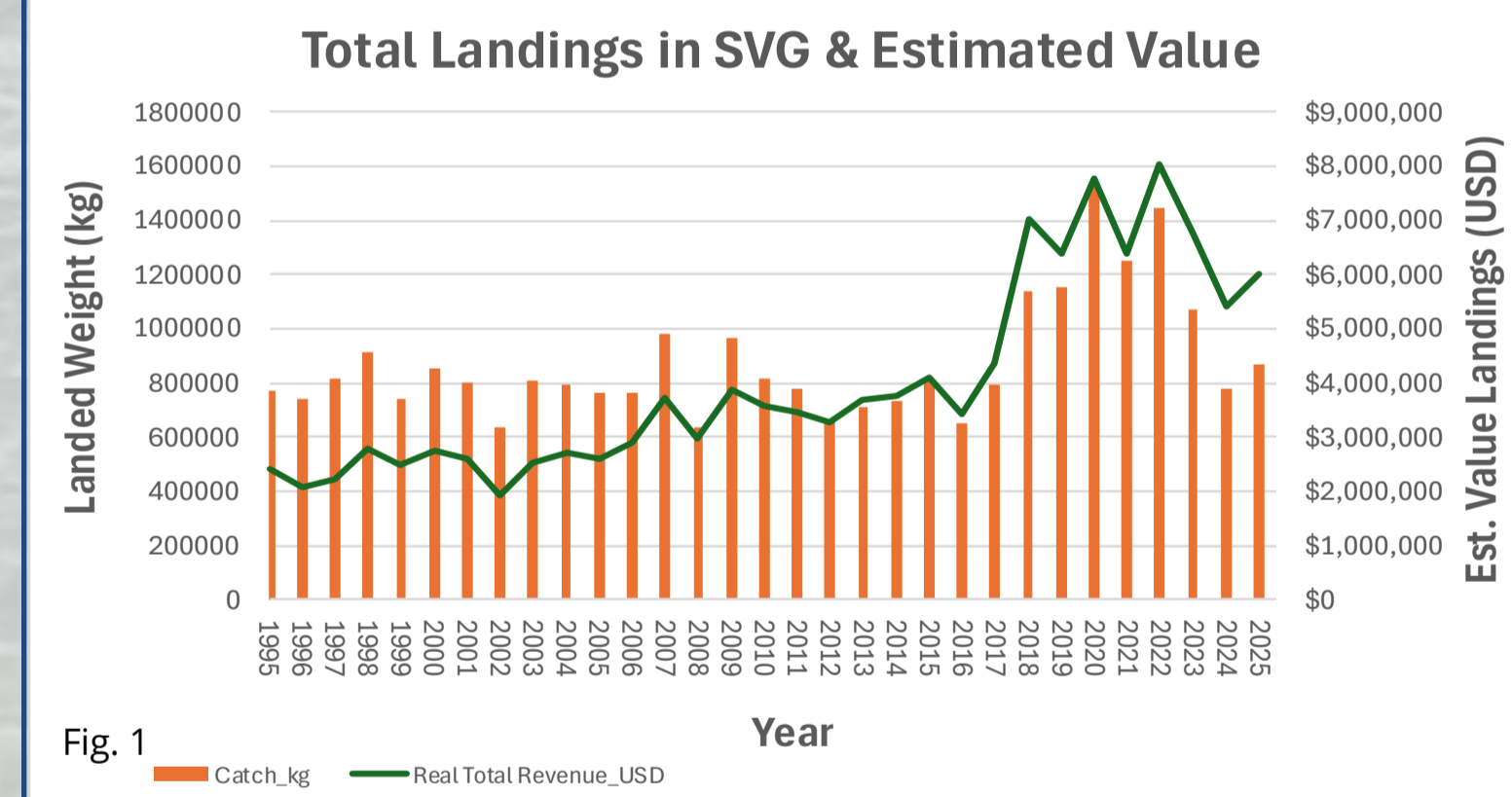


Effective Enforcement Protects Fisheries & Economies

Introduction

Fisheries are key to livelihoods and food security in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, although the sector is open-access and multi-species with a few high-value species.

