

Pangas observed within the Zero Tolerance Area (ZTA) by Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS) and ZTA Watch, October 2021 – May 2022

Between mid-October and November 3 panga counts within the Zero Tolerance Area (ZTA) were made using photographs made of the radar screen of an SSCS ship. Since mid-November, 1-2 SSCS ships have made hourly counts of pangas in the ZTA around the clock, based on radar and visual observations. The ships sail the ZTA boundaries continuously except for absences due to high winds and trips to port for fueling or crew changes.

Table 1 contains the maximum number of pangas counted per day by SSCS within the Zero Tolerance Area excluding pangas set up for diving for shellfish. Because no alternative fishing gear has been observed, the pangas counted without dive gear can be assumed to be fishing with gillnets. The second column shows the number of non-windy days observed. The subsequent columns show the number of days when the maximum count from the radar screen for an observed day fell into the category at the top of the column. November 1-3 data were taken during the vaquita survey and there were over 65 pangas on each day. Overall, between October and May, SSCS observed 5 days where the number of pangas (excluding those that equipped for diving) exceeded 65 pangas within the ZTA. These numbers of violations should have triggered a total closure of fishing for shrimp in the Vaquita Refuge, according to the [July 2021 Trigger Factors regulation](#).

| Month    | Non-windy days observed | Number of pangas observed excluding shellfish divers |      |       |       |     |
|----------|-------------------------|--|------|-------|-------|-----|
|          |                         | 0  | 1-20 | 20-50 | 51-65 | >65 |
| October  | 7                       | 0  | 2    | 5     | 0     | 0   |
| November | 6                       | 0  | 0    | 2     | 0     | 4   |
| December | 11                      | 0  | 6    | 3     | 1     | 1   |
| January  | 13                      | 1  | 9    | 3     | 0     | 0   |
| February | 7                       | 3  | 2    | 2     | 0     | 0   |
| March    | 12                      | 2  | 9    | 1     | 0     | 0   |
| April    | 16                      | 2  | 7    | 6     | 1     | 0   |
| May      | 14                      | 2  | 11   | 1     | 0     | 0   |
| total    | 86                      | 10   | 46   | 23    | 2     | 5   |

Table 1. Pangas likely to be using gillnets within the ZTA counted by SSCS using radar and visual counts.

The maximum count occurred between sunrise and sunset on 69 (91%) of 76 days when pangas without divers were observed in the ZTA. Daylight fishing, when fishing pangas can be readily observed, indicates that they did not fear consequences for illegal behavior.

The ZTA Watch counts using high power binoculars from land cannot distinguish gear type, and are therefore total number of pangas estimated by their position and/or proximity to marker buoys to be within the ZTA. Pangas that are equipped for shellfish diving should not be within the ZTA either, according to the [September 2020 regulation which established it](#), given that “fishing activities of any type” should be prohibited. However, [some permitted shellfish zones overlap](#) with the ZTA, so there are conflicting regulations that need to be resolved. The ZTA cannot be transited without permission, but ZTA Watch does not count moving pangas. Again, because the ZTA is designated a no fishing zone, any panga within it can be considered to be in violation of the regulations. Table 2 is the maximum daily number of pangas in violation, using both ZTA Watch and SSCS data. 58 of 147 days observed had maximum counts from both ZTA Watch and SSCS and of those ZTA Watch were greater than SSCS on 23 days and SSCS counts were greater than ZTA Watch on 30 days. 108 of 130 days when pangas were seen, the maximum count occurred between 6am and sunset (83%). Table 2 uses the maximum panga count for whichever count was the greatest.

Pangas were in the ZTA on 88% of days observed (129 out of 147 days).

| Month    | Non-windy days observed | Number of pangas in the ZTA |      |       |       |     |
|----------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------|-------|-------|-----|
|          |                         | 0                           | 1-20 | 21-50 | 51-65 | >65 |
| October  | 7                       | 0                           | 2    | 5     | 0     | 0   |
| November | 6                       | 0                           | 0    | 2     | 0     | 4   |
| December | 23                      | 3                           | 13   | 5     | 1     | 1   |
| January  | 24                      | 3                           | 14   | 6     | 1     | 0   |
| February | 20                      | 5                           | 10   | 5     | 0     | 0   |
| March    | 28                      | 3                           | 19   | 6     | 0     | 0   |
| April    | 21                      | 3                           | 10   | 7     | 1     | 0   |
| May      | 18                      | 1                           | 13   | 4     | 0     | 0   |
| total    | 147                     | 18                          | 81   | 40    | 3     | 5   |

Table 2. Maximum daily numbers of pangas in the ZTA observed by SSCS and estimated by ZTA Watch.

SSCS daily panga counts were summarized by Dr. John Payne, SSCS scientist, and categorized in the tables by Dr. Barbara Taylor, IUCN-Cetacean Specialist Group.