-OK. I'm here with Interviewee Interviewee Interviewee, and it's February 10, 2025, and we're going to talk today in Puerto Real with Interviewee about your work, but let's start with, if you can tell me a little bit: when did you start fishing, how many years ago?

-I was born and raised here in Puerto Real. Since I was 8, 9, or 10, I was already connected to it. Since I was born and raised right by the sea, I was already tied to it. At first, you start out as a lineman, but after a while, you start freediving, and occasionally, when I can't freedive, I'll go as a lineman or a scuba diver. I'm their assistant.

-To whom, whose assistant?

-From Bartolo Buelvas, another fellow fisherman.

-But when it started…

I started with the same friends from the neighborhood, our own generation growing up. And with my dad, our friends' parents, they were pot fishermen. Before, there were many more pot fishermen. Over the years, we evolved, and they became older. And that's when we grew up, and we liked diving. There have always been pot fishermen, very few, chilleros, but in our area in Puerto Real in Cabo Rojo, there are many more scuba divers now.

-Why do you like the diver?

-Because the fisherman sees the catch he is going to catch.

-You can select it better…

-You can select better, the fish you are going to kill, the edible fish: the captain (Hogfish, \*Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV\*) (hogfish), the grouper (red hind), the sama (Mutton snapper, \*Lutjanus analis\*) (mutton snapper), colirubia (yellowtail snapper), rayado (lane snapper), chapín (Trunkfish, \*Lactophrys trigonus XLVII\*) (trunkfish), the sierra (zero) and other species that are fished but the most edible and large species are what we fish, we select to kill them, to take them to the fishmonger and from there to the customer.

-When you started you were working as a trap and diving, and now what do you do?

-When I started, we even threw out tips, we caught sharks (Requiem sharks, \*Carcharhinidae\*), we fished with lines, but we went with the trap fishermen, as they were more trap fishermen, as the fishery was quite old, well, we accompanied the old ones, but when we learned, already 12 or 13 years old, we started diving on the beach, on the beaches, on the coasts, on the reef and until we learned to dive well. And we went to the shallows of Cayo del Ron, Cayo del Negro that we have here in front of Mayagüez and Cabo Rojo, where there are different depths. Because our fishing platform is the largest in the western zone, we're 12 or 13 miles beyond where our buoys are, the fishing limit. We have several more miles, and then comes the reef, which is where the chilleros fish. You know, our fishing platform, due to its flat areas and deep areas, has always maintained fishing. Because the fish migrate. There may be situations of pollution that come and go, but that has been global. But I understand that there's always good marine life, because there's always good fishing. We have it from La Parguera to Mayagüez.

[00:03:27]

-That's the area of…

-Our fishing area. But we also have friends from other towns and we can go, but to fish north, there isn't much area there. You go out 100 meters and you're already on the bank. Here in Cabo Rojo, we can go out, we go 10 feet and there's a deep, then another shallow. We can choose where we're going to fish that day, depending on where the current is.

-But are you still diving now?

-Yes. Right now, when I'm helping out with the tanker, and when I'm not, I'm on a shoestring with my wife or another companion who helps us. There's a lot of spiny lobster (Panulirus argus) out there right now.

-What's the difference between a mailbox and a lung? I know, with a tank.

-With the tank, well, I can stay on the bottom for several minutes depending on the depth. I just do a lung scan, go up and down, put the catch in the boat, and continue trolling. They tie us up with a rope behind the boat, and the fisherman gently reels it in, and I'm watching the bottom. When I see a fish, a queen conch (Strombus gigas) or a spiny lobster (Panulirus argus), I let go and grab it, and he waits for me to take it and hand it to the assistant.

-Tell me a little about the fish you catch. What did you catch when you started, and has that changed now that it's more mature?

-It's always been the same, it's just that before the trap fisherman caught them all and we classified them: the parrotfish, the whitefish, the mutton snapper (Lutjanus analis), the hogfish (Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV), which is the quality and since the price has gone up, why catch a lane snapper (Lutjanus synagris XXVII) that costs 2 pesos when I can kill a hogfish (Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV) that costs 6, or a queen conch (Strombus gigas) that costs 9, 10 pesos a pound. But we always go and we always catch them.

-Since you've been fishing, you haven't seen any changes in the size or type of fish…

-I understand it's always been the same, and over the years, as regulations and closures have come in, by species and size, fishermen have become a little more aware, and it's been seen, because right now with the red hind. Now, when the closure ends, there's a lot of red hind. We fishermen see them the same way, the Nassau grouper (Epinephelus striatus) and there's a lot of them now in our area, across the entire fishing platform from La Parguera to Mayagüez. We see them at all levels. And every fisherman I interview will tell you the same thing: they're seen. The hogfish (Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV) and all species, the lane snapper. The arrayao is caught in the mud, the trap fisherman throws several traps and goes and sees them, if he doesn't catch anything in the traps, then you can fish anchored with a line in the area.

[00:06:24]

-Let's talk a little more about your family, because you told me that your dad was also...

-My dad was a fisherman.

-And your grandfather?

-My grandfather too, one of them, on my mother's side. They were fishermen, and my stepfather was a fisherman all his life, too. And the parents of our friends, who were raised and born here. Puerto Real, truly from generation to generation, is a fishing community.

-Most of them are fishermen from generations…

-Yes, there are already third-generation fishermen: dad, son, and grandson, who we currently have fishing. Jaimito, they're three generations still alive. The gentleman has a good memory and everything.

-The economy of Puerto Real…

It's based on the fishing industry, because the floating population comes for a weekend and leaves, but here a lot of people come to the restaurants. You see, all the seafood restaurants have the same menu. So there's a lot of activity. The guy who sets up a chinchorrito sells fried seafood, and since it's a quality product, people buy it. Wherever you go, even to San Juan, and ask for that fish, we buy it in Cabo Rojo. Because for our area, we've always said that people's custom is that they like red fish, like silk snapper, red hind, lane snapper, which seem like family. For the eastern region, you go and there they like: jalea, sierra (cero), cojinúa (blue runner), guaymen (yellow jack). But it's also sold here because during Holy Week everything is sold, but whoever comes and knows: Oh, I want red fish, you know what he's looking for. You always get it. Now we have a lot of fish. At the fishmongers, sales are slowing down for now, but so far, they're booming. Business is good; all the fishmongers carry local fish.

-Tell me a little about your work day, what is it like?

