-Well, thank you very much for coming and sharing your experience fishing in Puerto Real with me. Her name is Interviewee Interviewee Interviewee…

-That's correct.

-Is that how you say it?

-Yeah.

-You're a fisherman, belonging to the Puerto Real Fishing Village. Before I forget, today is February 13, 2025. Could you tell me a little about yourself? What kind of fishing do you do, first of all, and when did you first start fishing?

-I was practically raised on the beach in Joyuda and I've been fishing since I was very young, but as a commercial fisherman, I've been doing it for about 5 or 6 years now and I do different types of fishing: I'm a free diver, a tank diver, and I also do line fishing.

-How old are you, if I may?

-I'm 33.

-33, that is, it started around 28, something like that.

-Commercially, but I'd been fishing with commercial fishermen for a long time before that, except I didn't have a license. After a while, I decided, as such, to do things properly, as they say.

-So, you were like an assistant before?

-Yeah.

-Yes, also with fishermen from here in the Villa?

-From Joyuda.

-And when did you start fishing as an assistant?

-So, to go out, as such, with the divers, I understand that since, like, 10 years, more or less.

-Tell me a little bit, were you always helping the same person?

-Yes, it was almost always with the same guy. Then we started fishing here. We rented a boat here in Puerto Real, and that's when I started meeting more people from Puerto Real, until I ended up at the Fishing Village. I've been at the Fishing Village for about five or six years, more or less, since I became a member and stayed fishing here.

-What is the process for joining and becoming a member of a Fishing Village?

-Well, to join the Fishing Village and become a member, you have to come and fill out an application for new members. And at least now, the board meets, which is held every first Monday of the month, with the members of the board, and they approve or reject new member applications.

-What is the process, they discuss the person?

-Yes, we meet with the person, they tell us why they want to become a member, what their expectations are, what they want from us, and so on. You don't necessarily have to have a boat at the dock to become a member; as long as they have good intentions, we approve it here at the board of directors.

[00:03:07]

-When you say good intentions, what do you mean?

-Let it be for the same purposes as us, let it be a matter of commercial fishing. Or at least, come and bring back some of the catch we need, that kind of thing.

-And what are the advantages of belonging to a Fishing Village?

-At least in our Fishing Village, if you're a member and have a boat docked with us, you get the benefit of us buying your catch, we give you a locker, you have water, you have electricity, as you saw right now at the boatyard, there's the machine. Being a member, you also get benefits from the machine, for example, when it's time to change the oil in the transmission motor, when we have to clean the bottom of the boats, to get what we call them, to get a new license plate, those benefits.

-Is there a limit on how many fishermen the association can help?

-No, right now we don't have a limit on that number of fishermen.

-And tell me a little bit, what kind of fish?

-Right now, the most I catch is queen conch (Strombus gigas\*) and spiny lobster (Panulirus argus\*), and when I go out with a line, I go and bring yellowtail snapper, lane snapper (Lutjanus synagris XXVII\*), mutton snapper (Lutjanus analis\*), and so on.

-And do you sell everything here in the Villa?

-I sell all my catch here at the Fishing Village.

-And can you make a good living, financially, from your work?

Fishing, of course, is like everything else, if you manage your money well. Because there are days when we can go fishing for the whole week, but, for example, like today I went out, and at 9:30 in the morning I was already turning back, not because the sea was rough or anything, but because of the wind. Everything was favorable, except the wind. The wind gets a little tricky, so we catch a little fish to be able to pay the expenses and have something left over to turn back.

-I mean, he takes care of himself, he has to be well cared for…

-Yes, of course. If we see that the weather is bad, we don't go out; we turn back. Or if we see that we can fish, like today, there was a little wind, but it wasn't that bad. Usually, when you go out like this, by 8, 9, 9:30 in the morning, the wind has already dropped, it has calmed down, but today it was the opposite; instead of dropping, it got a little stronger. And we decided to leave.

-And who taught you how to lung fish and scuba dive?

"I started fishing with the same guys I used to fish with back in Joyuda, who were the first ones I started with there. I started fishing with them, and I'd dive two or three times. I didn't dive much because, well, he was the diver and I was just starting out. Later, I gained a little more experience when I came here to La Villa, and from there, I went and took classes in tank fishing and all that. And now I fish tank fishing, not all the time, but I do fish tank fishing from time to time."

-Do you have to take classes at the university or where?

