

The Local Guide to **BETTER CATCHES**



SOLWATA
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
BLO IUMI



This booklet was produced by cChange in partnership with the Locally-Managed Marine Area Network International (LMMA) and the Pacific Community (SPC) through the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme with financial support from the European Union and the Government of Sweden. Its contents are the sole responsibility of cChange. The views in this booklet do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union and the Government of Sweden.

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All fish and marine species illustrations by Hazel Adams (HA), Les Hata (LH) and Rachel O'Shea (RO) were reproduced in this guide with permission of the Pacific Community (SPC) and cChange, unless otherwise noted. Photo sources are acknowledged where necessary.

About this booklet & Acknowledgements

Solwata Blo lumi is a national campaign that is showcasing the Solomons Way of working together to improve our marine resources. The power of the campaign ultimately lies in the people and communities who help spread the message on how communities can get better catches. Share and use this *Local Guide to Better Catches* to help communities get better catches for their food and income needs.

Tangio tumas to the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM), and their provincial government and non-government partners who have informed this booklet. This coalition is working towards scaling-up community-based resource management (CBRM) so that no community goes without receiving information to make informed resource management decisions.

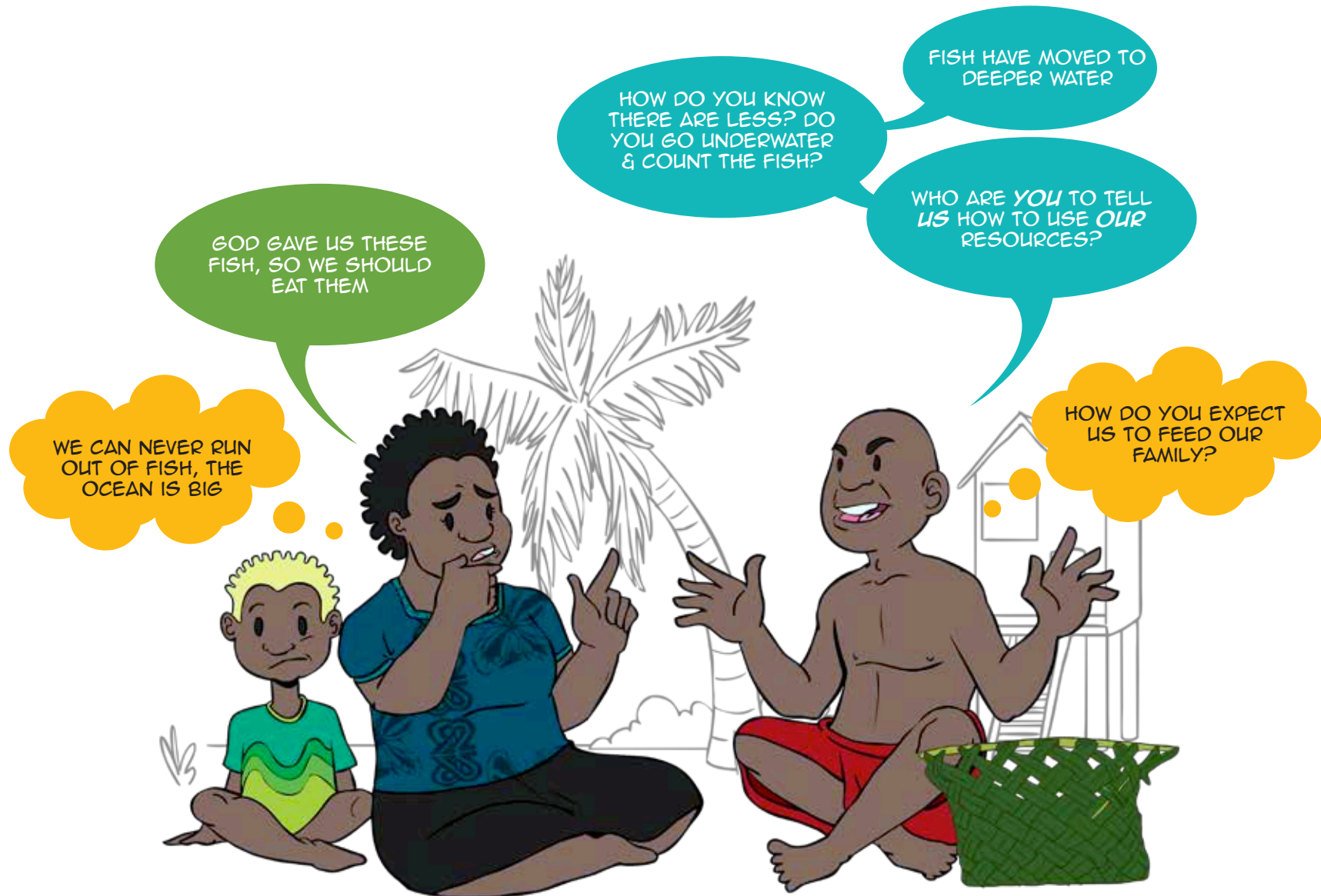


SECTION 1

What's the problem?