"I get up at 4:00 a.m. every day. I make coffee, go down to the fish market, take the tanks to the boat, then grab the tanks and go find my friend. At 5:15 a.m., I go and call him at his house. He gets up, makes coffee, or else drinks coffee from mine. He and another friend leave. In the morning, we wait for the sun to clear up and go out on several boats, talk, hang out, greet each other, and maybe we'll go to the same area to fish. There we hang out, and at 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., the fisherman is on his way, because he has four tanks. And the idea of ​​getting up early is that you get up early, you get to the fishing boat early, and since it always blows after 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., if it blows hard, it'll catch you on the way, sailing, not there on the fishing boat." But if it's blowing early, then we understand that the boat is good and we can. I always say that no matter how furious the sea is, it always has its navigable area, after the captain (Hogfish, \*Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV\*) and the fisherman know, because if the sea is rough, you're not going to go head-on, you have to navigate smoothly and sideways, looking for a port or the nearest coastal area, to reach your port safely.

[00:09:53]

-Tell me a little bit, are you the captain (Hogfish, \*Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV\*) of the ship?

-Yes, I have a boat and my partner has one too.

-And the companions you are looking for, are they assistants or do they do the same thing as you?

-No, I have two buddies who are divers, and I'm the assistant. But after we catch the fish, we sell it, and we cover the expenses: the investment in gas, air conditioning, or whatever. After that, we split it equally.

-Equal?

-The same. At least in my case, my partner and I. There are others who don't do it that way, but I understand that I'm watching over them. Even if they're diving down below, looking for food, I'm also doing something up above, watching, because I'm keeping an eye on a bubble: his oxygen bubble coming out, and a cord he has tied to the harpoon or the bag. I'm keeping an eye on those two things; I already know he's there.

-What dangers are there while diving?

-We have a way of saying that if there's salt water here, there are sharks. (Requiem sharks, \*Carcharhinidae\*) That's inevitable because we've had encounters with them. But when you see the shark, it's because it's seen you a while ago. And if we're killing fish, every time you shoot, that noise reaches the fish, the vibration reaches them, and their sense of smell reaches them like blood. And they come and prowl around you, but you know, if they just come to see you or sometimes they get a bit angry; they throw back their fins, and you either get away, move to a different spot, or stop killing any more fish in order to continue catching spiny lobster (Panulirus argus\*) and queen conch (Strombus gigas\*). Because, well, the shark is already in the area, because it's seeing you and knows there's blood, and if there's blood, it comes to eat. We're the ones in their territory, but we can coexist. Because many talk about sharks (Requiem sharks, \*Carcharhinidae\*), but more dangerous are the nurse shark (nurse shark) and the barracuda (barracuda), those are the ones that are really dangerous. You shoot a fish and the barracuda comes and goes up to you, and you have to remove it from the harpoon, let it eat it, the barracuda. ​​And let you interview Barber, because the nurse shark comes up to take his catch. When they come up with the catch, the nurse shark comes up to them and they have to push it even with their feet. The nurse shark is braver. So you can't fish or kill them, but if I catch five lobsters there, or if the cat got in there because there was a lobster (Spiny lobster, \*Panulirus argus\*), you can't put one more lobster (Spiny lobster, \*Panulirus argus\*) in there, because the cat stays there. But the rules are set and we respect them, but the cat, sometimes I don't know if it's an invasion, because it's not edible, there's no benefit to it, what it does is attack it. In fact, many people say no, because they see it as tame, but the fisherman can tell you that it's true, it's quite brave when it comes down to it.

-Can you tell me about a moment that stands out in your memory from your fishing career because it was dangerous or because it was really good, anything?

[00:13:14]

I found a fisherman swimming offshore, a Dominican. At 6 in the morning, in the sea. We went fishing with Raúl, Bruno Lugo, and Javier, we were at the old mark. (Black margate, \*Apisotremus surinamensis\*) They both jumped in, and suddenly I heard them shouting at me: "Hey! Hey!" and I looked over there, but it's Javier, not everyone can be there, leaving right now, and I approached him, and it was a Dominican. He told me he'd been swimming since 2 in the morning. If I don't find him, that boy will drown. So I'll rescue him. The first thing he asked me: "Do you have any coffee?" and he drinks coffee. And I said: "Look towards land," and I pointed to the beach, "Do you see that helicopter doing that?" They're there grabbing your buddy. I told him: "When my friends leave, we'll go to land, but if the police stop us, you have to tell the truth." Hey, we got to land and nothing. I told him, "Go swim and I'll take you to San Juan." [unintelligible] He said, "No, I'm going to take you to San Juan." And his family kept calling me for over two years. He's from Santo Domingo, (Blackline tilefish, \*Caulolatilus cyanops\*) He went to Santurce, they call him Pipo, José, but he's a 25-year-old kid, a bricklayer. He told me, "I wanted to experiment, but I won't come back," he told me, "because of the trip I had." And his mom told me, "I don't need to, I've already created that." You find a person, and if I don't find him? He'll drown.

-Is this a person who was leaving the Dominican Republic?

-From the Dominican Republic. They were already sailing here, almost reaching the coast, but it seems that along the way he had problems with the captain (Hogfish, \*Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV\*) or someone, and he thought they were going to do something to him, so he jumped into the water. He told me, 'Papo, go, go, I've been swimming since 2:30 in the morning, I threw away my watch, clothes, and I'm in my underwear, and the place is far away.' And that day we went fishing, just in case we didn't go at that time. Also, if at any given moment your engine breaks down and your buddy is down there, on the bottom, you have two options: you put it in, grab another tank, put it in the water, and hit it with a knife or an axe, and the fisherman hears the 'tin, tin, tin' and knows there's trouble, or else you throw the garapín and anchor.

-What is garapín?

The anchor, where the boat is anchored, we call it a "garapín" when we do it here. And it's happened to me three times, like that, simple little things, but you have to stay calm about this. I learned from that buddy that if something happens to the engine, the first thing you check is the fuel hose, the fittings, if it's connected, the switch. If it doesn't start, then you try to anchor so you're close to where your buddy is, so when he comes up, when he comes up and doesn't see you, he'll look, and you're already standing there or signaling him, or you've already notified other buddies. Now with technology, it's easier because you call another buddy: 'Look, I can't find so-and-so.' Because sometimes, as I told you, the barracuda comes and bites the plastic, and if I'm not paying attention to the bubble and follow the buoy, the buoy goes with the jet, well, I'm paying attention to it, and what happens? My partner gets lost. That's why you always have to pay attention to both: the buoy and the bubble that appears in front of the buoy. There you know where your partner is, or if there are two of you, you see two bubbles. Not just anyone can be a proel. You have to know. We have partners. My cousin's father went fishing, fell in, and never came back. He's Javier's cousin; his name was Ángel Luis, Luis Ángel's brother. He went fishing on the boat with Abraham Tejada. They went to the small boats, and the fisherman always carries something to drink, but while one of them was guiding, he was in the back struggling with the catch. It seems he fell in, and when they realized he wasn't there, they were sailing back at night. There was Abraham, the brother, Jorge. They no longer exist, they died, little by little.

