

1 Drivers of change in the spatial dynamics of the Amazon artisanal fishing fleet.

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7 Abstract

8 The way artisanal fishermen use natural resources is highly adaptable in space and
9 time. In the Amazon region, the spatial distribution of the tropical fishing fleet is
10 influenced by various environmental and anthropogenic variables. Environmental
11 variables include river level variation, which affects accessibility to different habitats
12 and species during seasonal changes, such as the flood pulse characterized by dry and
13 wet phases, and interannual variability, influenced by ENSO (El Ni o and La Ni a)
14 events in the Pacific Ocean. Anthropogenic variables, such as rising fuel prices and the
15 creation of protected areas, also impact the distribution of the fishing fleet by limiting
16 access to distant fishing grounds. This study investigated whether and how the spatial
17 distribution of the Central Amazon Fishing Fleet (CAFF) was affected by a series of
18 environmental and anthropogenic variables over an 11-year period (1994-2004). We
19 analyzed an 11-year dataset of landings (1994-2004) from the artisanal commercial
20 fishery in Manaus. Identifying habitat types, target species, hydrological anomalies,
21 fuel price variation and the increase in Protected Area areas. In addition, we evaluated
22 the drives that determine the distribution of CAFF. The results showed that there have
23 been substantial changes in the spatio-temporal distribution of CAFF fishing effort due
24 to the interaction between various environmental and anthropogenic factors, acting at
25 various temporal and spatial scales.

26 **Keywords:** environmental variables; anthropogenic variables; spatio-temporal
27 distribution; fishing fleet

28 Highlights:

- 29 • From 1998 onwards, the distance traveled by CAFF and the number of fishing
30 grounds exploited decreased;
- 31 • Considering the time scales, we observed that the seasonal scale (month)
32 showed the highest percentage of explanation for the intensification of CAFF fishing

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33 near the port of landing, highlighting the CPUE variables of the river-lacustrine
34 species and the increase in the price of fuel;

35 • It is necessary to establish strategies for the use of fishing grounds and
36 continuous stock assessments of the jaraqui species, since since the 1990s, the jaraqui
37 stock has been considered overexploited and to date there has been no monitoring.

38 **1. Introduction**

39 The way artisanal fishers use natural resources is highly adaptive in space and
40 time (e.g. Lambin et al., 2003; Perry and Sumaila, 2007; Vierros et al., 2020). Resource
41 availability and accessibility are continuously changing due to the variability of local
42 environmental and ecological conditions (e.g. Alho et al., 2015; Badjeck et al.,
43 2010), resource management, anthropogenic pressures, cultural practices and other
44 external processes (e.g. Cinner and Aswani, 2007; Malsale et al., 2018). These changes
45 in resource use have diverse socioeconomic and environmental impacts, and their
46 understanding is essential for the design of sustainable fisheries management
47 policies. The impacts of environmental and anthropogenic variability are particularly
48 critical in the Amazon region, where a high fish biodiversity is ensuring nutritional
49 security, income and livelihood sustainability (Welcomme et al., 2010) to numerous
50 artisanal fishing communities (Batista 1998a; Cerdeira et al., 1997).

51 In the gigantic Amazonian basin, 70-80 % of fish catches come from white-
52 water rivers and their nutrient-rich floodplains (Barletta et al., 2015; Bayley and
53 Petrere Júnior, 1989). The central Amazon fishing fleet (CAFF) exploiting this basin is
54 composed of >3000 boats performing relatively long fishing trips (average duration of
55 13 ± 11 days). This fleet exploits the Amazon River floodplain which is a complex
56 network that includes: the main stem river, permanent lakes of various sizes, large
57 river branches that receive the contributions of major tributaries and small streams that
58 drain riparian areas, and canals that connect floodplain lakes to the main stem and its
59 branches depending on the water level (Batista et al., 2012; Batista and Petrere Júnior,
60 2003; Melack, 1984; Nolan et al., 2009).

