

**12<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

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**SC12 - Doc 14**

**Annual Report of Belize to the SC**

*Belize*

## **Belize's 2023 Annual Scientific Report**

### **South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO)**

**Date:** July 09, 2024

Belize presents the Scientific Annual Report in compliance with the Conservation and Management Measures of the Commission. The report provides an account of the activities carried out by its fishing fleet within the SPRFMO Convention area from January 1st to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. However, it is important to note that there was only one active fishing support vessel that was authorized to operate in the Convention Area in 2023 but no authorized fishing vessels within the convention area during this period.

#### **Description of Fisheries**

Belize has only been an SPRFMO participant since January 2022 as a Cooperating non-Contracting Party and as a Contracting Party since February 2023. As a result, there is nothing to report for fleet composition and summary tables.

#### **Catch, Effort and CPUE Summaries**

In 2023, there were no fishing vessels operating within the SPRFMO Convention area except for one fishing support vessel which was registered in August 2023.

#### **Fisheries Data Collection and Research Activities**

No Belizean fishing vessels operated in the SPRFMO Convention Area in 2023, therefore no fisheries data collection system was implemented for this area. However, our standard system for the collection of fisheries data is via logbooks, catch and effort data reporting sheets, landed data and partially by our e-log system which is integrated into our vessel monitoring system.

Furthermore, we did not conduct any research activities or participated in any scientific programs within the Convention Area.

#### **Biological Sampling and Length/Age Composition of Catches**

No Belizean fishing vessels were engaged in operations within the SPRFMO Convention Area in 2023, consequently leading to the absence of any biological and size-frequency data.

#### **Ecosystem Approach considerations**

There were no fishing vessels operating in the SPRFMO Convention Area in 2023, thus there are no seabird mitigation measures or those used for other taxa to report. Additionally, there are no data reporting of observed bycatch by species, fishery and location for all seabirds, marine mammals, reptiles, or any other species.

#### **Observer Implementation Reports**

In 2023, there were no fishing vessels operating in the SPRFMO Convention Area. Consequently, Belize did not participate in the SPRFMO Observer program. However, it should

be noted that Belize does operate its own observer program in accordance with Section III of its Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Regulations outlined below:

“The [Belize High Seas Fisheries Observer Program] BHSFOP shall cover all vessels including transshipment vessels and shall be carried out in conjunction with any RFMO ROP. The level of coverage shall be adequate to facilitate robust assessment and evaluation of the effects of fishing. Ideal observer coverage levels shall be analytically established against clear objectives to ensure representative and systematic reliable collection of observer data across the fleet, fisheries, species, areas and seasons.

The aim of the program is to achieve 100% coverage with coverage consistent with the recommendations of the relevant RFMOs. The coverage will also be representative of the different vessel type, fisheries and areas of operation.”