[00:17:51]

-Fishing is dangerous, isn't it?

-Yes, yes, well fishing is dangerous in the sense that you go with the plan of going and coming back, but here it is ironed out right now like this, 2 minutes go by, and the sea gets rough, and that's when you have to take all the precautions, all the equipment, a good boat, a good life jacket, so that your companions know or you tell that companion: 'look, I'm going to buoy 8', to your relatives in which area you are going to fish, so that they know, in case something happens to you, well they already know where to direct the Government agencies to look for you.

-He told me a little bit, he started talking to me a little bit about the Dominican boy who came here, but are there Dominicans working here in Puerto Real?

-Yes, we have colleagues who are Dominican, who are divers. Right now, we have three or four young people in their twenties, thirty years old, who were born here and have become fishermen, they live here in the community.

-Their parents are from the Republic, but they are…

They came, but they've been legally registered for many years. They got married here and have children and grandchildren, and since they're friends of ours, they become fishermen. They also work on land if they have to, but the sea is a fishing method... You fish for four hours and you can earn a really good day, two days. There are a week or two that are really good, but you'll also have several really bad days during stormy weather. Right now, when the snowfall in the United States, all those cold fronts that come from the north don't let us fish here. We have to look south. All the friends who fish in the north come here to fish. So they generate more expenses. There are many things, you know, but you struggle. The fish come if you start going every day and make it.

Tell me a little about your life, your lifestyle. From what I understand from what you've told me, the life of a fisherman is quite good; they can earn a good living. Have you noticed any changes since you started? Is it harder to make money to live well now than in the past, or vice versa?

-Now there are many more fishermen, and since there's much more technology, it's not just us commercial fishermen; there are recreational, sport, and poachers. We're inspected more than them; there are a series of requirements. When the regulations came in, it's like the nurse shark—why did they ban it? Why did they ban the white grunt? These species used to be caught a lot, because they were caught in traps. Now there are few traps, and on the seabed you see huge swathes of those species. And people say: "You can't catch a parrotfish or a cotorro fish anymore," but it's because as long as one is worth more, I'll kill the one that's worth more. But we know there's a lot of marine life. There are many line fishermen; they catch lane snapper (Lutjanus synagris XXVII). You know, that's why there's always, here in our western zone, there's always going to be seafood, God willing. We know what climate changes can bring, because if there's a rough swell, when there's a rough swell, the fish go to the bottom. It's less of a force, and the rough swell doesn't pass quickly. You see the fish rising, like the spiny lobster (Panulirus argus), it can take a day or two. While the current clears, it depends on where it's going. And I'm going to dive north and the current is north. What happens? I'm going to catch it dirty, and here in the Atlantic off Mayagüez, the current is much stronger than in the Caribbean. And if we're north, it pulls you south or it pulls you north. If we're off El Combate, it pulls you south, but it doesn't pull you south, it pulls you south out, you know, the current pulls you in different places.

[00:22:09]

-How many areas do you cover in a day, diving, more or less, what area?

I'm trying to imagine how big the job is.

-You can... there are four tanks and you can cover 4 or 5 miles depending on the current. If the current is really strong, you go with it, or if not, you have to go sideways. Or if you're finding fish against the current, you have to push harder, or you go out and go much further upstream to come in with the current little by little. The amount of time the oxygen in the tank lasts depends on the depth.

-And he told me that he's starting around 6 in the morning in the water...

-At 6 in the morning, 6:40, the fisherman is already in the water.

-And how do you get back 4 or 5 hours?

-Yes. Well, by 11:00, we're already on our way. Fishing takes about six hours. The fisherman is diving. If by 2:30 the fisherman isn't here on land, in port, there's already concern. The Coast Guard is called to Natural Resources: look, so-and-so hasn't arrived. And the guys get active, start searching. You know, that's why they always say to have good communication, because if a fisherman is lost, we're going to go out more to look for him. You could have a worse situation, the same thing could happen to me, because remember, engines are mechanical and they get damaged. That's why when the weather's bad, fishermen are told not to go; some go for cavalry. But if you can't, stay, because that way you avoid problems for yourself and your other colleagues, because many families are going to go out looking for you and avoid misfortunes, because it's better to stay in port.

-But most of them go with someone, but are there people who go alone?

"Yes, as long as they know, and you tell them, and the wind itself punishes them and they turn back. Because you can go out in bad weather, but if bad weather is forecast, well, it becomes very difficult for you, you have to turn back. No matter how brave the fisherman is, he's going to turn back because he knows things are going to get complicated for the bowman, the assistant up above, and he's down there catching poison, and that kind of poison puts you against the rocks, it can cut you, burst your sleeve, and if you don't know what to do and a sleeve bursts, you get desperate going up and that's when you get the bubble, the VGE, the embolism, as they say, and if it's strong, you won't fish again."

-He tells me a little after he gets out of the water, how does he sell the fish, where does he go?

We're partners in a fishing village or some fish market. They have docks, so they give us docks to moor up. I arrive, sell them the fish, and they resell it. If they don't want it, I have to bring it home and sell it, or if I have money, I give it to my friends, and I keep it at home and sell it little by little.

-Who are you selling it to little by little?

- To the customers.

-What are they like, neighbors?

-To the neighbors. I can call a restaurant and say, 'Look, I have spiny lobster (Panulirus argus) and queen conch (Strombus gigas).' And if they want, I'll bring it to them. But I call several clients, the average customer, as I call them. Because the good times for fishing are right now. But we have cold fronts and all that. And when it's October, November, December, Christmas, suckling pig, there's a lot of fish. But what do they eat? A lot of turkey and suckling pig, and the fish is stored. Restaurant owners go on vacation and many businesses close. And we, well, have to sell the fish little by little, to the average customer.

[00:26:05]

-How many times does it happen that you have to sell it yourself?

