

**IUCN - ORMACC 2017 Report on the implementation of WCC-2016-Res-017:  
“Actions to avert the extinction of the vaquita porpoise (*Phocoena sinus*)”**

**WCC-2016-Res-017, The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai‘i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:**

**1. REQUESTS** the Director General and the Species Survival Commission to provide, as far as possible, technical and scientific help to Mexico in order to prevent the vaquita’s extinction;

**2. URGES** the Mexican Government to:

a. make permanent the gillnet ban throughout the entire vaquita range;

b. expedite implementation of the Official Mexican Standard NOM-002-SAG/PESC-2013 and the use of small shrimp trawls as an alternative to gillnets throughout the Upper Gulf of California shrimp fishery;

c. increase funding for, and expedite research on, additional technologies and techniques for catching finfish to facilitate and hasten the implementation of gillnet alternatives in these fisheries and establish an international review panel to evaluate the design and implementation of this programme; and

d. review current compensation programmes to ensure full compensation to fishermen and communities supporting vaquita-safe alternatives;

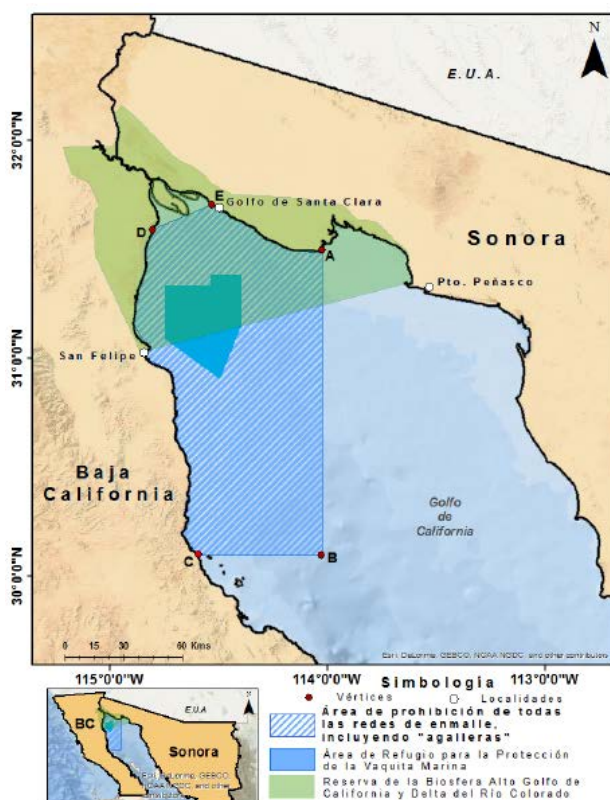
**3. CALLS ON** all organisations, states, sponsors, gear manufacturers and seafood importers to support the Mexican Government, provide technical and financial support for eliminating gillnets and promote economic alternatives and means of fishing that are vaquita safe; and

**4. URGES** all governments and competent international organisations, especially the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and INTERPOL, to assist any and all countries where totoaba products are found in markets or in transit, including Mexico, the United States and other countries, in combating the illegal international trade in totoaba products.

In response to **request 1** of the **WCC-2016-Res-017**, IUCN Secretariat and members maintained a constant follow up for the Government of Mexico to take the actions required by the urgency of the situation in term of technical and scientific support. An IUCN delegation (ORMACC-Mexico Office / SSC) participated to the “Trilateral meeting China/United States/Mexico on the combat against illegal traffic of Totoaba fish” hold in Baja California in August 2017. Partially due to this international pressure, the Government of Mexico promoted a coordinated effort between several government institutions, including SEMARNAT, SAGARPA, the navy and police forces, among others to stop the

illegal fishing of Totoaba and vaquita's by-catch in the upper Gulf of California. The figures presented referred to the confiscation of 694 Totoaba's swim bladders, 17 ships, 200 vessels, 995 fishing arts and the detention of 195 people during the last couple of years. IUCN local representatives are constantly monitoring progresses of Mexican Government. A total, effective and permanent ban of gillnets for all fisheries in the Upper Gulf of California was recommended as a necessary measure for reaching those results together with the introduction of new sustainable fishing gears for local fishermen. Progresses on the signing and implementation of the MOU among Mexico, USA and China to stop illegal trafficking of Totoaba swim bladders are also monitored.

In response to **call 2.a**, the Government of Mexico made permanent the gillnet ban throughout the entire vaquita range. In June 2017 the Government of Mexico published on the Official Gazette of the Federation the DOF:06/30/2017 **"AGREEMENT prohibiting gears, systems, methods, techniques and schedules for fishing activities with smaller vessels in marine waters of federal jurisdiction of the United Mexican States in the North of the Gulf of California, and establishing landing sites, as well as the use of monitoring systems for such vessels"** signed by the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, Rafael Pacchiano Alamán, and the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food, José Eduardo Calzada Rovirosa. The AGREEMENT establishes that gillnets, including those operated passively or asleep for fishing activities in the defined marine area (fig.1), are permanently prohibited. Such



fishing gear may not be transported in that marine area or by any other land or air means to, or between, the cities, towns, ejidos, communities and / or fishing grounds adjacent thereto. From the previous prohibition are exempted the nets used for the fishing of gulf corvina and sawfish, subject to fishing permits issued by the National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture. It is also prohibited to carry out fishing activities with smaller vessels, including recreational fishing, in the restricted area at night time between 21:00 and 5:00am daily. The agreement also establishes that vessels that have a concession or permit to carry out fishing activities in the area must have a monitoring system installed and functioning, with the technology and characteristics that are determined in the concessions or fishing permits and shall have as landing and

embarkation a specific site defined by the authority.

Regarding **call 2.b**, it should be remarked that Conapesca, the Mexican fishing authority, had granted shrimping permits for the use of drifting gillnets, valid for four years, from 2013 to 2017 despite its announcement that the chinchorro (drifting gillnet) would be phased out within year 2016. To date it is not known whether these permits were revoked. Moreover the recent increment in fishing permits authorized for the *corvina golfina* fishery in the upper Gulf of California may represent an additional threat to the survival of the Vaquita. Independent assessments produced by the civil society provide evidence that the fishing authority in Mexico has not acted in accordance with the recommendations of international scientific experts to protect the Vaquita, neither has it aligned itself with the efforts of the Mexican government towards this objective.

In response to **call 2.c**, multiple Mexican government agencies and some NGOs have been involved in trying to develop alternative fishing gear that can replace Gulf fishermen's reliance on gillnets. However, these efforts have had limited success, often stymied by a lack of community buy-in, slow response from government officials, or the inefficiency of the gear itself. The Government of Mexico should dedicate additional resources to the creation and implementation of alternative fishing development and training programs. To the greatest extent possible, it should attempt to include local fishermen, particularly those most affected by the gillnet ban, in the creation and execution of these programs.

In response to **call 2.d**, the Government of Mexico implemented a subsidy scheme to ensure full compensation to fishermen and communities. Nevertheless, several doubts have been raised regarding transparency and effectiveness in the distribution of compensations, with concentration of resources in the hands of few fishermen.

In response to **call 3**, it should be noticed the support by the Carlos Slim Foundation and the Leonardo di Caprio Foundation through a MOU signed with the Government of Mexico in June 2017, in order to promote sustainable development of fisheries methods and the establishment of an international advisory committee to develop an Action Plan for the Upper Gulf of California.

In response to **call 4**, the Government of Mexico promoted the "*Trilateral meeting China/United States/Mexico on the combat against illegal traffic of Totoaba fish*" hosted in Ensenada (Baja California) on the 22nd - 25th of August 2017 with the following objectives:

- Through a broad understanding of the relevant strategies, practices, experiences and specialized knowledge, establish an effective tri-national cooperation agenda in the fight against the illegal extraction, trafficking and demand of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*).
- Elaborate a trilateral strategy to combat Totoaba's illegal trafficking, and build a reciprocally beneficial partnership.
- Review the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), on trinational cooperation to combat Totoaba's illegal trafficking and associated demand; and formalize a

timeline to carry out the internal consultation and approval processes of each country.

