

Recommendation n.º 34

Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing – the case of French Guyana

Considering the threat that illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing represents, as currently practiced in French Guyana, to the preservation of sea turtles, marine mammals, sciaenid's (Acoupa weakfish - *Cynoscion acoupa*)¹, snappers, rays and sharks. The importance of fishing and aquaculture in French Guyana, stands out as the first contributor to the blue economy, in terms of employment (with over 450 jobs) and the third largest contributor in terms of production². The exploration of 60 % of the halieutic resources of French Guyana, is performed by fisherman in a situation of IUU fishing, according to the latest scientific study on the subject³;

Recognizing the commitment of French Guyana deputies to the issue of IUU fisheries; the efforts of the professional fishing sector, represented by *Comité Régional de Pêches Maritimes et Élevages Marins Guyane* (CRPMEM Guyane), to limit the incidental capture of sea turtles and large marine mammals, through joint projects with the *World Wide Fund for Nature* (WWF) and the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS)^{4 5}; the international cooperation through, in particular, the signing in 2017 of an agreement between France and Suriname on maritime delimitation from the river mouth of Maroni, incorporating objectives to combat the development of IUU fishing⁶; the request from fishing sector under the *Cayenne* agreements for a permanent presence of nautical means (GRAGE type) on the eastern and western borders⁷ and the announcement made by the government regarding the installation of two maritime surveillance radars at the frontiers, in 2015⁸;

¹ Chao, L., Nalovic, M. & Williams, J. (2021). *Cynoscion acoupa*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2021.

² Vertigo Lab (2020). Guyana's blue economy. Infographic.

³ IFREMER (2012). Estimate of foreign illegal fishing in French Guiana

⁴ WWF France, Antenne Guyane (2019). PALICA Final Report. Active Fisheries to Limit Interactions and Bycatch. Report; Participation in the PALICA II and ARRIBA projects (in progress).

⁵ M.H. Duffaud, L. Kelle, M. Nalovic, G. Feuillet (2011). The sea turtle recovery plan of French Guiana: balance and perspectives. Bulletin of the Herpetological Society of France, 139e140: 71 e 83 pp.

⁶ Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (2018). Decree n.º 2018-1157 of December 14 of 2018 publishing the maritime delimitation agreement between the government of the French Republic and the government of the Republic of Suriname (together with an annex), concluded in Paris on November 8, 2017.

⁷ Cayenne Accords of April 1, 2017. Examination of the claims of the CPMEM of Guyana - Record of decisions.

⁸ Berthelot, C. (2016). Water Monitoring, Prospects. Question to the Minister of Environment, Energy and Sea No. 96193 published in the OJ on 31/05/2016 (p. 4602).

Considering also, the 30% increase in IUU fisheries activities in the *Amana* National Nature Reserve, a place of international importance for sea turtle nesting, with about 25 illegal *tapouilles* (vessels) registered in French waters, recorded during an aerial inspection between *Iracoubo* and the *Maroni* estuary in 2021, compared to only 4 recorded in 2000 ⁹.

The deputies of the CRPMEM from French Guyana are concerned that, despite of previously submitted documents warning of IUU fishing in their waters^{10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19}, it appears to be increasing, representing a major threat to the survival of sea turtles, the tourism, and the sustainability of French Guyana's small-scale and subsistence fisheries.

Therefore, the Outermost Regions Advisory Council **recommends that, the European Commission, and the Member States, make all the necessary efforts to effectively initiate the combat against illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in French Guyana, as well as in the other Outermost Regions, namely by reinforcing the sanctions for those who fish and those who buy.**

The President of the Executive Committee of the CCRUP,

(David Pavón González)

⁹ Guyana 1.º (2021). illegal fishermen gain ground west of Guyana. Article published October 21, 2021, after the ULM aerial survey conducted by WWF.

¹⁰ Berthelot, C. (2009). Aquaculture and professional fishing, Fishing, Halieutic resources, Preservation. Question to the National Assembly No. 64636 published in the OJ on 24/11/2009 (p. 819) and answer published in the OJ on 26/01/2010 (p. 11013).

¹¹ Patient, G. (2012). Fight against illegal fishing. Written Question No. 21883, published in the Senate OJ of 19/01/2012 (p.138) and response from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, Rural Affairs and Urban and Rural Planning, published in the Senate OJ of 08/03/2012 (p. 637).

¹² CSRPN (2012). Motion against the plundering of halieutic resources in Guyana's EEZ. Motion.

¹³ CRPMEM (2012). Response to the "motion against plunder". Blada article.

¹⁴ Karam, A. (2018). Strengthening the fight against illegal fishing in Guyana. Oral question No. 0245S, published in the Senate OJ of 22/02/2018 (p. 749) and response by the Ministry of Overseas Territories published in the Senate OJ of 21/03/2018 (p. 2423).

¹⁵ UICN (2020). Reduce the impact of fishing on marine biodiversity. Motion.

¹⁶ CRPMEM Guyana (2020). Request for sanctions from the European Commission against the countries responsible for IUU fishing in Guyana's EEZ. Motion.

¹⁷ Animal Condition Committee (2020). A more sustainable and ethical approach to fishing. Motion.

¹⁸ Senate (2022). The Overseas Territories at the center of national maritime strategy. Information report.

¹⁹ Nature reserves of France (2022). Motion on foreign illegal fishing in Guyana's marine protected areas.