-Right now, we're selling fish two days a week and three days a week at the fish market. Because some businesses have closed, others have gone bankrupt, it's difficult for us to sell. But we go every day and catch and sell. So we don't have that problem; we don't stop fishing just because it doesn't sell, because at the fish market, we have a commitment that if the freezers fill up, I'll keep fishing and have the option to sell elsewhere. But the fishing villages provide services: docks, lockers, assistance. The thing is, you have to be up to date with the government, with a series of documents, licenses, everything, and then, if things are right, we ask for help. Even though it's a process, when we have those bad times for fishermen, there's no help as such, because you saw what happened with the kids from María, who are still struggling with it.

-Tell me a little more about that, what happened to Maria?

-Ah, well, for Hurricane Maria, NOAA gave about $11 million to the Department of Natural Resources for the fishermen, and they did whatever they wanted with it. Well, we have a president who's from the Puerto Rico Fishermen's Association. They took it to court with lawyers and managed to rescue $7 million. They were going to distribute it to us recently, but the administration, the government, changed. But we have until next month for it to be distributed; otherwise, we have to return it to NOAA. So the bottleneck is in the bureaucracy of NOAA and Natural Resources. Because NOAA could have given it to us, why did it use the Department? All NOAA had to do was ask the Fisheries Laboratory for a list of active fishermen, or they go to the fish markets themselves, or since we've been fishing for so many years, we know each other. You go every year to get a sticker, and the police stop you to check your documents. There's already communication between some people, but we have such bureaucracy in the government, and we're about to lose that money, and it's our money, because it's very difficult for aid to arrive. The Department of Agriculture can help me buy an engine, but what do they say? You put up the money, buy it, I'll pay you back, I'll give you half later. That's why I'm asking for half! Because I have half. They tell me: you put it up, we'll send it to you later, we'll send you 50%, and sometimes it doesn't even arrive 30%. In other words, if a fisherman wants to live a little comfortably, he always has to put something away for bad times.

-Tell me a little about what happened during Hurricane Maria. How did it affect you?

-Since we left the boat in the mangroves, here in Puerto Real Bay we have another bay where boats are kept for hurricane season. Since there are so many mangroves, thank God, they protected us, and none were destroyed. But we were there for several months because there was no power. Who are we going to sell to? So we went fishing, because we want to sell a few fish, but Hurricane Maria was a very difficult time. We had the opportunity because, since we belong to the Department of Agriculture, we went out fishing because we had a license, but no one could be at sea. But then another problem arose: all the recreational and sporting activities wanted to get a fishing license to stay at sea. And there are 1,000 of us, but if you look at the records in the department, there are 6,000, 7,000 registered fishermen. But many of them are, well, where are these people? Do they look at the statistics? All those large boats are registered on those little islands, so they don't pay a license. I understand that tourism is one of Puerto Rico's main sources of income, but on the other hand, a lot of money is lost, by the big interests, by the big vessels. Because I say: I'm not interested in exporting my seafood because after I sell it to the local restaurant here, to the chinchorro, to whoever, because those big hotels don't buy seafood from us, they buy it from us, American fish, as we say.

[00:30:35]

-What do they buy?

-By vanes, American fish, fillet.

-Aren't you from here?

-They're not from here. It's much cheaper. But you ask for a Captain fillet (Hogfish, \*Lachnolaimus maximus XXXIV\*) or grouper, and they'll sell you a basa fillet. So if you're a fisherman and you know what you're doing, well... but we always have to say that we've never sold to those big hotels, always to the small ones.

-Have they tried or haven't they even tried?

-It's been tried, but they didn't want to. It's because of the price; American eggs are much cheaper than buying them. It's like the egg problem in Puerto Rico now that we have them.

-How is?

-The thing about eggs is that the American one is getting more expensive.

-Cheaper.

- Or is it the other way around? The other way around. But local is local. You try fish from somewhere else and it's different because of how long it's been traveling, and here it's fresh. Here you can keep it for a month, two months at home, and you can eat it whenever you want. But how long have those Americans been traveling on those boats, in those wagons?

-But the American is coming. Do you think they're bringing him from the United States?

-From the Caribbean islands, because right now, fish from across the country is coming in here from Venezuela. The ones they buy come out with good flavor. But you have to say it's from the Caribbean. But when it's American fish, you realize it's a fillet, [unintelligible], different from the one from here. And you know, if you go to eat at a restaurant, you know the owner, the customers, and you say: look, this fish is from our country, this species, it has this, and there it is. That's why the government is required, the restaurants that sell our fish are required to have a seal, when you enter: 'Fish from the coast of Puerto Rico is sold here.' But, well, the government always finds ways to do its things, but we always fight and understand. At least I have good clients: three or four restaurants that order from me, and the average customer, well, I resolve it, you know. And if you know, times aren't what they used to be; Now, you can't just spend money like that. There are earthquakes, a pandemic. One was educated. There, one has to take care of the resources, because the fisherman is the only one who can protect them. The government is there to enforce the law, but if I start catching fish that are closed, the small fish, what do I have for myself or for future generations? Nothing. That's why the government, the biologists, I've always seen that they depend on us, perhaps we also depend on you, for knowledge, to study a species, for studies, but most biologists need the fisherman to continue. After they write their thesis, they need to continue learning, going with the fishermen, filling out the statistics that have data for many years. We understand that there is good communication with these people, but the government needs to be more proactive.

[00:34:10]

-Proactive in what?

-In enforcing the laws, because there's a bureaucracy that does nothing. If they don't do anything, I don't do anything. But if you give me a ticket today for a belt, you'll see me walking by tomorrow with it on. And I understand that if Resources caught a fisherman with an illegal or closed species, they can give them a chance, but if I catch you a second time, they'll give you a fine, because that reaches my ears: 'Wait, they're stopping.' And there's respect, it builds respect and raises awareness. Because I've always said: it's us, it's no one else; we're the ones at sea. And they'll ask us for information, we give it to them, even when they go to do studies, they look for fishing boats to take them, because we know where we're going.

-He told me a little about tourism. He said it's good for you because you can sell to restaurants and things like that. I don't know if it was always like that...

