2019 REGIONAL LEATHERBACK BY-CATCH PRIORITIZATION WORKSHOP

PARAMARIBO, 17 – 18TH OF MARCH 2019

A Summary to the WIDECAST Annual General Meeting

MEET THE MEETING PARTICIPANTS

THE ASSESSMENT OF BYCATCH IN THE REGION

NORTH-WESTERN ATLANTIC POPULATION

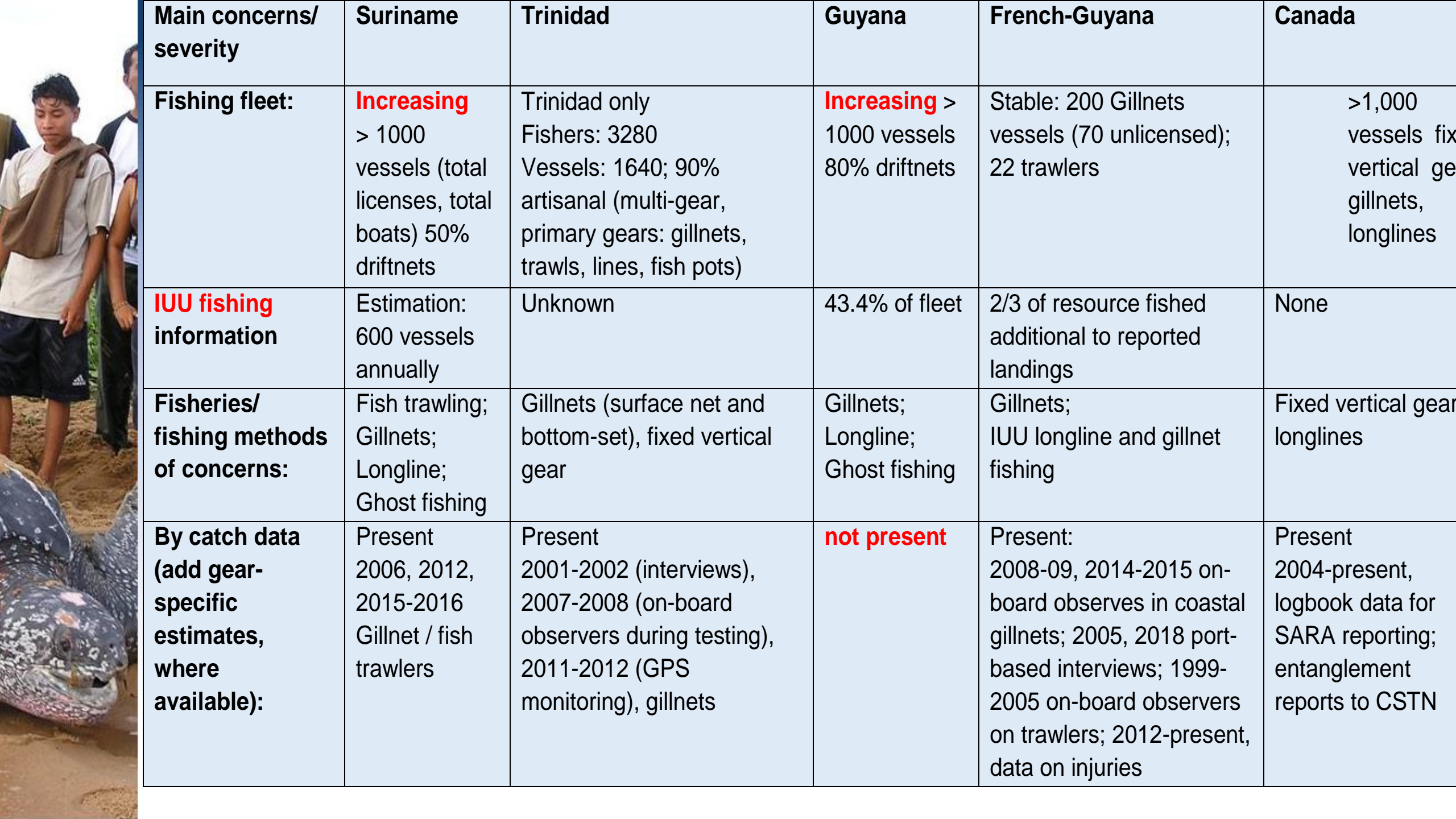Contributing countries:
SURINAME
TRINIDAD
GUYANA
FRENCH-GUYANA
CANADA

Leatherback nesting populations are declining

throughout the region!

