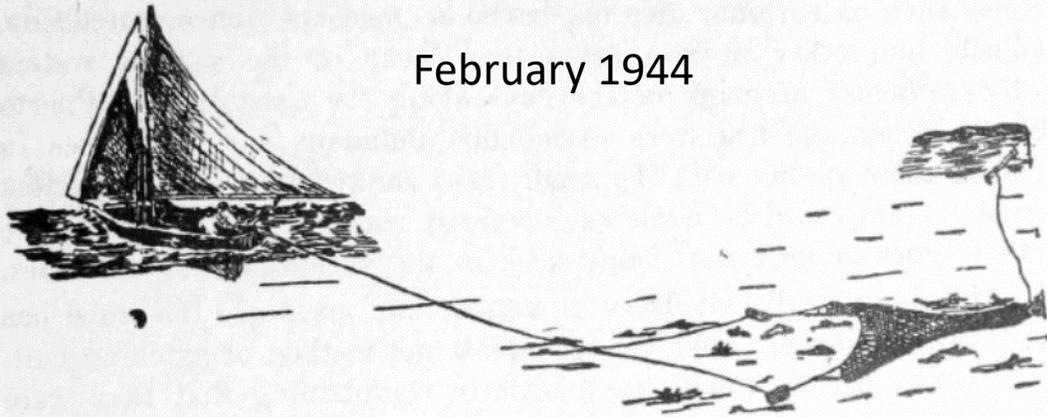


## OTTER TRAWL NET FOR SMALL FISHING BOATS<sup>1/</sup>

By B. O. KNAKE and R. T. WHITELEATHER.

February 1944



“Otter trawl” is the name of that type of bottom net which is fished by towing it behind a boat as shown in the above sketch. The mouth of the net is held open by the action of two doors which, when drawn through the water, have a reaction similar to that of a kite in the air. Large otter trawls operated from steam or Diesel powered boats have for many years been one of the primary gears used for taking enormous quantities of bottom fish on the New England Banks, North Sea and in other parts of the world. These large trawls are intricate in design and the product of many years of experimentation and constant improvement. The vessels using them have special winches and other deck equipment specifically designed for trawl operation. Bearing in mind that the regular fishing boat used in the Puerto Rican fisheries is neither large enough nor sufficiently equipped to make use of a large commercial trawl, experiments have been carried out during the past year in designing and adapting a small otter trawl to the sailboats and launches which are common to the fisheries of Puerto Rico.

# Trawling in Federal Waters of the US Caribbean EEZs

Caribbean Fishery Management Council

176<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Courtyard Marriott, Isla Verde, Puerto Rico

December 7 2021

# Why is the CFMC discussing trawling?

- To include those areas that are designated as MPAs to qualify for the MPA designations being considered under E.O. 14008
- In reference to Area Based Management (ABM) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that do not qualify for any special conservation area status because trawling is not specifically prohibited:
  - Trawls are an authorized gear type for commercial fisheries for non-FMP species under the 50 CFR 600.725 (v) provisions
- In reference to the revision of the authorized gears in the US Caribbean EEZs

