



Sustainable Fisheries Protecting fish stocks in the UAE

EWS-WWF

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Presentation to SIAL 2011



Sustainable Fisheries: Protecting fish stocks in the UAE

- EWS-WWF at a glance
- Fisheries in the UAE
 - State of the UAE fisheries: past and present
- What are we doing?
 - Market research-driven initiative
 - Sustainable Fisheries Project
- Next Steps

WWF IN SHORT

Conservation

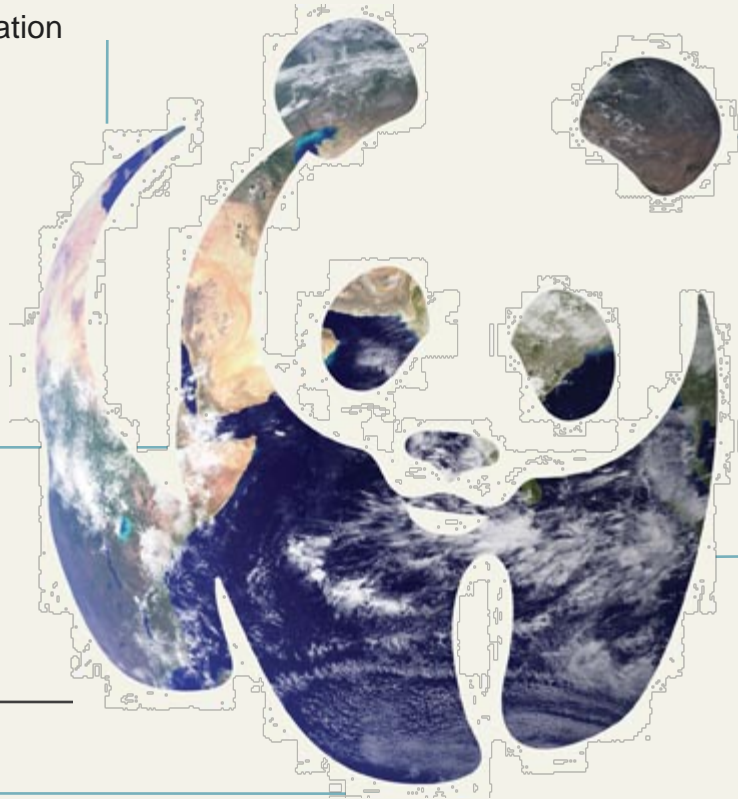
World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) is the world's leading conservation organization.

+100

WWF is in over 100 countries, on 5 continents

1961

WWF was founded
In 1961



+5,000

WWF has over 5,000 staff worldwide

+5M

WWF has over 5 million supporters



EMIRATES WILDLIFE SOCIETY IN ASSOCIATION WITH WWF (EWS- WWF)

NGO

EWS-WWF is the leading national environmental NGO.

Partner

EWS-WWF partners with individuals, institutions, government agencies, and corporations

2001

The first WWF office in the Middle East was established in Abu Dhabi in 2001



Mission

"EWS-WWF's mission is to work with people and institutions within the UAE and the region, to conserve biodiversity and promote sustainable living through education and conservation initiatives."

Projects

- Blue Flag
- Earth Hour
- Eco-Schools
- Ecological Footprint
- Heroes of the UAE
- Beati Watani (interactive education)
- Sustainable Fisheries
- Marine Turtle Conservation
- Wadi Wurayah Protected Area

