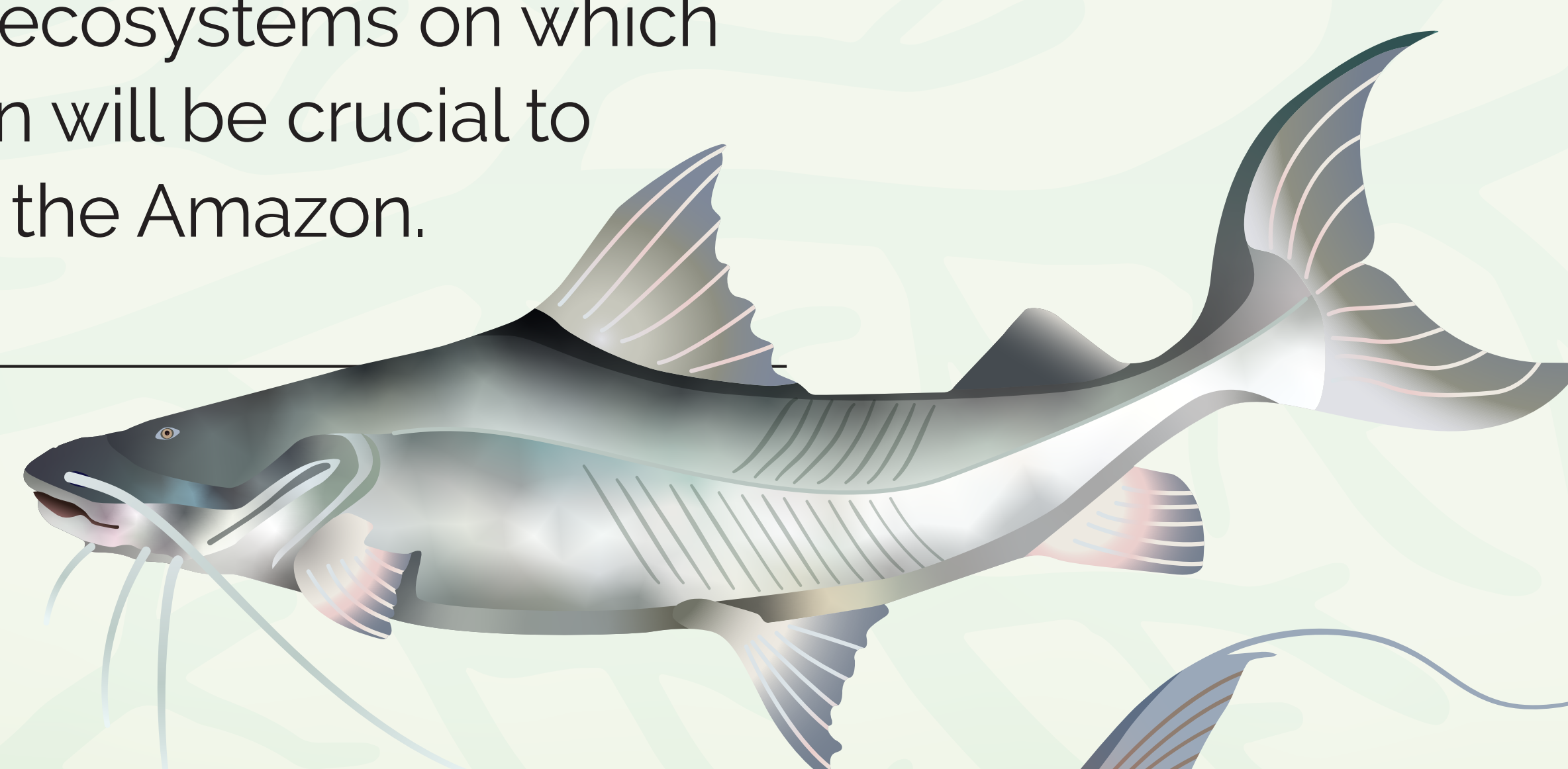


# Migratory fish: jewels of nature

Large migratory catfish in the Amazon are capable of epic journeys of thousands of kilometers. They are also species highly prized by humans in the region because of their size and economic value. However, the future of these species is at risk because of dams, deforestation, and overfishing. Conserving the aquatic ecosystems on which they depend, as well as managing fisheries throughout the Basin will be crucial to sustaining these fisheries and their status as cultural symbols in the Amazon.

**Piramutaba**  
*Brachyplatystoma vaillantii*  
40-100 cm



**Dorado**  
*Brachyplatystoma rousseauxii*  
120-140 cm



## Great Amazonian travelers

Some fish species in the genus *Brachyplatystoma* make the longest freshwater migrations on Earth, reaching more than 11,000 km round trip from the estuary to the Andean piedmont and back. The dorado and the piramutaba are also of great commercial importance in the Amazon, sustaining a multimillion-dollar fishery across the basin.