## Authorized Fishing Gear in the US Caribbean EEZ – current regulations

### V. Caribbean Fishery Management Council

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Caribbean Spiny Lobster Fishery (FMP):</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. Trap/pot fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Dip net fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Hand harvest fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">D. Recreational fishery .....</p> <p>2. Caribbean Reef Fish Fishery (FMP):</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. Longline/hook and line fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Trap/pot fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Recreational fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">D. Other commercial fishery .....</p> <p>3. Coral and Reef Resources Fishery (FMP):</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. Commercial fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Recreational fishery .....</p> <p>4. Queen Conch Fishery (FMP):</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. Commercial fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Recreational fishery .....</p> <p>5. Caribbean Pelagics Fishery (Non-FMP):</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. Pelagics drift gillnet fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. Pelagics longline/hook and line fishery .....</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">C. Recreational fishery .....</p> <p>6. Commercial Fishery (Non-FMP) .....</p> <p>7. Recreational Fishery (Non-FMP) .....</p> | <p>A. Trap/pot.</p> <p>B. Dip net.</p> <p>C. Hand harvest, snare.</p> <p>D. Dip net, trap, pot.</p><br><p>A. Longline, hook and line.</p> <p>B. Trap, pot.</p> <p>C. Dip net, handline, rod and reel, slurp gun, spear.</p> <p>D. Spear.</p><br><p>A. Dip net, slurp gun.</p> <p>B. Dip net, slurp gun, hand harvest.</p><br><p>A. Hand harvest.</p> <p>B. Hand harvest.</p><br><p>A. Gillnet.</p> <p>B. Longline/hook and line.</p> <p>C. Spear, handline, longline, rod and reel.</p> <p>Trawl, gillnet, hook and line, longline, handline, rod and reel, bandit gear, cast net, spear.</p> <p>Rod and reel, hook and line, spear, powerhead, handline, hand harvest, cast net.</p> |
|---|---|