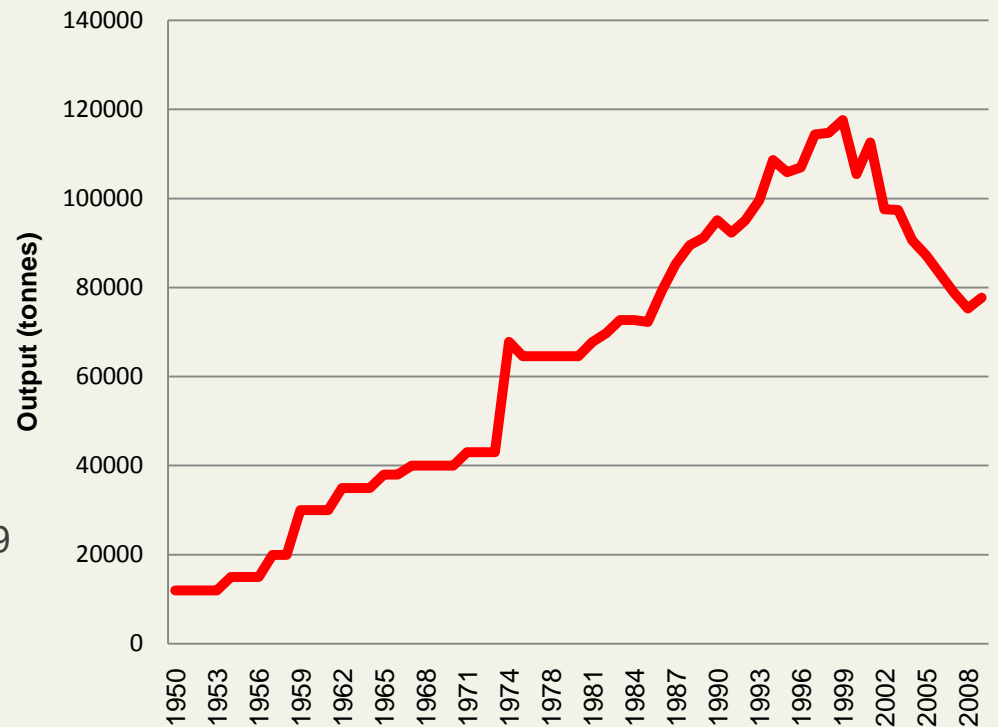




Fisheries in the UAE: Historical trends

- **Mainstay of economy** for over 7,000 years
- Fishing and pearl diving supported active **trading routes** to modern day Iran, Pakistan, and India as early as the 7th c BC
- Significant **heritage value**, part of social fabric of many coastal villages
- Significant component of biodiversity (239 species)

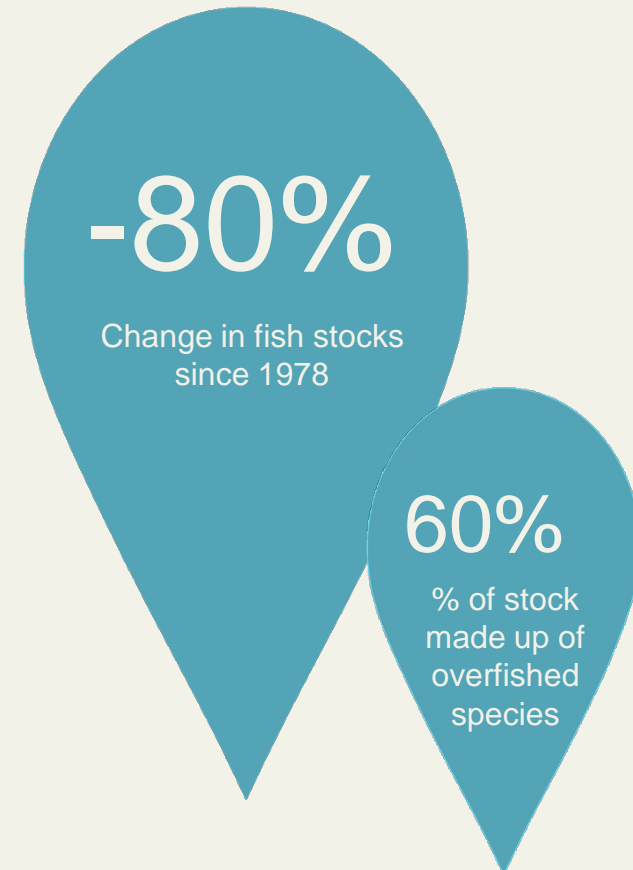
Annual Output of UAE fishing industry





Fisheries in the UAE: Present State

- **Severe decline** in fish stocks (80%) in the past 30 years
 - 60% catch made up of overfished species
 - Hamour overfished 7 times the sustainable rate
 - 95% decline in stock of some demersal species since 1978
- Less than **0.1%** of GDP
- Privately owned & small scale
- Size of fishing industry:
 - Number of people in fisheries sector (2001): 32,000
 - Annual catch (2002): **110,000 tonnes**
 - Value of output (2001): AED 123.5 million



