified to the Commission by a Member or Cooperating non-Member of the Commission (CPC).

1. CPCs shall:
   a. Prohibit their fishing vessels from interacting with data buoys in the Antigua Convention Area. Interactions include, but are not limited to, encircling the buoy with fishing gear, tying up to or attaching the vessel, fishing gear, or any part or portion of the vessel, to a data buoy, or cutting its anchor line;
   b. Prohibit their longline and purse-seine fishing vessels from deploying fishing gear within one nautical mile of an anchored data buoy in the Antigua Convention Area;

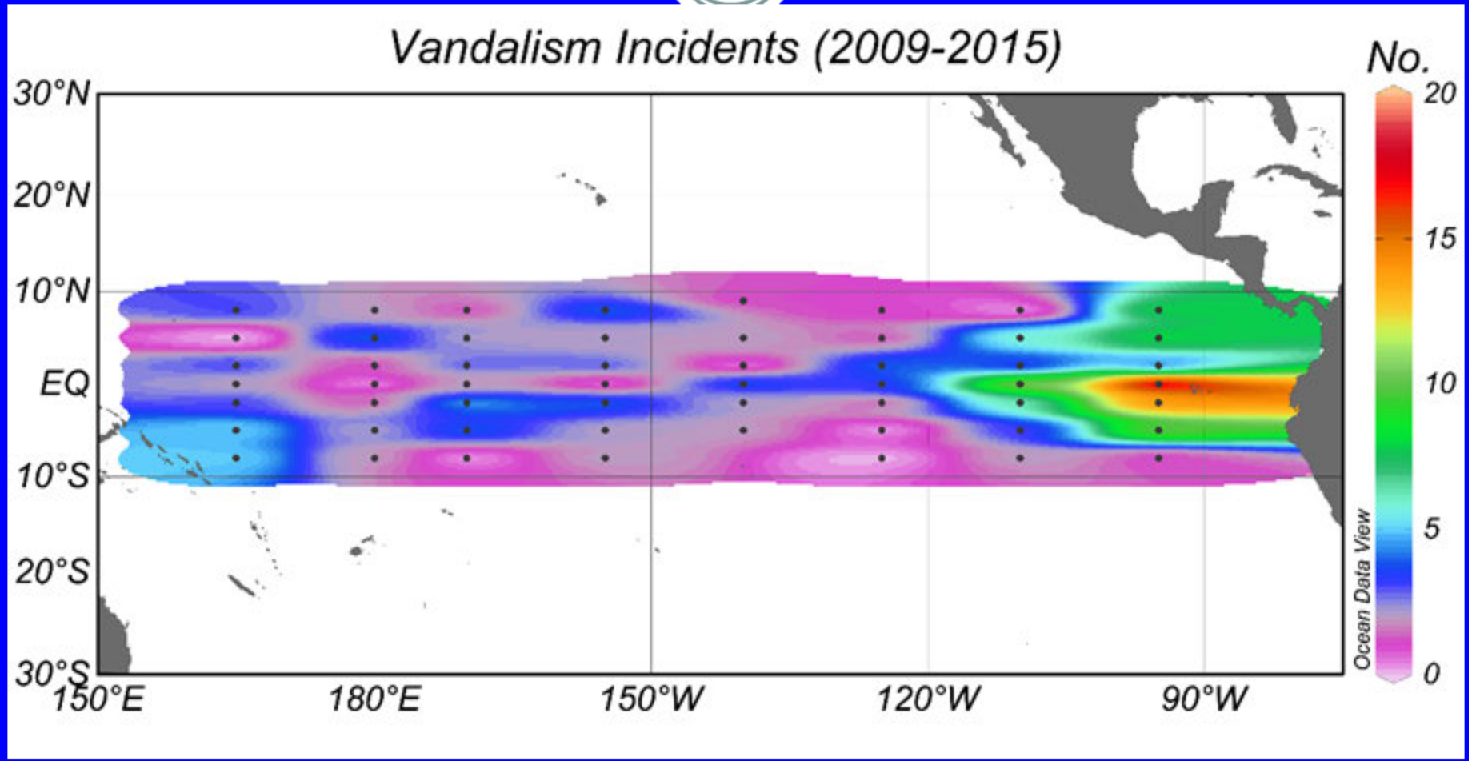
Why are buoys being vandalized?

Fish aggregate under data buoys. Fishing vessels are tempted to harvest the fish below the data buoys which results in damaging the highly sensitive instruments on the data buoy.