During the meeting the three countries recognize that:

- Combined efforts are essential for the preservation of marine species, especially the Totoaba and Vaquita.
- The illegal capture, traffic and consumption of Totoaba is one of the threats that puts the Vaquita porpoise at risk of extinction.
- Cooperation among the three countries is needed to identify the networks and modus operandi of traffickers with the purpose of establishing actions to dismantle them.
- Points of contact for information exchange for investigative and operational purposes are needed for all three countries.
- It is important to share information on enforcement and legal frameworks to better understand how investigations and prosecutions are conducted and can be supported.

After the 2 days meeting the three governments agreed on the following **next steps** to be undertaken:

- I. To create a **trilateral enforcement contact group** to combat trafficking of Totoaba to strengthen cooperation and coordination of investigations, with terms of reference to be developed.
- II. To consider **formalizing international collaboration**, through the adoption of a specific instrument of cooperation.
- III. To establish **ongoing comprehensive training programs** for the identification of the species, traffic routes and modus operandi in the three countries.
- IV. To develop trilateral **education and public awareness strategies**.
- V. To carry out **joint international operations** against Totoaba trafficking, where appropriate.
- VI. To collaborate actively in various relevant **international agreements** to stop Totoaba trafficking.
- VII. To designate a **point of contact** to follow up on these agreements.
- VIII. These agreements should be implemented immediately as **a matter of urgency**.

The next steps defined by the representatives of governments of Mexico, China and the USA represent a starting point towards strengthening collaboration among the three countries, however a clear timeline to carry out the internal consultation and formalize this process within the framework of a signed MOU was not defined during the meeting.

Moreover any positive result that could emerge from a trilateral MOU will not be reached in the short term as the urgency of the situation of the Vaquita would require.



## Template: Back-to-Office Report (BTOR)

Email Title: BTOR – Trilateral meeting China/United States/Mexico on the combat against illegal traffic of Totoaba fish – 22nd Aug – 25th Aug

### IUCN Back-to-Office Report

1. In accordance with the STO below, dated [N/A], I visited Ensenada, Mexico between 22nd Aug – 25th Aug.

The main purpose of this trip was to: Participating, as part of UNESCO's delegation, to the "Trilateral meeting China/United States/Mexico on the combat against illegal traffic of Totoaba fish".

Main objectives of the meeting were:

- Through a broad understanding of the relevant strategies, practices, experiences and specialized knowledge, establish an effective tri-national cooperation agenda in the fight against the illegal extraction, trafficking and demand of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*).
- Elaborate a trilateral strategy to combat Totoaba's illegal trafficking, and build a reciprocally beneficial partnership.
- Review the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), on trinational cooperation to combat Totoaba's illegal trafficking and associated demand; and formalize a timeline to carry out the internal consultation and approval processes of each country.

### 2. Summary of Results:

The IUCN delegation was formed by Silvio Simonit, Operations Coordinator of IUCN Office in Mexico, and Meike Scheidat, member of IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), as part of UNESCO's delegation headed by Fanny Douvère, Coordinator of the Marine Programme at the World Heritage Centre.

During the meeting several interventions defined the root causes of the problem and described the measures currently deployed to stop the illegal fishing and trafficking of Totoaba fish and reduce its impact on the Vaquita marina. The interventions can be summarized as follows:

- Totoaba is a Mexican endemic fish that has been facing threats including illegal fishing, trafficking and consumption for a long period of time.
- Combating illegal fishing and trafficking will enhance both conservation of Totoaba and Vaquita.
- Totoaba trafficking is carried out through several routes, including across the U.S./Mexico border to Asia.
- It is necessary to increase the training of Customs Officials, who are the first responders to prevent trafficking. They should have the necessary tools to identify this species.
- Crossborder collaboration has already resulted in the apprehension of traffickers and confiscation of Totoaba swim bladders.
- Cooperation among the three countries is needed, from the supply source, transportation route, and to the ultimate consumer market.
- The Chinese Government presented efforts to amend its laws in order to conserve wildlife and the measures that have been taken to avoid the trafficking and illegal consumption of wildlife species.

- China presented its work to carry out operations on the inspection of the key markets, enhance capacity building of law enforcement and raise awareness of this internationally protected endangered species and its illegal consumption, and the consequences for those who may traffic or illegally consume such species.
- The United States presented its efforts as a transit nation to combat this illegal trade.
- Cooperation between the Governments of the USA and China to identify and stop the traffic of endangered or protected species such as the Totoaba and the Sea Turtles through the U.S./China. Strategic and Economic Dialogue was also noted.
- The Mexican Government presented actions within the Comprehensive Strategy for the protection of the Vaquita porpoise and the framework of the Comprehensive Attention Program of the Upper Gulf of California were presented as are the permanent fishing ban in the area of the Upper Gulf of California, the change of national laws to increase the penalties to anyone who may capture or transport Totoaba or any protected wildlife species.
- The Vaquita CPR program was presented by Mexico, with the purpose of placing Vaquitas in captive breeding facilities.

The government of Mexico strongly emphasized the amount of effort that has been deployed during the last couple of years to stop the illegal fishing of Totoaba in the upper Gulf of California through a coordinated effort between several government institutions, including SEMARNAT, SAGARPA, the navy and police forces, among others. The figures presented referred to the confiscation of 694 Totoaba swin bladders, 17 ships, 200 vessels, 995 fishing arts and the detention of 195 people. However no data were presented on the number of still existing illegal gillnets in order to measure the scale of the impact generated by these efforts. In fact the numbers of Vaquita are still decreasing and more evidence on the current status of Totoaba fish stocks is needed. Dr. Luis Enrique Paredes of University of Baja California, attending the meeting and among the scientists responsible for the government-supported program of Totoaba restocking, told us that their genetic-based analysis on Totoaba population status indicates a population size of nearly 40,000 mature Totoabas. Considering a 1 to 1 sex ratio, there are 20,000 breeding females with an individual spawn of nearly 7.5 million eggs per year. Even using high early-stage mortality rates, the simulated population trend suggests a steady stock. Their conclusion is that Totoaba is not critically endangered, but vulnerable in terms of their short-time and space breeding aggregations in the upper Gulf of California.

We were also walked around the facilities under construction at the University of Baja California in Ensenada under a 5 million USD investment program for hatching and restocking of Totoaba (70% funded by Federal government SEMARNAT/SAGARPA; 15% State government; 15% University Baja California). The facilities would be operative by next year allowing to producing and releasing 1 million juvenile Totoaba fish per year with a potential for up to 7-10 million per year. This is in line with future plans by the government towards legalizing controlled Totoaba fishery and promoting private investments in aquaculture. This matter would be negotiated and discussed within the context of CITES and may be on the agenda for the next year.

The three countries agreed in principle on the following:

- Combined efforts are essential for the preservation of marine species, especially the Totoaba and Vaquita.
- The illegal capture, traffic and consumption of Totoaba is one of the threats that puts the Vaquita porpoise at risk of extinction.
- Cooperation among the three countries is needed to identify the networks and modus operandi of traffickers with the purpose of establishing actions to dismantle them.
- Points of contact for information exchange for investigative and operational purposes are needed for all three countries.
- It is important to share information on enforcement and legal frameworks to better understand how investigations and prosecutions are conducted and can be supported.