"It's always been like this. For as long as I've been around, restaurants have always sold. What I'm saying is that there are a lot of restaurants, and they all sell the same thing. I'm here, you're here, variety. But there is, in Puerto Rico, there's good marine life, and we have a lot of walls in the north, and you can't fish in the south because the sea is rough; a lot of species should be breeding there, like Mona Island. There's no need to close here; the regulations and closed seasons are enough. It's a matter of being educated, but continuing to educate this new generation and having the government do its part. If the government doesn't do its part, it's like when the cat runs away... when the cat runs away, the mouse has a field day. That's what happens in government." Resources never pay me, and I'm the fisherman who doesn't respect, because I'm going to bring everything, because I go fishing, if I don't fish what's legal and I see something illegal, I'm going to bring it, because if the police don't stop me... You know, there has to be a commitment from the agencies, and good communication because today a police officer: nothing, they intervene with you when they are going to intervene, but there is no dialogue, there are very few officers.

-There are many people who, you think, don't respect the rules or don't have the papers...

-Up to date, they're not up to date, because it's also a bureaucracy: I throw away the license today and the department has 90 days to give it to me, while they investigate. And you go get a driver's license and they give it to you the same day. So, if they don't want to give it to me, I've already lost the investment I made. Because we fishermen first make an investment and then go and see. Because it's not the same: if you work here on land 40 hours, on Friday you collect a check, but I go looking every day. So, there are good days and bad days, because today I might not earn anything: I collected the expenses for gas, to go tomorrow. But tomorrow I might earn 200, 300, 400 pesos, on a good day of fishing.

-What is the hardest license to get?

-The learning one. Because right now I had to get a license—I'm an older fisherman (Burro grunt, \*Pomadasys crocro\*) of 30, 40 years old. Why did I have to get a beginner's license? The first one is for a year. That year I have to submit fishing statistics, and then they give me a four-year license, the fisherman's license. But I have to get a license for queen conch (\*Strombus gigas\*) and spiny lobster (\*Panulirus argus\*). And I have to renew that every year. There's also the species license when they're closed...

[00:38:07]

-That of highly migratory species.

-But there are also smaller ones, like the yellowtail snapper and the white grunt, which are species of a certain size, like the king mackerel. If we analyze it, we have a closed season or ban all year round: from December to February, for the red hind; April and May, for the mutton snapper (Lutjanus analis); in summer comes the queen conch (Strombus gigas), and that doesn't include the protected species that are there all year round. And if we want to get a license to fish for goldfish (Coryphaenidae), we have to get that too, but we don't do that because we go much further afield. But when the weather's bad and you say let's go silk snapper fishing, I'll go fishing with you to the silk snappers, or we'll go fishing for dorado (Dolphin, \*Coryphaena hippurus\*), and I'll go with you because I like fishing. If we catch a catch, we win. But most of us just do that. I go diving every day. After I get home at 5 p.m., I don't do anything else. At noon, I don't do anything else. I prepare for the next day. Those who fish for lane snapper (Lutjanus synagris XXVII\*) do the same. Those who fish for silk snapper, well, if you're going to be there for two or three days, you prepare to be at sea for two or three days. And there are a lot of requirements: buoys, with a tag, you know. They demand a lot from us, and there's little help. There may be some, but the bureaucracy to give it to you is very difficult, and the fisherman gets tired. I've let a lot of aid go to waste because of that; the government helped many fishermen with motors, but what I have, mine has been a struggle. I have an 18-foot boat with a 40-foot motor, and I've gone to La Mona there in it, but I struggle with that. But it's not easy; sometimes it's hard, because you go out with a buddy and some get sick, take the bubble, and their families worry. I didn't learn to scuba dive much with a tank for that very reason, because of the loss of my uncle, because of another buddy who's still alive. He was disabled in the waist and can walk, and that young man made a commitment to the sea. He's a fisherman and he fishes a lot with line fishing, all along this coast, and a lot of mutton snapper, a lot of yellowtail snapper. A few days ago we were talking about the Nassau grouper (Epinephelus striatus), because there's a lot of it, and he tells me that it came here through the sargassum. Because if you collect sargassum, you take a bunch of sargassum and put it in the boat: little shrimp, shrimp, (Shrimps, \*Crustaceans spp.\*) little crabs, lots of them. And he told me, Papo, there are different ones there in Los Pozos. He goes by line: 30, 40 pounds of sama, (Mutton snapper, \*Lutjanus analis\*) 30 or 40 of colirubias, colirubia de veril. And everything, and back then we started talking to him, it was the day I went to visit Villafañe and he was there: Papo, you're going to Casa fría del peces and there we started talking about the grouper (Nassau grouper, \*Epinephelus striatus\*) and he told me: boy, Papo, that came here to Puerto Rico in the sargassum, because it migrates and it has stayed because there is a lot of it…

[00:41:35]

-You mentioned sargassum. Tell me a little bit about what you've noticed. If there's been more sargassum in the last year, how does that affect you at work, too?

"It affects us because, when you're sailing, if there's a lot of sargassum, it sticks to the engine's transmission and it doesn't breathe. What does that do? If the engine doesn't breathe, the impeller, which is what makes it pump, clogs up and your engine overheats and breaks down. You also have to be aware of sargassum; if you're sailing at night, it's much worse. And when it hits the beaches, you can't go near them; trash can wash up. My friend, just now, talking about this, many years ago we saw a lot of trash, a lot of plastic. We've been together again for two and a half years, with him, and we've talked about it: we've seen less trash, but it depends on where the jets are. When it rains a lot, all the rivers flow into the sea, and that's where all the trash comes from. It goes all the way up the coast from Mayagüez to here, and from here it flows down to here because it's still there, traveling on ships."

-Does garbage come with sargassum?

-Not as such, in the rain, with the bamboo stalks. The sargassum comes because it comes down from the streams, but many species migrate there: the little hawksbill travels there when it's born, which goes out to sea; in the sargassum there are many species, a lot of life. But when it reaches the shore, it decomposes and swims. Everything is an evolution, I understand, everything has a purpose.

[00:43:29]

-But sargassum has always been here, but in recent years has there been more of it than usual?

There's much more. The thing is, maybe now we could have any species. When there's a rough swell, the simple algae that exists rises from the bottom and the algae float because they have oxygen. When they release oxygen, it goes to the bottom of the sea, it rots. Well, and there always has been, but since the sargassum started to appear, much more attention has been paid to it. And it reaches the beaches, it reaches the places. But it's also difficult for sailors if you don't know how to navigate, because you can get into a huge, huge sargassum slick, and if all you have is the motor and no oar, how are you going to get out? It can take a long time to get out of the slick. Sailors also have to be well-trained, have that knowledge, because they can damage the engine, and it's on the high seas, and there's no one there, you don't have a radio, there's no way to communicate, because sometimes your cell phone doesn't work, depending on where you are.

