



Mobulid Purse Seine Sorting Grid Workshop

Overview for the IATTC Ecosystem and Bycatch Working Group, La Jolla,
May 2025

Workshop Dates: March 17-
18, 2025

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The Nature Conservancy

Participants and Sponsors

Sponsors

The International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF)

Pacific Island Tuna Provisions (PITP)

The Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA)

The Nature Conservancy's Large-Scale Fisheries Program (TNC-LSFP)

Participants

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Dr. Jefferson Murua, Skipper Workshop Consultant, AZTI

David Itano, Fisheries Contractor, TNC-LSFP

Melvin Silk, Fisheries Officer, MIMRA

Dike Poznanski, Fisheries Biologist, MIMRA

Casmil Saimon, Fisheries Biologist, MIMRA

Jenrok Joel & Wilmot Bikajela, MIMRA Fisheries Observers

Young Wanjun Yang, General Manager, Pan Pacific Fishing Company

Dion Muller, Base Manager, KOOS Fishing Company

Juan Carlos Muñoz, Fleet Manager, Caroline Fisheries Corporation, FSM

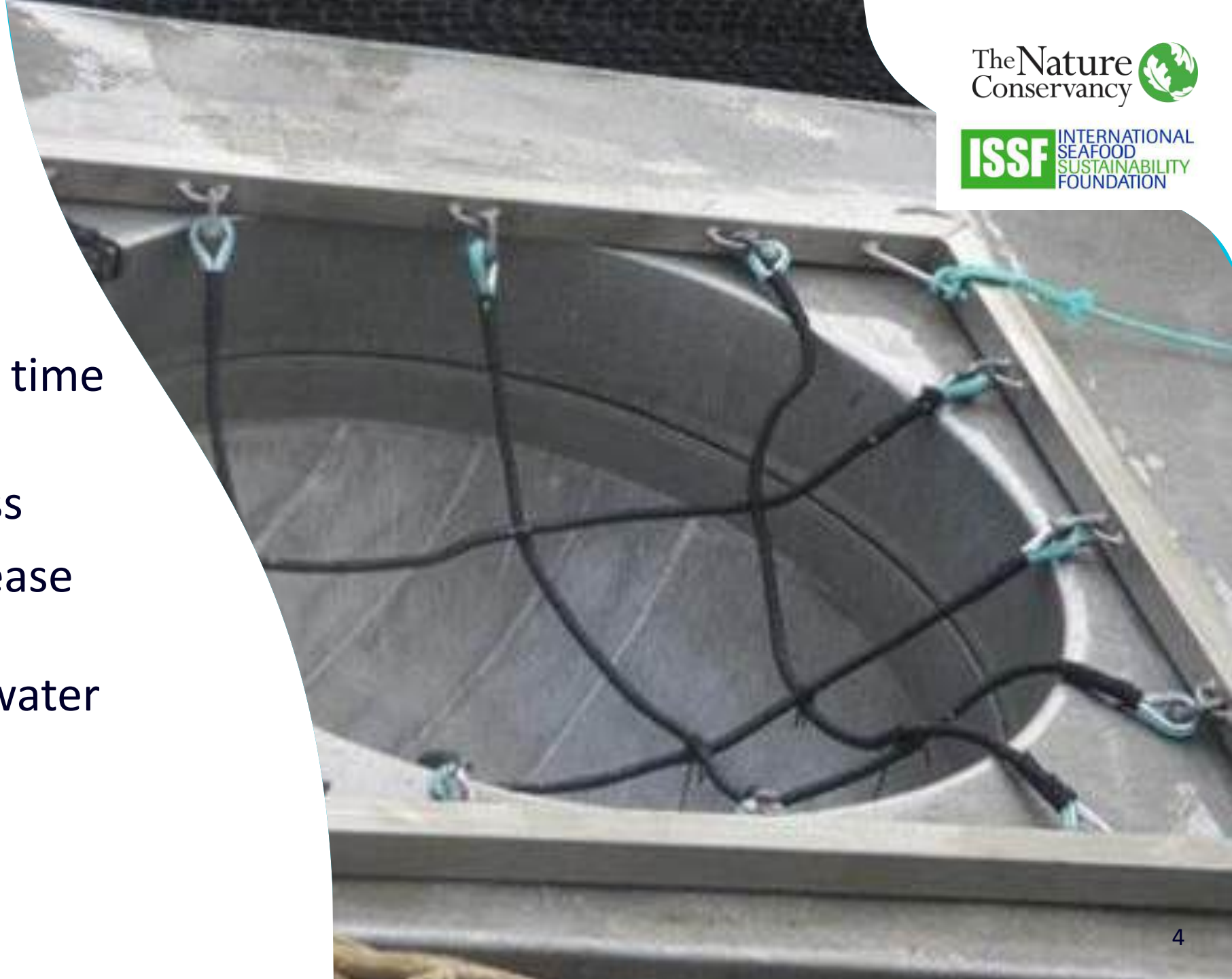
The Problem

- Manta rays and devil rays are key piece of Pacific Ocean Ecosystem
- Rays can weigh over 1500kg and exceed 7m in size
- Critically endangered by IUCN, in part due to bycatch in tuna fisheries
- Handling and release on vessels leads to safety issues for crew, decreased survivorship for rays
- Solution: rigid sorting grid



Sorting Grid Technology

- Reduces interaction time
- Decreases animal physiological distress
- Maximizes post-release survival
 - 3 min return to water time is key for survival



Technology in Use



Sample sorting grid



Grid in use with a mobulid

Tagging

- Satellite tagging techniques
 - sPAT tags
- Verify post-release survival rates
- 6 tags donated by Monterey Bay Aquarium
- Only tag animals >150 cm, avoid tagging near vital organs
- Thanks to David Itano (TNC), Dr. Melanie Hutchinson (IATTC) for tagging techniques



Next Steps



1. PITP vessel pilot and FSM Pilot
2. Dr. Hutchinson supporting tagging operations/communications
3. EM footage from PIT vessels reviewed to verify Best Release and Handling Protocols are being followed
4. Potential for additional PS Sorting Grid Workshops in Ecuador and Solomon Islands on PS vessels with EM

For more information:

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