



Responsible Sport Fishing: Best Practices Guide

Public Advocacy Program



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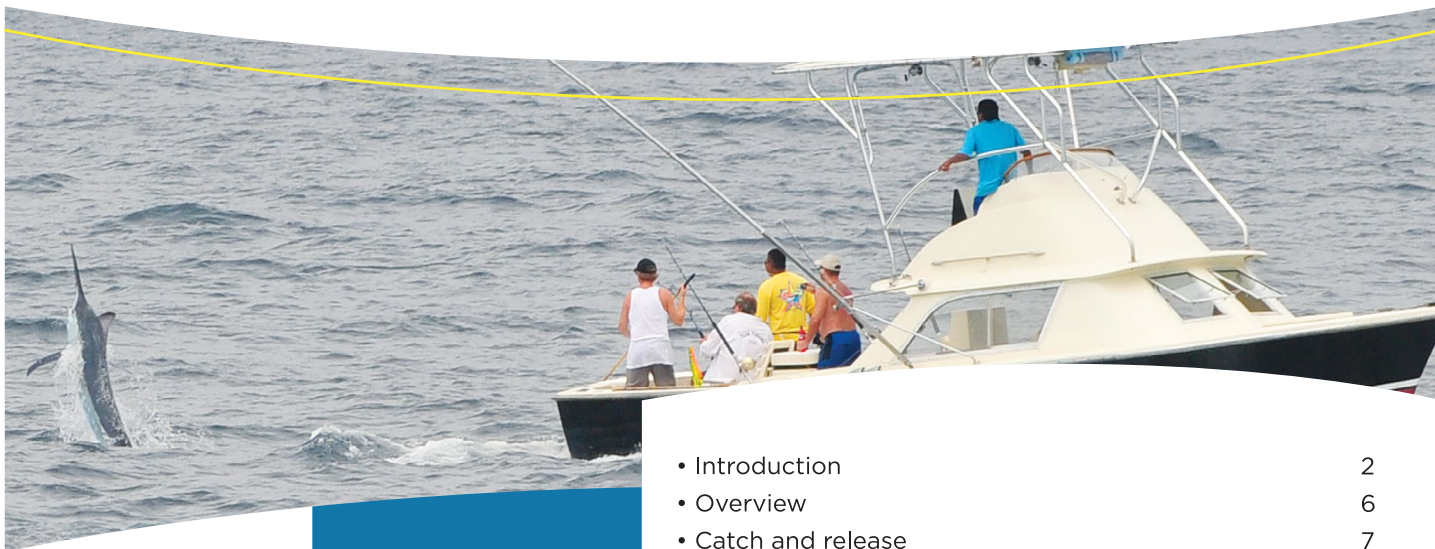
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INTRODUCTION

Sport fishing is widely spread in the Republic of Panama. It is an excellent form of recreation and entertainment, and contributes to socio-economic development in coastal areas. The conservation of our natural resources, particularly our marine resources, should be of special interest to those who practice and promote sport fishing, given that the activity relies on the good health of such resources.

Sport fishing in Panama has grown in recent decades due to the influence of tourism and the development of marina infrastructures and sport fishing clubs. Additionally, several businesses have opened to serve the growing sport fishing market. It is rapidly becoming one of the main pillars of the country's tourism sector.





This guide was conceived by MarViva, in partnership with fishermen and sport fishing captains, and is supported by the Government of Panama through the Panama Tourism Authority (ATP), as well as by several NGOs from the organized fishing sector, and by those working for the sustainable management of renewable natural resources in marine areas, among them: The BillFish Foundation, Ancon Expeditions of Panama, the Panamanian Sustainable Tourism Association (APTS), the Oceanic Association of Panama (Asociación Oceánica de Panamá),

the Panama Maritime Chamber, the Panamanian Spearfishing Association (Asociación Panameña de Pesca Submarina - APPES), the Diablo Spinning Club, the Association of Sport Fishing Clubs (Asociación de Clubes de Pesca Deportiva). The private sector also provided support through La Playita de Amador, the Yacht and Fishing Club, Cebaco Bay, Pesqueros, S.A., SCUBAPANAMA, Centro Marino, Flamenco Yacht Club, Flamenco Marina, Freelanz Corporation, and several Sport Fishermen from the provinces of Veraguas and Chiriquí.