When we start talking about fisheries management, here are the kinds of responses we hear most often:



But if you ask people how their catches have changed over the years, here is what you find.

1980

WE HAVE PLENTY
OF FISH.



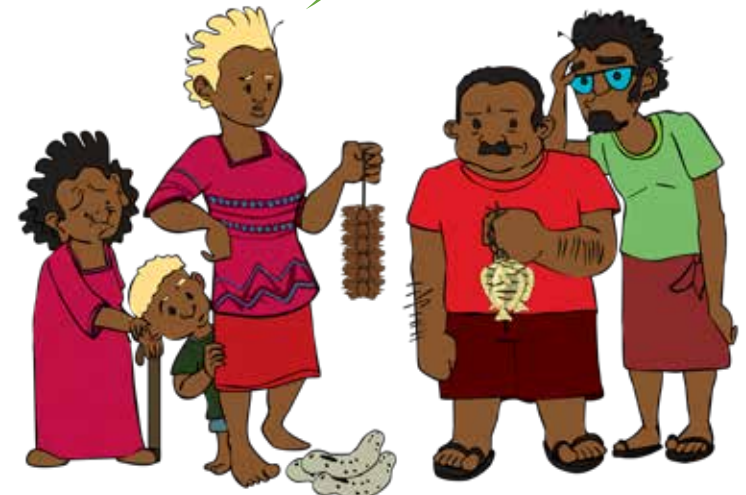
2000

WE HAVE
ENOUGH ...

