

# FIRST RECORD OF *ARAPAIMA* ON THE PACIFIC SLOPE OF SOUTH AMERICA: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIVE BIOTA IN COASTAL RIVER BASINS OF PERU (MODALIDADE PÔSTER)

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## RESUMO

Aquaculture is one of the main sources of introduction of non-native species, and the Loreto region stands out as a major global supplier. Cultivated aquatic organisms that escape or are released can establish new populations and become invasive species. A notable example is *Arapaima* Müller, 1843, known as "paiche" or "pirarucú" (hereafter referred to as arapaimas), one of the largest freshwater fish in the Neotropical region. This species naturally inhabits the basins of the Amazon, Essequibo, and Orinoco rivers. Despite its economic and ornamental importance, the arapaima faces threats in its native range, while it has been introduced into other Neotropical basins, such as the Bolivian Amazon and the Paraná basin in Brazil, as well as regions like Java and Sumatra in Indonesia, and water bodies in the Philippines. Recently, the increase in arapaima farming programs has facilitated its repopulation in areas where it was not native. In this study, we report the first record of an arapaima measuring 200 cm in total length and weighing 80 kg, caught by local fishermen using a trammel net near the village of Chilaco Sur, a tributary of the Chira River, Piura, a coastal river in Peru. This finding represents the first record for the Pacific slope of South America. Additionally, the potential for dispersal into other coastal basins, such as the Piura and Tumbes rivers, which offer favorable conditions for establishment, is explored, as well as its possible impact on the region's endemic species. Given its size and predatory behavior, this study analyzes the implications of *Arapaima* propagation and the potential effects it could have on the native biota of the Pacific slope.

**Palavras-chave:** Introduced species, Freshwater, Fishes Peruvian, Neotropical.

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