



TRANSFORMING WASTED RESOURCES

FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The sustainable management of bycatch in Latin America
and Caribbean trawl fisheries

REBYC-II LAC



Shrimp trawling and other types of bottom trawling provide employment, income and livelihoods for a large number of people in tropical and subtropical countries.

However, in addition to targeted species, these forms of trawling also catches other fish and marine life. This incidental catch is referred to as bycatch – or discards if it is not landed but thrown overboard. Often a significant part of the bycatch consists of small-sized and low-value fish but it can also include juveniles of commercially important fish species as well as highly vulnerable animals such as sea turtles, sharks or rays. Bottom trawl fishing can be damaging to sea-bed habitats and cause conflicts with coastal small-scale fisheries.

When bycatch is effectively managed and utilized, it can contribute to food and nutrition security and constitute an important source of food for local populations. However, when it is discarded, it represents a significant loss of food and revenue.

In the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, progress has been made in reducing both bycatch and sea-bed damage caused by trawling. Nonetheless, trawl bycatch and discards still constitute a sustainability threat and continue to jeopardize livelihoods and long-term food security.

In an average tropical shrimp trawl catch, the quantity of **bycatch** is between

3 AND 15

TIMES MORE
than the **targeted** species



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Today, measures exist to manage bycatch. These can be adapted to specific fisheries and take environmental conditions and socio-economic considerations into account. Previous projects* have shown that efforts to reduce bycatch effectively need to be an integral part of trawl fisheries management. A comprehensive and participatory approach focusing on shared management and the livelihoods of fishing communities is needed to achieve sustainable and responsible trawl fisheries.

BYCATCH: anything that a fisher does not intend to catch but that still ends up in the net or gear

DISCARDS: the part of the bycatch that is not utilized but returned to the sea, either dead or alive

THE REBYC-II LAC PROJECT

The REBYC-II LAC project aims to reduce food loss and support sustainable livelihoods by improving the management of bycatch and minimizing discards and sea-bed damage, thereby transforming bottom trawl fisheries into responsible fisheries. The project seeks to safeguard both human and environmental well-being.

To achieve this, the project covers **four integrated components:**

01 LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

02 RESPONSIBLE FISHING PRACTICES

03 LIVELIHOODS, FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY AND GENDER BALANCE

04 LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE SHARING



* A global UNDP-FAO-GEF project, REBYC was implemented in 2002-08



The most effective way to achieve sustainable and responsible trawl fisheries is through a comprehensive approach involving effective partnerships between the public and private sectors with a focus on the livelihoods of fishing communities.



01 LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Making the necessary changes to reduce bycatch requires an enabling environment in the form of appropriate legal and institutional frameworks. The project will help countries review existing legislation and governance arrangements and suggest amendments conducive to engagement by the fishing sector in fisheries management and to the establishment of public-private partnerships.

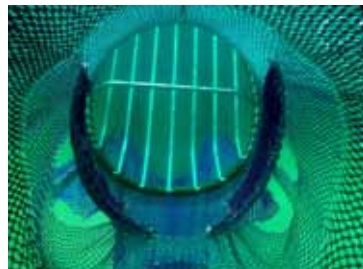
02 RESPONSIBLE FISHING PRACTICES

Improving trawl fisheries management and practices to reduce non-sustainable bycatch involves the use of appropriate technologies and other management measures. Appropriate and reliable data and information are important and essential for effective decision-making, so the project will assist in strengthening the knowledge on bycatch and discards in project countries. Based on this and in close collaboration with fishers and the fishing industry, the project will support the identification of management measures and technologies and promote the creation of incentives for transitioning to more responsible fishing practices.

The turtle excluder device (TED) is one type of bycatch reduction device (above) allowing turtles to swim out of the trawl.

03 LIVELIHOODS, FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY AND GENDER BALANCE

Introducing better management may require changing practices to reduce bycatch and also fishing less overall, potentially leading to less landed catch, at least in the short term. The project will investigate the role of bycatch in food security and livelihoods and explore alternative income generation opportunities for those affected by the management action, including women who are often involved in processing and selling products from bycatch. Capacity development for livelihoods diversification is critical to ensure decent job opportunities and incomes.



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04 LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE SHARING

Finding successful solutions for bycatch and trawl management requires taking local circumstances into account as well as sharing lessons and communicating good practices across fishers, countries and regions. The project will promote increased cooperation among project countries and in the LAC region. Systems and processes for monitoring and assessing project results and communicating these effectively will be set up. The project will be part of the GEF IW:LEARN network, contributing experiences and learning from others.

WHO IS INVOLVED:

The project covers six countries: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Key stakeholder groups engaging in the project include:

- the private fishing sector
- regional fisheries organizations
- NGOs and universities/research institutes.



GUIDELINES

The project is implementing the *International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards* (FAO 2011). Available at www.fao.org/fishery/nems/40157



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SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE

Managing bycatch and discards will provide long-term benefits for transforming food losses and waste into a sustainable future.

Take part in this initiative – help protect the ecosystem, safeguard people's livelihoods and create responsible trawl fisheries that work for present and future generations.





REBYC-II LAC

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