61 The Amazonian region is submitted to intense seasonal changes, mainly related
62 to the variation of the flood pulse characterized by dry phases with low water levels
63 and wet phases with high water levels (e.g. Junk et al., 1989). In addition to this
64 seasonal environmental variation, these freshwater habitats are submitted to
65 interannual variability (Ficke et al., 2007), partly driven by the regional effects of
66 ENSO events (El Niño and La Niña) originating in the Pacific ocean. Those events
67 differ in terms of magnitude, spatial extent and temporal evolution. And the effects of
68 those extreme climatic events are not homogeneous within the Amazon basin due to
69 differences in local landscape and climate, including precipitation, evapotranspiration
70 and flood size (Sorribas et al., 2016). In addition, climate change is expected to affect
71 this interannual variability, by modifying the frequency and typology of these ENSO
72 events (FAO, 2020). Consequently, changes in habitat accessibility, availability and
73 productivity, already acute under current variability, are expected to increase under the
74 pressure of climate change, including: (1) disruptions in the migratory routes of the

75 main Amazonian fish resources (Jackson and Marmulla, 2011); (2) decreases in fish
76 species diversity and abundance (Freitas et al., 2013); (3) changes in assemblage
77 structure (Röpke et al., 2017); (4) changes in target species and habitat types exploited
78 by fisheries (Pinaya et al., 2016); and (5) decreases in the abundance of larger fishes in
79 extreme drought periods (Fabr e et al., 2017).

80 Together with the impacts of seasonal, interannual and climate change induced
81 variability, habitats are also subject to the direct pressure from human activities, such
82 as deforestation, overfishing (Pauly and Zeller, 2016) and land-use change, which
83 influence the spatial dynamics of the CAFF. To limit the effect of these anthropogenic
84 pressures, Protected Areas (PA) are being increasingly implemented as a partial
85 solution to contain the degradation of habitats and conserve the biodiversity of
86 freshwater environments and fishing resources (Sousa et al., 2015). Many works
87 demonstrated the efficiency of the implementation of these areas for conservation and
88 for ensuring the sustainability of fishery resources (Arantes et al., 2008; Barnes and
89 Sidhu, 2013; Campos-Silva and Peres, 2016; Huntington, 2000; Keppeler et al., 2017;
90 Roberts et al., 2001). However, in marine environments, the rapid expansion of a
91 network of protected areas frequently triggers changes in fishing behavior, with
92 displacement and increased fishing effort outside PAs, adoption of new methods and
93 target species, and adaptation in the spatial pattern of resource use (Greenstreet et al.,
94 2009; Vaughan, 2017). In the inland tropical freshwaters, little attention has been paid
95 to the effect of area closure/delimitation from Protected Area implementation on
96 fishermen's behavior, particularly on the spatial dynamics of the CAFF.

97 The spatial dynamics of fisheries may also be driven by an economic
98 component, like the variation of fuel price for instance. For example, the Honduran
99 artisanal coral reef fishery decreased the number of fishing grounds with rising fuel
100 prices, favoring sites near the harbor, what induced local depletions of fish stocks
101 (Chollett et al., 2014). Davies et al. (2014) also demonstrated that increasing fuel price
102 led to a decrease in fuel consumption, especially for more powerful, larger vessels.
103 However, in inland water environments, the absence of records over time of both fuel
104 price and consumption by vessels makes it difficult to investigate the influence of this
105 factor on the spatial dynamics of the fleet.

106 The high diversity and heterogeneity of exploited habitats, conditioning the
107 way fishers use space, is a typical feature of tropical artisanal fisheries (Daw, 2008;
108 Lopes et al., 2020; Nolan et al., 2009; Pet-Soede et al., 2001; Petrere Jr, 1978).
109 However, the location of fish catches is generally overlooked in fisheries statistics and
110 often not even reported (Goethel et al., 2011). Yet, analyzing the spatial dynamics of
111 fisheries can be used both to infer trends in the distribution of fish (Booth, 2000) and
112 the fishing fleet efficiency (Bertrand et al., 2008), as well as revealing fleet responses
113 to variations in habitats generated by climate change (Pinaya et al., 2016).
114 Understanding the spatial dynamics of fisheries can serve as a thermometer of the
115 possible effects of climate and anthropogenic changes on resource uses, especially
116 when the fleet presents high mobility within the scale of the fishing area: The fleet that

117 lands in Manaus for instance, Central Amazon, has autonomy for weeks of travel, and
118 deploys itself in rivers and lakes at a spatial scale larger than 2000 km from the port
119 (Freitas et al., 2003; Petrere Jr, 1978).