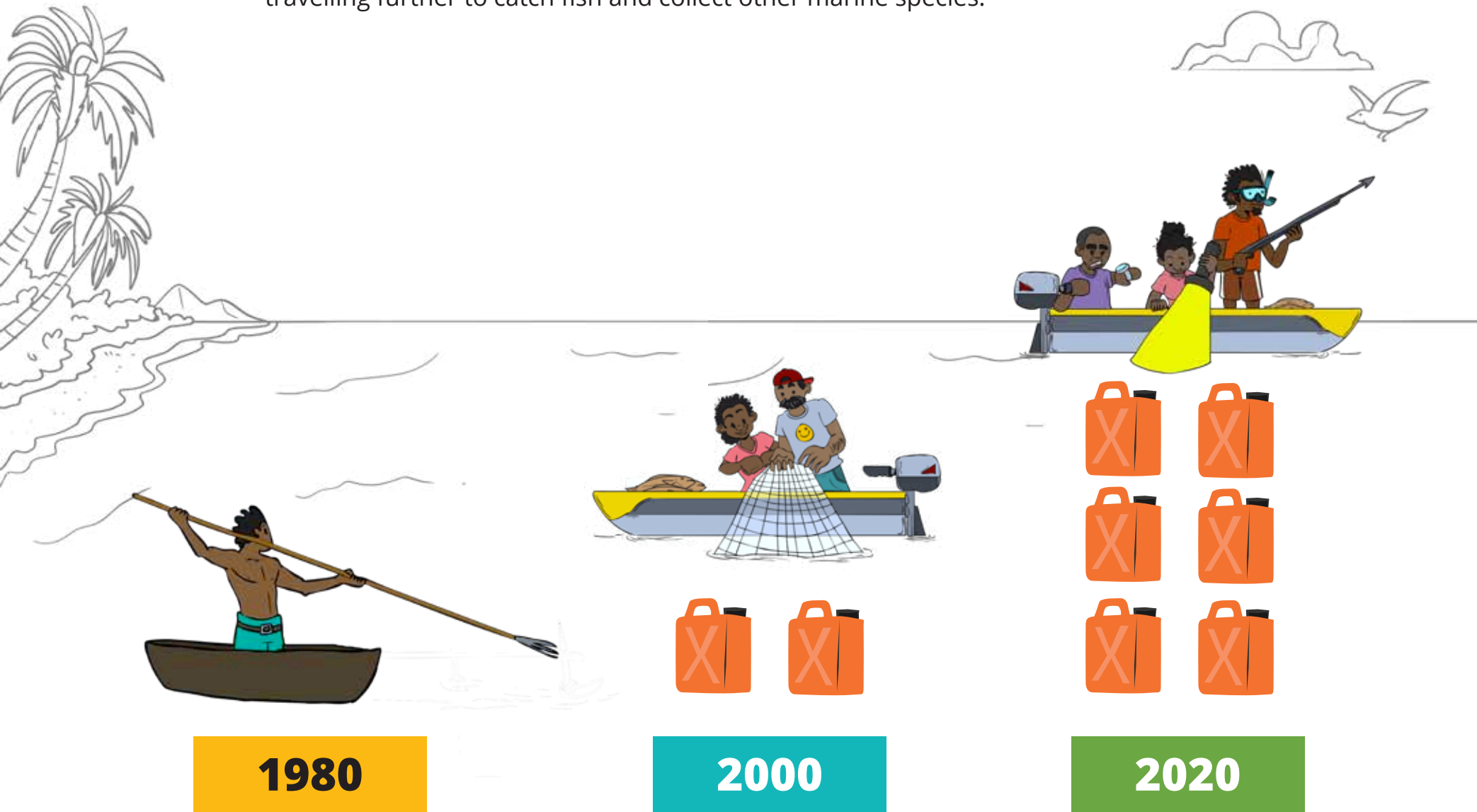


2020

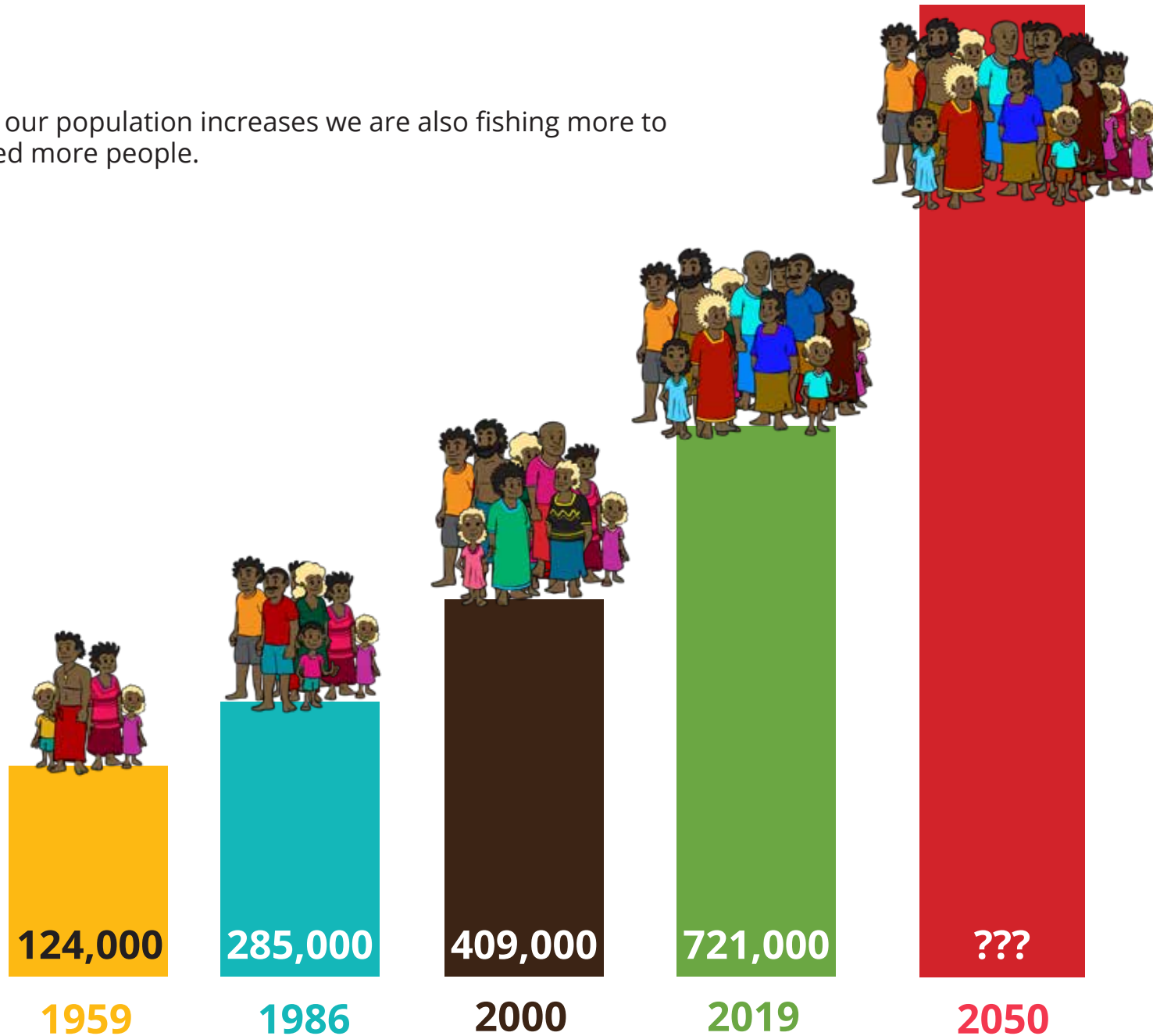
IT IS HARDER



It is also taking more time and costing more money as we are travelling further to catch fish and collect other marine species.



As our population increases we are also fishing more to feed more people.