-No, the diving instructors are in the dive shops themselves, and in some cases, you communicate with them and they give you advice.

[00:06:08]

-Is it expensive to learn?

-At least, I took the first course, it was basic and cost me around $80. And then the other course was, I think, $350, and I took it in Aguadilla, at Crash Boat.

-Since you started, have you experienced any major difficulties in your business, in your life connected with fish?

-For example, when bad weather comes, hurricanes, for example, the other time a hurricane hit, I don't remember exactly which one it was, I think it was Maria, and for practically 3, 4 months there was no power in almost all of Puerto Rico, only in some areas. And there was very little fishing that could be done, because there was no power to save, like in the Fishing Village where they save it for the next day, so the businesses come and get it, but rather a little bit when the businesses started to open, so they could manage and we could manage a little bit as well.

-How many months did that last after Maria?

-After Maria it was about 3 or 4 months.

-And you survived with little, you had to survive…

-Yes, with what we could do. We went out two days a week and then, back home again.

-And the Fishing Village, was everything sold here or did you have to go…?

-Yes, I always sell here. It's very rare that I sell anything outside, because they always take it from me here. Unless, like now, like what we were talking about just now, where fishing, well, isn't the same demand as before. I mean, if you produce more than before but don't sell as much, it sells but not as much. Well, those times, at least here we have two days; each fisherman has two fixed days to go fishing and has those two days, guaranteed. If I have an order from a client or something outside of those days, well, I go and take it to sell to the client. If I come here, like on Monday I went fishing and another guy came on a boat and took me to the dock and said: ‘I want to buy that lobster (Spiny lobster, \*Panulirus argus\*) that you have,’ well I told him: ‘I can sell them to you, but I can’t sell them directly, I have to take them to the Village, and then you go and pick them up at the Village. ’ That is the commitment we have to have the benefits of having the dock, having the electricity, having the locker, the boatyard and all that.

-If you didn't have the Fishing Village, what would your business look like?

-I think it would be a little complicated because, well, you'd have to launch the boat every day, take the boat out every day, you have to carry the equipment everywhere, you'd have to, as we say here, carry the catch up and down, to be able to sell it, because a business might buy 10 or 15 pounds from you, or they might only buy 10. It might be, but sometimes you have to run with the catch and the same monopolist isn't going to buy it all on the same day.

[00:09:05]

-So, do you work 2 days a week or do you have another job?

-Right now, I work here two days a week, and I go out and sell my catch two days a week here. But I also go out two more days to look for, I suppose, conch (Strombus gigas) to take home, because I also make empanadas and seafood salad.

-I mean, I'm trying to understand, 2 days he sells here.

-I sell here for 2 days, and the other 2 days I go and fish to take home, so I can prepare salad or empanadas there.

-But do you only sell during those 2 days or do you fish and sell?

-The two days they're not from here, I take it home, so that later, when I prepare it, I can sell it. Because you have to boil it, chop it, clean it, and then make the empanada and then sell it.

-So, he has like 2 businesses somehow…

-Yeah.

-And was there anyone in your family who was also into fishing?

-No. Not right now, at least not among those my age, but they used to be; my grandmother's brother, my grandmother's cousins ​​were fishermen, and even my grandfather was a fisherman too.

-But they could never teach you…

-With me, practically, like that, I went 2 or 3 times with my uncles when I already had the little boat and all that, but they were already older and they did it as a hobby, not as a job, but to go with me and spend some time and all that.

-Do you think, if another hurricane like Maria were to happen again, would you be better prepared or not?

-I understand that in Puerto Rico, I think we'd be without power for another three or four months, because we've been without power for several days for less than that. I understand that if a hurricane of that magnitude comes again, it would greatly affect the fishing community.

-So, the association didn't do things to prepare, if there's no electricity, it can't do anything?

-Yes, at least here at the association we have a plant, a large plant that powers the entire association. A year ago, solar panels were installed as well. When these events happen, if you can see there, there's an empty pallet over there. That pallet was filled with water, for us, the kids. Two cases of water were given to each fisherman who was a member here. Sometimes we even help the community itself, if we have any.

-Did something like this happen during Maria? Did you help the community in any way?

[00:11:55]

"We helped out. After that, I understand they even came here and brought us things so we could go and distribute them in the community, for the neediest people, the elderly and all that. And also recently, I think it was about two years ago, a storm hit there and we also had water. I even saw some people out front there, who were even throwing an extension cord for them so they could have electricity and all that."