120 Here we investigate if and how the spatial distribution of CAFF was affected by
121 a series of environmental and anthropogenic variables, over an 11-year period (1994-
122 2004). We expect environmental factors, such as anomalous river level variation, and
123 anthropogenic factors, such as increases in Protected Areas and oil prices, to influence
124 the spatial dynamics of CAFF by affecting the accessibility and availability of fishing
125 grounds. Based on the analysis of changes in the spatial patterns of fishing, we explore
126 the effects of possible drivers on the behavior of the fishing fleet.

127 2. Material and methods 128

129 2.1 Study area, fish community and fishing fleet

130 Our study area is the Amazon River basin and its main tributaries, both white
131 (Amazonas-Solimões, Purus, Madeira and Juruá rivers), and black waters (Negro
132 river), and its flood plains. The Amazon basin river-flooded area system has about
133 8,500 lakes, corresponding to approximately 11% of the 62,000 km² of Amazonian
134 floodplains (Hess et al., 2015; Melack, 1984). This area is among the most biodiverse
135 ecosystems in the world, with about 2200 registered fish species (Albert and Reis,
136 2011). This rich environment provides the basis for high fish production and extensive
137 fishing activity (Batista and Petrere Júnior, 2003; Goulding et al., 2018; Nolan et al.,
138 2009; Ruffino et al., 2012) (Figure 1).

139

140 Figure 1. Amazon basin study area, highlighting the main rivers and exploited fishing grounds (pink
141 dots) by the fishing fleet that lands in Manaus.

142 River-lacustrine species perform migrations that depend fundamentally on the
143 rhythm of the flood pulse (Barletta et al., 2010), what is reflected in the dynamics of
144 their landing in Manaus (Batista, 2012). These species, represented in the catches by
145 the Prochilodontidae family, have their reproductive cycle closely associated with
146 seasonal flood cycles. Because they have a short life cycle (6 years of longevity on
147 average) and a high growth and mortality rates, they are considered high turnover
148 species (Bayley et al., 2018; Winemiller and Jepsen, 1998). Lacustrine species have
149 generally k-strategy. Some species have limited movement, for example cichlids,
150 which lay their eggs on the bottom and both parents share care for weeks after
151 hatching (Kullander and Ferreira, 2006). These species have a maximum total length
152 (LT) of 20-200 cm and develop their entire life cycle in flooded environments with
153 similar limnological characteristics. These species perform daily or seasonal
154 movements on a local scale (1-5 km) in order to use different lakes or flooded
155 environments. This is the case of *Arapaima* spp, a k-strategy species that moves

156 between flooded forest habitats (Castello, 2008). Riverine species account for only 3%
157 of the catches and for this reason they were not considered in subsequent analyses.

158 The fleet operating in this vast region is composed of approximately 3 000
159 wooden boats with engine power ranging from 20 to 60HP (Batista, 1998b), boat
160 length ranging from 8 to 27 meters, with an average of 14 ± 3 m, and ice storage
161 capacity varies from 2000 to 14500 kg, with an average of $7,000\pm 3$ kg. Each fishing
162 trip is operated by an average of 8 ± 3 fishers and lasts 13 ± 11 days. The predominant
163 fishing gear is purse seine (91.4%), followed by gill net (8.25%) (Batista, 2012).
164 Vessels that land in Manaus have diverse ports of origin from which they explore
165 fishing grounds (Hanry et.al, 2019). This fleet is mainly composed of two categories of
166 boats: *commercial fishing boats* that take a more or less fixed team of commercial
167 fishermen to the fishing locations and have the autonomy to explore fishing
168 environments further away from urban centers, with appropriate structures for fish
169 storage and conservation, shelter for the fishermen and transportation of large
170 quantities of fishing gear; and *purchasing boats* that go around riverside communities
171 and Sustainable Development Reserves (SDR), buying fish from riverside fishermen
172 (Matos et al.,2021 e Isaac et. al.,1996).