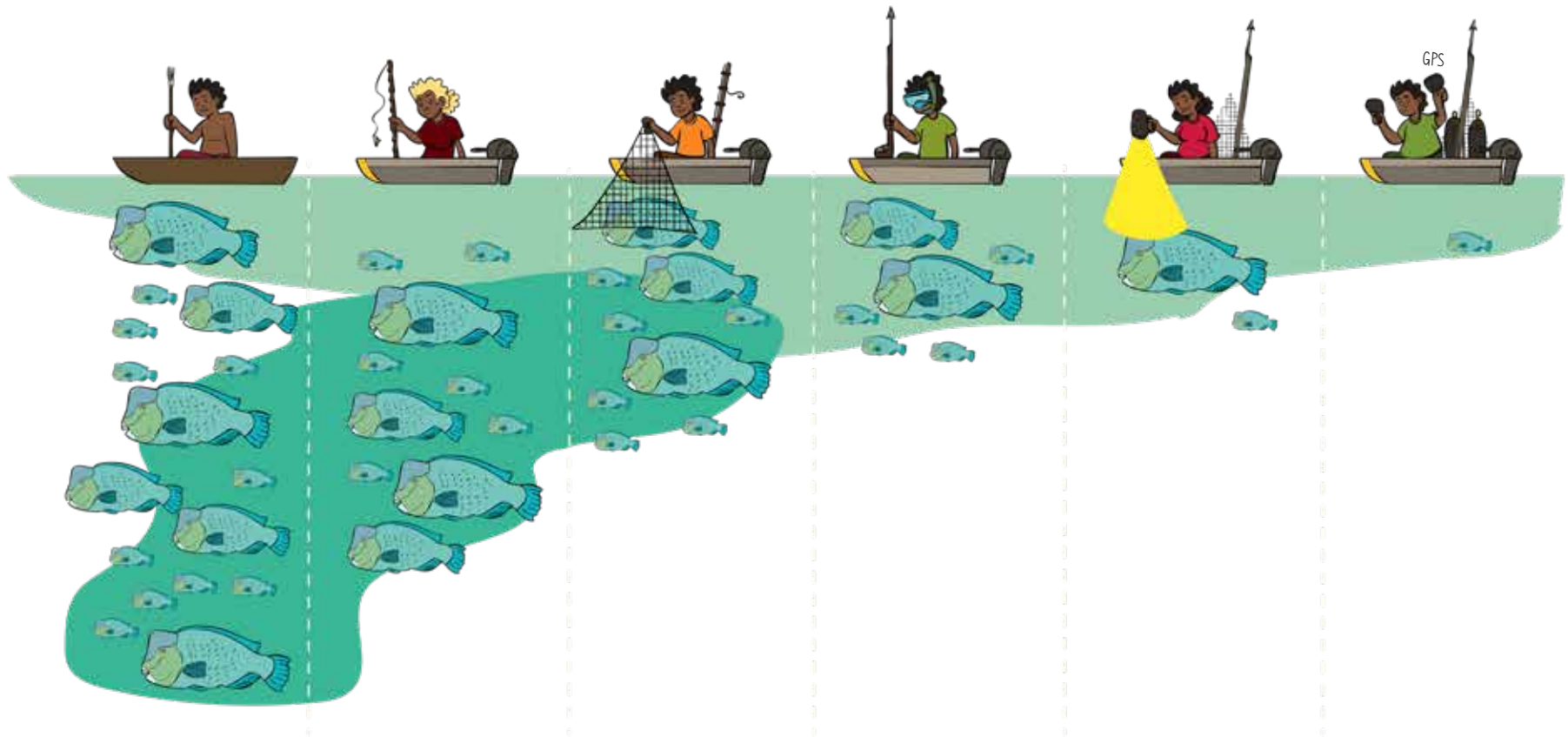
Solomon Islands national population (source: Solomon Islands Census, 2009 and 2019)

We are also fishing more to sell for cash to pay for our needs
and the increasing cost of things.



Fishing gear has also improved over the years, making it easier to catch more fish.
Too few fish are left behind to breed and restock our fishing grounds.

This needs to change if we want good catches to eat and sell, year after year.



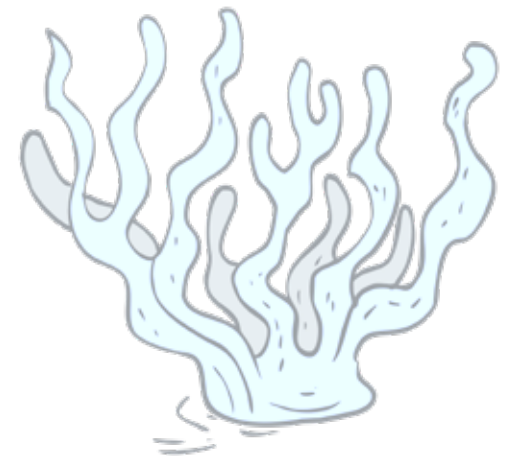
There are also threats to the places that fish and other marine species live and need to thrive – their habitats.



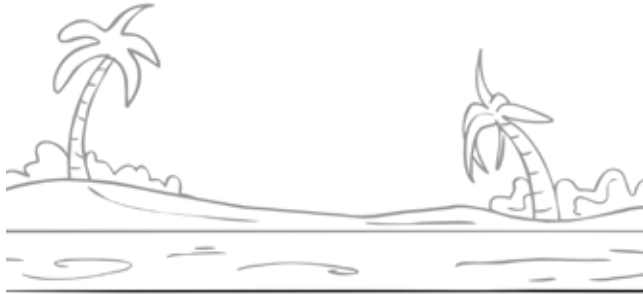
Mangroves are critical habitats, particularly for crabs and young fish. Clearing mangroves for firewood and building materials impacts habitats needed for species to grow. Using mangroves as a toilet is also harmful.