### **3. The key outcomes of the trip and next steps are summarized below:**

After the 2 days meeting the three governments agreed on the following next steps to be undertaken:

- I. To create a trilateral enforcement contact group to combat trafficking of Totoaba to strengthen cooperation and coordination of investigations, with terms of reference to be developed.
- II. To consider formalizing international collaboration, through the adoption of a specific instrument of cooperation.
- III. To establish ongoing comprehensive training programs for the identification of the species, traffic routes and modus operandi in the three countries.
- IV. To develop trilateral education and public awareness strategies.
- V. To carry out joint international operations against Totoaba trafficking, where appropriate.
- VI. To collaborate actively in various relevant international agreements to stop Totoaba trafficking.
- VII. To designate a point of contact to follow up on these agreements.
- VIII. These agreements should be implemented immediately as a matter of urgency.

The next steps defined by the representatives of governments of Mexico, China and the USA represent a starting point towards strengthening collaboration among the three countries, however a clear timeline to carry out the internal consultation and formalize this process within the framework of a signed MOU was not defined during the meeting. Moreover any positive result that could emerge from a trilateral MOU will not be reached in the short term as the urgency of the situation of the Vaquita would require.

The general impression is that current efforts in protecting the Vaquita from the extensive use of gillnets may not be sustained in the long run. Once the Totoaba restocking program would be in place and fully operative, potential increase in Totoaba fish stock may detonate a fishery which would require higher effort for controlling the illegal use of gillnets. Moreover, government's willingness in keeping such amount of effort could decrease considering that remaining Vaquitas may have been captured and kept in semi-captivity within the defined areas and that political pressure exerted by local fishermen and other influential groups could be stronger in 2018 during presidential elections. Under this scenario we could face the risk of gillnets being allowed again in certain areas of the upper gulf or during a certain period of the year as for the case for the corvina fishery. As result the Vaquitas, even if their numbers would increase in captivity, could not be released again in their natural habitat.

The recommendation is maintaining the international pressure on the Mexican Government and judging the situation on the base of concrete results (of future chances for its most representative specie to survive in its natural habitat) and not only according to the late efforts shown. A total, effective and permanent ban of gillnets for all fisheries in the Upper Gulf of California is a necessary measure for reaching those results together with the introduction of new sustainable fishing gears for local fishermen. Progresses on the signing and implementation of the MOU among the three countries should be also monitored.





Totoaba hatching facilities under construction at the University of Baja California in Ensenada.





**TRILATERAL MEETING CHINA / UNITED STATES / MEXICO ON  
THE COMBAT AGAINST ILLEGAL TRAFFIC OF TOTOABA FISH  
(*Totoaba macdonaldi*)**

**REUNIÓN TRILATERAL CHINA / ESTADOS UNIDOS / MÉXICO SOBRE COMBATE AL  
TRÁFICO Y DEMANDA DE PEZ TOTOABA (*Totoaba macdonaldi*)**

**DATE:** 23 – 25 August 2017

**PLACE:** Ensenada, Baja California, México  
Second Naval Region  
Boulevard Costero y Agustín Sangines s/n, Playa Ensenada, 22800 Ensenada, B.C.

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## OBJECTIVES

- Through a broad understanding of the relevant strategies, practices, experiences and specialized knowledge, establish an effective tri-national cooperation agenda in the fight against the illegal extraction, trafficking and demand of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*).
- Elaborate a trilateral strategy to combat Totoaba's illegal trafficking, and build a reciprocally beneficial partnership.
- Review the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), on trinational cooperation to combat Totoaba's illegal trafficking and associated demand; and formalize a timeline to carry out the internal consultation and approval processes of each country.

## WORKING PROGRAM

Wednesday, 23 August 2017

Time	Theme
08:00-09:30	Travel from Tijuana to Ensenada. (PROFEPA will provide the transportation)
09:30-10:00	Registration of participants and reception, Naval Zone 2 Ensenada
10:00-10:15	Welcoming remarks by Mexico as host country, USA, China and the CITES Secretariat (Mr. Tom De Meulenaer)
	Introduction of participants
10:15-11:00	Introduction to the ongoing efforts on the recovery the vaquita
	<b>SEMARNAT</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conservation status of vaquita's and totoaba 's populations</li> <li>b) Comprehensive Strategy for the Recovery of the vaquita</li> <li>c) Review results from the program to remove derelict and illegal fishing gear from the Gulf of California.</li> </ul>
	<b>CONAPESCA</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) Permanent Ban on Gillnet Fishing: Revision of its elements</li> </ul>
11:00-11:50	Overview of actions led by Mexico to combat Totoaba's illegal trafficking
	<b>SEMAR, PROFEPA</b>
	Comprehensive Attention Programme for the Upper Gulf of California
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Legal framework for the preservation totoaba</li> <li>b) Operational strategy to prevent the illegal fishing for and trafficking in totoaba swim bladders</li> <li>c) Overview of actions and results</li> <li>d) Next steps</li> </ul>
11:50 -12:00	Break
12:00-14:00	<p>Strategy on the detection and interception of illegal shipments of Totoaba bladder--enforcement information and actions developed in compliance with CITES Decision 17.146, (All)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each delegation will provide information related to the interception of illegal shipments of totoaba specimens in trade (including totoaba seizures and seizures in trafficking, stockpiling and illicit trade);10 minutes per delegation)</li> <li>• Each delegation will provide information on ongoing research related to the illegal specimens present in the international trade (whether online or retail markets, or others); (10 minutes per delegation)</li> <li>• Each delegation will provide information on detentions, arrests,</li> </ul>

prosecution of individuals associated with totoaba product illegal trafficking and identified modus operandi (10 minutes per delegation)

- Identification of coordinated trilateral actions on detection and interception of illegal shipments (Discussion all—30 minutes)

**14:00- 15:00**

Lunch (Ensenada Navy)

**15:15- 17:00**

Strategy to halt the demand in countries of distribution, transit and consumption of totoaba (All)

- Identification of specimens and products of totoaba (Mexico)
- Discussion on the possible collaboration of Non-Governmental Organizations in campaigns against the demand of totoaba
- Capacity building on the identification of totoaba and the detection of illegal shipments

**19:00**

**Dinner hosted by the ministries of environment and navy of Mexico**

#### **Thursday, 24 August 2017**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<b>09:00 – 12:00</b>	<p>Presentations of actions taken and future plans for action by each country to combat totoaba trafficking in fulfillment of CITES Decisions 17.147 to 17.151, which could include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Activities to raise awareness on the totoaba and vaquita's critical situation;</li> <li>2. Actions to halt the supply and demand chains of illegal specimens of totoaba;</li> <li>3. Activities to increase law enforcement measures to prevent and address the illegal fishing and trade of totoaba;</li> <li>4. Support for efforts to stop the illegal fishing and trafficking of totoaba;</li> <li>5. Identification of activities that benefit the recovery of totoaba.</li> </ol>
<b>12:00 – 14:00</b>	<p>Summary of agreements to build a trilateral strategy against Totoaba illegal trafficking Review and approbation of memorandum of understanding (MOU) and critical path for your subscription  <b>(It is proposed that an informal session review the scope of the proposal)</b></p>
<b>14:00- 15:30</b>	Lunch (Ensenada Navy)
<b>15:30 – 17:00</b>	Meeting Tri-national CITES authorities on COP17 Decisions on Totoaba

Next steps within CITES framework (document for the Standing Committee 69, deadline September 28th)

**Friday, 25 August 2017**

Time	Theme
09:00 – 10:00	Travel from Ensenada- San Felipe (Navy's airplane)
12:00 – 14:00	Maritime excursion <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Natural Protected Zone: Upper Gulf of California Biosphere Reserve</li><li>Vaquita refuge area</li><li>Demonstration of "Gillnet Extraction and Destruction Programme"</li></ul>
14:00- 15:30	Lunch (San Felipe Navy)
15:30 – 17:00	Transfer airport - hotel Mexico City (PROFEPA will provide the transportation)



# MEETING OF THE UNESCO - WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE ISLANDS AND PROTECTED AREAS OF THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA

PARIS, FRANCE, JUNE 26 - 27, 2017





# PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND THE “VAQUITA” PORPOISE

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# ISLANDS & PROTECTED AREAS OF THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA

Property composed by 12 natural protected areas that includes 244 islands and the entire coastal zone of the Gulf of California along its two sides. The total area covers 668,558 hectares



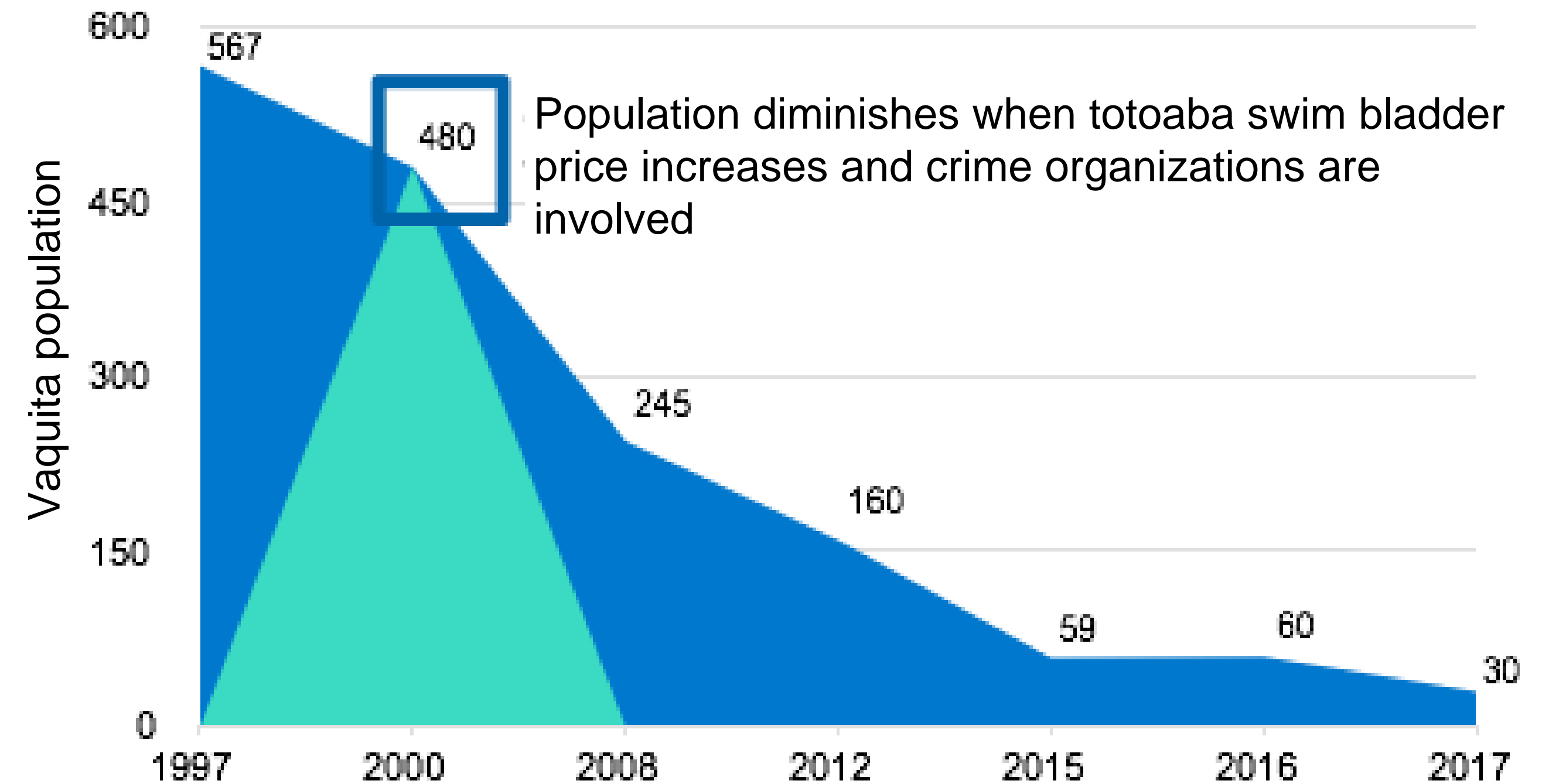
**The inscription on WH List is based on the following criteria:**

- (vii) Represents a natural phenomena or areas of an exceptional beauty.
- (ix) Representative example of ecological and biological processes in course of evolution.
- (x) Contains the most representative natural habitat and it is the most important for the conservation in situ of the biological diversity.

**Mexico undertakes significant efforts** for the conservation of this **property**, that host a great diversity of wildlife species: more than **4,900 invertebrates**, **911 species of fish (from which 86 are endemic)** and **36 marine mammals**, **one of those and also endemic is the Vaquita.**

**Vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*) population has diminished due to four main factors:**

1. Habitat reduction.
2. Bycatch on gillnets.
3. Totoaba poaching.
4. Transnational illegal wildlife trade.



- 1997, 2008, 2012, 2015 and 2016 are math-modelling estimations
- 2016 is estimation from field data collection



## DRAFT DECISION 41 COM / 7B.15

The Reactive Mission confirmed that other attributes of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) remain in good condition; however, it considers that the risk of imminent of the vaquita, endemic to the Upper Gulf, represents an ascertained danger to the OUV of the property according to paragraph **180 a) i) of the Operational Guidelines**.





## MISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

**R1. Gillnets Ban**

**R2. Development of Sustainable Fishing Gear**

**R3. Law Enforcement Strengthening**

**R4. International Cooperation**

**R5. Community Programs**

**R6. Regulated Sustainable Catches**



## R1. Gillnets Ban

By the end of June/2017, the Mexican Government will publish a decree which:

*Permanently bans gillnets in vaquita refuge.*

*Prohibits night fishing.*

*Provides for mandatory remote geo-position monitoring system for all the small vessels in the vaquita area (artisanal boats).*

*Assures reduced landing ports of small vessels to increase control.*

*Introduces mandatory reporting fishing gear loss and participation in its recovery.*



## **R2. Development of Sustainable Fishing Gear**

## DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE FISHING GEAR

1. INAPESCA has developed a program for an alternative, selective fishing gear that does not cause entanglement of vaquita.
2. In addition to being safe for the vaquita, it is also an economic alternative for local communities.
3. CONAPESCA has initiated a training program for fishing arts directed to the communities in the area.



## Sustainable development of fisheries methods

### 1. Suripera (trawling net) for Shrimp.

Highly selective and efficient, wind and tide-operated, minimal fuel consumption. Zero effect to vaquitas.



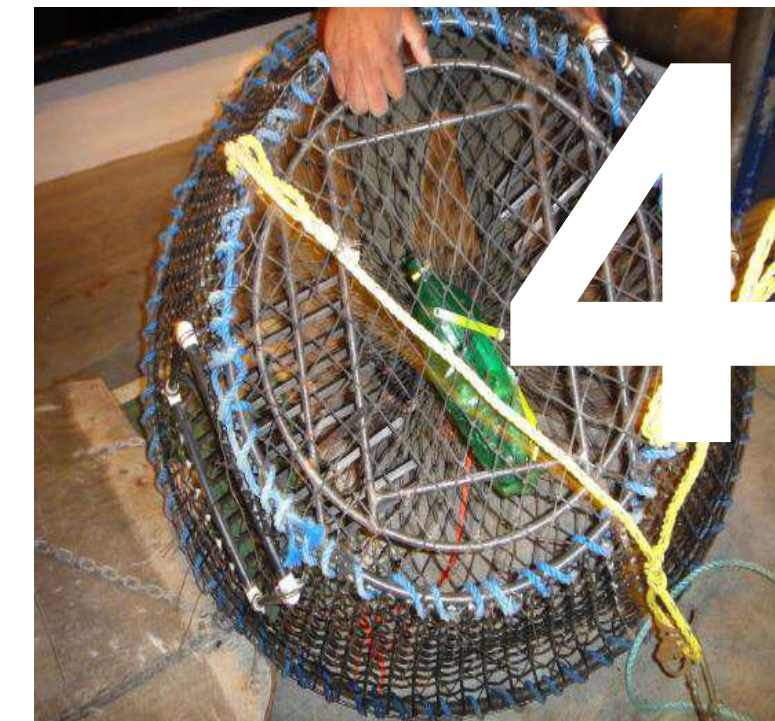
### 2. Collapsible tramp (2 X 7 X 7 m) with nylon 0.55 mm string.

