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Sian Ka'an and Banco Chinchorro Lobster Fishery

Stakeholder Notification:

Use of the Fishery Assessment Methodology V2 and the Risk-Based Framework

MRAG Americas announces that the fishery has entered the next phase of the assessment. We propose to use the Fishery Assessment Methodology version 2 (FAM v2), as allowed by TAB Directive 17 v.2 and required for use of the MSC Risk-Based Framework (RBF). Considering the information available for the fishery, MRAG has determined that the assessment will require utilization of the RBF to score outcome performance indicators for target stock status, habitat, and ecosystem status. Dr. Robert Trumble, who will conduct the RBF, has received training from the MSC in the use of RBF, and has trained team member Dr. Robert Wakeford on two previous applications of the RBF.

In evaluating the fishery against Paragraph 2.5 of FAM v2, we have determined that insufficient information exists to determine the biomass of the unit stock relative to the unfished state. The stock extends beyond the fishing locations at Sian Ka'an and Banco Chinchorro, and beyond the territorial waters of Mexico. Sustainability of the Sian Ka'an and Banco Chinchorro lobster may depend in part on fishing activities in countries other than Mexico. No assessment of the current status of the stock exists. Therefore, we can justify the use of the RBF for this performance indicator.

We have determined that insufficient information exists to determine the impact on habitat of fishing with casitas and traps. Therefore, we can justify the use of the RBF for this performance indicator.

We have determined that insufficient information exists to determine the status of the ecosystem relative to an undisturbed state. There is a lack of information regarding ecosystem effects from removing lobster. We are unable to assess using traditional methods whether changes in trophic structure or biodiversity from fishing lobsters causes serious harm. Therefore, we can justify the use the RBF for this performance indicator.

The FAM, the assessment tree specified in the FAM, and the RBF are available for download from the MSC website <http://www.msc.org/about-us/standards>. Anyone wishing to provide comments on its proposed use of the RBF in conjunction with the FAM default assessment tree is invited to contact Dr. Robert Trumble, MSC Assessment Manager. The comment period for the proposed default assessment tree will remain open until 22 October 2009.

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