Logging and burning vegetation cause soil to flow into creeks and rivers then to the sea. Dirty water then smothers reefs, which can kill coral and other important habitats like seagrass. Mining can also badly impact land and marine resources.



Warming seas and polluted water can kill coral, as seen when the coral turns bleach white.



Breaking live coral for lime or removing stones to build sea walls. Corals and stones are important habitats for reef fish and other marine species.



Oil, detergent, human and animal waste, fertiliser and other chemicals can enter creeks and rivers, polluting the water that flows to the sea.

Littering of plastic bottles, bags, containers, drums, cigarette butts, foam packaging and insulation and broken and burnt pieces of plastic are also harmful.



Some fishing methods, such as dynamite fishing, is destructive. It can destroy habitats, is non-selective and kills too many fish, and is dangerous to fishers.

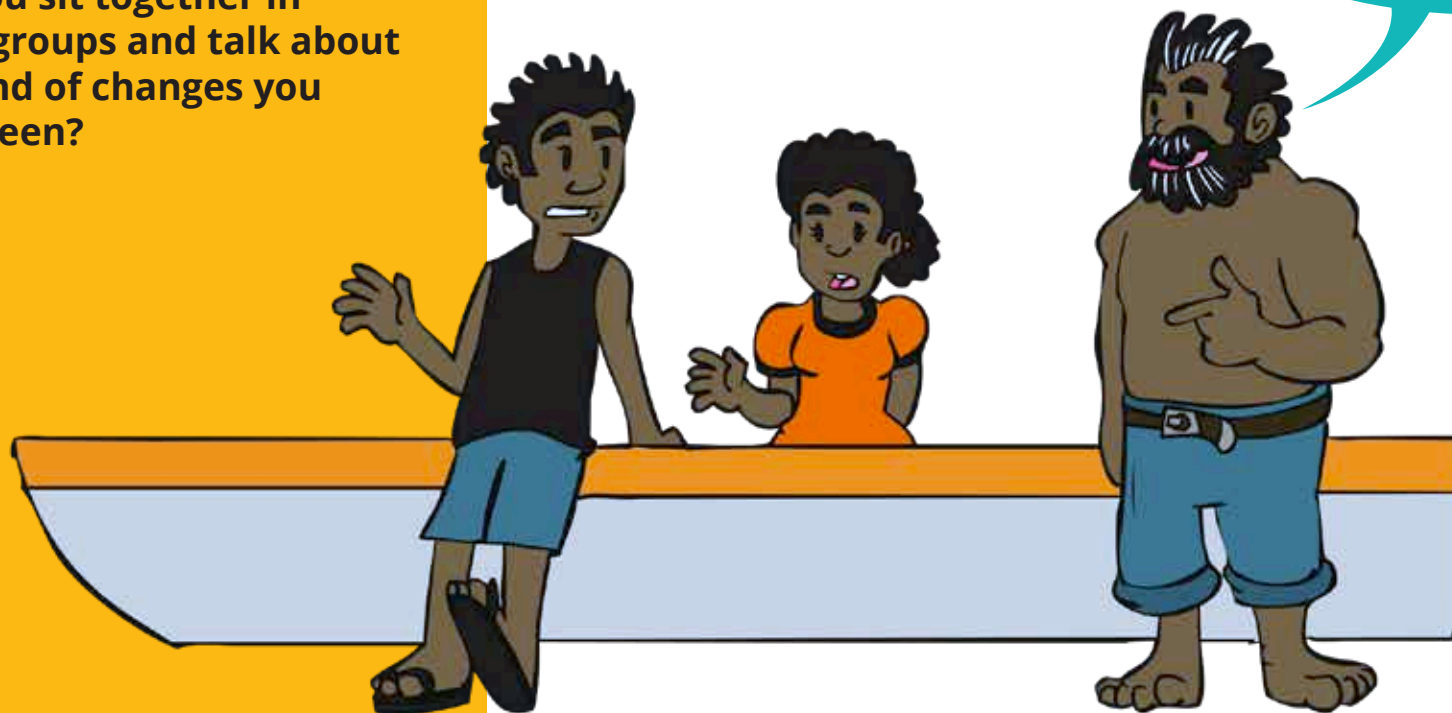
And the truth is, as our lives have changed, some of our traditions are being lost. When rules on who can fish and where are lost, uncontrolled fishing creates a free for all and can lead to marine resource decline, too.



IUMI SIDAON STORI

It's important for communities to talk about the changes they experience and the challenges they face.

Can you sit together in small groups and talk about the kind of changes you have seen?



ARE YOUR CATCHES DECLINING? ARE YOU COLLECTING LESS?

ARE YOU GOING FURTHER AND TAKING LONGER TO GET A GOOD CATCH?

WHAT OTHER CHANGES HAVE YOU SEEN, IN FISHING PRACTICES AND IN LAND USE THAT MIGHT IMPACT YOUR CATCHES?