Those who benefit the most from responsible sport fishing practices are the sport fishermen themselves, the populations of target fish species, and the local economies in coastal areas.

Cooperation with the authorities is essential to ensure the conservation and long-term sustainable management of target species, and of those species in the same ecosystem which depend upon them or are associated with them.

A decorative graphic consisting of three overlapping blue teardrop shapes.

The right to fish carries with it the obligation to do so in a responsible manner, so as to ensure the preservation of marine and coastal resources.



Whenever possible, assistance in monitoring, controlling, overseeing and implementing fishing regulations shall be provided to the authorities. All recreational activities must respect human safety provisions, as well as those concerning environmental protection.

The best practices for responsible sport fishing should be regarded as a fundamental starting point to preserve healthy species populations, prevent pollution, over-exploitation and undue pressure on fishing and marine resources in general.

If these best fishing practices are followed, the activity's negative impacts can be minimized substantially.

We present a standard quick reference Guide containing the best responsible sport fishing practices to sport fishermen and related stakeholders.

OVERVIEW



Regardless of the type of fishing conducted in Panamanian waters, it is necessary that each fisherman and boat captain respects, implement, and even expands upon, the following best practices.

Many kinds of fishing practices converge at sea; be tolerant and try to get to know the local people in the places where you go ashore, they could provide valuable information regarding your activity. Make friends!

Observe existing laws and regulations.

Show respect towards others.

Observe all safety measures required for navigation.

Respect Protected Marine Areas and Management Zones, since they usually are sanctuaries and nurseries for species that are important to various fisheries.

Use permitted fishing gear.

CATCH AND RELEASE

WHAT IT IS?

As the name suggests, this consists in simply catching and then releasing the specimen; however, it is necessary to do so respecting certain parameters, to ensure the least possible impact on the target species. Often, when trying to get the best possible picture, we could hurt the specimen, sometimes long before taking it out of the water. Our recommendation on the next page.



1



CATCH

Minimize "fight" time. The shorter the fight time, the more likely the fish's survival, thus allowing it to fight another day. If fishing from a vessel, use the motor to gain line and time.

TAKE A PICTURE

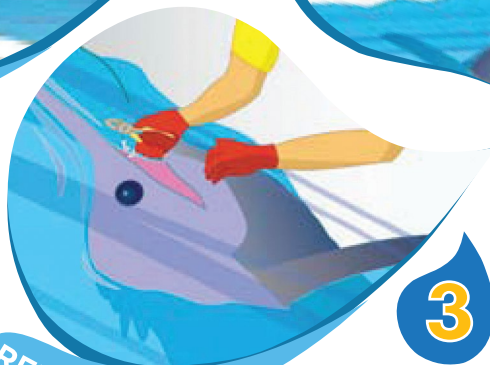


2

Photographing the specimen will provide you with a good souvenir from your trip. In doing so try not to hurt it, and do not put yourself or your companions in danger.

- Do not take the specimen out of the water, much less bring it on board, this can severely hurt it (especially billfish species).
- A photograph of a release is worth much more, and it will make you feel better than the inappropriately named "hero shot".
- The catching and releasing of billfish is a good practice that has been legally recommended by Executive Decree 33 from August 20, 1997.