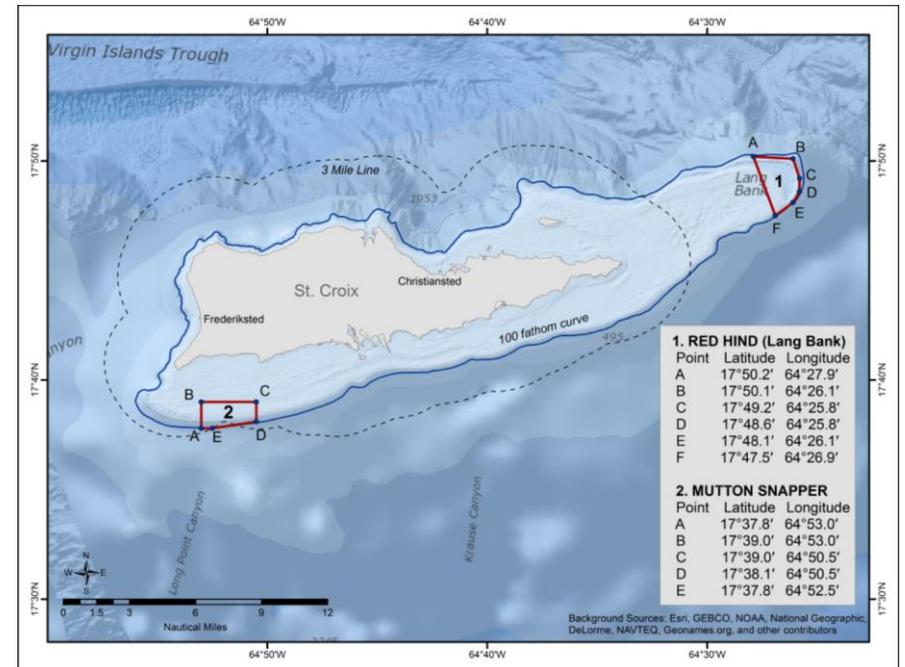
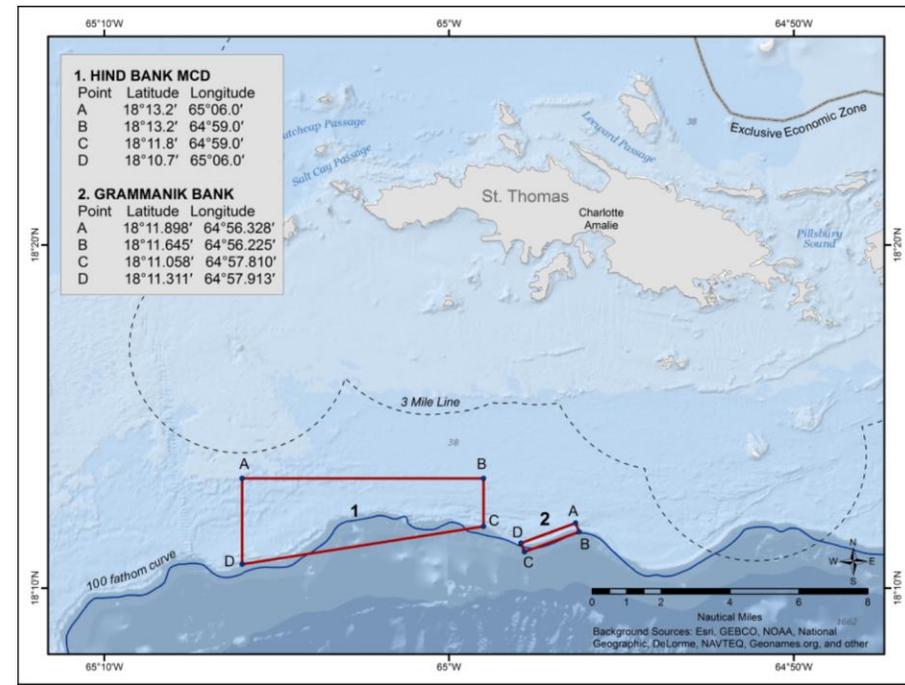
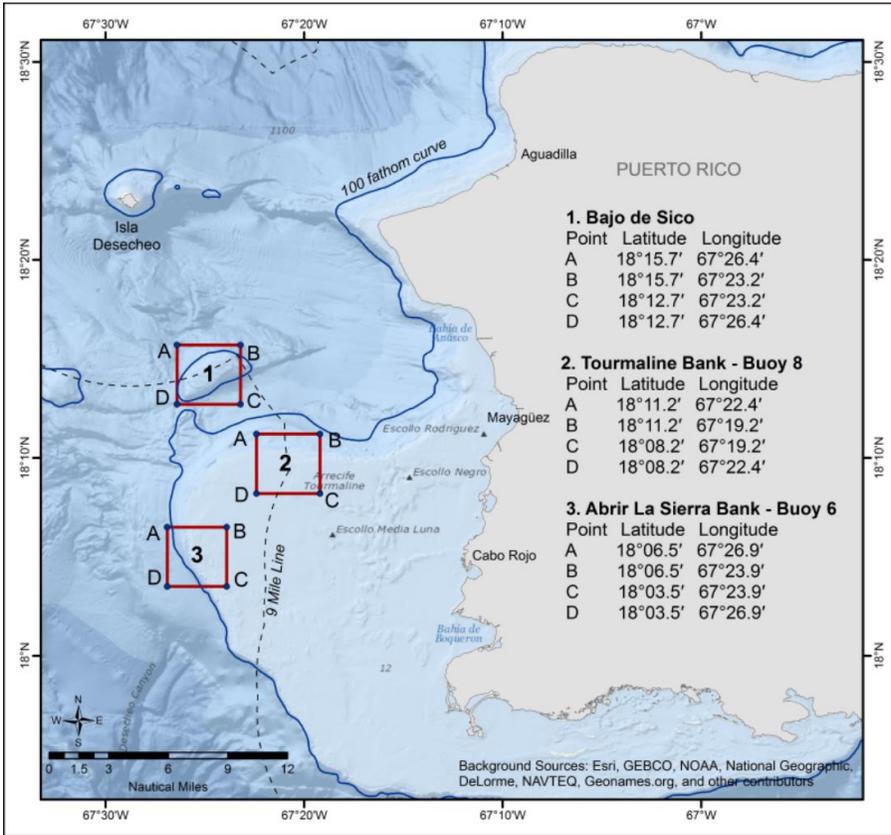
## Appendix B: Gear Amendment