How important do you think the fishing economy is for Puerto Real?

-For Puerto Real and for all of Puerto Rico, I understand that it's very, very important for the economy because, as we were just talking about, practically all the businesses, like the restaurants, depend on us fishermen, who are the ones who go out every day so they can sell their seafood.

-And what do you think are the biggest barriers to having a successful fishing business?

-Well, I understand that with good customer service, things can be done right. I don't think there are such big barriers, as such, for us fishermen. But when, one barrier that can be big is when bad weather comes, like, for example, when cold fronts come from the United States, which bring big waves. Sometimes they're big waves for one or two weeks straight, which means one or two weeks that you can't go out to sea.

-Because the water is too cold?

-The water isn't so cold, it gets cloudy, you can't see it in the water. And you can't fish like that.

-And that affects diving more than everything or everyone?

-Yes, diving, especially diving, because those who go fishing with a line or fish for silk snapper with a trap and such things, well, they don't have to, as such, go down there, at least we divers are the ones most affected by that.

-What technology do you use for fishing?

I have an app on my phone called Navionics, and I have GPS too. With those things, I have the locations, as we say, the fishing hotspots. We already have designated spots, where we go and where the fishing is most abundant, so to speak. Because not all the seas have enough fish to go diving. There are some more specific spots where fishing is more abundant than others.

-And did you find those points, based on your experience?

-Yes, most of the time we do the points ourselves, because let's say we go and throw ourselves in a place, when we are like that we go to the tank, we have the buoy, so that the bowman can see, identify where we are, in addition to the bubbles, and when we find a [unintelligible] on some rock with 7 or 8 large spiny lobsters, we pull the buoy line and then the one up front marks, and we already know that there is a rock there that a lot of spiny lobsters (Panulirus argus) get into and so on. The same thing with the queen conch, the queen conch (Strombus gigas) is not on the rock but it is in the grass or in the sand and where we find the majority of the conchs, well, that's where we mark, and maybe there isn't one further in front, but on the other side there is.

[00:15:06]

-And what do you use to find out the season? How do you know if it's a good time to fish or not?

-As we were just talking about, this area of ​​ours is where there is the most marine life and in terms of season, after there is a closed season, for example, for the queen conch (Strombus gigas) (queen conch) which the closed season starts in summer and ends in October, well, during those months we can't go catch conch, (Queen conch, \*Strombus gigas\*) we have to go catch spiny lobster (Panulirus argus\*) (spiny lobster). But we almost always catch good fishing, unless as I was saying, there is bad weather, there is a strong wind, there is a bit of a swell, the water is cloudy, and those are the complications that we have, as such.

-But no, I mean, he gets up in the morning, he notices a…

-Well, yes, we also have an app for the wind, called Windy. It's not exact, but at least it's approximate, and we can see from there. If not, well, from the evening news, depending on what the reporter tells us, and so on, we more or less know. Almost always, when they say a north wind is coming, we know we should go a little further south to be able to fish.

Have you ever used scientific products, for example, like a fish stock assessment or something like that?

-No.

What do you think about how the agencies in charge of environmental protection or fish management help you, or if they help you?

-At least when we're fishing, the Department of Natural Resources is almost always on the water. They go and check the catch, they stop for a moment, they check the catch if they need to check it to measure it, they check it, the queen conch (Strombus gigas) too. For me, that's their job, and for me, that's not bad; on the contrary, for me, it's fine. Why, because if they're doing that work of watching over all the fishermen and ensuring that what they're catching is legal, for example, small spiny lobster (Panulirus argus) or small queen conch (Strombus gigas), well, that benefits me. Because if we all fish consciously, as we're supposed to, we'll have fishing for a long time. If those agencies didn't do their job, and everyone went out fishing, and unlicensed fishermen destroyed the seabed, as we say here, then it would hurt us a lot, because those of us who do have licenses and do things the way they're supposed to be done, would be affected in that they would destroy the fishing industry and the fishing would be less than it should be, because they don't give it enough time to grow.

[00:18:13]

-You are quite young, among fishermen…

-Yeah, yeah.

-How did you come to have this awareness?