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174

2.2 Fishery activity and scales of analysis

175 We analyzed an 11-years dataset of landings (1994-2004) by the artisanal
176 commercial fishery in Manaus. The database provided information on a total of 27613
177 fishing trips made along the main Amazonian rivers (Amazonas-Solimões, Madeira,
178 Purus, Negro and Juruá, see Figure 1). The variables recorded for each fishing trip
179 were: year, month, vessel identifier ("vessel name"), vessel length (small, medium and
180 large, as established by Batista, 1998), total catch per species group (kg), based on
181 common name, not by species (see Supplementary Material 1), latitude and longitude
182 of the fishing ground, duration of the fishing trip (days), number of fishermen, name
183 of the fishing ground (when reported), type of habitat of the fishing ground (lake or
184 river), amount of ice on board (liters). The catch per unit effort (CPUE) of the trip was
185 calculated by dividing the total landings (kg) by the trip duration (number of fishing
186 days). Captured species group (40) were categorized according to their mobility and
187 life strategy into 'lacustrine', 'river lacustrine' and 'riverine' species (Barletta et al.,
188 2010) (see Supplementary Material 1).

189 Fishing grounds were mapped using the name of the fishing ground, the river it
190 belongs to and the nearest town, available in the database. The name of the fishing
191 ground exploited was recorded for each travel (207 different fishing grounds in total).
192 The 207 locations identified were classified into river or lake environments (see
193 Supplementary Material 2). We used this information for calculating the distance
194 traveled by the vessel, from leaving the central fishing terminal in Manaus to each
195 fishing ground. For such purpose, we used Google Earth to geolocate each fishing
196 ground and then, estimated the approximate path of the vessel along the river, in
197 kilometers (variable 'Dist'). To visualize the interannual spatial expansion or
198 contraction of the area used by the fleet we constructed maps highlighting the

199 registered fishing grounds, and calculated kernel density estimates using the
200 `stat_density2d` function of the `ggplot2` R package (Wickham and Chang, 2016).

201 From this database, the spatial distribution of the fishing activity was evaluated
202 at three scales: The *first scale* was that of the fishing trip, and was characterized by the
203 distance covered by the vessel; the *second and third scales* were that of the fleet
204 behaviour at the seasonal and annual scales respectively. For those last two scales, we
205 evaluated the spatial behavior using two metrics: (1) the center of gravity of the
206 fishing grounds visited, determined from the average of their spatial coordinates and
207 weighted by the number of trips concerned; and (2) the surface of the ellipse of
208 dispersion of the fishing grounds, which semi-axes are calculated from the standard
209 deviation of the center of gravity. The spatial direction of the ellipse is determined by
210 the direction of greatest spatial variability and its angle of rotation (Wang et al., 2015;
211 Yuill, 1971). At these seasonal and annual scales, we also computed: The proportion of
212 trips per boat size category (small, medium and large), the proportion of trips to river
213 and lake, the total number of trips, the proportion of fishing grounds visited, the global
214 Catch per unit effort (CPUE), that was calculated by dividing the catch (kg) by fishing
215 trip days; and the CPUE by species category, for which we selected only vessels that
216 reported catching only river lacustrine species and vessels that caught lacustrine
217 species.

218 2.3 Exploring drivers of change

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220 2.3.1 Hydrology

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222 We obtained the daily river levels, in meters, from the National Water Agency
223 from 1994 to 2004, for the Negro river station. This data was used to calculate a river
224 level climatology over the study period, as the average monthly value (amv) of the
225 river level and the corresponding standard deviation (sd).

226 To estimate hydrological anomalies, we compared for each month the observed
227 value with the climatology value for the same month. The anomaly was considered
228 significant if the observed value lied outside the range $amv \pm 2sd$ (Figure 2).

229

230 Figure 2. River level climatology (red curve, representing the average value and error bar indicating the
231 2sd interval) and monthly observations (average and sd based on daily data, black curve).

232 2.3.2 Protected areas (PAs)

233 We identified the Federal and States Conservation Units (CUs) and Indigenous
234 Lands (ILs) created during our study period from a series of websites
235 (uc.socioambiental.org; www.icmbio.gov.br and meioambiente.am.gov.br) and
236 denominated their ensemble as Protected Areas. The protected areas are managed by
237 specific environmental agencies: the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity
238 Conservation (ICMbio) for Federal Conservation Units (CUs) and the Secretary of the
239 Environment (Secretaria do MeioAmbiente) for State CUs, both of which follow the

240 guidelines established by the National System of CUs (Law No. 9985/2000) and the
241 National Indian Foundation - FUNAI, for Indigenous Lands, which establishes the
242 laws for the occupation of Indigenous territory. In these PAs, zones and norms are
243 established for governing the use of the area and the management of natural resources
244 identified in the management plan. In both CUs and ILs, zones are defined for
245 subsistence fishing for residents, fishing gear authorized, and the amount of fish that
246 can eventually be commercialized. Thus, in these PAs, subsistence fishing is
247 authorized while commercial fishing is prohibited. For each year, we estimated the
248 cumulative surface of these protected areas (CSPA) (Figure 3).

