

Project Update January 2026

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Project Title: Assessment of Biological and Socioeconomic Effects in a Fishery Refuge Zone in Yucatan, Mexico

Update:

First, we would like to share a short video hosted on YouTube, developed together with members of the Celestún fishing community. This video documents their voices, experiences, and perspectives regarding the Fishing Refuge Zone, highlighting how local participation, monitoring, and collective action have strengthened both community cohesion and confidence in conservation as a viable pathway for the future.

YouTube video link: <https://youtu.be/tOwel06nWE8?si=CupQKxGM5yYUKm2F>

Second, we are pleased to share a video from a national television interview in which the recent sighting of the sea cucumber (*Isostichopus badionotus*) was reported. Notably, this species was observed within the Fishing Refuge Zone after many years of absence. For the community, this finding represents a powerful indicator of ecological recovery, a tangible sign of success, and—perhaps most importantly—a source of renewed hope.

Facebook video link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1DvTw7bXMc/>

In addition, we are currently in the final stages of preparing our final report, which we plan to submit shortly. We hope to accompany this report with a manuscript that has already been submitted to a high-impact international journal, *Frontiers in Marine Science*, entitled:

“Social equity and economic distribution in community-based conservation strategies: The case of a Fishing Refuge Zone in Mexico.”

This article builds directly upon the experiences, outcomes, and lessons learned through the project, and seeks to contribute to the broader global discussion on community-based conservation tools and equitable governance.