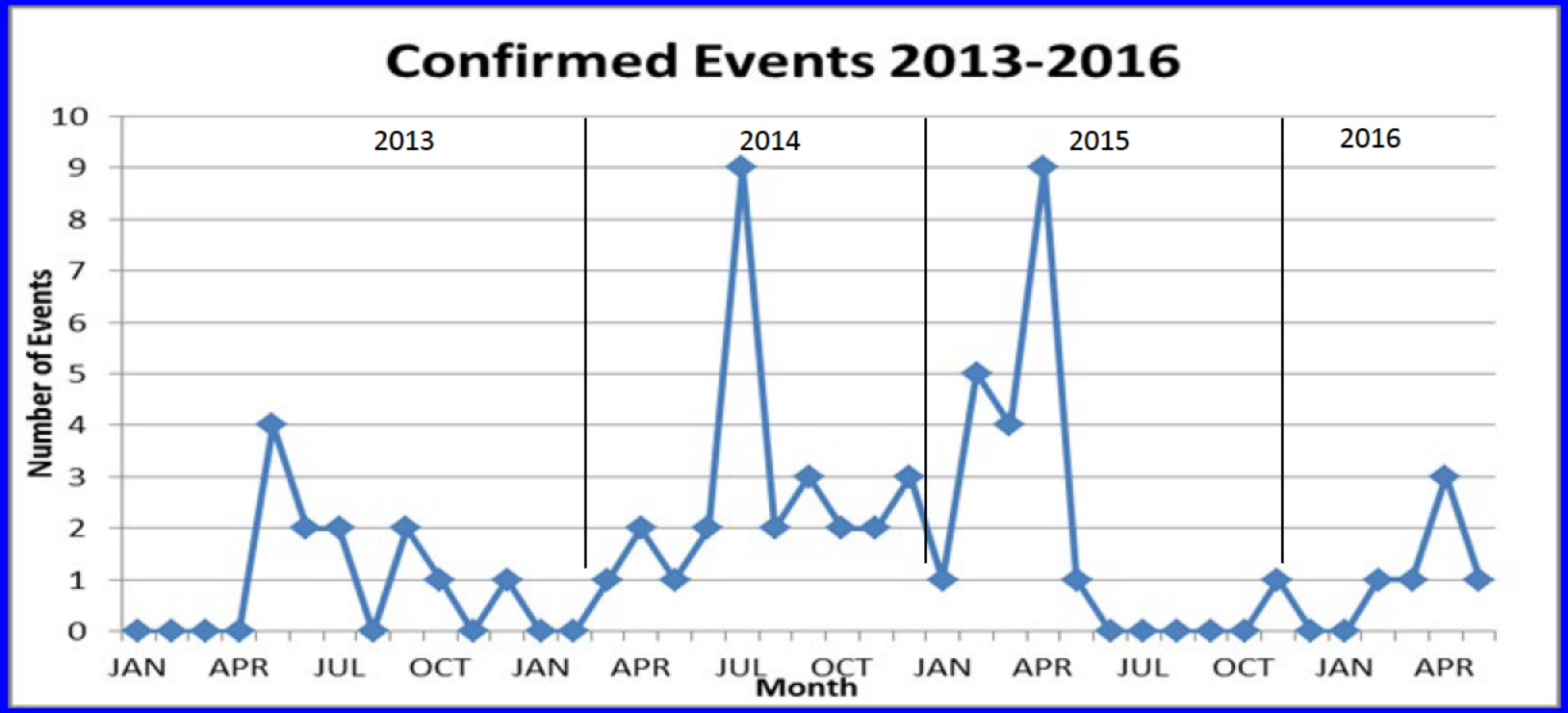
How is it done?



Where does buoy vandalism mostly occur?



When and How Often?



Advice to fishermen and mariners

- **DO NOT moor to, damage, or destroy any part of the buoys.**
- Do not pick up drifting buoys. Buoy operators do not refurbish the drifting buoys once deployed. They would continue to transmit their position along with erroneous meteorological and oceanographic data from the deck of the ship.
- Do keep watch for the moored buoys at sea; they should be visible on radar and can be avoided. Always keep off your fishing operations from the buoys in order to avoid entanglement of your net with the buoy
- Do educate your fellow community about the use and benifiof data buoys.

  • The buoys may attract fish: although it may be tempting, DON'T deploy gear around or near

  to the buoys. If your gear tangles with the buoy, DON'T damage or cut the buoy to retrieve

  your gear.