Main concerns/ severity	Suriname	Trinidad	Guyana	French-Guyana	Canada
Fishing fleet:	**Increasing** > 1000 vessels (total licenses, total boats) 50% driftnets	Trinidad only Fishers: 3280 Vessels: 1640; 90% artisanal (multi-gear, primary gears: gillnets, trawls, lines, fish pots)	**Increasing** > 1000 vessels 80% driftnets	Stable: 200 Gillnets vessels (70 unlicensed); 22 trawlers	>1,000 vessels fix vertical gea gillnets, longlines
IUU fishing information	Estimation: 600 vessels annually	Unknown	43.4% of fleet	2/3 of resource fished additional to reported landings	None
Fisheries/ fishing methods of concerns:	Fish trawling; Gillnets; Longline; Ghost fishing	Gillnets (surface net and bottom-set), fixed vertical gear	Gillnets; Longline; Ghost fishing	Gillnets; IUU longline and gillnet fishing	Fixed vertical gear longlines
By catch data (add gear-specific estimates, where available):	Present 2006, 2012, 2015-2016 Gillnet / fish trawlers	Present 2001-2002 (interviews), 2007-2008 (on-board observers during testing), 2011-2012 (GPS monitoring), gillnets	**not present**	Present: 2008-09, 2014-2015 on-board observes in coastal gillnets; 2005, 2018 port-based interviews; 1999-2005 on-board observers on trawlers; 2012-present, data on injuries	Present 2004-present, logbook data for SARA reporting; entanglement reports to CSTN

Gaps:

Good news: no gaps in nesting data

Bad news: gaps present in all other areas

Main concerns/ severity	Suriname	Trinidad	Guyana	French-Guyana	Canada
Gaps: fisheries – turtle spatial overlaps knowledge	Yes: gillnet, longline fisheries distribution	No: mapping of turtle habitat use and fishing effort through GPS monitoring and telemetry (2011-2012)	Yes: gillnet, longline fisheries distribution	Yes	Yes: Minimal data on spatial overlaps with fisheries at a fine scale
Gaps: nesting data	No	No	No	None	NA
Gaps: by-catch data	Long-line fisheries on-board observers data	Yes, repetition/ recent	Yes	Yes	Yes: Likely underestimated
Gaps: in regulation (gear adaptation)	Yes, to minimum extent	Yes and underlying documentation	In evaluation	In evaluation	Yes: Enforcement for reporting of entanglements
Gaps: in capacity	Institutional / financial/ technical	Institutional/ financial/ technical	Institutional/ financial/ technical	None	None

Turtle- Fisheries interaction and Protection:

Interaction: medium→ high
No sufficient protection!

Main concerns/ severity	Suriname	Trinidad	Guyana	French-Guyana	Canada
Fisheries-turtle-seasonality overlap of concern:	Waters (xx sea miles) in front of Braamspunt Galibi during the nesting season	Waters in front of Matura and Grand Rivere and other identified hotspots	Waters in front of Shell beach	Waters in front of nesting sites	High density fixed gear vertical lines foraging areas
Clarity in Bycatch evidence in the region:	YES: data	YES: data, ESS (2014); 2005 stakeholder meetings and MIP→ 2008→ revised MIP→ National Policy recommendations	YES: data	YES: data	No: underreporting
Leatherback in water Protection: Low/ medium/ high	TED in shrimp trawling 'NFZ'	None	TED in shrimp trawling 'NNZ'	No-Trawling zone	TED in shrimp trawls; circle hooks in longline fleet
Interactions fishing effort-turtle presence: Low/ Medium/ High	**HIGH**	**HIGH**	**HIGH**	**Medium**	**Low**

SOLUTIONS:

Main concerns/ severity	Suriname	Trinidad	Guyana	French-Guyana	Canada
Solutions Gear	Flexible TED; Lights??	O1: Replace traditional deep setting surface drift gillnets (100 – 200 "hole") with shallow set "narrow nets" and panel construction.--> **32% - 50% reduction in turtle capture rates, no reduction in fisher income, 80% - 90% reduction in turtle mortality!** O2: Replace gillnet fishing with modern troll line fishing methods.--> **Reduces turtle catch by 100% Requires ½ the capital costs of net fishing Reduced maintenance and fuel costs No reduction in fisher income** • O3: Modernize outdated fishery regulations to include the provision of time-area closures of leatherback 'hot-spots'.: *Changes can be implemented using authority already granted to the Minister of Food Production, Land, and Marine Affairs: no further Act of Parliament is needed to implemented these proposals."* **Benefits:** • Turtle mortality will be reduced by 95% according to our analysis		O1 : Adapt fishing gear and practices, adopt Bycatch Reduction Devices O2 :Change type of fishing gear . Reduce net height	Reduction of vertical lines (regulations or tech solutions)

Main concerns/ severity	Suriname	Trinidad	Guyana	French-Guyana	Canada
Solutions on regulation and enforcement	Mandatory TED for fish trawling; enforcement NFZ Galibi; establishment NFZ Braamspunt	Several (4) options to mitigate bycatch in gill nets: placement, avoidance, alternative fishing methods: trolling	Enforce the NNZ	PALICA project Training and data transmission	Improved reporting; identification of Critical Habitat
Solutions temporal spacing/ MPA	NFZ Galibi and Braamspunt	None		O3 :Limit or ban fishing activities depending on season and place	MPAs

SOLUTIONS:

Main concerns/ severity	Suriname	Trinidad	Guyana	French-Guyana	Canada
Bycatch priorities	Enforcement NFZ NFZ Braamspunt	Socio-economic study; recent By-catch data; adoption of alternative test into practice, by fishermen. Commitment from government and fishermen. Recommendations: Gear Restrictions… net size / type? Incentive programs… Gear exchange or conservation gear subsidies Support regulatory reform based around time area closures and gear restrictions.	Data collection and by-catch surveys	At an international level : Illegal fishing using gillnets ➔ joint deployment plans… Cf. IUU fishing workshop Longline fishing At a local / national level : Legal fishing using gillnets ➔ Raise funds to test and then implement bycatch reduction fishing gears / methods : ARRIBA, PALICA 2… At a national / european level : Trawl fishing: TED implementation ➔ French Guiana must be the pilot of a European regulation to make the TED mandatory for countries exporting tropical shrimps to EU.	Improve reporting; gathe data on threat ghost gear

Main Priorities:

Main Priorities

Regulations and enforcement: Protection of turtles in the nesting season in the waters at nesting sites, through restricted/ closed areas at nesting sites and in off-coast hotspots (high turtle-fishing interaction areas); develop a strategy to characterize and address bycatch related to IUU fishing (see IUU fishing workshop report for specific recommendations)

Gear: A structured program for testing, adaptation of modified gear in gillnet fisheries in the region; establishing and enforce time/area restrictions for these fisheries.

Data: Structured data collection approach in gillnet fisheries, across the region, in collaboration with fishers, covering socio-economic aspects of the fishers; assess potential impacts of longline fisheries on leatherbacks

E & A: multi-stakeholder (fishers, scientists, conservation groups, decision-makers) symposia to discuss issues and solutions proposed

NEXT STEPS:

Form an overarching organization or committee to facilitate and monitor the actions/ priorities in the region and success toward reduction of leatherback bycatch (FAO, WWF, WECAFC, CRFM), and engage with international conventions, commissions, and initiatives (e.g., ICCAT, IAC). Focal points: Suriname: Hanneke van Lavieren/ Mario Yspol; Guyana: Sopheia, Devon; French Guiana: Laurent; Trinidad: Rosemarie, Nicholas Canada: Brianne Kelly

Strategic framework for leatherback bycatch reduction in the Guianas and T&T

Focus near nesting sites in Guianas and TT, as well as foraging sites in Canada/ US

Focus on gillnet gear and engage fishers; symposium of stakeholders (e.g., fishers, scientists, decision-makers)

Modify the gear

Regulate (enforce and monitor) spatial/ periodical restriction areas/ closure.

Get fishers involved in data collection

Monitor, evaluate Share lessons learned, Adapt Mana

Thank you!