Source: Abu Dhabi Emirate-Source: EAD Annual Fisheries Stat. Report 2009, FAO 2002



Fisheries are a source of employment and food security in the UAE

30,000 tonnes produced in 1960

110,000 tonnes produced in 2002

40% of GDP in 1960s

Less than 0.1 % of GDP today

4,000 fishermen in 1980

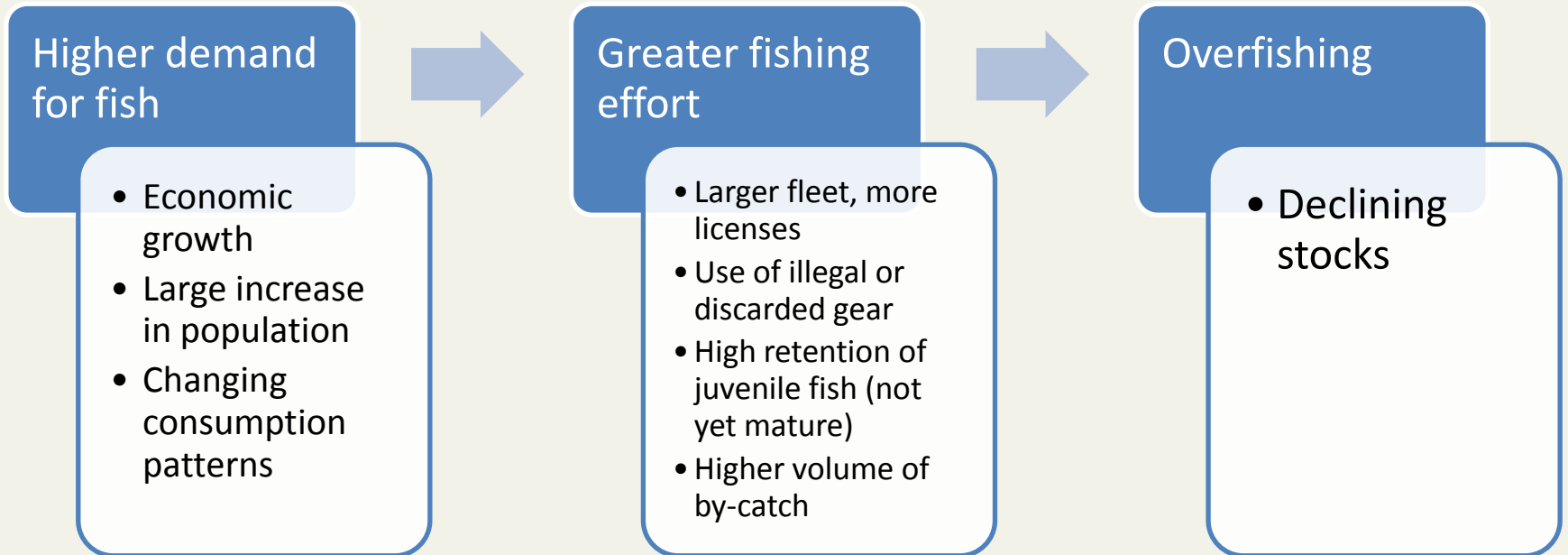
17,264 fishermen in 2002



Modern day *gargoors* are large dome shaped wire traps made out of steel. in the past, traps were made out of degradable palm fronds.
SOURCE: Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi (EAD)