SECTION 2

What can we do about declining catches?



What can you do about declining catches in your community?

That is where community-based resource management (CBRM) comes in.

CBRM is when communities make management rules to ensure marine resources are used sustainably. The next few pages share some of the typical **management rules communities make to manage their marine resources.**



LEARN MORE

Visit SPC's Echoes of Oceania website & search Infosheets for fishing communities.

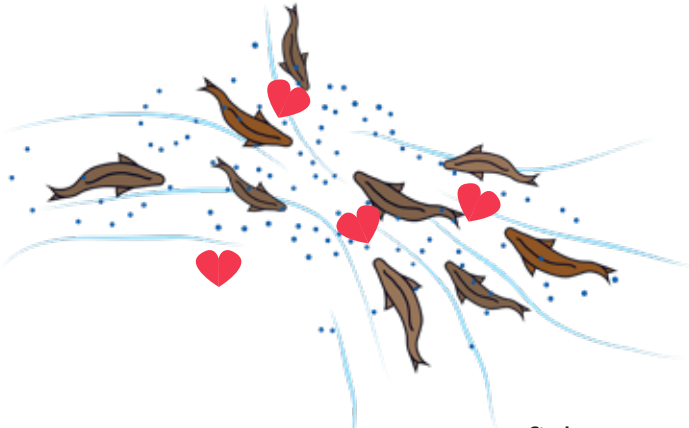


SCAN ME!

TEMPORARY CLOSURES

- Typically used to protect vulnerable species during their peak spawning months, when they migrate or gather in large numbers to breed. If you allow the fish to first breed, you help maintain good catches.
- Temporary closures can also be imposed during times when some marine resources become toxic to people eating them.

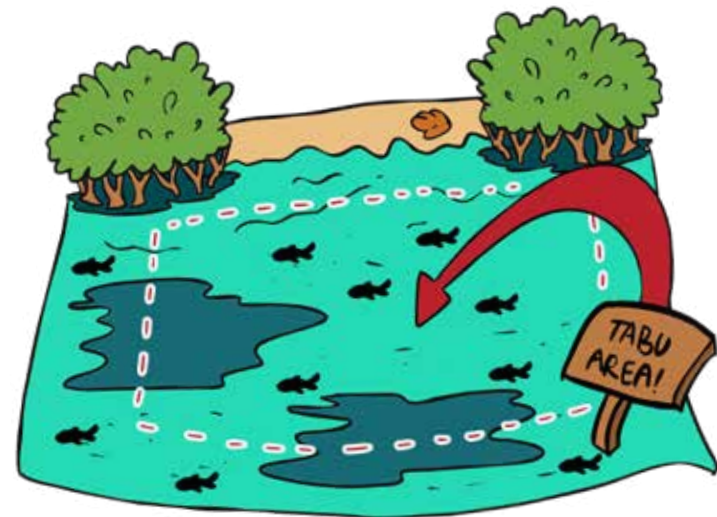
Avoid groupers from October – January during their peak spawning season. It's the law.



+ Snapper, emperor, wrasse, parrotfish, surgeonfish and trevally can also have temporary closures to allow them to breed and increase catches.

PERMANENT CLOSURES

- Marine areas in which the fishing and harvesting of marine resources is banned for many years.
- A permanent closure allows marine resources to reproduce without interference and provides protection of their habitats.
- The ultimate aim of creating a permanent closure is to increase marine resource stocks, which will spill-over into nearby fishing areas, helping to increase catches.
- Fish that swim over large areas and outside the closed area are still vulnerable.



BANS ON HARMFUL FISHING

Consider banning fishing practices that leave too few marine resources behind or damage habitats.

Nighttime spearfishing takes too many fish, cleaning out reefs.



**Small nets catch undersize fish, especially in nursery grounds.
Nets <8cm are banned nationally.**

Poison root fishing is banned. It stuns & can kill everything. It's the law.



Dynamite fishing damages habitat & kills too many species. It's also nationally banned.

LIMITS ON FISHERS/ CATCHES

- Limit the number of people allowed to fish in your marine area. Some communities just limit the number outside fishers.
- Limit catches, by weight or number.
- Limit the number of allowable fishing days, particularly when tabu areas are opened so breeding stock is not lost.



RESTRICTIONS ON VULNERABLE SPECIES

- Ban the overharvesting of fish and other marine species that are at risk of disappearing.

FOLLOW THE LAW

- + Restrictions on sea cucumbers listed in the National Sea Cucumber Fishery Management and Development Plan or when the season is closed.
- + Restrictions on golden cowrie shell, glory of the sea cone shell, green snail, triton shell, dugong, crocodile, branding, soft and mushroom coral.



MINIMUM SIZES

- Establish minimum size limits to ensure that what is caught is of a mature size and has had a chance to breed, to restock marine resources.
- Use bigger hooks or bigger net sizes to ensure immature or unwanted fish are not caught.
- Follow national minimum size limits to ensure sea cucumbers, clams and shells.



