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CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES OF PSMA IMPLEMENTATION IN OSPESCA COUNTRIES

“AN EXPERIENCE OF GRADUAL AND EFFECTIVE ADAPTATION”



AUTORIDAD DE LOS RECURSOS
ACUÁTICOS DE PANAMÁ

FAO P S M A



14-08-2020

04-12-2015

21-11-2016

FAO - P S M A

PANAMA'S EXPERIENCE

• Panama's Path and Lessons Learned – COMHAFAT, Morocco 2025 •

WHY PORT STATE MEASURES MATTER

FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST IUU FISHING



Port controls prevent illegally caught fish from entering the market – stopping the problem before it spreads across the supply chain.

PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF GLOBAL MARINE RESOURCES



Strong port inspections contribute directly to sustainable fisheries management and the long-term health of fish stocks.

GENERATE ACTIONABLE DATA FOR ENFORCEMENT AND POLICY



Inspections provide critical information on fishing effort, gear, crew, and routes – feeding national intelligence systems and global databases.

WHY PORT STATE MEASURES MATTER

UPHOLD THE RULE OF LAW AND FAIRNESS IN THE SEAFOOD TRADE



Port State Measures ensure that all vessels, regardless of their flag, are subject to the same scrutiny when seeking access to ports.

DETER ECONOMIC AND REPUTATIONAL RISK



Admitting IUU-derived products can harm national credibility and block access to regulated markets.

BUILD TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY WITH COASTAL COMMUNITIES AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS



Effective port measures show commitment to transparent, rules-based governance of the oceans.

BUILDING THE LEGAL PATHWAY TO PSMA IMPLEMENTATION IN PANAMA

2016

LAW 43



Ratifies the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)
Establishes Panama's international commitment to combat IUU fishing and provides the legal basis for port State control.

2021

LAW 204



Defines the legal framework for sustainable fisheries governance
Empowers fisheries Authority to apply conservation, inspection, and enforcement measures, including port controls.
Later regulated through Executive Decree No. 13 of November 2023, which in its Chapter IV sets out procedures for implementing Port State Measures in line with PSMA obligations.

2022/2024

RESOLUTION 055



Operationalizes port access procedures for foreign vessels
Defines authorized ports, required documents, timelines, and the digital validation process for granting or denying entry based on risk assessment.

CORE ELEMENTS BEHIND PANAMA'S PSMA IMPLEMENTATION

STRONG INSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

24/7 REMOTE VMS OVERSIGHT

MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION

DIGITAL TOOLS & PROTOCOLS

TRAINING & JOINT OPERATIONS

PRE-ARRIVAL RISK EVALUATION AND AUTHORIZATION FLOW IN PANAMA

PRE-ARRIVAL REQUEST SUBMISSION

The foreign vessel submits an access request in advance, attaching mandatory documentation such as licenses, authorizations, fishing permits, transshipment or unloading intentions, cargo manifests, and crew lists.

CROSS-VERIFICATION AND RISK PROFILING

Submitted information is reviewed and cross-checked against databases, prior inspection records, flag State communications, and intelligence reports. The vessel's history, operator background and potential IUU associations are analyzed.

VMS ACTIVATION AND CONNECTION TO PANAMA'S MONITORING CENTER

As part of the risk screening, the vessel is required to connect its satellite tracking system (VMS) to Panama's control center prior to entering jurisdictional waters, ensuring real-time monitoring.

PRE-ARRIVAL RISK EVALUATION AND AUTHORIZATION FLOW IN PANAMA

ALERT CONFIGURATION AND ROUTE TRACKING

Based on the risk profile, system-generated alerts are configured: entry point, estimated time of arrival, duration at port, and any deviation from the declared plan are automatically flagged for review.

DIGITAL VALIDATION PLATFORM WITH INTERAGENCY ACCESS

The authorization process takes place through an integrated digital platform (developed by ARAP), which allows real-time coordination and information sharing among customs, Port Authority, Navy, Immigration and Health authorities.

RISK-BASED DECISION: AUTHORIZATION OR DENIAL

A final decision is issued by ARAP based on consolidated risk analysis. Entry may be authorized, conditioned, or denied if red flags or inconsistencies are identified. Every decision is traceable and logged in the system.

MAIN IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

HUMAN AND FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

Limited budget and staffing levels affect inspection coverage, training continuity and long-term sustainability.

HIGH ADMINISTRATIVE LOAD AND TIME SENSITIVITY

Processing requests, crosschecking documentation and coordinating multi-agency responses within tight deadlines remains complex.

INTERINSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION UNDER OPERATIONAL PRESSURE

Aligning protocols, communication, and decision-making between ARAP, AMP, Customs, SENAN, Migration and Health requires constant effort.

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND DIGITAL INTEROPERABILITY

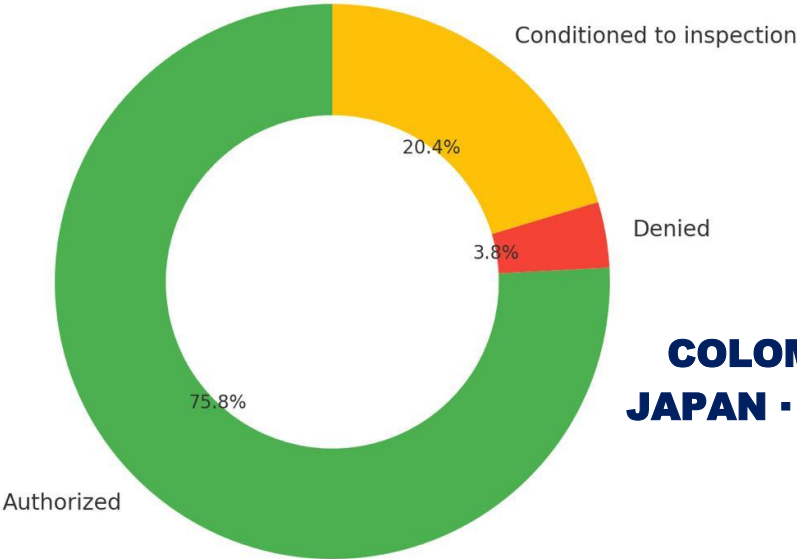
The digital platform is effective but requires ongoing updates, stable connectivity, and back-end integration across institutions.

LEGAL AND PROCEDURAL FLEXIBILITY FOR EMERGING SCENARIOS

The current legal framework must adapt to new operational realities (e.g. unlisted ports, late notifications, foreign crew changes) without losing control or legal grounding.

STATISTICS ON FOREIGN VESSEL ACCESS (2024-2025)