3



RELEASE

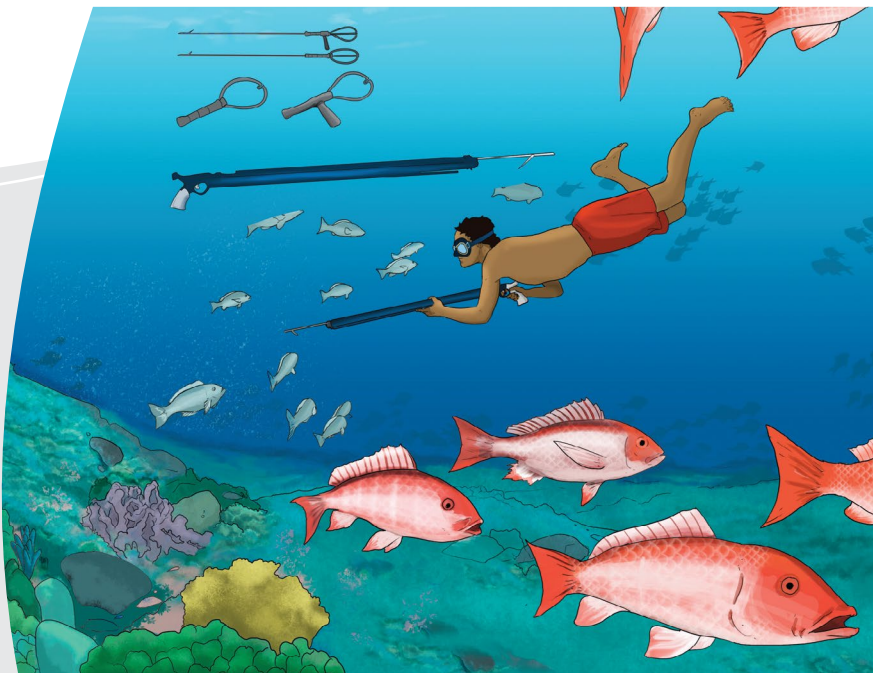
Release the fish promptly and correctly. Do not touch the specimen's eyes and gills; these are its most sensitive and vital areas. Aerate or "revive" the specimen if it is exhausted after the "fight". To do this, gradually circulate water by the fish's mouth until it recovers. When in a vessel, the water flow generated by the motion may be helpful. When fishing from the shore, move the fish back and forth in the water.

FISHING GEAR

According to existing legislation in the Republic of Panama, the gear allowed in sport fishing, either from anchored or from moving vessels, includes: string, rod, reel, wire, and hook.

When fishing with bait, choose circle hooks. These hooks decrease the likelihood of deeply hooking the specimen's gut, throat or eyes, and make a successful release easier. Survival of the specimen is very high when using circle hooks.

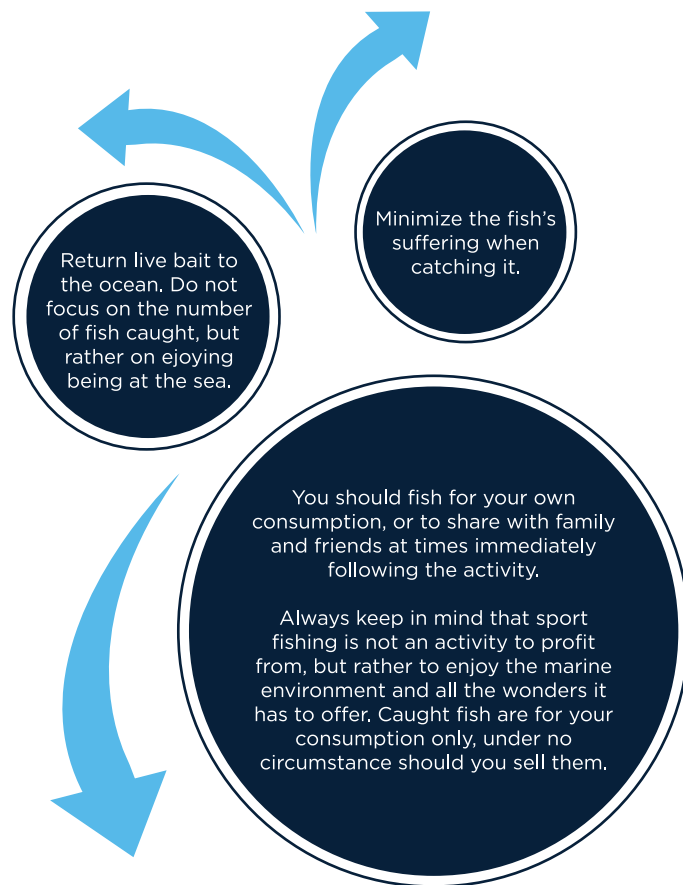
Use non-stainless hooks, because if you fail to remove a stainless one, it can do much damage to the specimen. Also, you can voluntarily remove hook's barb.