"I carry that awareness, not about us now, but about future fishermen, because we're back to the same thing: if we take away the small catch, the fish in closed season, or the fish that are in danger of extinction, or something like that; where will we end up in 10 or 15 years from now? Because in 10 or 15 years, maybe I won't be a diver anymore, as we were just talking about. I'll probably be doing something else, maybe using a trap or line fishing. I understand that this awareness should be about thinking about the future, not just about now. If we do things right now, I believe that in the future, fishermen will be much better off, just as if we do things wrong, the fishing situation will also decline significantly."

-Do you think that fishermen of the past have passed on a healthy maritime environment?

-Like everything, there are some who have had a good time in some places, and others who haven't had a good time, because perhaps before, there wasn't as much presence from government agencies like Natural Resources and those things. And yes, there are some places where fishing used to be much more abundant than it is now.

-Can you show me where on the chart? If you know, roughly. Where did the abundance of fish change? Can you…?

-Let me… This is the stingray (Southern stingray, \*Dasyatis amercana VII\*) from Puerto Real…

-You can mark it.

-I understand that this area here is what we call El Negro. There's diving there, but free diving, because some are 15, 20 feet deep. Before, there was a lot of fishing there because there weren't that many fishermen. Now, there are many more fishermen, and more people who go and fish in that area.

-What did he say his name was?

-That's what we call El Negro. This is El Negro over here, and this here is El Ron, this one over here.

-Rum, with an R?

-With an R, yes. Exactly, the Rum.

-This area is…

-What we call El Negro is a rock, what we call a key, a very large rock, and around the rock is grass, which is where we fish, just like here. There are two rocks here.

-Was there much more abundance here before?

[00:21:03]

-Yes, before, at least when I started, yes. There weren't as many fishermen as there are now. Now there are more fishermen. Well, now we can go fishing. It's not that fishing has ended, but you won't catch the same amount as before, because there are more fishermen than there were before, too.

-And when he says before, more or less, when?

-Let's say that when I started going out there it was about 10 years ago, when I was an assistant.

-I noticed that from 2008 until today, abundance has dropped a bit there…

-A little. Yes.

-Abundance decreased. And when you say, do you mean mostly all kinds of fish, or mostly queen conch (Strombus gigas) and spiny lobster (Panulirus argus)?

-At least that place there is more of a conch. (Queen conch, \*Strombus gigas\*) If you go fishing with a line, yes, you go and catch fish.

-But did that abundance drop a little just because there are more fishermen?

-Because there are more fishermen, and I understand that, since it's so shallow, you have to go out some 3 or 4 miles to get there. But the place, when you get there, is 15, 20 feet deep, and by lung, well, there are many fishermen who go down that deep by lung. It's not the same as those who go to tanks, who have to fish from 30 feet or more, because they have tanks. We can't go lung fishing there, because those with tanks find it easier to fish that way. For example, here's El Negro, half a mile from here, and it's deeper here, you see? Well, there's more abundance of fish there, because it's a little deeper. What happens? Because it's shallow here, the fish come from here to here, or from here to here and they go in. Since we're here all the time, the fish stay here because it doesn't come from here to there. When it gets here, the lung fishermen catch it. Yes, there is fishing, not that there isn't, but most of it is farmed, small conch (Queen conch, \*Strombus gigas\*) (queen conch), because we are on the flat land, we have already caught the big ones, but from here to here, then the big ones come back up again to the dry land, which is what we call 'the dry land' because it is not so deep.

-I mean, what I understand is that it's not necessarily that there are fewer fish in the area, it's just that it's smart and it got out of there in a way, and there are also more fishermen, because it's flatter, it's easier for more people to go fishing. I get it.

-I, at least, since I've been here for a while, say that this area here, we call this the novice area, the rookie area. That's where you start fishing properly. That's the training ground for us fishermen. We start there and then expand to the entire area.

[00:24:08]

-I'm going to write this: training site. Diving. OK. Very well. But you spent a lot of time in the sea since you were little, right?

-Yes, I grew up on the seashore.

-And in general, how do you think the quality of the maritime environment is now compared to when you started?

-I see it practically the same. I don't see much change in the water or anything like that. As far as water goes, I always see everything the same. And at least, I think this area of ​​ours has some of the clearest water in Puerto Rico. If you drive along the entire shore of Joyuda, from the moment you're in the car and you look at the water, you can practically see the rocks and everything. And the pool areas, where there are no rocks or anything, where there are clear waters, look spectacular.

-Why do you think it's cleaner here than elsewhere?