This unregulated access drives heavy fishing pressure and is unsustainable for long-term stock health. Although the laws provide strong guidance for stock management, weak enforcement and lack of legal follow-through fuel illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Typical of IUU-affected fisheries, landings peaked and started declining over several years in SVG as shown in Fig. 1 below. However, the authority lacks the capacity to assess stock status, leaving the bioeconomic situation unclear.



This study examined how the lack of enforcement of MCS tools affects bioeconomic outcomes using the Gordon-Schaefer model and a gap analysis of legislative implementation.

Objectives

- ❖ Examine the 30-year bioeconomic status of the fishing industry in SVG.
- ❖ Analyse the bioeconomic performance in the context of the existing MCS/E framework of SVG.

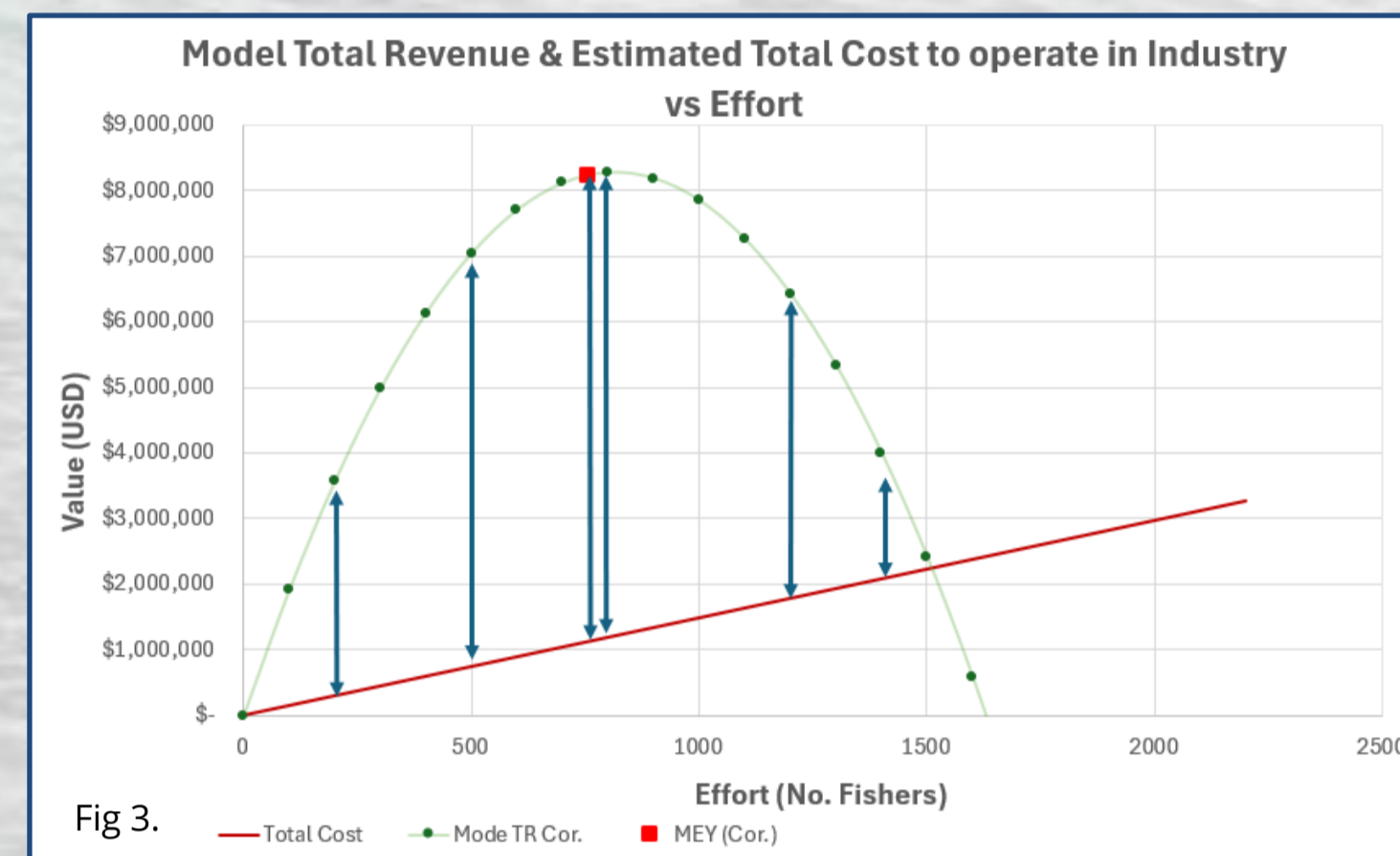
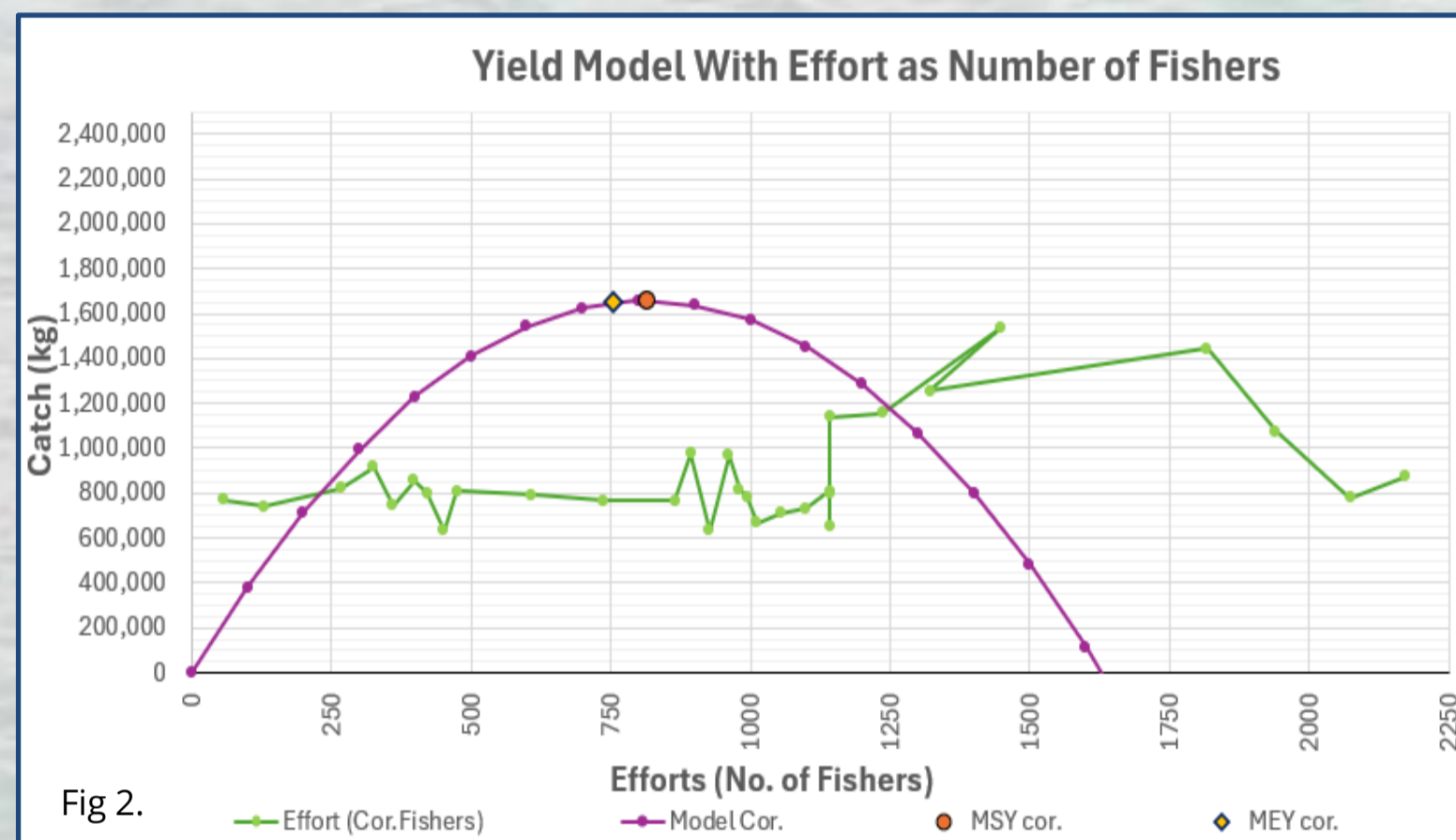
Methods