SELECTIVE HARVESTING

- Limit the taking of certain sexes of species. This includes female mud crabs, coconut crabs or crayfish, or taking any species that are carrying eggs.
- Ban the taking of certain species when they change sexes of their lifetime. Some parrotfish change from female to male later in life and if you take only the larger males, you will only have females left and reproduction will decline.



PROTECTION FOR KEY HABITATS

- Protect key habitats from harm, so fish can grow through their life stages. For instance, fish might hide in mangroves when they are small, then move into seagrass areas and coral as they grow.



PROTECT MANGROVES



PROTECT SEAGRASS

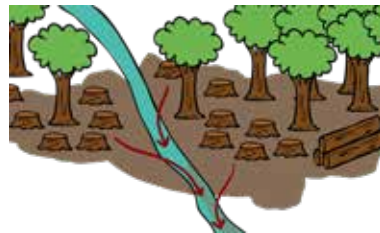


PROTECT REEFS

BANS ON HARMFUL LAND PRACTICES

- Creeks and rivers that flow to the sea can transport soil, chemicals, fertilisers and effluent which can smother reefs. What happens on land can impact the health of reefs.
- Putting bans on harmful land use practices can reduce soil, chemicals, fertilisers and effluent from entering creeks and rivers that flow to the sea.

Know your rights as a community to ban harmful land practices like unsustainable logging.



Mining practices can also cause this problem.



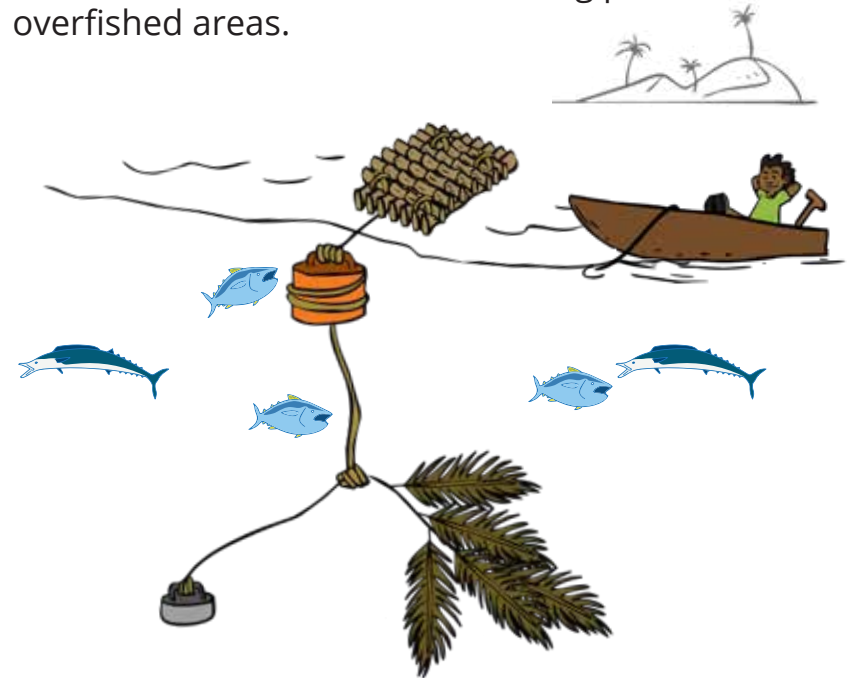
Relocate your piggery or chickens away from creeks and rivers.



If this harmful activity is not in your community, you can contact the neighbouring village or provincial government to discuss your concerns

FISH AGGREGATING DEVICES

- Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs/Rafters) are human-made objects used to attract fish to a location, making them easier to catch.
- FADs are typically placed offshore to attract fish such as tuna or wahoo. FADs can also be placed closer to the shore to reduce fishing pressure in overfished areas.



OTHER ALTERNATIVES: Raise pigs or chickens to get alternative protein & plant cash crops for income.

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DO YOU
AGREE THAT FISHERIES
MANAGEMENT MAKES
SENSE IF IT CAN HELP
INCREASE CATCHES?

WHAT ARE YOUR
CONCERNS ABOUT
FISHERIES
MANAGEMENT?

ARE THERE
CURRENT FISHING
RULES IN THE
COMMUNITY? ARE
THEY HELPING?

ARE YOU
INTERESTED IN
KNOWING MORE
ABOUT THE HEALTH
OF YOUR FISHING
GROUNDS AND THE
RULES THAT CAN
HELP IMPROVE
CATCHES?

SECTION 3

Where to from here?

SOLWATA
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
BLO IUMI



This booklet has shared some of the issues you might experience in your community and management rules to help get better catches.

The next step is to sit down and talk together, learn from each other, and share stories to understand how declines in catches affect each other and the community.

This booklet can be used as a guide for you and your community to create management rules to start managing your marine resources.

The following pages share how you can do this – don't wait for outside support. This is what *Solwata Blo Iumi* is about, helping communities to manage their marine resources themselves.

WHAT COMMUNITIES ARE DOING

Communities can create their own **fisheries management rules** that make sense locally and that are enforceable. Encourage lots of discussion with everyone in your community as rules can impact people differently.