- Yes, I think so.

- But why do you think that? Do you have a theory?

-No, I don't have a theory, as such.

-OK. How did you do during Covid?

-Just.

-Tell me a little about this?

Bad, because of the lockdown we had. I think the first few months were a total lockdown for everyone, with no one allowed to go out. Later, when they started opening things up a little, at least licensed commercial fishermen could go out to sea. If they didn't have a license, no one could be in the water. At least at first, it was a bit tough, but then things gradually improved, at least for us commercial fishermen who had a license and our things were up to date.

-Were there any fishermen who were not commercial fishermen who were able to obtain licenses during that time?

Yes, there were many fishermen who also obtained licenses after that time. For example, I see it this way: you get your license, and then they give you a one-year beginner's license, with your species permit, and then you choose which species you fish for. You get that license for that year, and then the next year, you can renew it for a four-year commercial fishing license, which is what we have here: full-time work. The beginner's license is like a part-time license, but that license is fine; they can give it to anyone; anyone can apply and have it. But I understand that not everyone keeps their fishing license. Why is that? Because they give you the license, but you have to fill out the Fishing Statistics for what you're fishing for, what day you went out fishing, what day you didn't go out.

[00:27:15]

And yes, there were a lot of people who got their licenses as if they had a fishing license and maybe received some benefit or something like that. But if you don't fill out your Fishing Statistics, they won't give you another license. Unless you pay a fine, that's another thing, which I understand is fine. Because OK, giving a license to anyone is fine, there's no problem with that, but it's a commitment you're making by having your license. It's not like you're going to have a license like any other and you're going to go fishing and do whatever you want, no. It's a license, but you have to make a commitment to that license. Every time you get home, fill out a statistic, take it to the Department of Natural Resources, and there they'll give you a receipt for when you go back to apply for your new four-year license or come back and renew for four years. You have to have your statistics up to date. If you don't have the statistics, they won't give you another license.

-And is it difficult to complete those statistics?

-No, it's something very simple, it's a sheet, it tells you the date, if it was filed by the fisherman or the fishmonger, if the fishing was during the day or at night, it lists all the species, you just have to put next to it the pounds you caught, how long you were there, how high you got, and that's it.

-Is that on physical paper?

-A physical form, like this one, a little longer. I have one over there that I can give you right now. And it's as simple as that: you fill it out, and at least here they ask you to bring it in every two months.

-Every 2 months?

-Every two months we go and submit the statistics and they give us a receipt. If you go past the two-month mark, they won't accept the statistics.

-Every 2 months, but is there one for each trip?

-There's a different sheet for each trip. For example, if we go fishing in the morning, we fill out one sheet, and if we go fishing again that same afternoon with a line, we fill out another sheet.

-I mean, every trip…

-Every trip, a different sheet, and when you send it, do you send it by mail?

-I, at least, personally take it to Natural Resources, to the Fisheries Laboratory, or Natural Resources visits us here weekly, and they come here and we give them the statistics, and they stamp the receipt right here and give it to us.

-And is the Department far?

-No, on the Joyuda Highway, I don't know if you know where the correctional facility is to go down to Mayagüez, there's a small entrance there, the lab is there. That's about 10 minutes from here.

-It's in every fisherman's interest to fill that thing. Do you think it's easy for older fishermen who also don't know as much?

[00:30:06]

At least now they wanted to make a change to the statistics. Instead of filling them out physically, they sent out a new application. I think it's about a year or two old, and you can also fill out the statistics on that same application. What's happening? If I go fishing today, let's say an older person goes fishing today and forgot to fill out their statistics. Tomorrow's already arrived and they forgot to fill them out. I don't know how the application works, but they told me that the statistics have to be up-to-date on the application. I can't fill out yesterday's statistics today. On paper, you know? Because on paper, I have 60 days to fill out my statistics. I fill out my statistics; if I forgot to fill them out today, I'll fill them out tomorrow. I understand that on paper, it's much easier for those older people who may have a phone, but it's a government phone that doesn't have internet. I understand that the physical version of the paper version is better.

-I understand. Do you personally think you have a bright future in this industry?

-Of course

How do you think your business will change in 10 years, or how do you want it to?

-I would like it to be for the best, really. My goals would be to one day open a fish market too, nothing to do with competing with the Fishing Village, because as I've told you, I really respect the Fishing Village for all the opportunities it's given me, because yes, I already knew something about fishing, but here, at least with the kids, it's a little different. We help each other. We're not perfect, sometimes we have some differences, but I understand that if we continue doing our part, the fishing can improve a lot.