-I understand. Can you tell me a little about the town of Puerto Real? You told me it was always a fishing village, that tourism was always important, but I think I want to understand how you feel life is more or less the same, or what has changed in the quality of life and how people enjoy it here?

-Now it's changed a lot, because many people have come down to the area, to the coast, to buy. And it's like I said; if my grandparents died and my mother wants to move from the seaside, and the house belongs to her and she sells it, well, the one who buys it is someone who has money, someone wealthy. And so the fishermen are displaced. But there's always been some, because right now, the fishermen who don't live on the shore live on plots of land, in the town, and there are always more fishermen. Now there are more fishermen from all neighborhoods. What they have to do is unite, fight. If the fishermen unite, they achieve many things. But our fear has always been that we'll be displaced as a community, because progress is coming. What used to be a fish market is now a marina, with large interests. And when those people come from there, they come with everything they own. They pay for the marina for all those projects they want to build on our coasts; they want to take it away from us. The coasts are the green lungs of all towns; if there is no green lung, there is no life.

-What do you mean by green lung?

-The green lung is the vegetation, the mangroves. If you take out a tree and plant cement, it's not a green lung; there's no oxygen, well, as they say. From here, to our area, many people from the metropolitan area, San Juan, from those towns where almost everything is cement, like to come to our area for Easter, for the summer. Many buy, have second homes. And you can see that many people go out to stay with relatives, others sell, move, because fishing isn't a thing... I have two sons and they don't like fishing; they work on land, the other is in school. They go to the sea with me if they have to, but they haven't developed that passion to be a fisherman, what they would like to be, you know. Well, and there are others who did. Since we were little, my grandmother didn't want me to be a fisherman, for that very reason, because of my uncle, because of my friend, the bubble, and since I live right by the sea, I would come home from school and stand on the balcony of my house and look over there, where the dog is, and you can see the sea, it was the bay. Exactly, well, I had to become a fisherman, forced. When I opened my eyes, I already had one of those little boats standing up and I would fish around there. We would fish at night, fishing with a light, going to catch lobster (Spiny lobster, \*Panulirus argus\*) with a line. And the problem with our pollution is that, being a coastal town, all the discharges go into the sea, from the dairies, from the big companies, and internally, the government has made them realize that the studies, well, we have contaminated waters. If there weren't so much pollution, I understand there would be a lot more fishing, more people would be involved, because not everyone is a fisherman. It seems we're born, otherwise you can go out and get seasick. People who go out and get seasick once don't come back; they become afraid, yes, and the waves, you know, not everyone.

[00:48:23]

-But, from what you're telling me, I understand that the population of Puerto Real has grown in a way...

-Yes, our neighborhood right now is the largest neighborhood in Cabo Rojo. Of the nine neighborhoods, we're the largest because we have many residential developments, many buildings, and a quality of life. In a large community, there are many social problems, many single mothers, many small houses that need improvements. The government gives you a plot of land and you do nothing, and that's where it's lost. The government doesn't have a plan to help its communities. The central government, the state government, whatever. If they were there to listen to their people, we wouldn't be where we are now in the situation in Puerto Rico. I understand. There wouldn't be so much corruption. If the incumbent worked for the people, we would be fine, because there's more than enough funding. We're a country that receives a lot of funding, and we understand that it's poor administration, in terms of education and healthcare.

-How do you take care of your health? Do you have insurance or how can you take care of yourself?

- I'm not in good health, but I... we fishermen rarely get sick, like I say: the sun and the salt water heal us, we're immune. I don't go to hospitals; I have to be really sick, with a really bad rash to go to a hospital. I take medication, or I go to the sea sick. You sweat, but thank God, I'm healthy enough to last a couple more years. But you have to take care of yourself, even with that. During the pandemic, I tell you, we were the only ones who could go out, but we also had the problem that not everyone wanted to come and buy fish. So what we saw in the Fishing Village was that since the restaurants closed, everyone who ate at the restaurants in our area, what did they do? They went to the fishmonger to buy their fish, straight from the fishmonger, and that's why we were able to survive. But if we hadn't stayed until after the power came back three, four, or five months, we wouldn't have had the chance to sell our seafood. And what the restaurants that had to close, that were damaged, had to do was very difficult.

[00:51:07]

-How many fishermen are in the Village?

-In the village, on any given day, there are about 36 of us active fishermen, and there are others: partners, colleagues, family members, a large group, so there are several independent fishmongers.

-What is the difference between the Fishing Village and independent fishmongers?

-A private fish market: he has a dock, I can tie up at his dock, but if I sell fish to him, I can't sell to him. If I don't sell him fish, I can't sell to him. So, if I sell to him and something happens, it's at his discretion whether he lends me money to fix it. But if I'm a member of a Fishing Village, I have a dock, I have a locker, and being the good fisherman that I am, if I need help, fix the engine, buy a part. That's the advantage of fishing villages, there are a number of benefits: with a dock, electricity, water, a locker, you arrive, they buy your catch, and you go to rest.

-It's easy…

-So, because if I don't have a dock, I have to have a bus or a cart to launch and pull the boat out every day.

-And do the people who work at the Fishing Village earn money from what they sell?

The Fishing Village has one employee, but it's a non-profit entity. With the funds we earn, we set up a plant to fill the tanks, buy equipment to keep the facility running, and are accountable to the government. Every fisherman fills out forms, fills out their accounts, you know, to make a profit. But now, after the hurricane and the pandemic, the government became interested in the fishing villages, in helping them. Otherwise, the fishing villages were always obsolete. Right now, with all that money, many could have been fixed; many haven't been fixed yet. Many will remain that way. Every time a government wins, they change the secretaries, and that's all. These plans, this one got thrown out, that's why we say that with our funds... We have until the 13th, this week, and they haven't said anything. We don't know what's going to happen, because then you have to submit a document to request them again. And the way government agencies are doing, one is in a bind, well, we know who's at the top. Sometimes we have lawyers representing us, but it's also expensive. And the hearings or meetings may be in San Juan. I may have a good car to go, and if that week I can't go in my car and my wife has to use it for something else, other colleagues—not all of us have the opportunity to go. One of the options was, we had a mayor who would provide the bus for every meeting. Now, this incumbent doesn't provide a vehicle to transport all the fishermen. Cabo Rojo may have 100 or 120 active fishermen, and those who aren't active are much more; we're a significant force. There, yes, those from other towns go, and we don't. What the government needs is presence, support, and someone to represent us.