Very selective for specific target species. Zero effect to vaquitas.



### 3. Solid tramp

Very selective for fish. Zero effects to vaquitas.



### 4. Trunc cone for crustaceans and fishes

Highly selective and efficient. Zero effects to vaquitas.



## Totoaba Sportfishing

- Currently the evaluation of the population of totoaba is carried out by encouraging preliminary results with the possibility of opening the totoaba to the sport fishing, generating an option of productive conversion to the commercial fishermen.



## Advantages

- Local communities take advantage of productive reconversion
- Discourages totoaba illegal capture
- Provides economic spill up to one billion pesos
- Strengthens the zone tourist vocation
- Encourages consolidated surveillance
- Increases the chances of recovering the Vaquita population



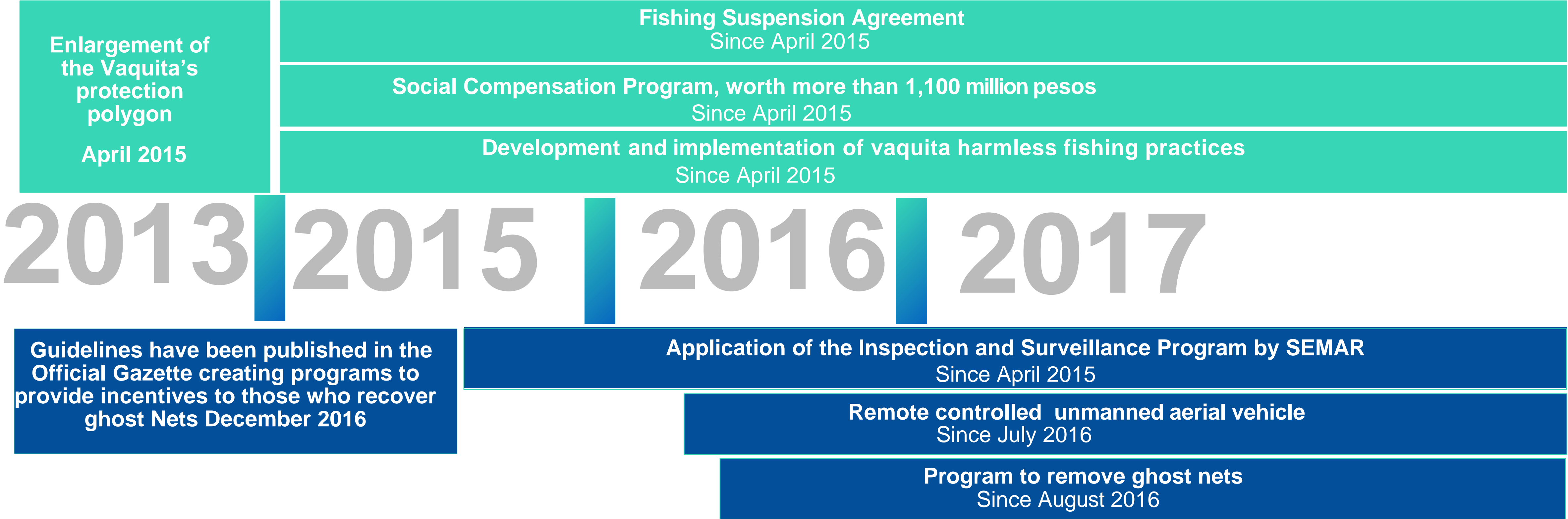
## **Sustainable Development of Fisheries Methods**

The MOU signed with the Slim and DiCaprio Foundations includes the commitment to work with local communities promoting sustainable fishing practices, replacing gillnets with vaquita-friendly o fishing gear; feasibility evaluation of a temporary sanctuary for the vaquitas and the establishment of an international advisory committee to develop an Action Plan for the region.

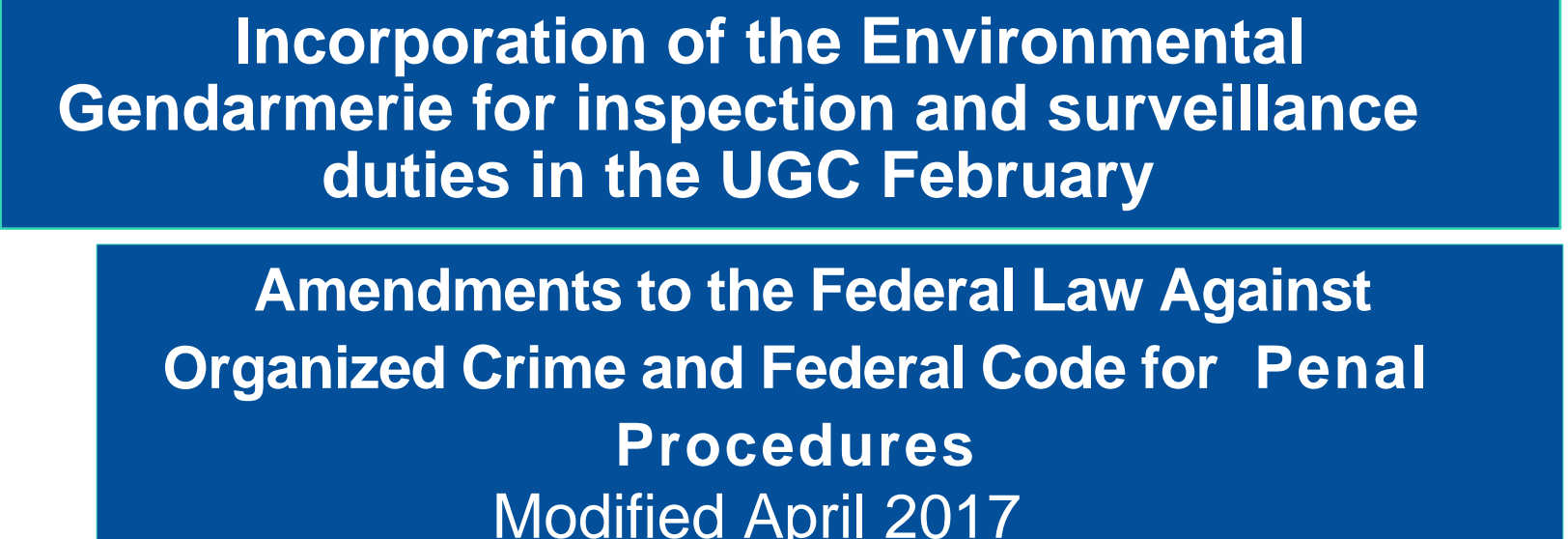


## R3. Regulatory Compliance

Actions undertaken for small scale fishing boats (legal)