249

250 Figure 3. Cumulated surface (hectare) of the protected areas.

251 2.3.3. Oil Price

252 Due to the unavailability of the oil prices applied locally in the State of
253 Amazonas at the time the data were collected, we used as a proxy the monthly
254 variation of the price of crude oil calculated by the World Bank and available online at
255 the website: www.indexmundi.com. Figure 4 provides a summary (annual average and
256 standard deviation among months) of these oil price fluctuations.

257

258 Figure 4. Annual world crude oil price movements.

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260 2.4 Data analyses

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262 2.4.1 Random Forest (RF)

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264 RF (Breiman, 2001; Prasad et al., 2006) are flexible and robust models, based
265 on regression or classification trees. Randomization procedures on the data and the
266 variables allow to build a forest of trees, robust to data and predictor specificities, and
267 then allowing a more robust result. They allow the use of a mix of continuous and/or
268 categorical values, are robust to collinear variables, interactions between variables and
269 non-linear relationships between predictive and response variables. These models
270 identify the most important variables to explain the response variable using mean
271 square error - MSE. The percentage increase in the mean square error indicates the
272 most important variable. To examine the type of effect of the most important variables
273 detected in the RF model on the response variable (fishery spatial behaviour), we used
274 the partial dependency plot, from the pdp R package (Greenwell, 2017).

275

276 2.4.2 Exploring the drivers of fishing behaviour changes at different scales

277

278 Random Forest (RF) were used to identify the factors that explained space-time
279 patterns of the fishing activity, using the randomForest Rpackage (Friedman et al.,
280 2001). We considered three models, to address the question at three different scales
281 (Table 1):

282

283 ✓ Fishing trip scale- Predict the variability of distance traveled per fishing
284 trip as a function of numerical and categorical variables.

285 ✓ Month and Year scales - Predict the variability of the spatial dispersion
286 of the fishing trips as a function of numerical variables.

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295 Table 1.Explanatory variables used in RF models at thefishing trip scale,year and
296 month scales.

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298

299 Three parameters needed to be defined in the RandomForest regression model:
300 *ntree*, the number of bootstrap samples from the original data (the default value is 500,
301 but we used 1000); *nodesize*, the minimum number of data on each end node and
302 *mtry*,the number of different predictors tested at each node, we used the default
303 parameter (total predictors/3) for each scale.

304 T-tests were performed to test for significant differences between distances
305 traveled between years, considering 5% significance level. The calculations and the
306 statistical analysis were performed with R 3.6.3 (R Development Core Team, 2017).

307 3. Results

308

309 3.1 Typology of the captured species

310 Among the species groups captured by the CAFF, 13 are lacustrine species,
311 where the most representative were: tucunaré (*Cichla* sp), pescada (*Plagioscion*
312 *squamosissimus* e *P. auratus*), aruanã (*Osteogloss umbicirrhosum*), and pirarucu
313 (*Arapaima* spp.). And 28 river lacustrine species, highlighting jaraqui
314 (*Semaprochilodus insignis/ Semaprochilodus taeniurus*), curimatã (*Prochilodus*
315 *nigricans*), pacu (*Mylossoma* sp.), matrinxã (*Brycon amazonicus*), and tambaqui
316 (*Colossoma macropomun*). Our results show that the river-lacustrine species are the
317 main target of the CAFF fishery, highlighting the increase in the catch of the jaraqui,
318 curimatã, pacu and matrinxã (Figure 5A). Among lacustrine species, we observed an
319 increase in the capture of tucunaré, pescada, and aruanã (Figure 5B).

