

**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Office of Law
Enforcement
Southeast
Division

OLE Update

CFMC - 179th Meeting



Manny Antonaras

Assistant Director
Southeast Division
August 12, 2022

SED Caribbean Updates



- Inspection of a cargo vessel entering the St Thomas CBP cargo dock. Seafood improperly manifested - cargo was found to be illegal egg-bearing and short Caribbean spiny lobsters imported from the British Virgin Islands – Lobsters were seized and released alive. Case is ongoing.
- Dockside boarding of recreational fishing vessel at Crum Bay Marina - upon inspection of the catch, OLE officer discovered 3 undersized yellowtail snappers and later determined the fish were harvested in federal waters. Case was documented and subject was issued compliance assistance.
- A written warning was issued to a fisherman who was in possession of one yellowfin tuna during a ramp check conducted by a DNER Officer.
- TTVP case referrals – OLE special agent contacted two importers and requested missing required paperwork in regards to six different entry imports of tuna. Importers have provided the paperwork.

SED Caribbean Updates – Partnership Activities



**NOAA
FISHERIES**



**Department of Planning
& Natural Resources**



**U.S. Customs and
Border Protection**

- OLE enforcement officer worked in conjunction with St Thomas DPNR Officers to respond to a complaint of illegal possession of Staghorn coral at a residential complex. Upon follow-up, OLE issued compliance assistance to the complex manager- also provided outreach and education to the subject and residents of the complex.
- OLE enforcement officer responded to a report from CBP of an illegal shipment of West Indian Whelks that arrived at the St Thomas Airport. The Whelks were shipped from the British Virgin Island of Tortola – at the time of report, West Indian Whelks were closed for harvest. The Whelk were denied entry into USVI.
- IUU- Patrol Operation. Conducted a multi-day operation with CBP, AMO, FDA and an additional Miami based OLE IUU enforcement officer at the St Thomas Airport and Seaport to inspect commercial fish shipments coming from outside the United States.



NOAA FISHERIES

SED Caribbean Updates



- Patrol with CBP at the French Town waterfront seaport. I was alerted by CBP that an illegal shipment of conch was brought into the USVI without CITES documents. Case review for referral to USFWS.



- A charter company was issued and paid a summary settlement offer for harassment of dolphins under the MMPA. The charter company was swimming and touching a group of dolphins.
- Several ongoing investigations continue.

SED Caribbean Updates

5 Year Priorities Discussion and Request for input from Council Members and DAP Chairs



- Solicited input from JEA/USCG partners in Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic, and from other NOAA line offices
- Held meeting with Chair and DAP representatives
- Led to follow up discussions on seafood mislabeling
- Draft enforcement priorities have been submitted to OLE HQ for review and we hope to share our final approved priorities during the next CFMC meeting.

JEA agreements are pending final submission for the next agreement cycle

- Puerto Rico
- USVI



USVI and Puerto Rico OLE Contacts

Special Agent Miguel Borges – San Juan, PR miguel.borges@noaa.gov

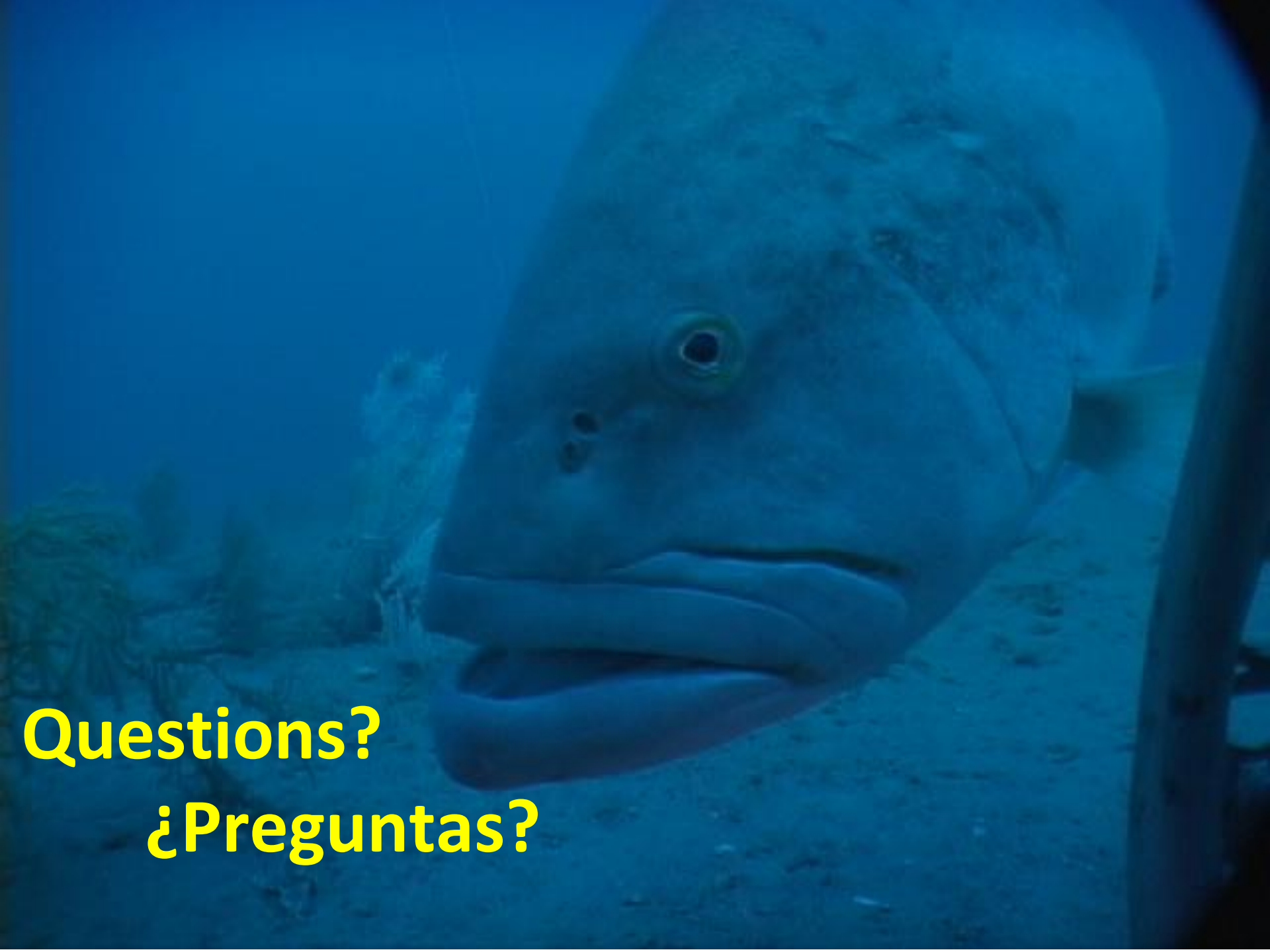
Enforcement Officer Alex Terrero – St Thomas, USVI

Alexander.terrero@noaa.gov

Report A Violation

Please contact us if you see a possible violation of a federal marine resource law.

(800) 853-1964



Questions?

¿Preguntas?