| <b>Fishery</b>  | <b>Authorized gear types</b>   |
|---|--|
| A. St. Thomas and St. John Reef Fish Fishery (FMP):               |  |
| i. Commercial fishery   | i. Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, trap, pot, spear. |
| ii. Recreational fishery  | ii. Dip net, handline, rod and reel, slurp gun, spear, trap, pot.                              |
| B. St. Thomas and St. John Pelagic Fishery (FMP):                 |  |
| i. Commercial fishery   | i. Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, gillnet.          |
| ii. Recreational fishery  | ii. Spear, handline, longline, rod and reel.   |
| C. St. Thomas and St. John Spiny Lobster Fishery (FMP):           |  |
| i. Commercial fishery   | i. Trap, pot, dip net, hand harvest, snare.  |
| ii. Recreational fishery  | ii. Trap, pot, dip net, hand harvest, snare.   |
| D. St. Thomas and St. John Coral Reef Resource Fishery (FMP):     | No harvest or possession in the EEZ.   |
| E. St. Thomas and St. John Queen Conch Fishery (FMP):             | No harvest or possession in the EEZ.   |
| F. St. Thomas and St. John Commercial Pelagic Fishery (Non-FMP)   | Gillnet, automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel.             |
| G. St. Thomas and St. John Recreational Pelagic Fishery (Non-FMP) | Spear, handline, longline, rod and reel.   |

Appendix B – Source: Island Based FMPs Tables of Authorized gear types:

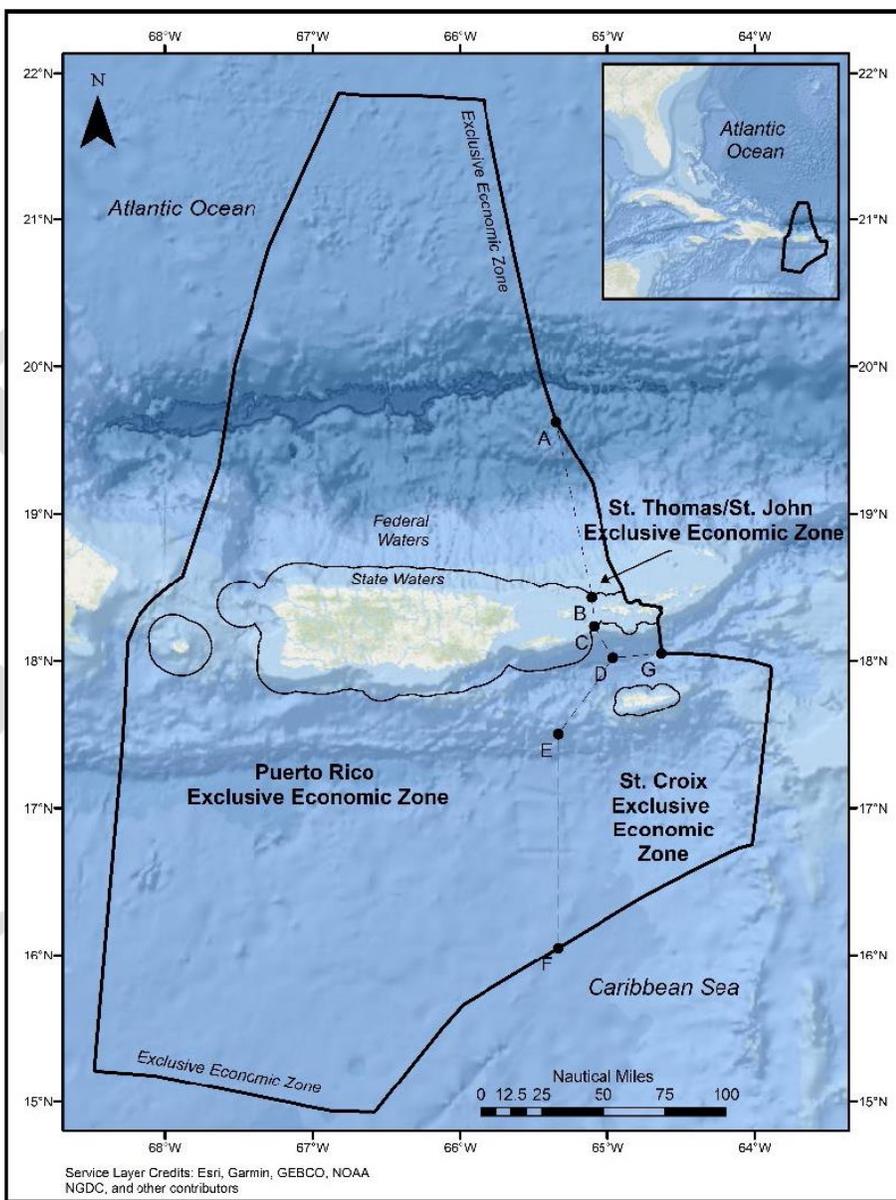
| <b>Fishery</b>  | <b>Authorized gear types</b>  |
|---|---|
| H. Puerto Rico Commercial Fishery (Non-FMP)               | Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, trawl, gillnet, cast net, spear.          |
| I. Puerto Rico Recreational Fishery (Non-FMP)             | Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, spear, powerhead, hand harvest, cast net. |
| H. St. Croix Commercial Fishery (Non-FMP)                 | Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, trawl, gillnet, cast net, spear.          |
| I. St. Croix Recreational Fishery (Non-FMP)               | Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, spear, powerhead, hand harvest, cast net. |
| H. St. Thomas and St. John Commercial Fishery (Non-FMP)   | Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, trawl, gillnet, cast net, spear.          |
| I. St. Thomas and St. John Recreational Fishery (Non-FMP) | Automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, longline, rod and reel, spear, powerhead, hand harvest, cast net. |

