

Mexican Baja California Lobster Fishery

We are pleased to announce that the MSC fishery certification process is underway for the Mexican Baja California Lobster Fishery. This project will specifically focus on evaluating this fishery for compliance with the international Standard for well-managed and sustainable fisheries produced by the MSC. The certification body contracted to assess this fishery is SCS - see contact details below.

Three independent experts have been selected to work with Scientific Certification Systems, Inc. (SCS) to assess whether the Mexican Baja California lobster (*Panulirus interruptus*) fishery is in compliance with the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) Principles and Criteria for sustainable fisheries management.

SCS, an MSC accredited independent certifier, consulted with stakeholders in the fishing and environmental communities in the two regions in selecting the team of distinguished scientists to serve as an independent Evaluation Team. Joining SCS in its scientific evaluation of the fishery are Dr. Bruce Phillips (Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia), Dr. Daniel Lluch (Centro Interdisciplinario de Ciencias Marinas del IPN (CICIMAR), and Dr. Enrique Lozano (Instituto de Ciencias del Mar y Limnología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) who collectively provide expert knowledge of and experience in fisheries stock assessment and population dynamics, ecosystem impacts from fishing, and fishery management processes in Mexico. Dr. Phillips will be the lead scientist in the assessment.

In May 2001, the Federación Regional de Sociedades Cooperativas de la Industria Pesquera Baja California F.C.L (Baja California Regional Federation of the Fishing Cooperative Societies) fishing in Baja California, and three cooperatives (Sociedad Cooperativa de Producción Pesquera Langosteros del Caribe, S. C. L.; Sociedad Cooperativa de Producción Pesquera Andrés Quintana Roo, S.C.L.; and Sociedad Cooperativa de Producción Pesquera Pescadores de Banco Chinchorro, S.C. L.) fishing at Banco Chinchorro applied for certification for their respective lobster fisheries.

The Mexican Baja California lobster fishery occurs in an area of approximately 2,400 km² from Cedros Island in Baja California through Punta Abreojos in Baja California Sur. It occurs along the coast of Mexico between 28.6(N 115.5(W to 26.6(N 113.2(W. This area is part of the Vizcaíno Biosphere Reserve. The lobster species fished is *Panulirus interruptus*, also known as red rock lobster or California lobster. The annual catch in this fishery is less than 2000 tonnes.

SCS and its team members will undertake a transparent, comprehensive scientific audit of the lobster fisheries and will solicit input from stakeholders. The Mexican lobster fisheries will be measured against the fisheries management standards set forth in the [MSC's Principles and Criteria](#). Anyone interested in expressing views about this certification (e.g. status of stocks, habitat protection, ecosystem management, bycatch etc.) should contact the certification body, **SCS**:

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