EXAMPLE BILLBOARD



What's the problem?	Community rule	Penalty
Destructive and harmful fishing practices	Prohibit gill nets < 8 cm & no spider or magnet nets	1. Warning 2. Cash penalty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 SBD for resource owners • 100 SBD for non-resource owners
	Ban poison root	
	Ban breaking coral	
	No taking undersize fish	
Community overfishing/declining catches	No night diving with torches	3. Village committees/House of Chiefs
	Tabu area	
Declining grouper populations	Ban fishing at spawning sites during peak months	

WHAT GOVERNMENT & PARTNERS ARE DOING

Government and partners are working with coastal communities across the Solomon Islands to reverse marine resource declines and protect food security and livelihoods.

This support is provided in many ways.

Communities can submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to MFMR to seek additional support in creating a Community Fisheries Management Plan (CFMP). This process can help identify what support your community might need to reverse marine resource declines.



Get Organised & Submit an EOI to MFMR

The more organised you are, the easier it will be to get help, if needed



EOI Assessment & Recommendations

1. If considered for support, start management planning
2. If not considered, further advice will be provided



Management Planning Starts

Community consultation, health assessments and endorsement of plan



The Solomon Islands government has regulations to prevent fisheries from being overharvested. For example, seasonal closures and minimum sizes for beche-de-mer to help sea cucumber populations recover.

There are also laws that state what size fish, shells and crabs need to be before they are caught and bans on destructive and harmful fishing practices.

Here are some of the laws that communities should follow to help revive species that are an important source of cash in rural communities.

For more information, please contact the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources 39143.

BANNED FISHING PRACTICES

Gill net & seine net < 8cm



Any chemical, poison or noxious substance, bomb, electrical device, or material dynamite or explosive substance or device.



✗ Use bottom trawling or dredging to harvest sedentary or other marine resources.

CRAB & CRAYS SIZE LIMITS

KAPEHE, ALIMAGO / MUD CRAB



> 12 cm, Not Carrying Eggs

URA / CRAYFISH



> 8 cm, Not Carrying Eggs

KASUSU / COCONUT CRAB



> 9 cm, Not Carrying Eggs

ALLOWABLE SIZE LIMITS

MAMINI / MAORI WRASSE



65 cm

TOPA / BUMPHEAD PARROTFISH



65 cm

PAZARA, ULAFU, GHULAVU

BROWN MARBLED GROUPER



45 cm

Banned from October - January

CAMOUFLAGE GROUPER



45 cm

SQUARETAIL CORAL GROUPER



45 cm

LEOPARD CORAL GROUPER



45 cm

*Banned from
June - October*

SHELL SIZE LIMITS

TROKAS



8 cm - 12cm

OYSTER SHELLS



>10 cm

HARVESTING TURTLE RULES

- ✗ Any nesting turtle
- ✗ Destroy turtle nests or eggs
- ✗ Destroy turtles with a tag attached
- ✗ Destroy a tag attached to a turtle

NO HARVESTING LEATHERBACK TURTLES



BANNED SPECIES (NO COLLECTING OR HARVESTING)

- ✗ GOLDEN COWRIE SHELL
- ✗ GLORY OF THE SEA CONE SHELL
- ✗ GREEN SNAIL
- ✗ TRITON SHELL
- ✗ DUGONG
- ✗ CROCODILE
- ✗ BRANCHING, SOFT & MUSHROOM CORAL

NO SHARK FINNING!



SEA CUCUMBER & BECHE-DE-MER RULES THAT FISHERS & COMMUNITIES MUST FOLLOW

Rules for when BDM collecting is closed

There are serious fines & penalties for anyone who breaches the rules outlined in the National Sea Cucumber Fishery Development & Management Plan and during a closed fishing period.

At the time of printing, there is a national ban in place. It is prohibited to collect, process or export BDM.

Communities have a lot to gain by following the rules to revive this important cash resource.

Communities can have their own BDM Management Plan to manage their sea cucumber stocks.

For more information contact MFMR: 39143 or speak with a provincial fisheries officer.

Rules for when BDM collecting is open

1. You need a licence to export.
2. You need a licence to process bech-de-mer.
3. You must only collect by hand, free diving, gleaning or wading & during daylight hours only.
4. You must not possess or export BDM smaller than the dry minimum size lengths.
5. Species not permitted or banned.

WHITE TEATFISH



BLACK TEATFISH



CITES LISTED, NATIONALLY BANNED

WHAT YOU CAN DO ... JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!

1
**SHARE
THIS
BOOKLET
& HOST A
DISCUSSION**

2
**VISIT
PROVINCIAL
FISHERIES**

3
**CONTACT
MFMR: 39143**

4
**TUNE INTO
SIBC RADIO**



5
**FOLLOW ON
FACEBOOK**

6
**LEARN MORE
ABOUT CBRM**

cbfm.spc.int

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**JOIN THE CAMPAIGN TO
HELP SPREAD THE MESSAGE
ABOUT COMMUNITIES
MANAGING THEIR MARINE
RESOURCES THEMSELVES.**