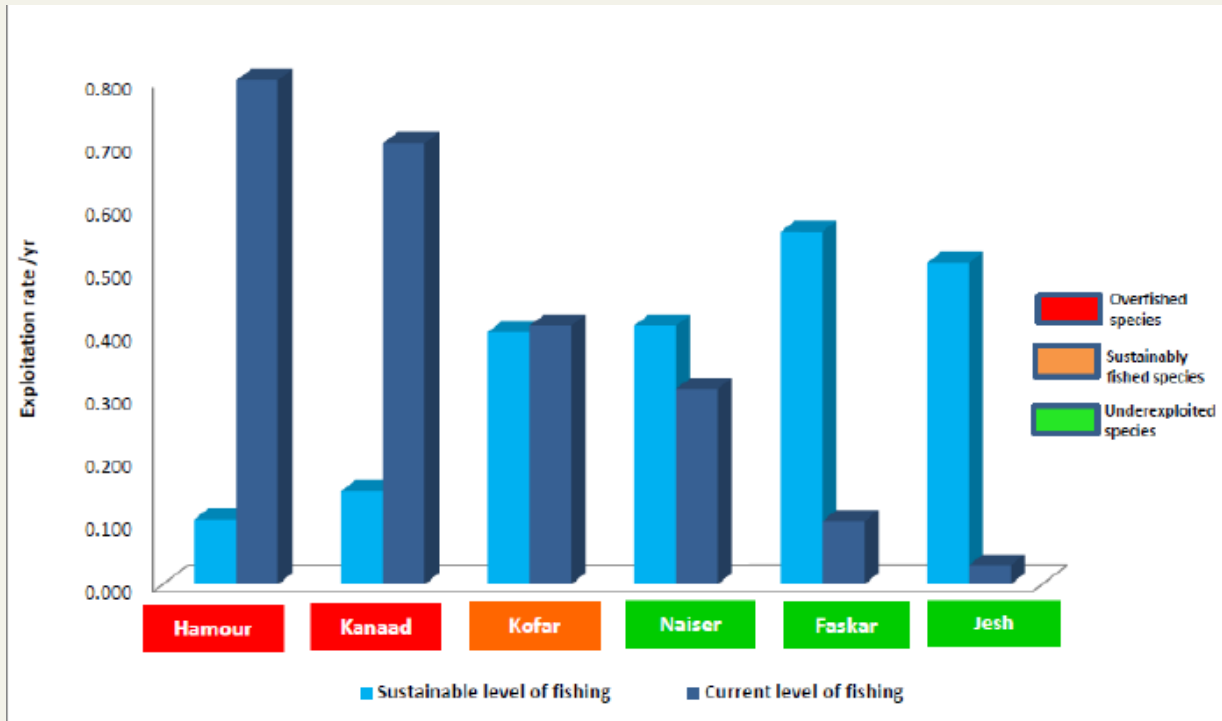


Tension between food security and sustainability





Several species in the UAE are fished at unsustainable levels



7x Factor by which *hamour* is overfished

SOURCE: Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi (EAD)



What are we doing?

- Market Research
 - Country-wide survey by Yougov (2009)
 - Assessment of consumption patterns and awareness levels in the UAE
 - Assessment of consumer information needs in the UAE
- Sustainable Fisheries Project
 - Choose Wisely campaign



Market Research: Objectives and Findings

- Country-wide **survey** of UAE consumers conducted by Yougov in 2009
- **Objectives:** To assess --
 - Fish consumption habits in the UAE
 - Levels of awareness about overfishing
 - Knowledge of which fish species in the UAE are overfished
 - Attitudes and behavior toward the issue
 - Desire to modify behavior
 - Desired information in order to change consumption patterns

