

# Rescue, Restore, Reinforce,

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Analyzing Global Policies to  
Reduce Peruvian Bycatch  
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The Northern Pacific fishing industry, like Peru, is an epicenter for bycatch. Specifically in trawling, many marine animal species have been injured and killed by bycatch in the Alaskan region. Amply, policies have been implemented to mitigate this issue, including amendments and specific task forces. This examination will determine whether Alaska's bycatch policies can be effectively implemented in Peru.

In Alaska, one of the most prevalent bycatch species is salmon. To combat this, organizations, task forces, and government involvement have been established. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), for example, reports that cameras are required on vessels to monitor salmon bycatch. Each fishing vessel is required to retain each salmon catch, which is then counted by an independent observer while collecting samples and data to better understand the species' origins and populations. (NOAA, 2024)

Even more so, government amendments have been implemented to mitigate bycatch.

Amendment 110, implemented in 2015, specifies catch limits for the period from August 15th to October 14th. (NOAA, 2024) Figure 1 below details Amendment 10.

**Chum salmon: Chum salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery is managed under incentive plan agreements (IPAs) that provide incentives to avoid chum bycatch. Attainment of 42,000 fish limit in the Catcher Vessel Operational Area between August 15 and October 14 closes the Chum Salmon Savings Area for the rest of that time period. Vessels that participate in the IPAs are exempt from this closure.**

The development of Incentive Plan Agreements (IPAs) is also outlined in Amendment 10, which exempts vessels from it. The North Pacific Fishing Management Council (NPFMC) has reported that since 2010, all vessels have participated in IPA, and representatives provide annual reports to the NPFMC council to better understand and strategize bycatch reduction. (NPFMC)

Amendment 91, implemented in 2011, places hard caps or (PCS limits) on the number of Chinook Salmon to a limit of 60,000 per year for all vessels. (NPFMC) In the NOAA-reported Chinook and Chum Salmon Bycatch Reduction Incentive Plan and Agreement, IPA vessels with low bycatch performances are given access to restricted fishing grounds or dates. (NOAA 2024)

These amendments have provided exceptional understanding and progress towards bycatch mitigation in Alaska, and similar cooperation from fisheries is needed to further bycatch reduction in Peru. In Peru, the consequences are outweighed by the benefits of overfishing and bycatch due to economic and cultural needs. Peru's artisanal fisheries must be active participants in reducing bycatch. Implementing policies similar to Amendments 110 and 91 would call on Peruvian artisanal fishers to cooperate, as fishing access incentives would address their economic needs.

To develop policies and drive action to mitigate bycatch, there must be enforcement or oversight. In Alaska, there are multiple councils, organizations, and task forces that oversee fishing activities and provide recommendations for further problem mitigation.

One task force was implemented by Governor Dunleavy with Administrative Order (AO) #326, beginning its effect in 2022 (State of Alaska, 2021) in the Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT). ABRT was established to explore and provide bycatch mitigation recommendations for future policies by: (1) Studying what impacts bycatch has on fisheries. (2) Evaluate and recommend policies informed by a better understanding of the issue of bycatch of high-value Alaska fishery resources. (3) Ensure state agencies are leveraging available resources to better understand the issue of bycatch. (4) Utilize the best available science to inform policymakers and the public about these issues. (ABRT Final Report, 2022)

One contrasting issue with ABRT is the composition of the task force. Some members are directly responsible for overseeing fisheries in the Alaskan fishing industry, which creates a conflict of interest, especially when it comes to potential reduction strategies that affect members' personal activities and profits. However, the initiation of task forces in Peru could provide some enforcement and bycatch mitigation, as long as the task force members don't directly conflict with the task force's goals.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), also known as NOAA, and the NPFMC are critical organizations that oversee the marine environment and ecological life. Other organizations that help with bycatch mitigation and increase bycatch enforcement. Similar to ABRT, these organizations have authority over fishing activities in the Alaskan region that, if adaptable to Peru, could help with bycatch enforcement.

The issue with implementing bycatch policies, task forces, and organizations in Peru is that government enforcement, such as laws, has been put in place but remains ignored. In the late 1900s, Peruvian officials signed a law prohibiting bycatch—the problem—and addressing the lack of enforcement and the need for artisanal fishers' cooperation. The cultural and economic needs of artisanal fisherfolk are important factors that policies and organizations need to acknowledge. Alaskan policies, task forces, and organizations can be adapted in Peru; doing so would represent substantial progress toward bycatch mitigation.

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