# Managed Areas where trawling is allowed for non-FMP species:



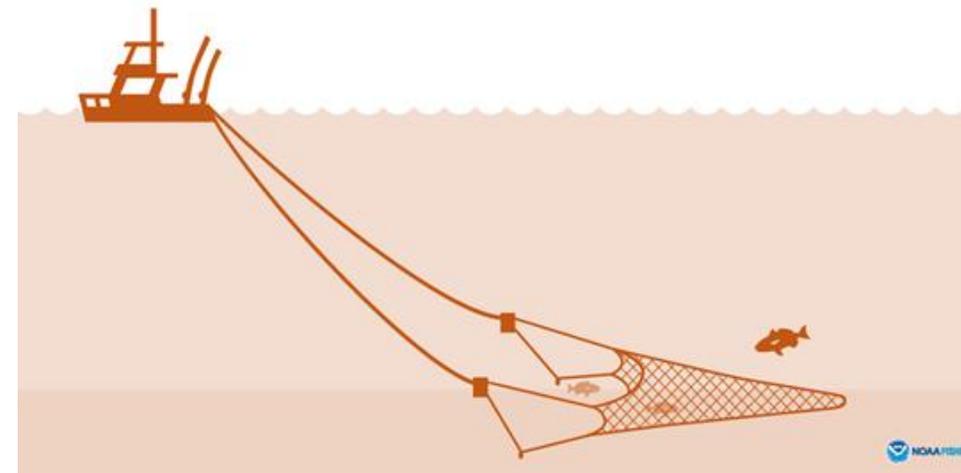
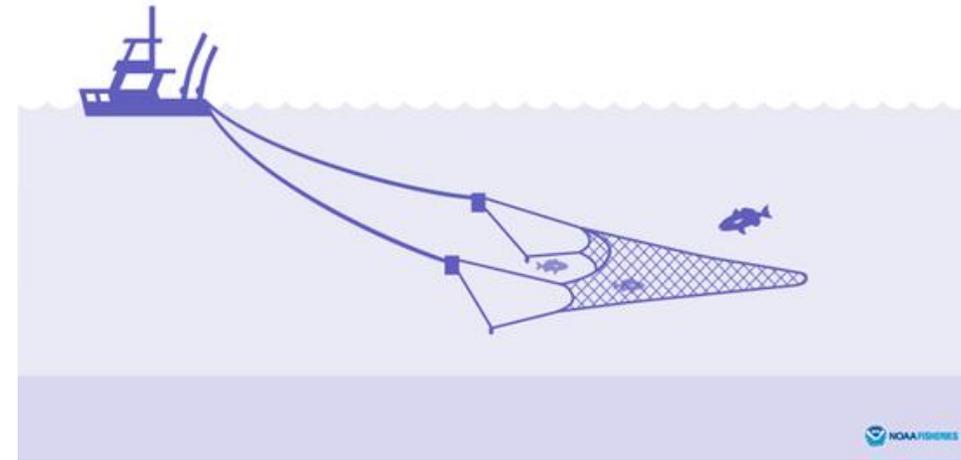
# Code of Federal Regulations - NETS