Outcome of Foreign Vessel Access Requests



COLOMBIA · SPAIN
JAPAN · VENEZUELA

313  **TOTAL FOREIGN VESSEL REQUESTS**

298  **AUTHORIZED**

15  **DENIED**

80  **CONDITIONED TO INSPECTION**

 **TOP FLAG STATES REQUESTING ACCESS**

90%  **% OF REQUESTS CROSS-CHECKED WITH FLAG STATE_**

EXTENDING PORT STATE MEASURES TO OUR OWN FLEET

NATIONAL RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN PORT ACCESS

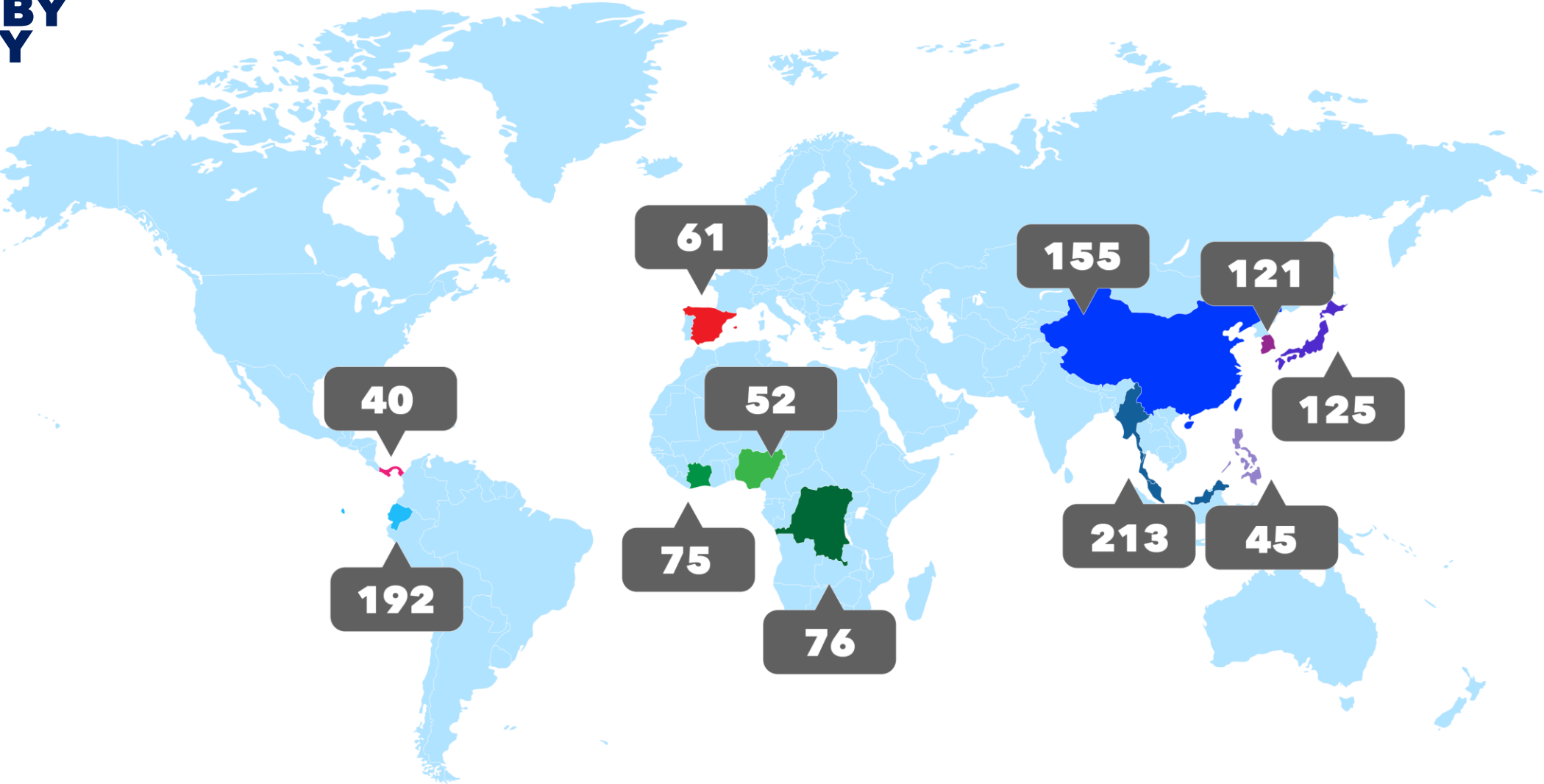
LIST OF AUTHORIZED PORTS FOR PANAMANIAN VESSELS

SPECIAL MECHANISM FOR NON-AUTHORIZED PORT ENTRY

OBSERVER PROGRAM: AT-SEA & IN-PORT (SINCE JAN 2025)

REINFORCED OVERSIGHT OF TRANSSHIPMENTS ABROAD

ACTIVITY BY COUNTRY



A SHARED PATH FORWARD

Panama's implementation of the PSMA reflects what is possible when institutions align, collaborate, and act with purpose.

We recognize that each country faces unique challenges. But progress becomes real when there is political will, legal clarity, and interagency coordination.

We stand ready to continue learning, sharing and building together — because combating IUU fishing is a shared responsibility.

IATTC RES 21-07



ICCAT REC 23-17



PSMA



SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Combatting IUU fishing** (Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated) helps protect responsible fishing communities, supports their growth, and ensures there are enough fish for the future.
- **Working together as a region** allows countries to manage their fisheries better—scientifically, economically, and socially.
- **Port State Measures (PSMs)** are like safety checks at the ports that stop illegal fishing from entering our countries. These checks must be planned and done properly.
- **Harmonizing the rules** across countries makes things easier. RFMOs (regional fisheries organizations) help get started, but it's important to follow the best international standards.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The **FAO's global agreement on PSMs** helps countries get better information about fish and fishing activities. It also creates fair and simple rules that benefit the whole fish supply chain—from the ocean to your plate.
- **Every country with fishing ports** needs to take part. Ignoring the issue is not an option. Each country must understand its risks and prepare to do inspections where needed.
- **Learning from others** who started early helps speed up the process for countries that are just beginning.
- The **PSMA rules are flexible and practical**. Countries just need to find where their biggest risks are and focus on stopping illegal fishing from entering their ports.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

TO MAKE THIS WORK WELL, COUNTRIES NEED TO:

- Understand how their fisheries and fish markets work.
- Make clear rules and procedures.
- Train people to inspect and find risks.
- Choose and prepare ports for fish entry, with good equipment and trained staff.
- Share information with other countries and organizations.
- Keep reviewing and improving the system with regular feedback.



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★ CON PASO FIRME ★

AUTORIDAD DE LOS RECURSOS
ACUÁTICOS DE PANAMÁ

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