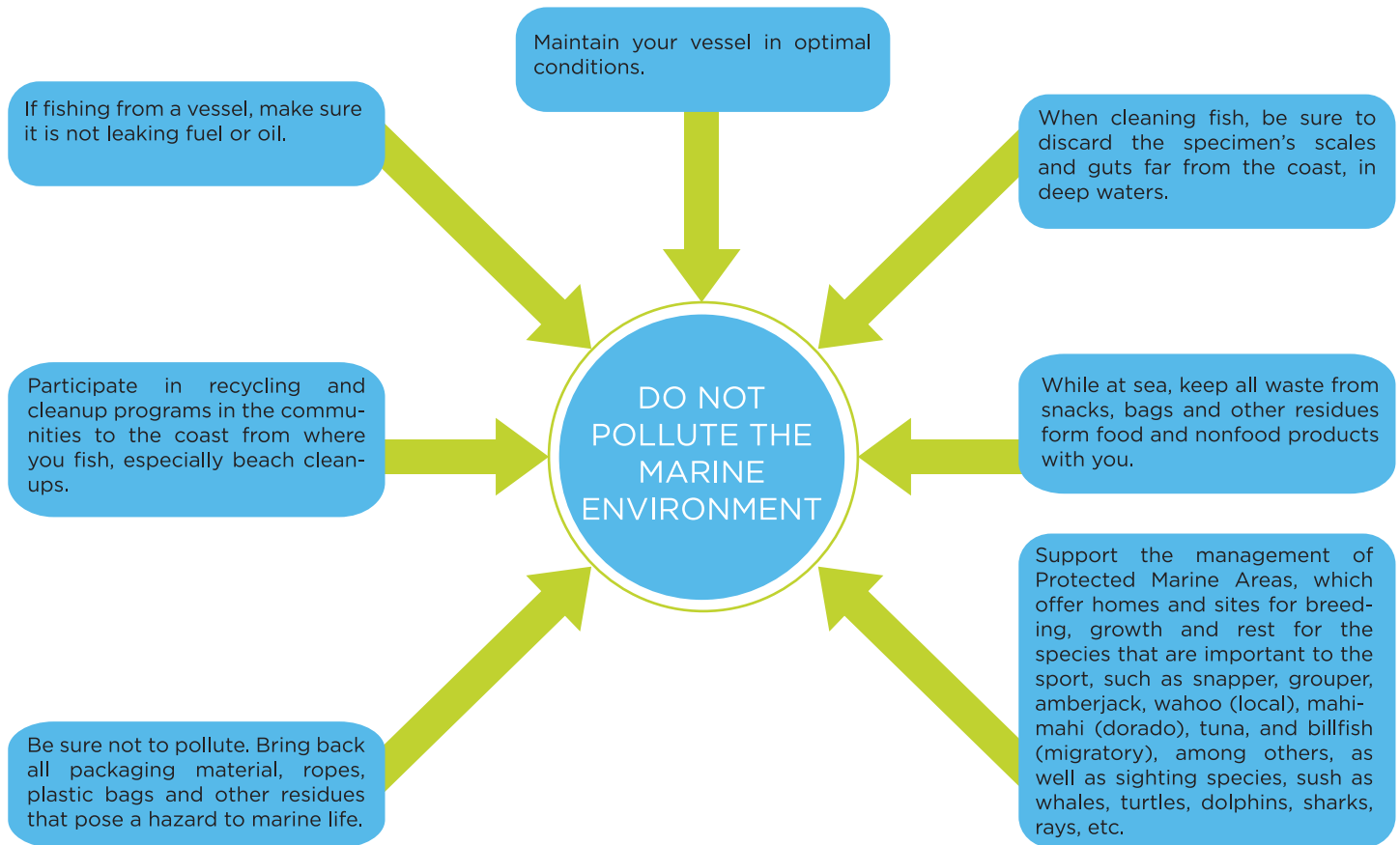


SPORT FISHING AS A RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY

Always be sure to minimize impacts on the marine environment. Remember, sport fishing is not commercial fishing. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) , Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries makes it very clear that fishing is a vital source of food and recreation, both for present and for future generations; hence, it must be conducted responsibly. With this in mind, we recommend the following best practices for sport fishing:

¹ Regulation ARAP 003 November 18, 2009 (G.O. 26422 of 07/12/09) which adopts the Code of Conduct for Responsible Organization of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Fisheries and its annexes.





CARBON CONSCIOUS FISHING

WHAT IS CARBON CONSCIOUS FISHING?

Consists on different measures in order to aim towards lowering CO² (Carbon Dioxide) emissions during fishing activities. Think about the many ways you can reduce your carbon footprint when you go fishing.

Our recommendations on the next page.



CARBON CONSCIOUS FISHING

Pack out all your trash. The ocean or lakes are not trash receptacles. Education is key for an informed, concerned and involved sport fishing community. The meaning of Panama's name "Abundance of Fishes" cannot be sustained without your help.

The less fuel (carbon) we burn while fishing, the less potential damage we may do to the environment. We can all do our part by reducing the amount of carbon that our fishing trips put into the atmosphere.

Replace the propellers of your boat with a new stainless steel ones (SS) usually provides more cup, allowing you to trim out more and provide higher efficiency and since the blades are thinner, the boat will have less drag and thus more fuel efficiency.

