



**THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,
MARINE RESOURCES &
FAMILY ISLAND AFFAIRS**

Press Statement

By

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Statement to the Bahamian Fishermen

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My Dear Bahamian Fishermen:

Here we are, just a few days from the start of the 2022/2023 crawfish season. As a former fisherman, I always feel nostalgic around this time of year - reminiscing on the excitement of what the new season would bring. The fishermen of our country work hard during the off-season to repair and prepare their equipment and vessels in hopes of reaping a bountiful harvest. They must plan and be prepared for all possible outcomes. Fishermen must be businessmen, self-reliant, strong and adventurous.

The crawfish industry is vital to the fishing sector and to many Family Islands. Therefore, we must continue to protect and enhance the industry.

The Department of Marine Resources and I would like to wish all fishermen of The Bahamas a prosperous and safe crawfish season. We recognize the importance of this industry to thousands of Bahamians throughout our archipelago including Spanish Wells, Eleuthera, Abaco, Long Island, Exuma, Andros and many others.

I once shared the statement below from an article and it still resonates today!

“Fishing is certainly not a life for everyone. Long hours, hard work and bad weather are enough to keep most people on land. But if you ask commercial fishermen about fishing for a living, they will tell a different story. They will tell you about the breathtaking beauty of the open ocean, about the great excitement of a good catch of fish and about the personal satisfaction of a hard day’s work. While many fishermen admit that fishing can exact a physical and emotional toll, it is a

small price to pay for a way of life keeps them coming back season after season to earn a living from the sea.”

Our Blueprint for change provided a framework on how we can enhance and continue to protect the fishing sector. We, as a government, have made much progress in such a short time to continue to develop and protect the sector.

We have:

- 1) Digitalized the license and permit process for the fishing sector
- 2) Eliminated duty on motor parts inclusive of outboard motor parts
- 3) Continued Marine patrols along the southern most boarder of the Great Bahama Bank and Cay Sal Bank.
- 4) Initiated the establishment of Bahamas Wildlife Enforcement Network (BahWEN)

We will continue to work diligently as a government to engage the fishermen and persons invested in the industry to help create policies and initiatives to strengthen the industry.

May God bless you and keep you safe!