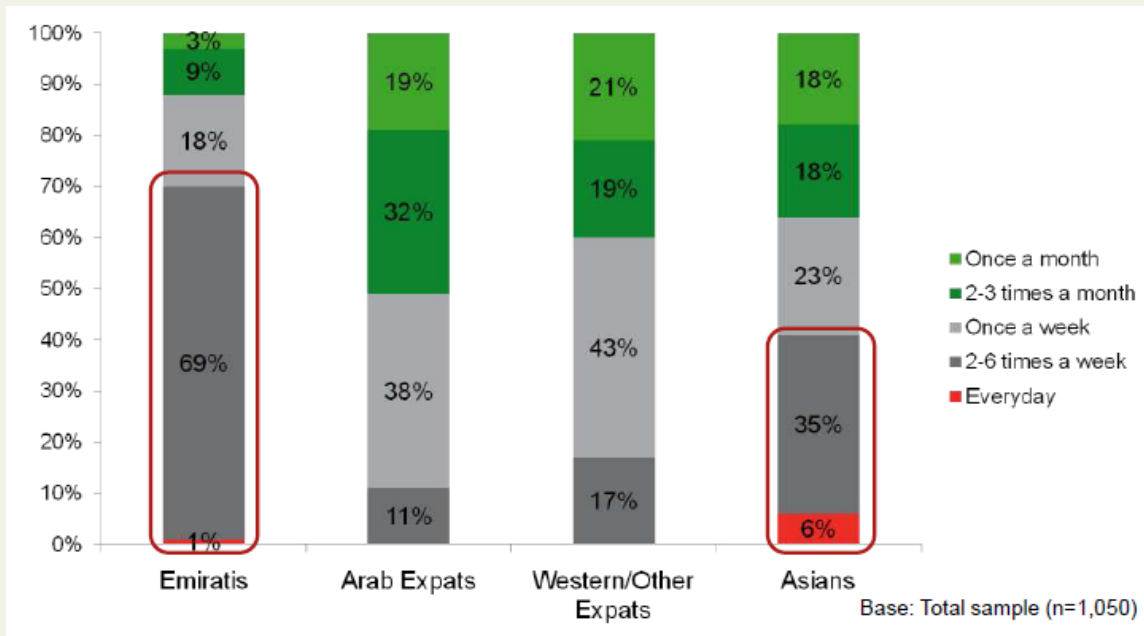


Insights used to develop **communication and awareness campaign** targeted towards UAE consumers to --

- **Educate** people about overfishing, with emphasis on Hamour
- Encourage people to **shift consumption patterns** toward more sustainably fished species



66% of UAE residents eat fish at least once a week



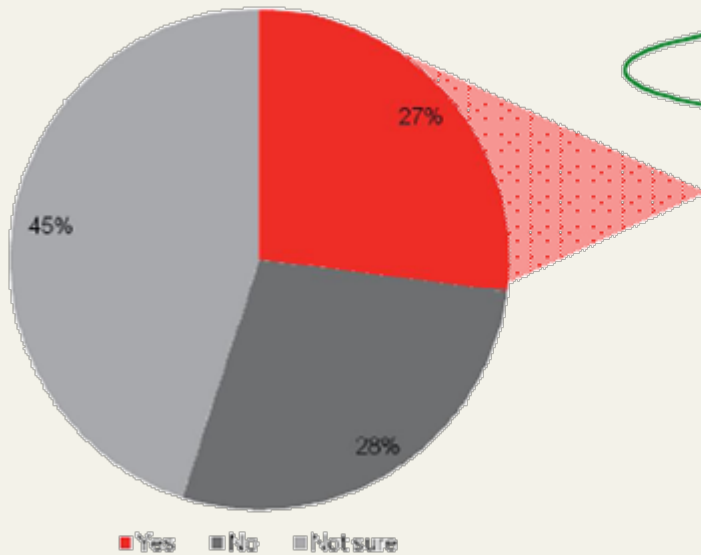
Compared to the other nationalities, Emiratis tend to eat fish much more frequently, with 70% of locals claiming to eat fish several times a week

**Q: On average, how often do you eat fresh fish?
(Please do not include shellfish or canned fish)**

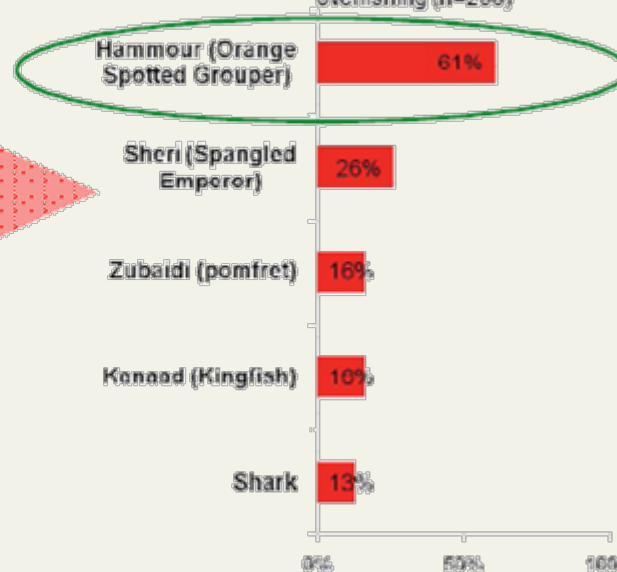


Only 27% of residents are aware of overfishing in the UAE

Base: Total sample (n=1,050)



Base: Those who are aware of overfishing (n=288)



Among those aware of overfishing in UAE waters, 61% recognized that Hamour is one of the overfished species in the country

Q: To the best of your knowledge, do you think that some fish species are overfished in the UAE waters?