Use your equipment properly; closely monitor your fuel consumption to find your most efficient cruising speed.

Keep up with the recommended maintenance on the engines and keep all parts of it boat in top condition.

Learn to go easy on the throttle and teach the younger fishing generation to be mindful about good boating practices.

KAYAK FISHING: A CARBON CONSCIOUS FISHING ALTERNATIVE?

If you are really into being Carbon Conscious, try fishing from a Kayak or Surf Casting from any of Panamas spectacular beaches. The fishing action and excitement that you will experience when you "Hook Up" will remind of the joy you felt when you first started fishing.

Use human power to paddle a kayak. It will save fuel. Also, the size of the storage on kayaks will limit the number of fish that can be taken.

Remember: always use the proper size of rods and reels for the type of fish, poppers or live bait for the length of the fish you want to target. You do not want to hook a fish bigger than skills you have to handle and transport it into your kayak safely. Fishing with friends should always be fun and safe. Kayak fishing can be most comfortable early in the morning and late in the afternoon. If you fish during the day, please keep yourself well covered and use plenty of sunscreen. Always use personal flotation devices, paddle leashes and location flags while you are kayak fishing.

Remember that even when there is no legal binding for these recommendations and proposals, it is possible to enjoy the activity while you follow them, contributing so with the conservation of our marine and coastal resources.



