

# Recent Grounding Incidents

## Issues and Challenges

Nilda M. Jimenez-Marrero, PhD





# Grounding Response

## Legal Authority

### **Law 147, 1999: Law for the Protection, Conservation and Management of Coral reefs in Puerto Rico**

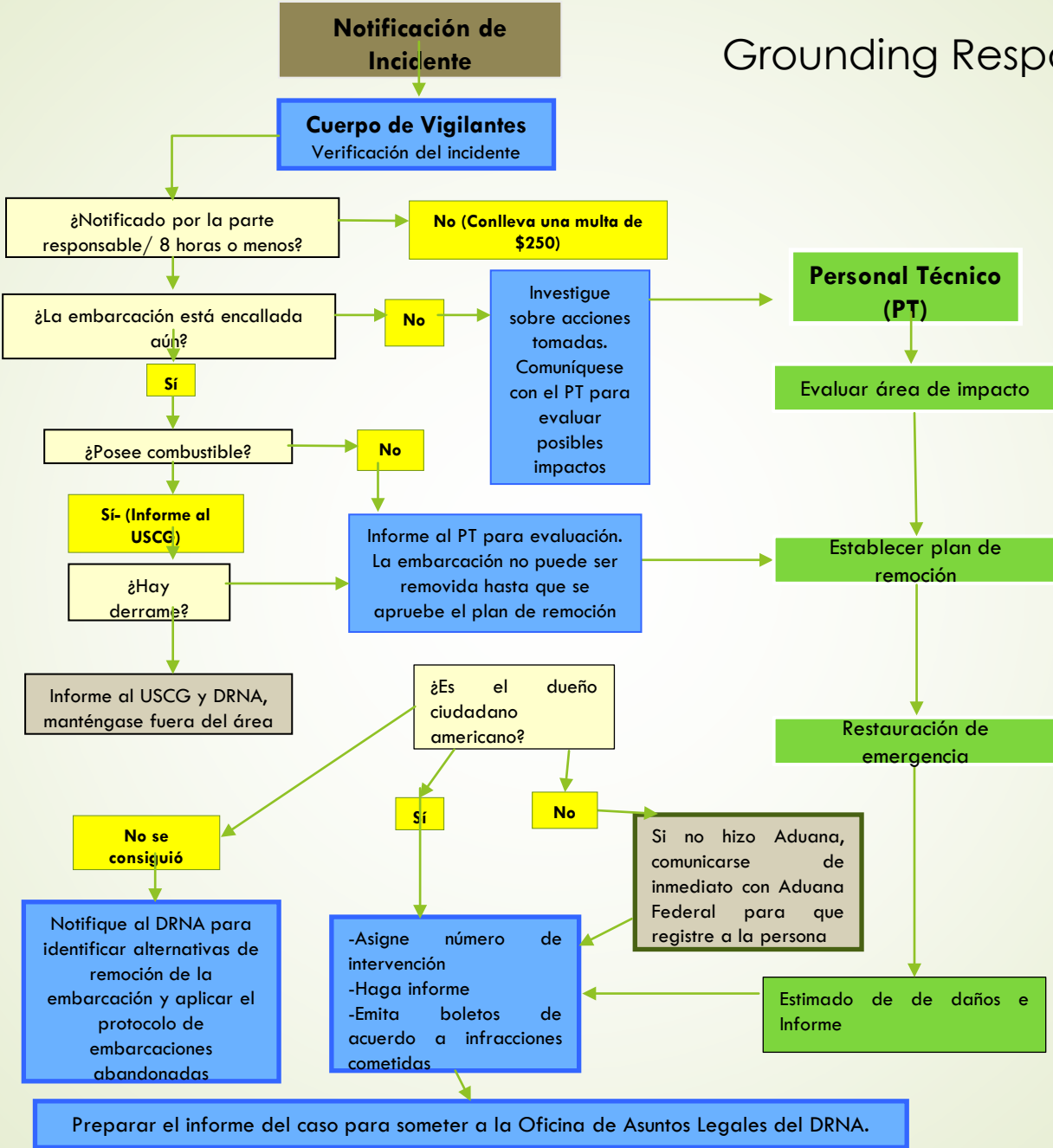
#### Article 4

- Mandates the creation of a Grounding Response Protocol

#### Article 5

- Mandates the creation of an Advisory Committee, composed of state and federal agencies to support the implementation of this law

# Grounding Response Protocol



Challenge: Collect information needed to conduct evaluation or seek alternatives to remove the vessel.

What is a grounding for your entity?

# Sailboat at Margarita reef case

- Grounding August 2022
- Citizen from Belgium
- Left PR, went to Dominican Republic
- Contact Homeland Security and Border Patrol to notify if he entered PR again
- Activate orphan grounding funds because of amount of corals being impacted.



Took many phone calls and a lot of effort tracking down the owner to verify if he was coming back for the boat

# Sailboat at El Palo

- Owner- Citizen from Sweden
- Rescue offshore, vessel adrift
- Obtaining information on the insurance company, contacts in PR was challenging
- Still pending on the insurance to confirm removal



Was there a chance to track the drifting vessel to prevent it from running aground?

What is currently threatening



# Municipalities and inventory



10 municipalities- some that might be able to support removal, if notified  
Cutting the vessels sometimes make it harder to remove  
People have reported the vessels are pushed back to the sea  
Approximately 20 new "yolas" from January to March 2023  
Yolas sometimes are removed sometimes left behind

SAR, drug related or alien related are usually not reported as grounding

# ESF10- Fiona

- Inventory of approximately 25 impacted vessels
- Requested support in different forms
- Last request rejected because it was the owner's responsibility to remove the vessel
- Vessel removal responsibility of a vessel whose owner could not be identify becomes the responsibility of the state





# Next Step

- ▶ Coordinate additional meetings to discuss response and communication networking
- ▶ Create an agreement to be signed by all agencies to strengthened communication and improve collaboration



An underwater scene with a blue background, showing silhouettes of fish and a coral reef. The word "QUESTIONS" is centered in the image.

# QUESTIONS