## A regional plan

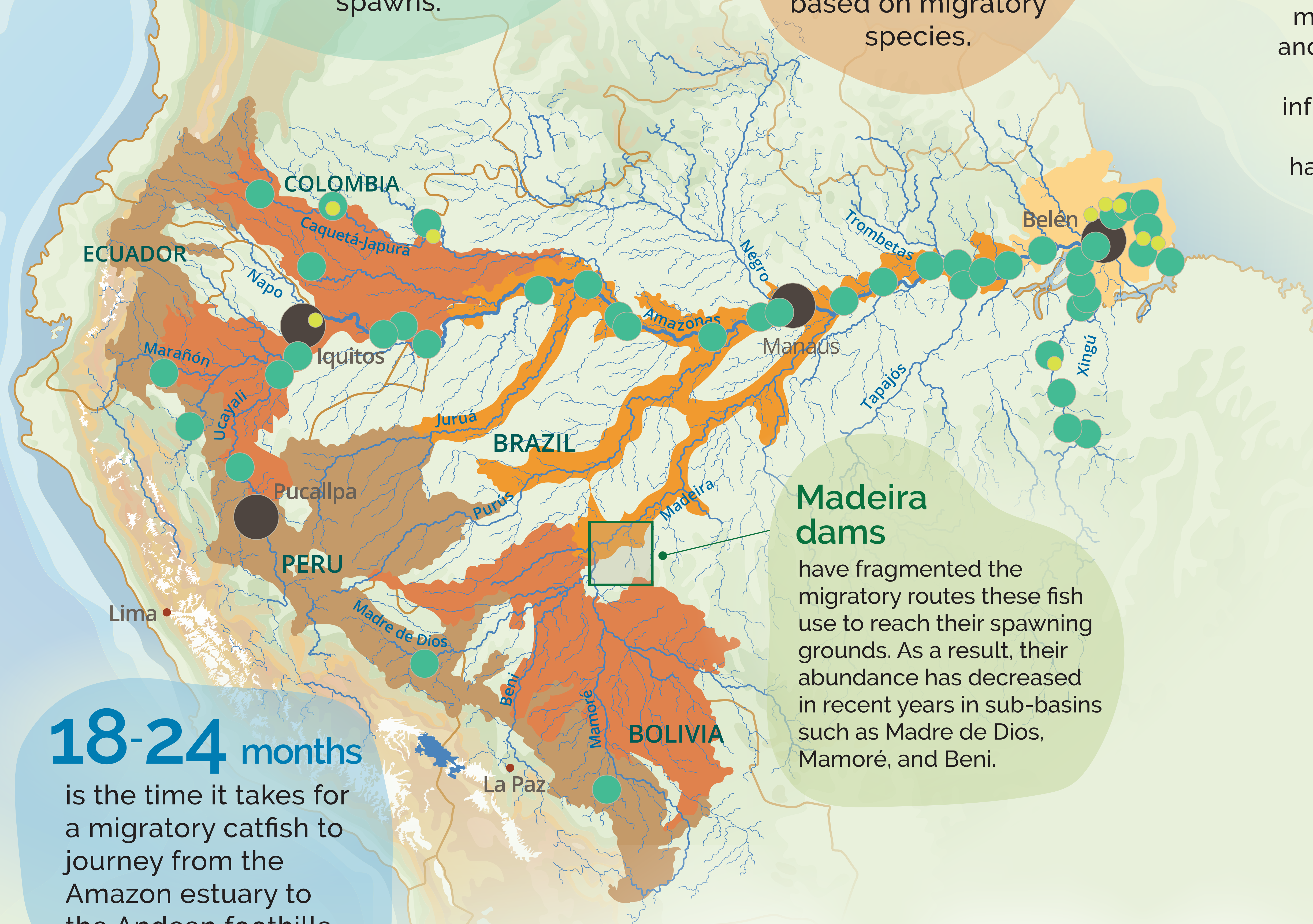
Management of long-distance migratory fish species can only be effectively and realistically addressed at a regional scale, through international cooperation and strategic actions that recognize the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to sustainable fisheries management, assess and monitor fish populations, design and implement effective fisheries regulations, mitigate infrastructure impacts that affect fisheries, and conserve the habitats that the fish depend on.

**Up to 5,500 km**

upstream is the distance a *Brachyplatystoma* catfish can travel when migrating from the estuary, where it breeds, to the Andean foothills, where it spawns.

**80%**

of commercial fishing in the region is based on migratory species.



### Madeira dams

have fragmented the migratory routes these fish use to reach their spawning grounds. As a result, their abundance has decreased in recent years in sub-basins such as Madre de Dios, Mamoré, and Beni.

**18-24 months**

is the time it takes for a migratory catfish to journey from the Amazon estuary to the Andean foothills.

Habitats of large migratory catfishes according to different life history stages

- Nursery area
- Pre-adults
- Adults
- Breeding area

Estimated catches by urban area (ton/year)

- 10,000 - 100,000
- 100 - 10,000
- 10 - 1,000