

Summary



Mexico Grouper FIP

A fishery improvement project (FIP) is a multistakeholder effort to address environmental challenges in a fishery.

Summary

In 2013 the Sea Delight Ocean Fund was awarded funding from Sea Pact and the Sustainable Fisheries Fund to develop a FIP for the grouper fishery located off the northeast coast of the Yucatan Peninsula. The FIP was formalized in 2014 with the end goal of MSC certification. The red and black grouper fishery is one of the most important fisheries in Mexico with more than 16,000 families benefiting from it. In 2016 membership grew significantly as Handy International, PESMAR, Chefs Trading, and Quirch Foods joined the FIP.



Species	Red Grouper (<i>Epinephelus morio</i>), Black Grouper (<i>Mycteroperca bonaci</i>)
Location	Campeche Bank in the Gulf of Mexico
Gear	1. Manually operated longlines and/or handlines (Artisanal fleet) 2. Mechanized longlines with minor use of handlines (Industrial fleet)
Stakeholders	CONAPESCA, INAPESCA, SAGARPA, CeDePesca, Sea Delight, Atlántida del Sur, Handy International, PESMAR, Chefs Trading, Quirch Foods, fishing cooperatives, local processors, and others
Start Date	April 2014

- Active supply chain participation?
- Public commitment?
- Timebound objectives defined?
- Published work plan?
- System for progress tracking & reporting?

Highlights

Handy International, PESMAR, Chefs Trading and Quirch Foods join FIP in February-April 2016



Local committees formed to review the fishers' register and fishing vessel permits in July 2015



CeDePesca worked with fishermen from Chicxulub to improve "Good Manufacturing Practices" in January 2016



Timeline

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2015-2016 FIP Highlights

- Between July and September of 2015, several local committees were formed to review fishing vessel permits and registered fishermen in major coastal communities to assess fishing effort.
- On September 8th and 9th, 2015 the state government and FAO held a workshop to analyze and validate specific actions to be included in the document: "Plan Rector de la Pesca y Acuicultura del estado de Yucatan".



3. In the last quarter of 2015, “Fisheries Management Nautical Committees” (Comités Nauticos de Ordenamiento Pesquero) were established in Sisal, Progreso, Chelem, Telchac and other coastal communities to validate and update the census of fishermen.
4. From January through March 2016, recently published ruling documents created an opportunity for official discussions regarding effective management strategies, including a quota-per-fleet system, in order to regulate fishing effort.
5. From January through March 2016, CeDePesca worked with fishermen from Chicxulub Port in order to improve Good Manufacturing Practices and to promote a better register of catches.
6. Between February and April 2016, Handy International, Chefs Trading, Quirch Foods, and Pescados y Mariscos del Caribe (PESMAR) became official FIP participants. An updated Framework Collaboration Agreement and Addendums were signed to this effect, as well as a Specific Agreements for each new participant for 2016.

Sea Delight’s FIP Membership and Contribution – Sea Delight sources both red and black grouper from the Yucatan region of Mexico and in 2014 the Sea Delight Ocean Fund (SDOF) initiated the Mexico Grouper FIP. In early 2014 the SDOF approached the Centre for Development and Sustainable Fisheries (CeDePesca) to see if there was interest in creating a FIP for the grouper fisheries of the Campeche Bank located off the northern coast of the Yucatan peninsula. SDOF received two grants from Sea Pact and the Sustainable Fisheries Fund respectively to fund the MSC pre-assessment needed for the fishery. CeDePesca then created a work plan and budget to begin implementing FIP activities. CeDePesca maintains a field office in Mexico (incorporated as a Mexican entity) along with field staff that coordinate with all stakeholders, including the national government, to work towards improved fisheries management.

2015-2016 Sea Delight FIP Activities

1. **Financial support of the FIP** – Sea Delight supports the FIP through annual financial contributions to assist with the implementation of on-the-ground FIP activities. In 2016 a \$0.02/lb. billback program for U.S. importers was instituted. New FIP participants will also contribute to the billback program and SDOF will make up any budget deficit, if needed.
 - a. **FIP Activity Supported** – While not an official Action Plan activity, funding is needed to complete the list of improvement activities outlined in the FIP Action Plan.
 - b. **Importance** – Long-term and sustainable funding is needed to carry out the FIP’s scheduled set of activities and not allow the rate of progress to fall behind.
2. **Motivate new companies to join FIP** – Sea Delight continues to leverage its business relationships with both Mexico and U.S. based companies to gain additional support for the FIP. In the past, attracting



new FIP participants was a difficult task, however in 2016 the addition of four new participants has bolstered industry support for the FIP.

- a. **FIP Activity Supported** – While not an official Action Plan activity, Sea Delight is working to increase industry support for and participation in FIP Action Plan activities.
 - b. **Importance** – Financial support generated from new FIP participants is needed to carry out the FIP’s scheduled activities and to demonstrate industry support for fisheries improvement.
3. **Communications, outreach and education** – SDOF is heavily involved in the communications, outreach, and education strategy concerning the Mexico grouper FIP in the U.S. market as a way to engage seafood consumers and demonstrate that FIPs are one way for the industry to drive on-the-ground fisheries improvement.
- a. **FIP Activity Supported** – While not an official Action Plan activity, working to raise public awareness regarding the need for improved fisheries management can attract new funders to support the implementation of FIP activities.
 - b. **Importance** – A knowledgeable seafood consumer base is an important part of the equation to increase the demand for sustainably produced seafood.
4. **Quarterly check-in with CeDePesca** – Sea Delight stays in regular contact with CeDePesca to remain up-to-date with FIP progress and to become aware of any issues that may have arisen.
- a. **FIP Activity Supported** – While not an official Action Plan activity, regular contact with the FIP implementation team is necessary to understand how the FIP is progressing and what current obstacles need to be addressed.
 - b. **Importance** – A thorough understanding of how Sea Delight financial and in-kind contributions are being used for FIP implementation is necessary for continued support.

Sea Delight Next Steps – Although Sea Delight does not implement company-specific FIP activities as part of the Mexico grouper FIP Action Plan, next steps for the company include:

1. Increasing local participation within the FIP.
2. Government approval of the FIP’s proposed management measures.
3. Create consensus among U.S. grouper importers to achieve unified large-scale goals.
4. Upon achieving consensus, SDOF would like to deliver targeted proposals to the Mexican government, including proposals for the use of a science-based quota system for juvenile catch within the fishery.