- I also heard at the morning meeting a bit about the pressures from development here, tourism development, condominium development. What do you think about this?

"At least in that case, I can talk to you about what they want to do in Los Pozos, and I think that's it. For me, everyone has their own opinion. I wouldn't like it. It's not that it affects my fishing, because I don't fish in that area, but I think these are our natural resources that have been there for years. And at least for my part, I don't think that's going to have any change in that area. That area is close to Combate, and if you go to Combate, there are campers, there's a business here and there, but it's only for weekends. It's not like it's something like a weeknight, like saying, 'Let's go to San Juan in the county, where it's full all week long. Come and see that there are people there all week long.' The economy, at least there in that area, is different than here. I wouldn't like them to do any of that in that area of ​​Los Pozos."

[00:33:13]

-I mean, you wouldn't like it, I'm trying to understand, why would there be more people?

Not so much because of the people, but because I understand that there are other places where there are already old structures that can be demolished and rebuilt. Why would we damage another part of our coast? At least for me, I don't think it's necessary. Because right next door is Boquerón too. You go to Boquerón, what's Boquerón? Weekend things too. During the week, there are practically no people. The merchants there are the same; it's on weekends. So, I understand that if there are other places that can be remodeled and make better things, why would we take another piece of land we have free to knock something down, scrape it, damage it, and what could happen? In 20 years, the same thing happens again, everything closes down, and the same thing happens again. Another thing, I know that whole coast, and on that coast, you can swim from here to where the chairs are, 20 feet. From there on, it's deeper or there are rocks, which I understand is not a beach suitable for swimmers, per se. For example, regarding the old structures that can be repaired, there's the port of Mayagüez, where the tuna fishing boats used to be. What's been done there? The ferry doesn't even come anymore; you cross the bridge and the vegetation is already spilling out into the street. Can't we invest in those places instead? I understand that it will help the economy more because the ferry can return to that area, make trips to Santo Domingo (Blackline tilefish, \*Caulolatilus cyanops\*) and turn around. Right now, there are only one or two ferries, and they're in San Juan. If you want to go to Santo Domingo (Blackline tilefish, \*Caulolatilus cyanops\*) from here, you have to go to San Juan, and then go to Santo Domingo. (Blackline tilefish, \*Caulolatilus cyanops\*) So I understand that in those areas, those investors who want to invest should invest in those other things and not in the land we have available.

-Do you think something like this could also harm the aquatic environment?

-Yes, because they are buildings that are built right next to the shore, on the coast, practically on the beach.

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing Puerto Real and the fishing industry in this regard?

[00:35:40]

-Right now, there are many things going on, because here at least, we need that same support. We can do those things here. Why? We have to dredge there, because the sand has already risen too much, and we need the dredging so that larger boats can come in here for maintenance and all those things. We see many docks that are deteriorating there, with the eyes, which are the pipes that are getting old, the eyes are old. I understand that those are things that could be fixed. Right now, right in the middle of the bay, we have a boat that's already rotten. It's been rotting there for many years, and sometimes, because it's been there for so many years, you can still see it as if it's demarcated around it, like when it's leaking oil. I understand that these things represent many challenges that could be resolved, and right now the water in the bay could be a little clearer than it is now, because before the water was darker in color. But with the mangroves, many of the guys here—Papo Daniel, El Gordo, too—they really get involved in cleaning the mangroves. They come here and pull 20, 30 sacks of garbage from the mangroves. And since they've started doing that, the bay has taken on a little more life. At night when you come, or in the early morning when we go out really early, you can see the bioluminescence.

-If I had, I don't know, something magical and I could say or I could somehow enlist help, what would you think would be the first thing, the most important thing that you would do for this place?

-Here, more equipment and things for the fishermen. They should make life a little easier for the fishermen in terms of equipment, so they can go out, sometimes with a GPS. Sometimes a fisherman gets lost or something, so we should have people dedicated to rescuing those types of fishermen. Here, fishermen have been lost at 11 in the morning, and they come and rescue them at 7 at night. And I believe that more things can be done, providing more equipment, the municipality having more boats and more things, so that these responses are a little faster. Because I understand that when a fisherman gets lost at 12 noon and shows up at 7 at night, that's a miracle, because they've already been on the water for more than 10 hours, and a lot of things can happen on the water. I understand that at least some help would be more equipment for the fishermen, so they have more things for when something happens to them. For example, there are fishermen who get a stroke, which is what we call a bubble, and sometimes the fisherman gets from there to here, it takes half an hour, 40 minutes, because they fish far away. Yes, the ambulance is already here waiting for them, but I understand that that route could have been avoided, made a little shorter, a bigger, faster boat, for example, like the police one.

