

" The Call to Action from small - scale fishers support fisherfolks of the Ngabe-Bugle indigenous peoples from Panama in the defense of their rights to subsistence lobster fishing in their marine life territory".

March 24, 2023

PANAMA:

The Ngabe-Bugle marine territory of life located in Panamá, has a wide and rich culture based on small-scale artisanal fishing, which provides the main source of food security for families living in this territory of life. With their traditional knowledge and fisheries, they have implemented a lobster fishing, and have contributed to the conservation of marine biodiversity.

However, this livelihood is in danger, because the Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA) agreed on a lobster ban season Ngabe-Bugle territory / Kusapin District precisely during the months in which this specie is found and is caught more easily by the Ngabe fishing communities. This goes hand in hand with the defense of Escudo de Veraguas Island, an area where small-scale artisanal fishing is also practiced in the Ngabe-Bugle region.



Based on what has been mentioned so far, the leader representing the Ngabe-Bugle region and who is part of the Sea workers Union (SITRAMAR for its name in Spanish), organization that since 2022 is also member of the ICCA Consortium. Alfonzo Simón Raylan, has been an active part of the Marine territories of Life movement at the Mesoamerican and global level. Since the last UN Ocean Conference, small scale fishers launched a Call to Action for Artisanal in which they presented a series of specific actions that authorities at the local, regional, and national levels should follow to support the small-scale artisanal fishing sector of the world.

On Thursday, March 23, 2023, Alfonso Simón had the opportunity to participate in a meeting with authorities to discuss the impacts of the lobster ban in his marine life territory, where he presented The Call to Action and its content.



In this context, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, of which Panama is part, in December 2022 approved the Global Diversity Framework. This document has stated clearly that biodiversity conservation should be done with a human rights approach. One of its main pillars is the respect towards local communities and indigenous peoples' rights and participation in decision making when addressing biodiversity conservation issues in their territories.

Alfonso Simón's actions are a vital part of how the implementation of the Global Biodiversity framework should be done, not only of his region, but also worldwide . Participation of people whose way of life is small-scale artisanal fishing and which in most cases is the only source of employment and access to decent work and food security for entire families living in the different marine territories .

According to Alfonso Simón, this meeting "was an opportunity to present the Call to Action, and were informed that the first week of April we would have a definitive decision on the issue of lobster catch in our region. We hope in April to have the legal documents that prove that we can continue fishing, which will allow us to improve the conditions of the Ngabe fishermen and continue with a sustainable lobster fishery in our territory.



MORE ON THE ARTISANAL FISHERIES CALL TO ACTION:

CoopeSoliDar R.L:

<http://coopesolidar.org/>

Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements

<https://www.cffacape.org/>

Confédération Africaine des Organisations de Pêche Artisanale

<https://caopa.org/>

