

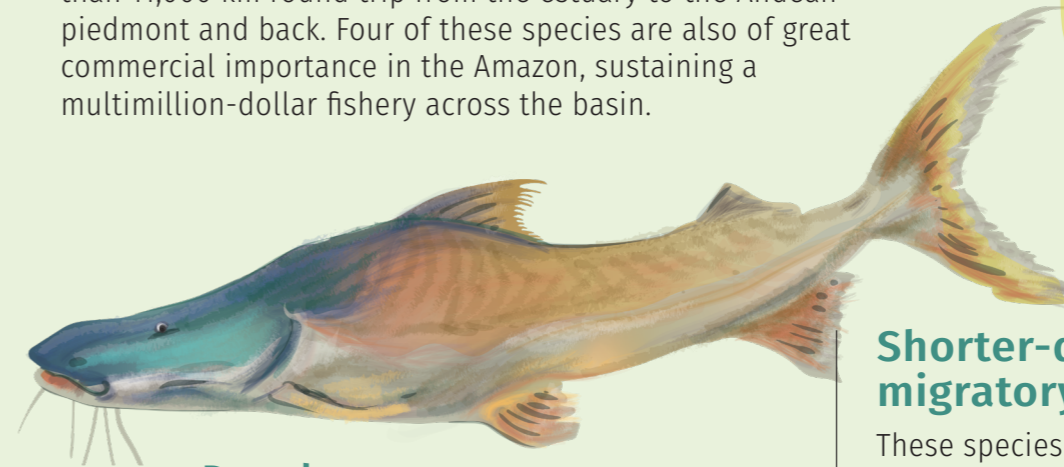
Migratory fish: jewels of nature

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.

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. Four of these species are also of great commercial importance in the Amazon, sustaining a multimillion-dollar fishery across the basin.

80% of commercial fishing in the region is based on migratory species.



Dorado
Brachyplatystoma rousseauxii
120-140 cm

Shorter-distance migratory species

These species make smaller migrations, between 100 and 1,000 km, for reproductive or feeding purposes. Like the large catfish species, they are of great commercial importance throughout the Basin



Sorubí
Pseudoplatystoma spp
100 cm



Gamitana
Colossoma macropomum
40-100 cm



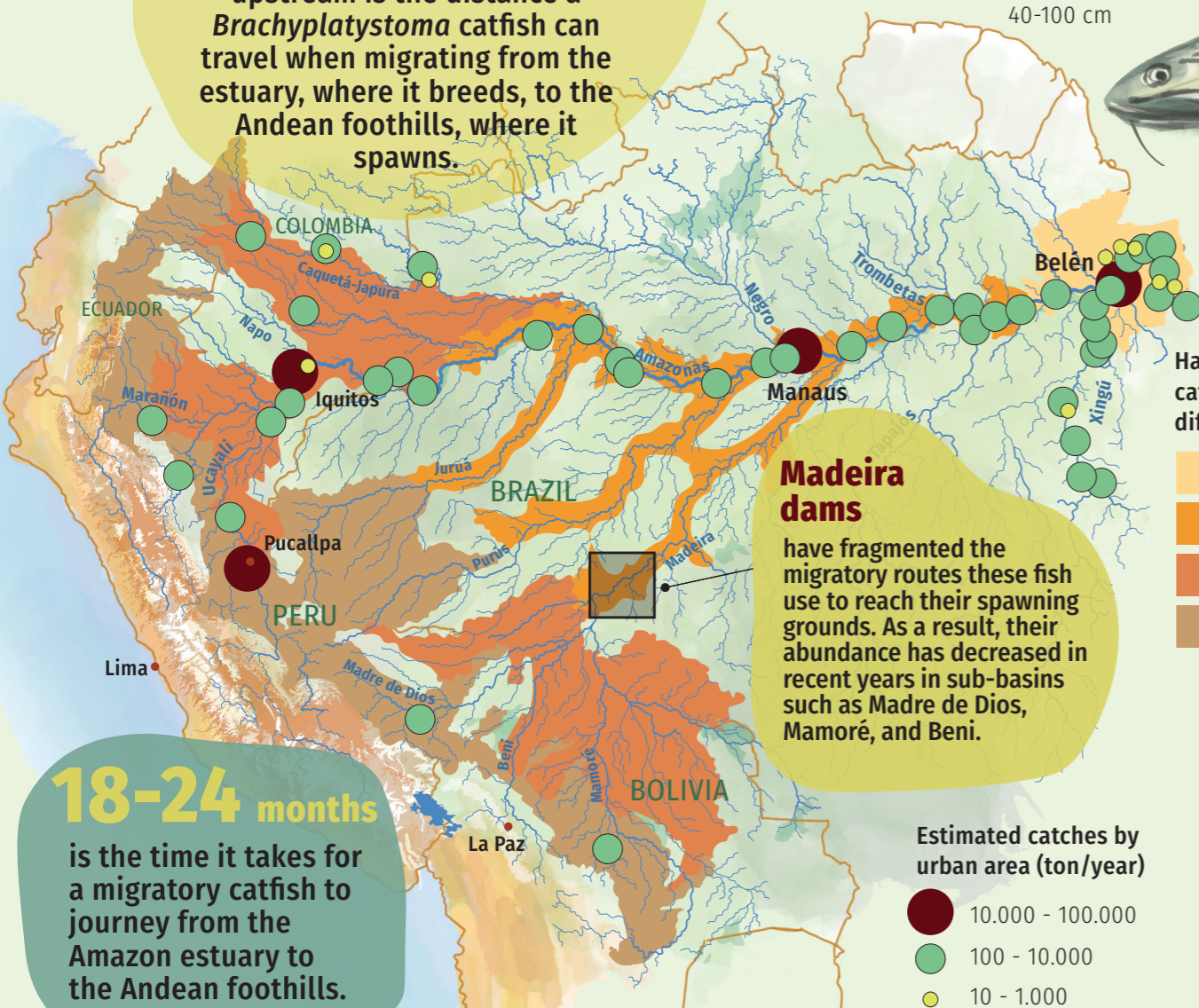
Manitoa
Brachyplatystoma vaillanti
40-100 cm



Baboso
Brachyplatystoma platynemum
60-80 cm

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.



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.

Habitats of large migratory catfishes according to different life history stages

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

18-24 months

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

Estimated catches by urban area (ton/year)

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

A regional plan

Management of long-distance migratory fish species can only be effectively and realistically addressed at a regional scale, through integrated government actions that monitor and assess fish populations, implement fisheries regulations, mitigate infrastructure impacts that affect fisheries, and conserve the habitats that the fish depend on.

