



Mexican Octopus

Case Study

Disclaimer: This case study does not necessarily represent the current situation of this fishery and is conceived only for training purposes.

Stakeholders would like to conduct a FIP for all the Yucatan fleets fishing for both octopus species.

Mexican Octopus

The octopus fishery in the Gulf of Mexico and the Mexican Caribbean Sea is made up of two species: red octopus (*Octopus maya*) and common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*). Fishing is becoming an important primary activity in Yucatan and neighboring states. Both octopus species are harvested by the small-scale and medium-scale fleets based in the State of Yucatan, under management of the State of Yucatan, and landing product in the State of Yucatan. The octopus fishery in the Gulf of Mexico also takes place in the neighboring states of Campeche and, to a lesser degree, in the states of Veracruz and Quintana Roo.

Method of Capture

The red octopus is caught using a fishing rod with lines containing bait; this method is known locally as *gareteo*. The common octopus fishery also employs a fishing rod with lines and bait, but in this fishery, a hook is used with the line.



Figure 1. Red octopus (*Octopus maya*) distribution



Figure 2. Common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*) distribution

Octopus Population

Red octopus is managed as a single population in Mexico. For common octopus in the Yucatan, there is no genetic information and no stock assessment or reference points. Despite this lack of information, the fishery is managed under the assumption that common octopus found in the Yucatan and adjacent Mexican states are all part of one stock.

Management System

The current management system for both red and common octopus fisheries is based on fishery landings, stock assessment (only for red octopus), regulations (minimum size and season closures), and a yearly quota. This strategy has been implemented for several years. However, there is not a quota monitoring system to stop the fishery when the quota is reached. Catches and biomass have been stable, and the fishery has not collapsed.

Fleets Involved in the Operation of the Octopus Fishery

Region	Main Fleet	Fishing Gear
Yucatan	Small-scale fleet	Fishing rod with lines and bait
Yucatan	Medium-scale fleets	Pole and line
Campeche	Campeche fleet	Fishing rod with lines and bait and hook
Quintana Roo	Quintana Roo fleet	Fishing rod with lines and bait and hook
Veracruz	Veracruz fleet	Fishing rod with lines and bait