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

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PANAMA

REPUBLIC OF PANAMA
ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Part 1

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1. Abstract/Summary

The Republic of Panama is located between 7 ° 12'07" and 9 ° 38'46" North Latitude and 77 ° 09'24" and 03'07" 83 ° west longitude and has a length of 75.517 km² (29,208 square miles). Panama is the link between Central America and South America, and has coasts on the Caribbean and the Pacific, where emerging about 1, 581 islands and islets. The costs add up to total 2,988.3 km, of which are 1.700.6 km and 1,287.7 km of the Pacific are in the Caribbean. Its territorial waters extend to about 200 nautical miles wide over which the Republic of Panama has sovereignty and sovereign rights, as in the seabed. This area is influenced by a large upwelling in the Gulf of Panama; the dry season increases the primary productivity and accelerates the development of a large number of species. In the Pacific Ocean was developed for 95% of fishing activity, also found 80% of the population.

The fishery is divided into two major sectors: industrial and artisanal fisheries. There is also a fleet of vessels licensed to fish in international high seas, mainly tuna in East Pacific and the Atlantic. Among the items of interest in fishing in waters include: white shrimp fishing, fishing for anchovies and herring and demersal fisheries, commercial, and background pelagic.

In Panama, the Caribbean coastal fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean is sectioned into areas such as Bocas del Toro, Colon and San Blas, where the continental shelf and steep cuts only allow fishing for reef-associated species, although has developed an industrial shrimp fishery is of low intensity. This traditional fishing area is principally engaged in the capture of lobster (*Panulirus* sp), shells (*Strombus* sp), octopus and crab spider crab. Of these the most important is fishing for lobster (*Panulirus* sp), resulting in the main fishery in the Caribbean region.

As the fishery in this area is very limited in recent years (2000 to date) have been established activities associated with these areas as they are growing cobia and sea bass and bream in floating cages. Between 1990 and 1995, reducing the fleet of Japanese and Korean longliners because of profitability in the tuna fishery, reporting losses in the Panamanian registry, which is offset by the change of vessels from Taiwan to open registry flags, particularly that of Panama.

Panama has made a major management control of its fishing vessels since 1997, which establishes the obligation to obtain a fishing license for fishing vessels on the high seas or EEZ of other States, continuing the imposition of a satellite monitoring system (VMS) mandatory for all vessels fishing in international fishing

license for 1999 and by specific legislation for the elimination of IUU fishing, ADM Resolution 1791.

Panama uses a vessel monitoring system (VMS) in both large Panamanian flag vessels fishing in the Atlantic, as in all fishing vessels Panamanian international license (fishing vessels engaged in harvesting marine resources outside territorial waters), established by Administrative Order No. 101-99 of four (4) August 1999 (1999). Since 1999, Panama runs a satellite monitoring of all fishing vessels of international services that obligation must be installed satellite monitoring system approved by the competent authority ARAP. It is well to recall that in the case of these fishing vessels, the size of the length does not exempt from compliance with the standard.

In late 1997 it mandatory to obtain a fishing license prior to the registration of the merchant marine and fishing is prohibited in the Mediterranean and the directed fishery for Bluefin tuna and albacore in the North or South in the Atlantic. Thus, over a thousand Panamanian-flagged fishing vessels did not apply to obtaining the appropriate fishing license and are removed from the record of our Merchant Marine.

In compliance with the decisions taken and issued by Resolution A/RES/53/33 of 15 March 1999 General Assembly of the United Nations concerning fishing in large-scale drift-nets, the unauthorized fishing in zones of national jurisdiction and high seas, bycatch and discards in fisheries and other matters; Republic of Panama issued Executive Order No. 90 of July 17, 2002 "Through which prohibits the use gill nets and / or drift to all industrial fishing vessels domestic and international service under the Panamanian flag because it represents a major threat to the marine environment, the sustainability of fisheries and marine biodiversity, Panama, in accordance with these international instruments adopted programs to control illegal fishing by the European Union and other fisheries management organizations (RFMO's), since 2005.

In the same year he joined the National Maritime Strategy, the need to establish a National Plan to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated.

In the context of regional fisheries management organization, CIAT, Panama as a contracting party since 1952, ratifies the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation by Act No. 75 of November 10, 1998.

As for the national fleet in the western Pacific Ocean, is made only for transport and support ships with a total of 70 vessels By Law No. 44 of November 23, 2006, establishing the Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP) and adds a definition for fishing vessel that houses the fish transport vessels or cargo ships and support vessels. After some discussions about a clear definition of such craft is adopted a resolution which regulates the issue of receiving transshipment vessels and support vessels to fishing activities.

In November 2008 approved the Maritime Code of Panama, there is established as a prerequisite to register a fishing vessel in the register of the Merchant Marine, to obtain a fishing license. This has been a great achievement and, despite all efforts made during the past years, it is not until now that is adopted by the Republic Act requirement to obtain a fishing license, for any type of fishing boat ; previously required through an Executive Decree. Among the implemented rules, referred to in Annex I to this document, we find the definition of illegal unreported unregulated (IUU) and the explicit consideration of not granting fishing licenses to vessels that are under this condition.

2. Tabular Annual Fisheries Information

We have no information of fisheries because there are not catch vessels in Western and Central Pacific Area.

3. Background

The Republic of Panama is a cooperating non-Member of WCPFC, the number of vessels operating in this convention area are totally transport and support vessels. All of our vessels are licensed to operate in the WCPFC in compliment to the commission's recommendations and requirements.

We have 69 vessels of transportation and support and as we declared when we request been part as a cooperating non-member, the Republic of Panama accept high seas boarding and inspection and has accepted 100% observer coverage on its carriers and commits to compliance with all WCPFC CMM's.

4. Coastal State Reporting

We are not a Coastal State in WCPFC Convention Area.

5. Socio-economic factors

The benefits obtained the flag in marine and crews of the ships as well as praise company profits that are in the country and generate many jobs.

6. Disposal of Catch

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

7. Onshore Developments

We are not a Coastal Sate and no processing plant or support facilities in WCPFC Convention area.

8. Future Prospect of the Fishery

We have our position to maintain only transport and support fishing vessel.

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 on a regular basis 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 Merchant Shipping, Ports, Seafarers and discharge data of fishery products in domestic and international ports.

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

The ARAP maintains periodic sampling programs at ports landings by species and sizes. There are research centers, such as the Center for Marine Sciences and Limnology, University of Panama, which conducts research on specific estuarine systems and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI), which focuses its studies on the biological area and conservation of marine ecosystems.

Also conducted joint research with CIAT-Achotines, which supports research of tropical tuna species, with the aim of closing the life cycle. Similarly, the Action Plan of the Southeast Pacific and the Caribbean Action Plan are programs Regional Seas Programme of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), supports research on environmental indicators and quality of coastal marine waters, which allow to address areas risk to ecosystems and marine species of commercial interest. On the other hand, supported the Ministry of Science of Spain develop fisheries research survey and monitoring inventories of stocks of fishery resources on continental shelves. All this contributes to better decision making regarding the sustainable management of fisheries resources and ecosystem.