



**Addressing manta rays' bycatch
in Peruvian waters:
a majestic and threatened giant of the ocean.**

Cisne Zambrano

Report 1 of 3



Report 1




In partnership with Planeta Océano

The giant manta ray (*Mobula birostris*) is an iconic and endangered species, with population trends decreasing worldwide. One of the world's largest manta populations is thought to migrate into Peru, where mantas had been exposed to intentional and incidental fisheries, commercialized, and consumed. Since 2012, Planeta Océano has been pioneering manta conservation in Peru, including researching and working with the national government to secure legal protection for mantas in Peru, with which manta capture and consumption is now forbidden. It was in 2015 when after a series of efforts, Ministerial Resolution No. 441-2015-PRODUCE was issued that restricts and sanctions its extraction.

However, giant mantas are still -frequently- incidentally entangled in small-scale gillnet fisheries in northern Peru. Caught individuals have included pregnant females, a worrisome fact given the manta's slow reproduction (1 pup each 2-7 yrs., age of maturity at 7-10 yrs.), and small population sizes (~1000 individuals). Furthermore, when mantas are entangled, fishermen's nets are damaged, leading to economic loss and challenges, and in some cases potential negative perceptions towards manta rays. Some low-income fishermen have reported losses of up to USD 1500 per manta ray interaction. Considering the over 7 thousand small-scale fishers in the region and over 1500 fishing vessels, reducing bycatch entanglement is critical to promoting sustainable fisheries and livelihoods. Establishing bycatch mitigation measures is urgently required.

In collaboration with the Peruvian government, Planeta Océano aims to develop a plan to promote manta bycatch mitigation and understand the socio-economic impact of manta bycatch on small-scale fishers, to help drive these mitigation measures. This will support both manta conservation and contribute to Peru's National Action Plan for Sharks and Rays.

The following photographs are examples of incidentally caught mantas in 2017 (after national legislation):

Location	Date	Description	Image
Acapulco, Tumbes	06/09/2017	Female manta ray entangled with pup. Event published by our team (Cabanillas et al. 2020)	
Canoas de Punta Sal, Tumbes	26/09/2017	Local media showed an image of children helping to pull a giant manta toward shore after it had been incidentally captured.	
Distrito de San Jacinto, Tumbes	08/11/2017	Manta ray was incidentally entangled, and fishermen were reported to cut the individual and bring it to shore.	

This Darwin Leader project was made possible by:



<https://planetaoceano.org/connecting-schools/en/connecting-schools-en/>

Thanks to all partners and sponsors that made the DARWIN200 2023-25
Global Voyage Possible.

www.darwin200.com/sponsors



zero
six
zero