320 Figure 5. CPUE time series of river-lacustrine species (A) andCPUE time series of lacustrine
321 species (B).

322

323 3.2Spatial dynamics of the fishery

324

325 Vessels covered in average 357 ± 257 km per trip. At annual scale, longest distances
326 covered were observed in 1995, 1996 and 1997. After this period, distances travelled
327 were smaller, with significant difference between those before and after 1998 ($t =$
328 4.0123 , $df = 9$, $p\text{-value} = 0.003053$)(Figure 6). In the same sense, we observed a
329 decrease in the number of exploited fishing grounds after 1997.

330

331 Figure 6.Total distance travelled by the fleet over years (boxplots) and number of fishing grounds
332 exploited by the fleet per year (red curve).

333 We observed an increase in the number of Protected Areas along the Solimões-
334 Amazonas River and the Negro River; a decrease in the number of fishing points used,
335 especially the fishing grounds farther from the port of Manaus, and from 98,we
336 observed a concentration of fishing trips near the port of Manaus (Figure 7).

337 Figure 7. Kernel density (green to red color scale) of the fishing grounds used by the fishery over 11 years. Additional information are: the landing port of Manaus (black dot),
338 fishing grounds (black, blue and pink dots, those in pink lying >1500km from Manaus), protected areas (brown surfaces), synthesis of the spatial dispersion of fishing
339 grounds (black ellipses).

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340 3.3 Drivers of change of the space use by the fishery

341 At the fishing trip scale, the model explained 53% of the variability of the
342 distance traveled. The variables with the highest percentage increase MSE are the most
343 important predictors, which are: habitat type, rivers and river level (Figure 8A). At the
344 month scale, the model explained 58% of the variability of spatial dispersion (area of
345 the ellipse) by the fleet from the fishing grounds to the port of landing (Manaus). The
346 most important variables were: Global CPUE, river-lacustrine species and price of Oil
347 (Figure 8B). At the scale of the year, the model explained 32% of the variability of
348 spatial dispersion traveled by the fleet from the fishing grounds to the port of landing
349 (Manaus). The most important variables were: total fishing grounds, rivers and lakes
350 (Figure 8C).

351

352

353 Figure 8. RF results at the trip, month and annual scales (panels A, B and C respectively). The most
354 important variables are those with the largest percentage increase in the mean square error (%IncMSE).

355

356 In the partial dependence plots for the *fishing trip scale*, we observed that the
357 fleet traveled longer distances to lake-type fishing grounds, for the Juruá and Purus
358 rivers and when the river level was at its minimum (Figure 9).

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360

361 Spatial dispersion Figure 9. Partial dependence plots showing the influence of important explanatory variables,
362 Habitat type, rivers and river level on the variability of the distance traveled by the fleet per
363 fishing trip.

364 The partial dependence model at month scale shows that low dispersion is
365 associated to high global CPUE, high catches of river-lacustrine species and highest oil
366 price (Figure 10).

367

368 Figure 10. Plots of partial dependence showing the influence of important explanatory variables, global
369 CPUE, and CPUE of river-lacustrine species and price of oil of the spatial dispersion by the fleet per
370 month.

371 In the partial dependence plot at the annual scale, we observed that the fleet
372 exhibited greater dispersion to explore numerous fishing grounds mainly more distant
373 lakes. At closer distances to port, the CAFF exploits mainly rivers. And there was an
374 increase in the CPUE of river-lacustrine species with low fleet dispersal (Figure 11).

375

376

377

378 Figure 11. Plots of partial dependence showing the influence of important explanatory variables,
379 total fishing grounds, total rivers, total lakes and river-lacustrine species CPUE of the spatial
380 dispersion by the fleet per year.

381 4. Discussion

382 To our knowledge, this research represents the first study illustrating how data
383 of fishing recorded over 11 years can be used in combination with data of the
384 hydrological anomalies, protected areas and oil price in Random Forest models to assess
385 the spatial distribution of the Amazonian commercial artisanal fishing fleet (CAFF) and
386 its response to environmental and anthropogenic drivers of change. Our results showed
387 that substantial changes in the spatio-temporal distribution of CAFF fishing effort
388 occurred due to the interaction between various environmental and anthropogenic
389 factors, acting at multiple temporal and spatial scales.

390 Our data show that understanding the synergistic impact of environmental and
391 anthropogenic factors in determining the dynamics of CAFF has important implications
392 for fisheries management and the conservation of aquatic ecosystems and the
393 livelihoods of riverine populations that depend on fisheries resources. It helps to
394 identify critical areas for fishing and to guide policies for managing the use of and
395 access to fishing territories, as well as the conservation of fisheries resources.