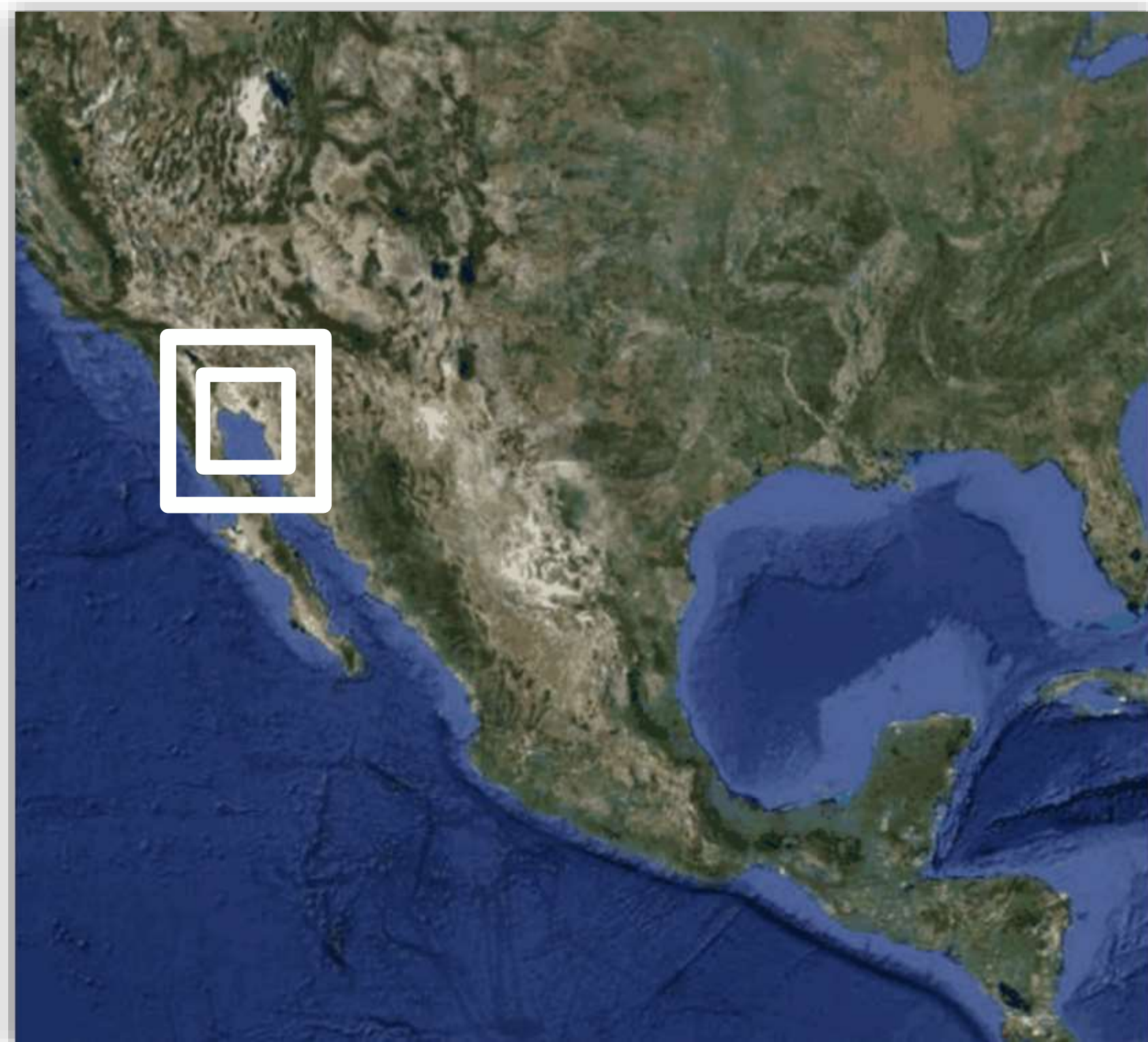


Actions taken against illegal fishing





## Comprehensive Program for the Upper Gulf of California



The operation of the program is under the Interinstitutional Operative Center (COI) based in San Felipe, and coordinated and directed by the Navy (SEMAR) through the Naval Sector Commander in that area.



With the participation of multiple agencies:



## SEMAR actions and deployments in support of the program

- 6 “Defender Speedboats”
- 4 Interceptor Boats
- A Ocean Patrol wht on-board helicopter in a Permanent Surveillance Program
- 300 marines in the UGC, stationed permanently.
- Operation of a Unmanned Aerial Surveillance System
- Participation of the “Río Tecolutla” the Mexican Oceanographic Research Ship.
- Construction and establishment of the Naval Search, Rescue and Marine Surveillance Station in San Felipe



## R4. International Cooperation





INTERNATIONAL  
WHALING COMMISSION



SRE  
SECRETARÍA DE  
RELACIONES EXTERIORES



## **International Whaling Commission, 66th Meeting, Slovenia, October, 2016**

"Resolution on the Critically Endangered Vaquita" IWC / 66/20, was adopted.

## **IUCN World Conservation Congress, Hawaii, September, 2016.**

The establishment of a permanent ban on the use of gillnets and driftnet that threatened the Vaquita Marina in the Upper Gulf of California was adopted as a global priority.

## **Ministry of Foreign Affairs México**

Diplomatic Contact with China, Hong Kong, other Asia countries and USA related with totoaba illegal trade.

## **Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries**

Secretary Calzada Roviroso visited in December 2015, the Ministry of Agriculture Han Changfu and the Ministry of AQSIQ, Zhi Shuping, of the Chinese government, addressing the illegal traffic of totoaba.



## CITES COP-17, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2016

- Attending to the implementation of the CITES, Mexico, the United States of America and China are committed to collaborating towards totoaba conservation, including by eliminating supply of and demand for totoaba, and increasing law enforcement measures to prevent and address illegal fishing and trade.
- CITES Standing Committee shall evaluate the status of totoaba and vaquita and ongoing conservation efforts at its 69th meeting in Geneva (Nov-Dec, 2017) and make recommendations for any additional actions.
- Guangzhou, China on December, 2016. sharing-information meeting with 100 Chinese officials in the areas of Customs and Trade to combat totoaba poaching.
- Next China-USA-Mexico meeting : August 23 to 25, 2017. Objective: Share strategies, practices, experiences and knowledge to stop illegal fishing and illegal trade of totoaba swim bladders.





## R5. Community Programs

To avoid an economic impact to fishermen, families and the communities of the Upper Gulf of California:

- Santa Clara
- San Felipe

A compensation was granted.

There was an expenditure of more than \$1,055 million pesos (\$59 million dollars), distributed to 8,000 fishermen, fishing permit owners and workers of the whole associated productive chain.

	2015	2016	2017
<b>Compensation</b>	<b>338.2 MP</b>	<b>501.3 MP</b>	<b>216.3 MP</b>
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	<b>2,571</b>	<b>2,673</b>	<b>2,658</b>

## **R6. Regulated Sustainable Catches**

### **Fisheries of the Gulf of California are regulated:**

1. They require, as established by the law, concessions or permits granted by the competent authority.
2. Fisheries are included in the National Fishery Chart, most of them with specific technical requirements and management specifications.
3. Fisheries such as shrimp, Northern Gulf corvine, crabs, sharks and rays are regulated by official standards and subject to management measures such as closure, minimum size temporary prohibitions, etc. In the case of the Gulf corvine, individual quotas are established.
4. The catches must be declared to the competent authorities at arrival.
5. There are inspection and surveillance programs that are applied to those fisheries, some of which even include the collaboration and in some cases active participations of fishermen.
6. The actions being undertaken within the scope of the previous recommendations are further strengthening by the implementation and enforcement of the aforementioned regulations.



# CONSERVATION PROGRAM OF THE VAQUITA IN A SPECIAL SANCTUARY





# SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF WILDLIFE RECOVERY IN MEXICO

## Mexican Wolf

- In the 1970's the last 7 wolves were captured.
- After 30 years of a breeding program there was a re-introduction to the natural habitat.