Biological: $\frac{dx}{dt} = rx \left(1 - \frac{x}{k}\right) - H$

Economic: $H(E, x) = qEx$

$TR = p \times H(E, x)$ & $TC = c \times E$

Results



GAP ANALYSIS MATRIX Fisheries ACT & Subsidiary Legislation CAP 59, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. (1986)

Aspects of legal framework	Description of Requirements	
	Management (Mngmt)	Institutional Action Monitoring & Surveillance (M&S)
Management Plans	1 Develop plans for species Mngmt 2 Conduct stock assessment to inform plans 3 Implement admin + technical measures	1 No formal Mngmt plans done 2 No stock assessments 3 Weak to no enforcement of measures
Species Management Measures	1 Restrictions by sizes, sex, seasons & areas 2 Prohibitions of the catch of some species 3 Restrictions & prohibitions on methods & gear	1 Weak M&S of species, ad hoc for gear 2 Weak enforcement for species & none for gear
Restriction on Fishing & Putting to sea	1 Fishing without license & inspection 2 Inspection of fitness of vessel & registration 3 No putting to sea without registration 4 Keep registry of all fishing vessels	1 Licensing not enforced & inspections done only on entry & ownership change 2 Vessels go to sea without registration 3 Registry kept but has data issues
Enforcement & Legal Action	1 Designation of officers & authorities to enforce law 2 Powers of enforcement officers 3 Guidance for acting against offenses	1 No designation done, officers cannot legally enforce 2 Other authorities have no fisheries enforcement mandate, so cooperation is weak 3 No legal action taken against any offenses

Opportunities from results

- ✓ **Improving MCS and shifting open-access losses into measurable gains** - Effort can be stabilised, CPUE can improve, and both private profits and public revenue from licences and landing fees can grow.
- ✓ **Supporting sustainable stocks** by strengthening enforcement and increasing the real risk of penalties can help curb IUU fishing.
- ✓ **Better data collection and DBMS supported by routine monitoring and surveillance**, provide a clearer picture of effort and stock, supporting strong adaptive management.

Conclusion

Weak enforcement of fisheries laws, especially when monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) are the main enforcement tools, significantly undermines the bioeconomic performance of a fishery, limits public revenue and reduces private profitability. Prioritising a strong data-collection system is essential, because it powers the entire management framework and enables both managers and enforcers to act effectively.

Recommendations

Empower officers and partner institutions to enforce the laws and take appropriate action

Reduce fishing effort and enforce a licensing scheme- Trends show effort exceeds sustainable limits. Implementing licences can help control expansion and generate state revenue.

Increase the coverage and scope of data collection- To address data gaps, including operational costs and reported infringements, to better inform management decisions.

Create a database management system- Categorise fisheries and systematically track data, enabling stock and fishing pressure estimation across groups rather than individual fisheries.

Develop a SMART Fisheries Management Plan- Create a clear vision for how the entire system would operate, including each fishery.

Acknowledgements