[00:54:35]

-Has the Fishing Village always been so united?

-No, there was a time when the department did nothing, there were a series of presidents who did nothing.

-And when did that change?

-In 2019, when I became president.

-Are you the president?

-It was. I was there from 2019 to 2022, two and a half years. We rescued it, put it to work, and another board came in. And now the government became interested because when the pandemic hit, the Ministry of Agriculture distributed a lot of boxes of food, and we used the Fishing Village through us. We rescued it, helped it, and now it's working well, and the government is interested. But the idea is to get the funds to repair the pier, various little things we need to improve but bureaucracy hasn't let us, and the "permits." Because everything here is the Corps of Engineers, over the years the bay, the sediment, you have to dredge, you have to clean, and they ask for a lot of documents, and it's difficult for us. But anyone comes to build and quickly, well: build and then I'll give you the permits. They ask for an apology instead of permission.

-Another thing, the last thing I think I'm going to ask you, is what you think the future of fishing in Puerto Real holds. More importantly, are there any young people interested who have a place to learn, and if they want to...

-The thing is, there's a lot of new generation of fishermen in Cabo Rojo. The problem is that fishermen are afraid of interacting with authorities. Right now, I thought, I dare you to talk to me, but we call any fisherman to interview him, and he says no. He's afraid. He thinks the information you give him will be used against him, and it's very difficult. We have to continue educating and reaching him; what we want is to help.

-Are young people like that?

"Yes, because young people are learning from those out there as if nothing's wrong. But right now, most are up to date. Why? Because aid has arrived, and that's what I tell them: if you're up to date, hurricanes and earthquakes are phenomena that don't announce themselves; they arrive when they should. If a hurricane comes and destroys a dock, a fish market, you're on foot for several days. The Ministry of Agriculture will provide some funds. Since I'm up to date with my documents, I benefit from the aid, but if not, I get nothing. That has raised awareness among young fishermen. Most are active now, with documents, everything, licenses, everything they tell them, but there's always the bureaucracy that takes so long when we go to apply. And why do I have to get a license for conch (Strombus gigas) and spiny lobster (Panulirus argus) every year? Give it to me for like four years. And I understand that it's the government, for kids." The police stopped me today, and they know my sticker doesn't expire tomorrow. Tomorrow they'll come back and stop me. I understand it's a requirement because we get stopped by all the agencies: municipal, state, FURA, Homeland, Coast Guard. We have 7 or 8 agencies, and one or all of them can stop me every day. When they're all mixed up, when we say they're activated, they stop everyone. And it's a process because you might know me and say, 'Give me the boat license and yours for a search,' but sometimes it's uncomfortable because when they stop me, the tourist comes by and they don't stop them. And it's happened to me. I had an anecdote: my neighbor who's in the United States and was a fisherman. I was his assistant, a bowman. We were going out fishing, and like two chartered boats went out fishing. And I said, 'There's the police. I bet they won't stop us because we're on the charter.' When we passed, the charter boat headed south, we headed north, and the police went behind us to stop us. Why didn't they stop me in front of the other guy? Because they had to stop the tourist, and they don't stop them. That's why they have a regulation for catching 10 or 15 dorados. (Dolphins, \*Coryphaenidae\*)

[00:58:52]

But why do you think the police are supposed to be from here too, why?

-Because they only interfere with the fishermen, they don't stop the tourists and that's my complaint. That's our complaint; if you stop me, you caught an illegal, small spiny lobster (Panulirus argus), you fined me, fine, but why don't you stop the tourists? They're on the run, catching dorado (Dolphin, Coryphaena hippurus) and wahoo (Acanthocybium solanderi). The quantity is 10 or 12 dorado (Dolphins, Coryphaenidae) and he has 20. He doesn't throw them away. So he comes and sells them, takes them to the fishmonger and sells them, when he can't sell them.

-What is the dorado (Dolphin, \*Coryphaena hippurus\*) like here?

-Mahi-mahi (Dolphin, \*Coryphaena hippurus\*) is reasonably priced; an American fillet is the same here. Mahi-mahi (Dolphin, \*Coryphaena hippurus\*) is dry. If you buy it as a fillet, you don't have to deal with the backbone.

-But is it in abundance here?

-Yes, over time, yes there is, there is a good life for dorado (Dolphin, \*Coryphaena hippurus\*) (dolphin) and wahoo (wahoo), that's why the bayaos, the sargassum, they look for that, where they see four birds flying around the sargassum: 'let's go there' and they run and catch. That's why there is a lot here, here is the marina, there is the sports center, there is the Boquerón marina, there are many boats, for tournaments, they are bringing many of those things from San Juan to here, because they have seen that our fishing platform is much larger, many more facilities, it is new for them, to explore.

-Well, thank you very much for giving me all this information.

-At your service.

-Is there anything you'd like to tell me, that you think I should know about the changes?

I've always said that the government, the government's aid, has to be more concerned and work with fishing communities and enforce the law, whoever it is, so that it creates respect. And the aid should reach the fishermen directly, so that it doesn't require the use of several people or other entities. Because if NOAA had come directly to us, that problem would have been solved, but they used the Department, and that created bureaucracy. From the Department, they moved it to Agriculture, from Agriculture, they reversed it, and that's where it's lost.

[01:01:16]

(Jannette) What things in nature impact fishing, your fishing? What things happen in nature?

-Pollution. All the discharges that go into the sea. Every time they move land on a mountain, you see the puddle of water, the red shoal, the sediment. There's no work plan, all the discharges into the water, all the sanitation systems in Puerto Rico are obsolete; they've been around for 40 years, and in 40 years there were 6,000 homes in Cabo Rojo; here we are 14,000 people right now.

-Are there sanitary discharges here, in Puerto Real?

-Sewers, there are.

-But are there sanitary discharges into the sea?

-Of course, the entire main street. And everything that comes up from up there, everything that comes down from San Germán, San Sebastián, all those towns, all the dairy farms, all of that discharges into the sea. The government stays silent because it's not going to take action against a dairy farm. I raise my voice against a dairy farm and they'll say: 'This fisherman, what, don't you see he's leaving millions for his milk?' But all the discharges from the dairy farms end up on the coast.

-And with hurricanes now getting stronger, what changes do you see when you go to sea?