- 50 CFR 622.433(c) Gillnets and trammel nets in the Caribbean EEZ. A gillnet or trammel net may not be used in the Caribbean EEZ to fish for Caribbean reef fish. Possession of a gillnet or trammel net and any Caribbean reef fish in or from the Caribbean EEZ is prima facie evidence of violation of this paragraph (c). A gillnet or trammel net used in the Caribbean EEZ to fish for any other species must be tended at all times.
- 50 CFR 622.452(b) Gillnets and trammel nets in the Caribbean EEZ. A gillnet or trammel net may not be used in the Caribbean EEZ to fish for Caribbean spiny lobster. Possession of a gillnet or trammel net and any Caribbean spiny lobster in or from the Caribbean EEZ is prima facie evidence of violation of this paragraph (b). A gillnet or trammel net used in the Caribbean EEZ to fish for any other species must be tended at all times.



**Figure 1.1.** U.S. Caribbean region with boundaries between the Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix management areas.

Similar to [bottom trawling](#), midwater trawling involves towing a large net through the water column. Trawls are designed to capture and trap the target species inside the cod end as the net is hauled through the water.



Bottom trawling is a fishing practice that herds and captures the target species, like ground fish or crabs, by towing a net along the ocean floor.

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/bycatch/fishing-gear-bottom-trawls>

| Allowed trawl gear in the EEZ/MPAs for non-FMP species:            | PRO | CON |
|--|-----|-----|
| Destruction of coral habitat (including deep-water corals) (ACL=0) |     | X   |
| Destruction of sponge habitat (including deep-water sponges)       |     | X   |
| Bycatch  |     |     |
| If Usable and non-ESA  | X   |     |
| If Unusable  |     | X   |
| Identification of new species/fisheries                            | X   |     |
| Damage/Loss of gear (tangling) (economic consideration)            |     | X   |
| Protect managed species  |     | X   |
| Protect EFH and HAPCs  |     | X   |
|  |     |     |



# Trawling regulations across jurisdictions:

|              | <b>US Caribbean EEZs</b>    | <b>Puerto Rico</b> | <b>US Virgin Islands</b> |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Trawl Gear   |                             |                    |                          |
| Commercial   | Allowed for non-FMP species | Prohibited         | Allowed                  |
| Recreational | Prohibited                  | Prohibited         | Allowed                  |

# Council input:

- The issue is to determine if
  - a prohibition on trawling in all MPAs established by the CFMC is necessary
  - a prohibition on trawling in all of the US Caribbean EEZs is necessary
  - No Action is necessary
- How can it be done (e.g., regulatory amendment)
- When can it be done? When the IBFMPs are implemented?

*Trawl* means a cone or funnel-shaped net that is towed through the water, and can include a pair trawl that is towed simultaneously by two boats.

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2019-title50-vol12/xml/CFR-2019-title50-vol12-part600.xml>