

# Sustainable Management of Bycatch in Latin America and Caribbean Trawl Fisheries (REBYC-II LAC)

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## Suriname’s national Fisheries Management Plan validated by stakeholders

On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2021, the Suriname Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) 2021-2025 was unanimously approved at the Pier of Hotel Torarica in Paramaribo. During a two-day validation workshop, stakeholders worked on the final screening of the FMP, after which it was formally endorsed. The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (MAAFH), Ing. Parmanand Sewdien, and key representatives of both industrial and artisanal fisheries signed a declaration approving the content of the FMP and committing to its implementation.

The fishing sector is of great socio-economic importance to Suriname. This sector provides income through the export of fish and shrimp, and supplies the local market with fresh fishery products. The Fisheries Directorate of the MAAHF has a leading role in the management and conservation of the country’s fisheries resources. In order to achieve good management, a multi-year plan (FMP) has been developed, with the input of all stakeholders involved in the sector and support from FAO/GEF project REBYC II LAC. During the validation workshop, discussions on the content of the plan were limited, as the concept had been prepared through various meetings over the past year. Stakeholders put a lot of emphasis, however, on the need for effective implementation of the plan and improved monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing activities.

Chairman of the fisherfolk organization, Visserscollectief, Mr. Mohamedhussein, spoke on behalf of the artisanal fishery and expressed his appreciation to the Directorate of Fisheries, since thousands of people depend directly and indirectly on the fishing industry, from the catch to the sale of fish and shrimp. He indicated that there is a real need for more cooperation among fisherman in further organizing the sector. He acknowledged that many challenges remain in the fishing sector and that several fish stocks are under high pressure. Mr. Udo Karg, represented the Surinamese Seafood Association and spoke on behalf of the industrial fisheries during the validation session. He complimented the organization of the workshop that the Minister is present to sign the plan immediately and commit to its implementation. According to Mr. Karg, transparency is very important.

Fisheries Director Mr. Parveen Amritpersad indicated in her speech that there are still many challenges. One of the biggest is tackling IUU fishing. According to the director, Suriname is experiencing loss of income because of IUU and urgent action is needed. Guaranteeing access to export markets is also a major challenge, as these markets are increasingly demanding. She called on the sector to roll up their sleeves, so that work can be done to bring the sector to greater heights. She emphasized that cooperation with the various supervisory authorities should be strengthened and the sector might have to contribute to the high costs associated with enforcement. The Minister had the final say during the workshop and gave an extensive speech prior to signing the FMP declaration. His main message was that we must now move towards enforcing this management plan. The weaknesses in the various authorities and institutions are known and we need to address them. In his own words, he counts on unity within the fisheries sector to support his policy and, conversely, will also serve the entire fisheries sector.

With the approval of the FMP 2021-2025, an important milestone has been achieved in the management of Surinamese fisheries. It was agreed to meet annually with stakeholders to evaluate the implementation of the plan and to remind each other of the agreements made.

07/04/2021  
Suriname

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