-The swells that carry away the grass. Hurricanes are more constant. The rainy seasons start earlier. This hurricane season started early, although no major disaster occurred, but, well, because the waters are warmer. When it rains a lot, the rainwater, the freshwater stays on top, and you see the difference when you dive, that the fish go to the bottom; they don't want to be linked to the freshwater. You notice the freshwater on top. Ask the boys now, you can notice the change; you know it's freshwater, it's dirty. And the fisherman is the one who has to search a little deeper, with a little more depth, because there's a little more saltwater, but if he dives shallow, all the water there is freshwater, as we say.

-If the fish is moving deeper now, you have to go deeper too…

-That's the idea, because if the fish go deep, and it depends on the depth where you start, but I can catch the queen conch (Strombus gigas) at 100 feet or at 15 feet, because we have the fishing platform, there it goes, it buries itself, it comes up. And I go fishing and all the corals are alive. There's good life, that's why there's marine life. And since we have that, I can fish today here in the south and tomorrow it could come to the north. So where I fished today, if a friend of mine fished here today and I don't know about it and I come to the spot tomorrow, it could be a bad day for me, because he caught fish. But if no one has been there and when several days of rough seas pass, when all the fishermen go out, everyone catches good fish. And they spend several days fishing an area and they catch good fish; Spiny lobster (Panulirus argus) variety, a few conchs, a little spiny lobster (Panulirus argus) fish, back to land, as we say. Sometimes they use two tanks, sometimes three, sometimes four. If you fish with one tank or two, well, you come back to land early. You know, to do other things, because you also have to take a day off. If there are bad days there, you take advantage of it to work at home, pay for necessities, be with the family. Because I leave at 4, I get back by noon. Sometimes my wife is here; if she's not at school with the kids and arrives, she goes to pick up her granddaughter. Sometimes we meet at 3:30 in the afternoon. That's Monday through Friday, and to share, we go with her: 'Come on, let's go fishing,' or we go to the dock to wait for me. You know, wives are always a good pillar for fishermen. They have to learn, like it. If there's a wife who supports a fisherman and helps each other, life is comfortable.

[01:05:34]

-And does your wife help you?

-I called her and sometimes she sells stamps, she decorates...

-And she's also into fishing, right?

-He likes to help, he goes with me if I want to do something.

-And what does she do, what is her role?

-Well, if we're going diving, I'll dive in and she'll watch. And if she needs to make a line, she'll take a little fish and pull it out, or I'll pull it out for her, and she'll come with me.

-Does she clean fish and help sell it?

-Yes, sometimes I want to eat a fish, but it's not fixed: it's fine, I'll fix it.

-No, but for sale.

Yes, she helps me. I prepare the conch (Queen conch, \*Strombus gigas\*), I clean it, and she calls: 'Look, I have conch,' I publicize it, she calls her family, her friends, they always come. If I'm not there, well, she already knows that I have the fish bagged there, so many pounds for the clients, but she's a source, I mean, she helps me, because if I didn't have her, it would be much more difficult. Because when I come from fishing, I can't rest, I have to move, to carry the catch, deliver it, and if I arrive, I have to deliver it to Añasco, Rincón, to another town far away, you know, which requires some expenses, and the price here is much cheaper than in the metro area. Right now the price here is low, it's dropped a little due to supply and demand. When you catch a lot and you can't sell it, well, if you know how, you lower the price a little, so that the catch moves, that way you evolve and earn enough to go the next day. But if not, well, I don't do anything with my freezer full of fish there. I fill it and I have to sell it. If not, well, I can't, because if the fishery doesn't buy from me and I have a freezer full and I have nowhere to store it, you know, the fisherman has to be there, from the first moment I go out fishing: the fisherman automatically becomes a merchant, because I catch it and I know I have to clean it, make it look nice, to take it to the fishmonger, to the customer. I'm the first one who has to deliver our product, 100% indisputable quality, Puerto Rican seafood. What's missing after that? The service I give the customer, the treatment, because if I give you a good price and good service, you come back. And I'm selling you a quality product that when you take it home, you're going to eat something, and I can give you better service than a fishmonger. The fishmonger sells it to you dirty, dirty it is: with gills and scales. They weigh it, clean it, and you tip the person who fixes it. If it weighed 5 pounds, it might come down to 4.5. So, I don't. I do one thing: I clean it, and after I clean it, I weigh it. I'm assuming the cost.

-Of what is not eaten

-Of what's not edible. So, that's when I offer it beautifully, well-washed, well-bagged, and that's when I get my customers. The fishmongers themselves call me: 'Do you have any fish?' Fishmongers call and say: 'Look, do you have any fish? Get me some.' Because they know our fish is of undeniable quality, and what's missing is the service the fisherman provides, the way he treats them, how he handles the fish, how he presents it to the customer.

[01:08:59]

-And that's why they come back...

-Yes, of course, and they come back. They ask for your number and people from all over, from San Juan, call you. I have good clients. I have some friends from Hormigueros who live in San Juan. When she comes, she calls me, 200, 300 pesos worth of conch (Queen conch, \*Strombus gigas\*) (queen conch): 'Papo, I'll buy this for myself, for home. I'll leave 10 pounds here in Hormigueros and I'll take the rest over there, to eat there and when I come to visit my mom, I eat here.' They're people who know you through the platforms, or when I was president, I would serve the client myself, I would fix the fish myself, and then, well, being a fisherman and being a vocal member, because there are very few fishermen who come when there's a rush, well, you always get something and you go. And I've always liked having the knowledge to defend myself, because we have our rights, but if not... The fisherman today, many fishermen don't understand that we are part of Puerto Rico's food supply, we belong to the Ministry of Agriculture, we are the ones who bring and sell fish, they always run to buy American fish, which right now is the time of year when there's a lot of land, but when Holy Week comes, now in April, well, it shrinks, not much comes in, but, well, they buy American fish and then when it's good quality, the fishmongers can sell it, because before it was very oily, a lot of stuff, now the fish comes out much prettier. But at least I always try to have local fish and sell local fish, and if it's from somewhere else, I tell the customer: look, this fish isn't from the country, but it's good, you can eat it because you can buy it frozen, when you thaw it at home it can come out very soft, well, it's been there for several months, old man, as we say.

[01:11:09]

-OK, the mosquitoes came out.

-Thank you very much, I'll stop here.

-The Nassau grouper you have seen, are they big?

-Boy, all sizes.