62% say sustainability is an important factor when choosing fish

69% would choose one outlet over another if it had fish labeled with sustainability information

70% would like to see indicator labels on overfished species when buying or ordering fish

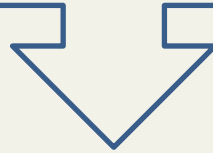
SOURCE: EWS-WWF nationwide fish consumer survey, 2009



Decline of fish stocks in the UAE due to overfishing

Lack of awareness of overfishing among consumers

Self-reported consumer need for “eco-labeling” of fish



إختربحكمة
choose wisely



Sustainable Fisheries at EWS-WWF



Launched August 2009

Sponsor: Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi

Objectives:

- **Promote** well-managed healthy fisheries
- Raise **awareness** on overfishing
- Encourage **action from government** and examine possible solutions
- Provide UAE **residents** with specific practical steps they can take
 - **Choose Wisely** campaign
 - Fish finders training program
- Promote **sustainable seafood** through the tourism, retail sectors
 - “eco-labeling” of fish
 - supplier criteria
 - encourage MSC certified products



EWS-WWF Choose Wisely Campaign



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Focus on **consumer awareness** to reduce demand for threatened species

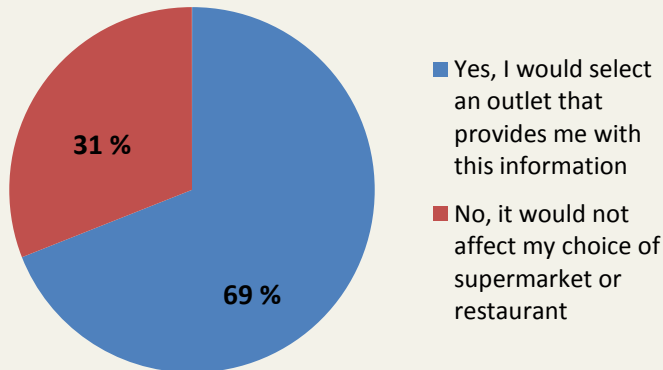
Tools and Resources:

- First science-based UAE consumer guide
- Award-winning *Sustainable Fish Recipes* recipe book
- 7 minute documentary on UAE fisheries
- Choose Wisely website (www.choosewisely.ae)
- Open letter to retailers and restaurants



Retailers/Restaurants: Help your customers choose wisely!

When buying/ordering fish, would you select an outlet over another if it had “eco-labels”?



- Add “eco-labels” to indicate the sustainability of species
- Encourage your staff to make sustainable recommendations to customers
- Increase the amount of sustainable seafood on offer
- Offer a "Sustainable Catch of the Day" or a "Free Taste" to promote sustainable alternatives.
- Support EWS-WWF campaign events at your restaurant or store to promote sustainable fish dishes.
- Distribute the EWS-WWF fish consumer guide at your restaurant or store.

Source: EWS-WWF nationwide fish consumer survey, 2009



Partners



Le MERIDIEN



• Retail:

- Carrefour UAE
- Choithram UAE
- Abela Stores, Abu Dhabi
- Lulu, Abu Dhabi
- Freshly Frozen Foods, Dubai

• Hotels:

- Hilton Dubai Creek
- Sheraton Dubai Creek
- Le Meridien Abu Dhabi
- Le Meridien Al Aqah, Fujairah
- Sheraton Corniche, Abu Dhabi
- Le Royal Meridien, Abu Dhabi
- Aloft, Abu Dhabi
- Sheraton Khalidiya, Abu Dhabi
- Radisson Blu, Yas Island
- Fairmont Abu Dhabi
- Park Haytt Abu Dhabi
- Grand Millennium Abu Dhabi



Next Steps- 2012-2014

- **Socio-economic survey of fishermen within the UAE**
 - analyze the importance of fisheries for livelihoods,
 - fishermen attitudes and knowledge of existing regulations relating to overfishing,
 - information gathered will help foster the development of effective policies and regulations,
 - facilitate the development of well targeted education and awareness programs amongst fishing communities.
- **Further increase awareness on the importance of choosing sustainable seafood and avoiding unsustainable fish species towards consumers.**
- **Conduct a new consumer awareness research to uncover how consumer knowledge and interest have changed since the implementation of the Choose Wisely campaign.**



Thank you

www.uae.panda.org