**Liberación**  
de 7 ejemplares de  
**lobo gris mexicano**  
(*Canis lupus baileyi*)

**Antes:**  
vivían en un recinto de  
**1.7 hectáreas**  
en Sonora

**Ahora:**  
superficie de  
**6 mil 070.81 hectáreas**  
en Chihuahua

**Familia consiste de:**

- 2 padres**  
Reyénari (sol)  
Mechá (luna)
- 5 crías de cinco meses**  
(1 macho y 4 hembras)  
Iká (viento)  
Ba'wí (agua)  
Se'wa (flor)  
Kiparé (nieve)  
Seporí (estrella)

\* Los ejemplares cuentan con un **collar de monitoreo**  
\*\* La población actual en vida libre en México asciende a **28 (13 machos y 15 hembras)**

SEMARNAT  
CONANP

- In 2016, 7 wolves were set free in Chihuahua. That is the 9th group recruited in Mexico.
- Since 2011, there is a total of 28 animals, 13 males and 15 females.



## California Condor

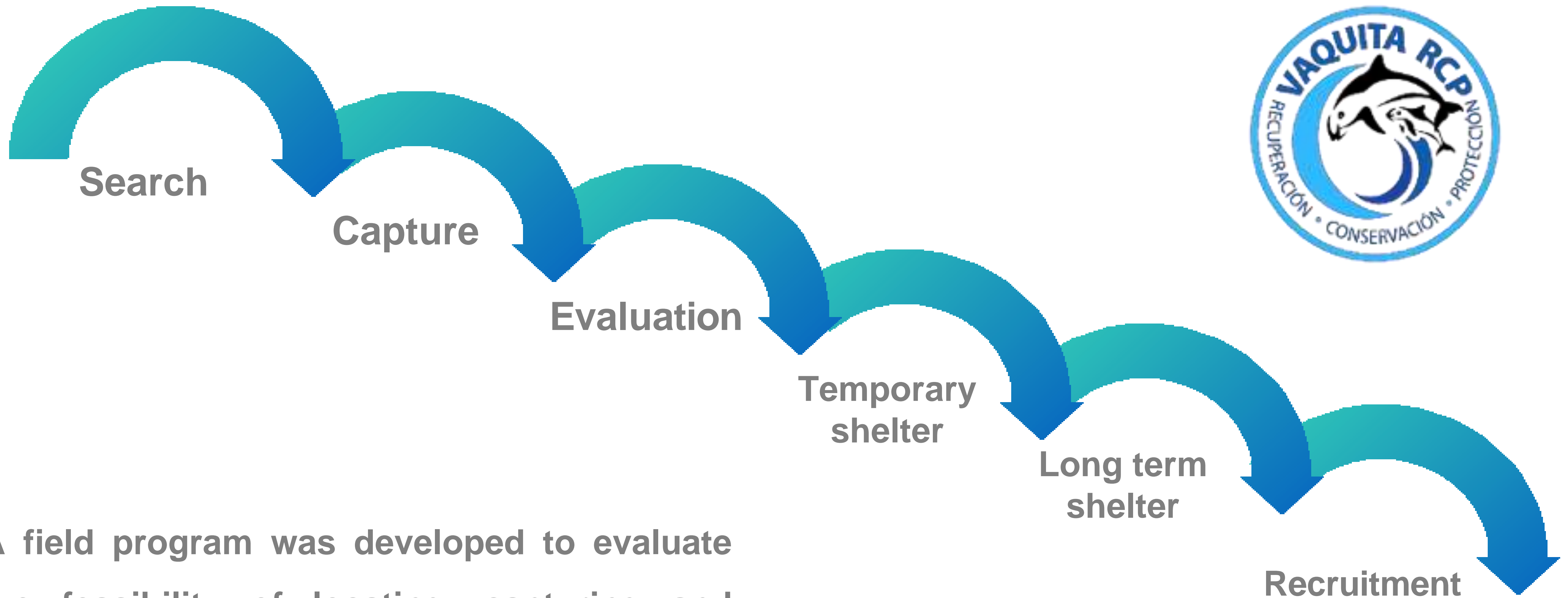


- Species considered extinct in Mexico for over 60 years.
  - 6 condors reintroduced in the Sierra de San Pedro Martir, Baja California, in 1999.
  - Up to date, there are 35 free condor individuals with 6 juveniles born in wildlife conditions.
- 
- A breeding program in Chapultepec Zoo launched in 2014.
  - Binational efforts from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and CONANP MOU.





## STEPS FOR THE VAQUITA CARE



A field program was developed to evaluate the feasibility of locating, capturing and housing vaquitas.

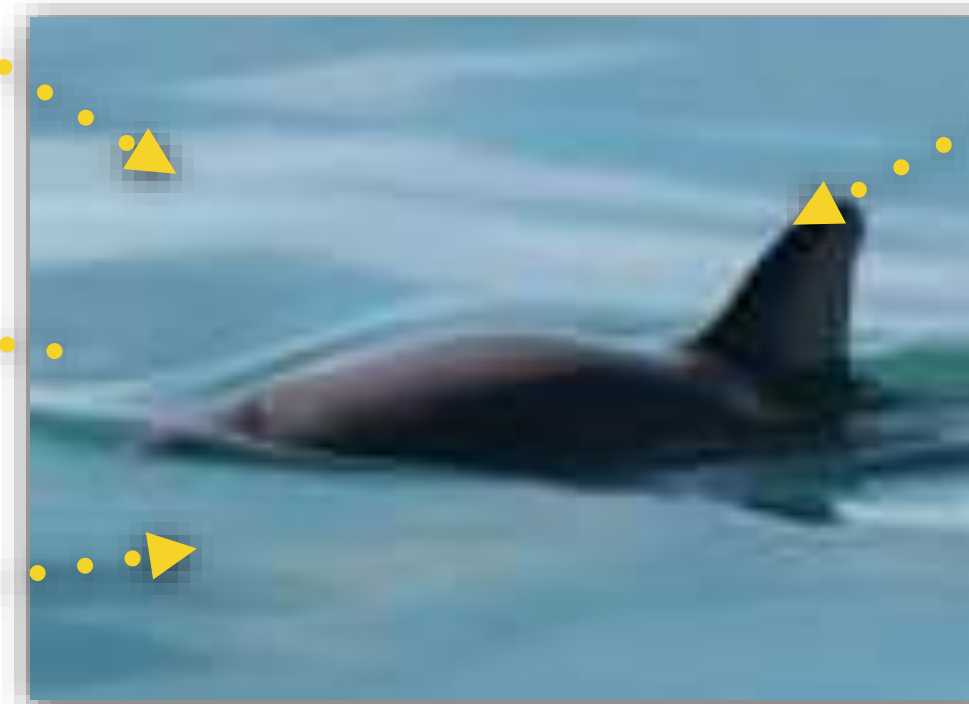
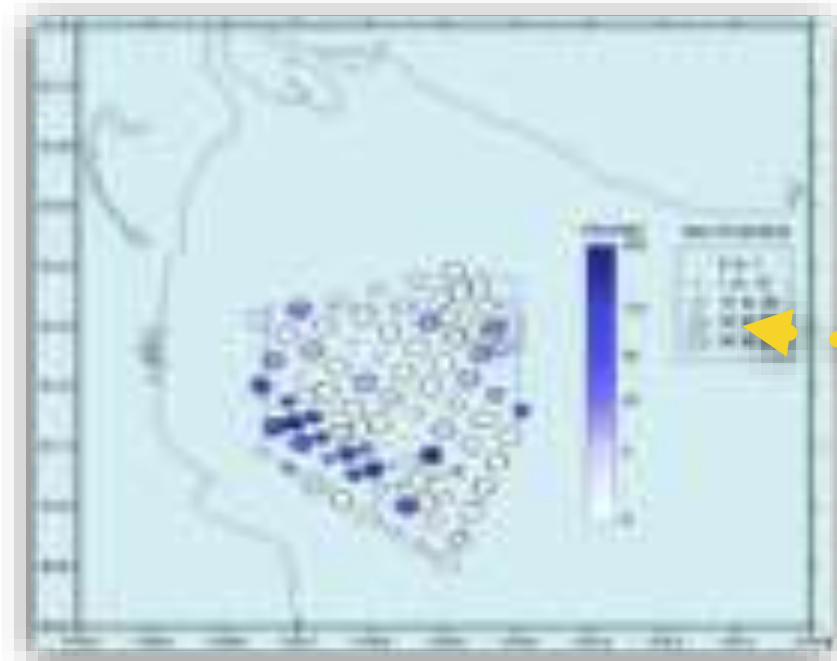


# METHODS FOR SEARCHING AND CATCHING

**Visual**

**Acoustic**

**Trained dolphins**



- 11 experienced observers in searching Vaquitas
- 3 boats for the tracking
- 3 experts in vaquita acoustic
- Trained dolphins by the U.S. Navy, for the vaquita's tracking



## The design of shelter includes:

1. Hosting for vaquitas immediately after their capture.
2. Short-term shelter in San Felipe Bay.
3. Coastal Sanctuary in San Felipe, medium to long term.