396 4.1 Drivers of change: 'Macro' adaptive responses

397 Our results showed that CAFF's spatial dynamics were particularly affected by
398 two factors: the average river level variation and fuel price increase. Both factors
399 triggered substantial macro-scale changes in the dynamics of CAFF fishing effort,
400 which were reflected in the notable reduction of the distance traveled and the number of
401 fishing grounds exploited by CAFF.

402 This sequence of events started in 1997-1998, a period when negative
403 hydrological anomalies were recorded. These anomalies were caused by El Nino events
404 (Marengo, 2009; Marengo et al., 2012) stimulating prolonged droughts in Amazonia
405 (Cavalcanti et al., 2013). We expected that hydrological anomalies, particularly the
406 negative anomaly, which represents more severe drought periods, would influence the
407 dynamics of the CAFF, promoting a retraction of the distance traveled, due to the
408 difficulty of access of important fishing grounds. However, although we show the spatial
409 retraction of CAFF, the negative anomalies do not explain it at any temporal scale,
410 fishing days, month and year. And, this retraction was maintained in the years without
411 negative hydrological anomalies.

412 However, our results reinforce the importance of seasonal hydrological
413 variability for the spatial dynamics of fishing, since the response of fishing effort
414 distribution to the variability of flood pulses varies according to the fish feeding strategy
415 and access to the fishing ground (Castello et al., 2015; Isaac et al., 2016; Pinaya et al.,
416 2016). This seasonal variability is known to fishermen who rotate their use of the space.
417 Isaac et. al., (2016) demonstrated four strategies of fishers to minimize seasonal
418 variability of CPUE according to the seasonality of flood pulses. Fishers target fish
419 from floodplain lakes during rising waters (e.g., *Hyporthalmus* spp.), Characiform fish
420 that migrate out of floodplains during high and low waters (e.g., *Semaprochilodus* spp.),
421 and migratory catfish that migrate upstream in river channels during low waters (e.g.,
422 *Brachyplatystoma rouseauxii*).

423 Linked to river level variability, the increase in fuel prices from 2000 onwards
424 affected CAFF's response by shifting their fishing effort closer to the main port in order
425 to increase or maintain profit. This strategy was also observed by fishermen from Puerto
426 Ayora, in Galapagos, who also intensified their fishing effort close to the port of origin,
427 aiming to reduce fuel costs, as an adaptive response to the global financial crisis of
428 2007-2009 (Castrejón and Charles, 2020). This strategy reflects the importance of the
429 economic factor for the spatial dynamics of CAFF, as the costs of a fishing boat can
430 involve more than US\$ 632,47 with the purchase of fuel, ice and the advance payment of
431 auxiliaries who will go fishing (Illenseer and Pereira, 2010). Study in Central Amazonia
432 demonstrated that fuel expenses range from 30 to 64% of the operational costs of the
433 expedition (Cardoso and Freitas, 2004; Inomata and Freitas, 2015). Thus, our results
434 demonstrate how fuel costs can affect the dynamics of space and resource use by
435 causing fishing intensification in a few fishing grounds close to the port of landing.

436 Another factor that we expected to affect the dynamics of CAFF was the
437 increase in protected areas. Differently from what was expected, the increase in
438 protected areas was not a determining variable in the spatial dynamics of the CAFF. Our
439 results showed an increase in protected areas over these 10 years. Then, we expected
440 that this increase in protected areas would cause a retraction in the spatial distribution of
441 the fleet, since it would no longer have access to the traditional fishing grounds that
442 now were delimited within the protected areas.

443 Thus, it is suggested that CAFF fishermen have articulated new agreements for
444 the use of fishing grounds by establishing new arrangements with local actors and social
445 agents involved directly and indirectly in fishing, both with residents living within
446 protected areas and with residents living in rural communities on the banks of rivers and
447 establishing community fishing agreements. For example, Tregidgo et al. (2021)
448 observed that riverine fishers living in communities along the Purus River maintain
449 fisheries for pirarucu (*Arapaima* spp.) and tambaqui (*Colossoma macropomum*) in the
450 lakes and sell to larger fishing boats. Another example was the establishment of
451 partnerships between commercial fishermen with local fishermen in the Anavilhanas
452 National Park on the Negro River to access and use fishing grounds (Illenseer and
453 Pereira, 2010).

