



Mac Stone/ WWF-US

UPDATES FROM THE WATER

OCTOBER 2020

HONDURAS SPINY LOBSTER - TRAP FISHERY

Gear Type: Traps

Volume: 1,803 MT

FIP Stage: Stage 5 (Improvements on the Water)

Progress Rating: B (Good Progress)

Start Date: July 2012

Honduras is the second largest lobster producer in Central America after Nicaragua with an average production of over 4,000 tons per year for the trap and dive fisheries, which generates about \$42 million dollars annually in exports to the United States. The industrial trap fleet is made up of 87 vessels which employ approximately 1,500 fishers. Fishers are engaged in the trap FIP mainly through the industrial fishing associations APESCA and APICAH, where representatives attend FIP meetings to get updated on the latest management regulations and FIP actions. The FIP has helped fishers to better understand the fishery management regulations and improve their catch data collection efforts by learning what information is required to inform the stock assessment. Under the FIP, studies have been conducted to evaluate the impact of the fishery on the habitat. The research found that the fishery has a medium impact on deep coral reefs and in response the government is implementing new management measures to reduce the fishery's impact on the environment.

Like Nicaragua, the coronavirus pandemic has had minimal impact on the Honduras lobster fishery since the season opened in July. Although the decreased demand for lobster from the international market is likely to impact the fishery, the full impact has not yet been measured. Despite travel restrictions due to the pandemic, fishers are fishing at their full capacity and FIP activities have continued to advance with few delays as the FIP has adapted to conducting virtual workshops and meetings.

FIP efforts this year are focused on completing the first ever bi-national stock assessment for spiny lobster. The joint stock assessment, which is required for the Honduras and Nicaragua

lobster fisheries to meet the MSC standard, will provide a more accurate measure of the impact of both countries' fisheries on the lobster population and will inform whether additional management measures need to be implemented.

In March, just before the coronavirus pandemic hit and travel restrictions were put in place, Nicaraguan government scientists led a successful workshop in Honduras in which government researchers, university scientists, and processing plant managers were trained on the new stock assessment model and how to best collect catch data at the plants to inform the stock assessment. Priority activities expected to occur over the next several months include: compiling Honduras catch data from processing plants for the bi-national stock assessment by September; conducting a virtual workshop to run the stock assessment model by October; conducting a study to determine the risk of the fishery impacting the ecosystem by October; and drafting a Honduras lobster fishery management plan and finalizing the bi-national stock assessment report by February 2021.

Become a WWF FIP participant today by visiting:

<https://seafoodsustainability.org/fisheries/fishery-improvement-projects-signup>

Being a WWF FIP Participant provides a pre-competitive space for companies to engage with fisheries in their supply chains and leverage power across multiple companies to drive fishery improvements forward. By signing on to support a FIP, you are joining forces with other leaders in the industry that seek to help conserve marine ecosystems and advance the livelihoods for millions of people who depend on them.

WWF recognizes FIP participants on the industry website, SeafoodSustainability.org. WWF also works with FIP participants to communicate the benefits of FIPs among key buyers, sustainable business leaders, employees, environmental activists, and other key constituencies.

Together we can protect oceans and the food and livelihoods they can sustainably provide.

For more information or to partner with WWF, please visit SeafoodSustainability.org or contact us at info@seafoodsustainability.org