MAP OF RESPONSIBLE SPORT FISHING PLACES



PACIFIC OCEAN

PEDASI

Yellowfin tuna



Wahoo



Pompano



Almaco jacks

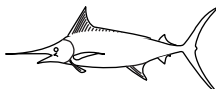


Crevalle jacks



HANNIBAL BANK

Blue, black & striped marlin



Pacific sailfish



Yellowfin tuna



TUNA COAST

Yellowfin tuna



Wahoo



Pompano



Almaco jacks

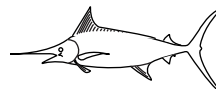


Crevalle jacks



ZANE GREY REEF

Blue, black & striped marlin



Pacific sailfish



Bigeye yellowfin



MARIATO POINT

Yellowfin tuna



Wahoo



Pompano



Almaco jacks



Crevalle jacks



Dorado



Cubera snapper



Trevally



Grouper



PACIFIC OCEAN

BANCO HANNIBAL

↳ Dorado



BAHÍA PIÑA

↳ Amberjack



↳ Wahoo



↳ Pacific sierra



↳ Crevalle jacks



LAS PERLAS

↳ Yellowfin tuna



↳ Wahoo



↳ Pompano



↳ Almaco jacks



↳ Crevalle jacks



MONTUOSA ISLAND

↳ Yellowfin tuna



↳ Pacific sailfish



↳ Grouper



ATLANTIC OCEAN

ISLA GRANDE

🐟 Yellowfin tuna



🐟 Amberjack



🐟 Great Barracuda



🐟 Permit



🐟 African Pompano



🐟 Cubera Snapper



🐟 Grouper



🐟 Spanish Mackerel

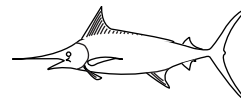


🐟 Crevalle jack



VOLCAN REEF

🐟 Marlin



🐟 Wahoo



🐟 Dorado



🐟 Amberjack



🐟 Cubera snapper



🐟 Grouper



LAKES AND RIVERS

BAYANO RIVER - COQUIRA

↳ Tarpon



↳ Snook



LOWER CHAGRES RIVERMOUTH

↳ Tarpon



↳ Snook



LAKES AND RIVERS

GAMBOA - ARENOSA

↳ Bass



GATUN LAKE - MELIA AREA

↳ Bass



ALWAYS REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING



SPORT FISHER WHO WANT TO REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING SHOULD WRITE DOWN, IF POSSIBLE, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Date	Time	Latitude	Longitude	Witness vessels	Witness fishers

REPORTS TO PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY

Hotline	501-5033	311.gob.pa
Puerto Mutis	999-8080	
Puerto Pedregal	712-1232	

REPORTS TO THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITY (AUTORIDAD NACIONAL DEL AMBIENTE - ANAM)

General Headquarters	500-0855 Ext 6002	
Chiriquí Headquarters	774-6671	http://consult.anam.gob.pa/denuncia_web/index.php
Veraguas Headquarters	998-4271	

REPORTS TO THE AQUATIC RESOURCES AUTHORITY (AUTORIDAD DE LOS RECURSOS ACUÁTICOS - ARAP)

Hotline	511-600	
Puerto Pedregal	721-2730	denuncias@arap.gob.pa
Puerto Mutis	999-8610	

REPORTS TO THE NATIONAL AIR AND NAVY SERVICE (SERVICIO NACIONAL AERONAVAL - SENAN)

Hotline	211-6000	
Base aeronaval David	721-1078	senan@aeronaval.gob.pa
Puerto Mutis	999-8642	

ALWAYS REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING



The Interinstitutional Coordination Platform (PCI, for its acronym in Spanish) APP for smartphones is on PlayStore for Android devices, and for iOS at the Apple's APPStore. With this tool, users will be able to complain directly to PCI authorities, on presumably illegal situations related to illegal fishing within jurisdictional waters. Accessing www.plataformadecoordinacion.gob.pa, the application for both devices can be downloaded directly.

In addition, the page contains links to contact the various environmental and fishery authorities, through which we can inform them about related.