[00:39:04]

-And why do you think these things aren't done until now?

-Yes, they are, but, OK, if a diver gets caught in a bubble and the police are nearby, the police will escort you to shore, but they don't bring you back, you see? Yes, it's fine. They helped you by escorting you, but their boat is faster, bigger. I understand that if there were only one agency dedicated to that, for example, like Natural Resources, which checks on fishing and all that, there could be another Natural Resources boat for emergency management, a little bigger, a little faster. We have a municipal emergency management boat, but the boat is good, not bad, but we could have better things than that, a more modern boat, with a bigger engine, so there's a faster response. For example, there are ambulances and first responders on the street. That first response can also be given in the water, and first aid can be given to the fisherman from the moment he comes out of the water until he reaches the shore, when he may be a little more stable when he reaches the shore.

-How do you deal with the fact that your job is dangerous in a way? How do you think about this? What do you say to yourself?

-For that matter, I think that when we go to sea it is dangerous, a lot of things can happen. You have to try not to think about that, because if we go to sea thinking about that, we won't jump in. It's happened to me many times and I've been doing it for a while, and even with that, from time to time, not all the time, but from time to time you get a little bit, like you feel like looking to the side, in case a shark, a barracuda, not so much a shark, might come along. Barracudas are sometimes even more treacherous than sharks. (Requiem sharks, \*Carcharhinidae\*) You can spear a fish and the barracuda comes and takes it from the spear, pulls it from the rod. But I understand that, yes, every day one is in danger, but it's a matter of not having that in mind, because if we have that in mind, we go to sea tense and it doesn't let us fish and work calmly. You have to flow, always flow carefully. But yes, let it flow.

-Well, thank you very much, one more question, because people are talking about seeing sargassum or seaweed blooms last year, have you found this?

-Yes, we encounter that every year, around this time. A lot of sargassum comes in, and sometimes out at sea we find a sargassum patch that's practically as big as the entire Fishing Village.

-And what happens when that comes?

[00:41:53]

-For us, at least the divers, it also affects us a little, because we have the buoy and the buoy gets tangled in that. If we're lung fishing, that bothers us a lot too; that has snails, that has shrimp (Shrimp, \*Crustaceans spp.\*), that has crabs, it has everything. When it reaches the shore, it also affects us quite a bit, because of all that on the shore, and that, at the same time that it hits the sand, two or three days go by and there's no one to go to the beach, because of the bad smell, because of the small shellfish that die there, but it does affect us quite a bit. And every year that passes around this time, we see it appear. Right now there isn't much, but it's already starting to arrive, and by next month if you go by the beaches there, you'll see quite a lot of sargassum along the shore.

-So, ever since you started fishing here, there has always been one?

-Yes. Every year around this time, there's always a little bit, very little, which is normal, but around this time, a lot of sargassum starts to come in. Yes, we get quite a lot of sargassum accumulating around here.

-Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about fishing here, anything you'd like people to know?

-Fishing, as I always say, as I was just telling you, is dangerous. But if you like it, you'll keep doing it, you won't stop doing it. You have to go with the flow. Those who like it, those who want to take to the water, should go with someone who knows how. Don't stop. It's not so dangerous that you'll just go into the water and get bitten by a shark, because it's not like that. Yes, you have to take precautions, be careful, know how to swim, let yourself be guided by those who know how, go with the flow when a current is carrying you, you can't swim against it. There are many things you can do. And you really enjoy fishing, whether you're in the water or on the boat.

-Is there anything you've learned that's been useful to you in your life in general, or something you've learned from your job in particular?

-The same, flow. Let yourself flow, don't swim against the current, don't get scared at sea, handle things as if you were on land, think calmly, and things will turn out well for you. Like everything, I come back again: flow. If you flow, things in fishing will turn out well for you.

-How nice to end this interview with that. Thank you so much again.

-Thanks to you.

-I'm going to stop the…