454 Our results reinforce the importance of PSAs for the conservation of fisheries
455 resources (Hermoso et al., 2016; Keppeler et al., 2017), but also for the maintenance
456 and survival of riverine livelihoods by strengthening local arrangements (Campos-Silva
457 et al., 2021; Nagl et al., 2021). As well, they reveal the importance of identifying and
458 understanding the strategies of use and access of space and fishery resources between
459 commercial fishermen and riverine fishermen promoted by different and simultaneous
460 territorial, political, economic and environmental changes.

461 4.2 Drivers of change: 'Micro' adaptive responses

462 The macro-scale changes in the spatial dynamics of CAFF described above have
463 in turn altered the micro-scale dynamics of CAFF fishing patterns, which is reflected in
464 intensification in habitat and fishery resource use, mainly at the seasonal scale.
465 According to the RF models, the distance traveled by CAFF was influenced by the type
466 off is hing ground habitat exploited and the target species. CAFF exploite drivers in
467 search of river-lacustrine species.

468 We suggested that the preference of CAFF for river environment may be related
469 to the greater availability of migratory species, throughout the hydrological cycle, as
470 they are species that have their life or part of it associated with the river channel and
471 their spawning occurs in lotic environment as for example, jaraqui (*Semaprochilodus*
472 spp) (Barthem, R., & Goulding, 2007; Barthem et al., 2019; Isaac et al., 2016). Another
473 species, represented in catches by the curimatã, of the family Prochilodontidae also have
474 their reproductive cycle closely associated with seasonal flood cycles. Because they
475 have a short life cycle (6 years of longevity on average) and a high growth rate and high
476 mortality, they are considered special high turnover species (Winemiller & Jepsen, 1998;
477 Bayley et al., 2018). These characteristics are known to commercial fishermen and are
478 reflected in fishing productivity throughout the hydrological cycle (Batista, 2012). So,
479 adding the fisherman's knowledge of the biology of the species and the need to reduce
480 fuel costs, CAFF adopted as a strategy the use of traditionally productive fishing
481 grounds close to the port of landing and that can be accessed throughout the
482 hydrological cycle.

483 Thus, our results signal the need to establish strategies for the use of fishing
484 grounds and assessments on the fish stocks of these species on a continuous basis to
485 propose management actions for these species, since the 1990s the stock of jaraqui is
486 considered overfished (Batista et al., 2012; Ribeiro and Petrere Jr, 1990) and the lack of
487 data since then, leaves the current situation unclear (Goulding et al., 2018).

488 Although river environments are intensively used by CAFF, lake environments
489 are particularly important for most exploited species (Martelo et al., 2008) and fisheries
490 production (Nolan et al., 2009). Our results demonstrated that the more distant lakes
491 remain important fishing grounds for the CAFF because they are home to lake species,
492 which have a high market value, such as tucunaré (*Cichla* sp.), aruanã (*Osteogloss*
493 *umbicirrhosum*), and pirarucu (*Arapaima* spp.) (Isaac et al., 1996). Making lake
494 environments more attractive to commercial fishermen. This condition suggests that the

495 lakes are fishing points of relevant importance for the CAFF commercial fishery (Nolan
496 et al., 2009), especially for the buying boats, which possibly maintain a communication
497 network with the riverside fishermen living near these environments for the
498 commercialization of these species (Illenseer and Pereira, 2010; Tregidgo et al., 2021).

499 However, pirarucu, has its fishing prohibited throughout the year, and can be
500 caught and sold only in areas with community management (Decree No. 36083 of
501 07/23/2015). And the tambaqui, has the closed season regulated by law, as well as,
502 minimum capture size (IBAMA ORDINANCE No. 08, FEBRUARY 2, 1996). But, due
503 to the lack of inspection, these species are also fished illegally in many areas until today
504 (Cavole et al., 2015). Thus, our results corroborate the strategies used by commercial
505 fishermen operating in the Rio Negro after the emergence of protected areas that limited
506 the use of traditional fishing grounds. One strategy adopted was agreements with
507 riverine fishermen who carry out community management and sell their fish to
508 commercial fishing boats and those who risk fishing illegally.

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522

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