REGULATIONS

EXISTING REGULATIONS REGARDING SPORT FISHING IN THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

- 1. The 1972 Political Constitution of the Republic of Panama**, as amended in 2004, states in Article 296 that: "The Law shall regulate hunting, fishing and forest use, so as to ensure their renewal and the permanence of their benefits."
- 2. Law No. 24 from June 7, 1995, amended by Law No. 29 from November 24, 2005, and regulated by Executive Decree 43 from July 7, 2004**, defines Sport Fishing as one that is carried out using hooks to catch benthic and pelagic species within a protected area for recreational and non-commercial purposes. It prohibits fishing with explosives, poisonous or toxic substances, or harpoons using autonomous or non-autonomous equipment (scuba tank or diving suit) for breathing underwater.
- 3. Law Decree 17 from July 9, 1959** defines Sport Fishing as "one which is conducted as a distraction or exercise, with no other purpose than the activity itself."
- 4. Executive Decree No. 33 from August 20, 1997** reserves the catching of Swordfish, Black Marlin, Atlantic and Pacific Blue Marlin, Striped Marlin, Pacific and Atlantic Spearfish, and White Marlin, for sport fishing alone. Commercial fishing, capturing, exploiting, salt-and-dry processing, and exporting of these species is prohibited. The choice to take action to protect these resources is left up to the fishermen, but sport fishermen are urged to return the specimens to the ocean.
- 5. Decree 197 from November 26, 1953** establishes that all who practice sport fishing, or who fish from row and paddle boats using hooks and harpoons, are exempt from applying for permits or licenses.
- 6. Resolution No. 1 from February 3, 1977** prohibits the use of scuba tanks to catch fish.
- 7. ARAP Resolution 003 from November 18, 2009** adopts the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its annexes, as well as FAO's International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.
- 8. Resolutions 603-07-09 ALCN from May 4, 1992**, and 603-074-25 from August 6, 1992, regulate the issuing of navigation licenses for outboard motors.



ENJOY GOOD FISHING!

Follow and disseminate these best practices, they provide Guidance that benefits sport fishing and the health of our oceans.

If you would like to obtain a copy of this publication, or if you wish to learn more about sustainable fishing practices or make recommendations, feel free to contact us: **info.panama@marviva.net**

We thank everyone who participated in this process

List of Participants

- Panama Tourism Authority (Autoridad de Turismo de Panamá) – www.atp.gob.pa
- Ancón Expeditions of Panamá- www.anconexpeditions.com
- Association of Sport Fishing Clubs (Asociación de Clubes de Pesca Deportiva).
- Oceanic Association of Panama (Asociación Oceánica de Panamá)
- Panamanian Sustainable Tourism Association (APTso) – www.aptso.org
- Panamanian Spearfishing Association (Asociación Panameña de Pesca Submarina – APPES)
- Panama Maritime Chamber – www.camaramaritima.org.pa
- Cebaco Bay- www.cebacobay.com
- Yacht and Fishing Club
- Diablo Spinning Club- www.diablospinningclub.org
- Flamenco Yatch Club
- Flamenco Marina
- Paulette Guardia - www.pauguardia.com
- Freelanz Corporation
- MarViva- www.marviva.net
- Pesqueros, S.A.,- www.pesqueros.com
- La Playita de Amador- www.thebeachhousepanama.com/es/la-playita
- SCUBAPANAMA- www.scubapanama.com
- The BillFish Foundation (TBF)- www.bilfish.org
- Sport Fishermen from Veraguas and Chiriquí Province
- Panama Paddle Center - www.paddlepanama.com



MarViva Foundation is a regional, non-governmental, non-profit organization whose area of action is based on selected areas of the Eastern Tropical Pacific.

Its mission is to encourage the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources through three main strategic programs: Marine Spatial Planning, Sustainable Markets and Local and Institutional Capabilities by means of:

- Facilitating multisectoral participation of communities and marine resource users in forums for the analysis, planning and decision making for the design and implementation of policies, regulations, and management of human activities at sea.
- Promoting the development and implementation of governance schemes in coastal marine areas.
- Supporting the development of value chains in fisheries and marine tourism.
- Strengthening local and technical skills to develop responsible markets.
- Building partnerships and mechanisms for collaboration between local and international organizations and between public and private sectors.
- Providing scientific and technical support for the design and implementation of policies, regulations and management of human activities at sea.
- Developing communication and awareness campaigns on the importance of the sea and its sustainable management.



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