- Law Enforcement Agencies will continue their work permanently.
- Efforts for the removal of ghost nets will be strengthened
- Tourism and mariculture alternatives production will be developed as productive options.





# INITIATIVE FOR THE PRODUCTIVE RECONVERSION

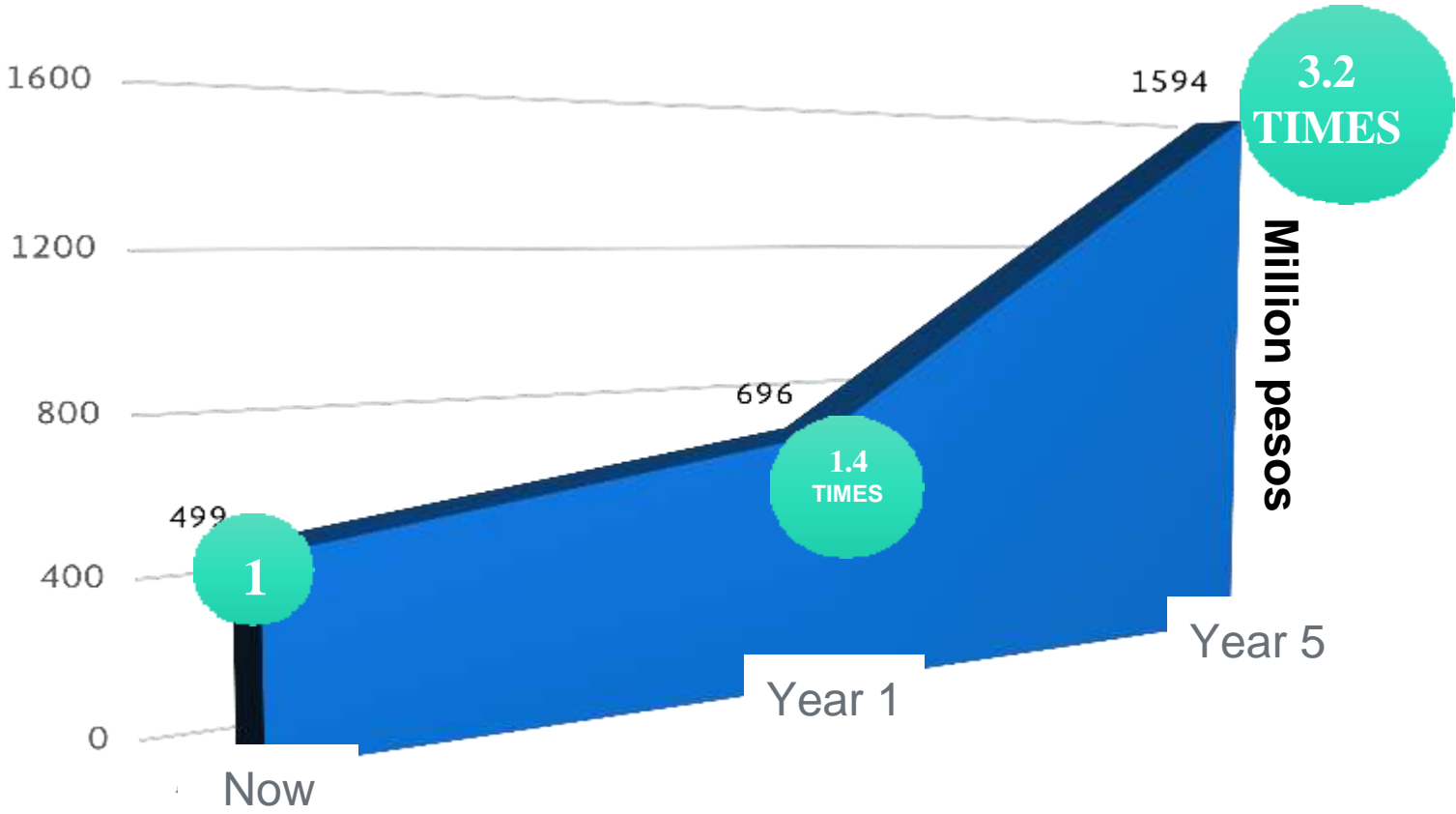


# PRODUCTIVE RECONVERSION IN THE UPPER GULF OF CALIFORNIA

PRODUCTION OPTION	INVESTMENT MILLION PESOS	INCOME YEAR 1 (MILLION PESOS)	INCOME YEAR 5 (MILLION PESOS)
I. Responsible fisheries			
I.1 Totoaba Sport Fishing	110	308	409
I.2 Responsible fisheries (Shrimp, Chano fish, Sawfish, Corvine)	132	106	326
I.3 Totoaba trade	0.4	238	350
II. Aquaculture			
II.1 Shrimp	140		94.8
II.2 Totoaba	53.8		80
II.3 Clams	6.6		37.55
II.4 Algae	18.94		8.79
II.5 Oysters	5.8		2.4
III. Use of flora and fauna			
III.1 Cactii farming		1.9	1.9
III.2 Deer hunting		1.8	1.8
IV. Tourism			
IV.1 Accomodation infraestructure	37	26	116
IV.2 Trailer Parks	17	6	75
IV.3 Adventure Tourism	12	1	12
IV.4 Nature Tourism and wildlife watching	12	2	17
IV.5 Astronomy Tourism	20	2	30
IV.6 Natural Atractions: Giant Cactii Valley and Sonoran Desert	43	3	32
	608.54	695.7	1,594.24

The current value of fisheries production in the Upper Gulf area is nearly **500 Million Pesos (26 million Dollars)** per year.

With the implementation of these productive options, in a year it would increase the value **1.4 times the first year and 3 times in 5 years** the increase would be little more than three times the current value.

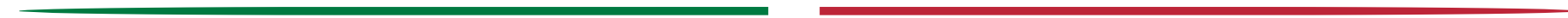


**The goal is to continue supporting the fishermen families in the zone.**





## MEXICO REQUEST





## Considering:

- (That) the Property includes 12 Natural Protected Areas. With an extension of 668,558 hectares that host more than 5,847 marine and terrestrial species, **Vaquita is just one of them.**
- That Mexican Government is undertaking significant and extraordinary efforts for the conservation of the property and the OUV leading to its inscription.
- That regarding the particular situation of Vaquita, **Mexico has developed unprecedented actions to assure the vaquita's recovery.**

## Mexican Government requests to the WHC:

1. **A new Reactive Monitoring Mission to be conducted at the end of this year or the beginning of 2018, in order to evaluate the impact of the actions that are currently being implemented to fully address the recommendations of the Report and the challenges that affect the survival of the “Vaquita”.**
2. **To postpone the decision presented in the Report until the results of the new Reactive Monitoring Mission are considered at the 42nd Session of the World Heritage Committee.**



**MÉXICO**  
GOBIERNO DE LA REPÚBLICA