



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2023/092

Geneva, 24 July 2023

CONCERNING:

MEXICO

Compliance action plan on Totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*)

1. The present Notification is published at the request of Mexico, to inform Parties that Mexico's redacted Compliance action plan on Totoaba is available as an Annex to this Notification.



“COMPLIANCE ACTION PLAN OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT ILLEGAL FISHING AND TRADE OF TOTOABA, ITS PARTS AND/OR DERIVATIVES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE VAQUITA”

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

The Mexican Government, by constitutional mandate, promotes comprehensive and sustainable national development; to this end, it defines planning and development objectives that are equitable, inclusive, comprehensive and sustainable regarding the protection of the environment and wise use of natural resources. To strengthen compliance with these objectives, Mexico has signed and ratified international conventions for the care of the environment and the protection of its biodiversity.

One of these international conventions is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), whose purpose is to prevent international trade of specimens of endangered wild animals and plants from posing a risk to their survival or causing collateral damages to other wild species. Under these acquired commitments, CITES has urged Mexico to remove all gillnets from the historic range of *Phocoena sinus* (hereafter, ‘the vaquita’) in the Upper Gulf of California (UGC); to ban all fishing and the transit of vessels in the area with the highest current concentration of the species; and to uphold the protection of the Vaquita Refuge Area, eradicating at the same time illegal international trade in totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*), its parts and/or derivatives.

In particular, the CITES Standing Committee at its 75th meeting, held on 13 November 2022 in Panama City, requested Mexico to prepare an ‘Action Plan’ to effectively prevent illegal totoaba fishers and unauthorized vessels from entering the Vaquita Refuge and Zero Tolerance areas and maintain them as gillnet-free zones. Moreover, to ensure the appropriateness of this Plan, the CITES Secretariat was asked to review and assess the Action Plan and monitor and consider its progress and, in the absence of sufficient progress, implement compliance measures in accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP18).

In terms of what was requested, the Action Plan had to fulfil the following actions:

- a) Prevent fishers from using gillnets in the Refuge Area for the Protection of the Vaquita or Vaquita Refuge Area (VRA) and vessels from entering the Zero Tolerance Area (Zo); maintain these areas completely gillnet-free by implementing a strict zero-tolerance policy, ensuring surveillance on a full-time basis, and imposing strict penalties, including the seizure of both vessels and unauthorized fishing gear combined with administrative or criminal penalties as applicable;
- b) Pursue the implementation of all aspects of the Regulatory Agreement, which includes the following:
 - i) maintain the presence of authorities with legal powers of seizure and arrest, effectively prevent fishers from fishing with prohibited gear in the Vaquita Refuge Area and from entering the Zero Tolerance Area, and take strict action against fishers that use any sites other than the authorized sites for departure and arrival of vessels;
 - ii) effectively implement the gillnet ban; and
 - iii) prevent, detect and penalize any manufacturing, possession, selling and transportation of gillnets in the marine area and surrounding areas as determined in the Regulatory Agreement, to ensure the disruption and neutralization of any illegal activity.



- c) investigate the organized crime groups involved in illegal fishing and trafficking of totoaba, and act against the structure and modus operandi of these groups, to further neutralize them;
- d) secure resources to ensure uninterrupted gillnet removal to maintain the Vaquita Refuge and Zero Tolerance areas net-free, and protect the teams of people who remove and destroy confiscated nets;
- e) support the development and use of selective fishing gear, and consider seeking funding for these activities from suitable sources; and
- f) combine punitive approaches with alternative solutions: transition to vaquita-friendly fishing gear;
- g) submit to the CITES Secretariat a comprehensive report on the implementation of the actions required and recommendations made, for submission to the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting, together with any recommendations it may have.

The Compliance Action Plan, which includes 7 lines of action and 34 targets, was prepared to comply with this recommendation, through the Intragovernmental Group for Sustainability in the Upper Gulf of California (GIS), composed of the ministries of the Environment, the Navy, Agriculture, Economy, Foreign Affairs, the Interior and the Treasury, as well as the National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INAPESCA), the National Commission for Aquaculture and Fisheries (CONAPESCA), the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (PROFEPA) and the National Commission on Natural Protected Areas (CONANP).

The Compliance Action Plan has been developed considering the above-mentioned decisions and recommendations directed to Mexico at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (COP19). It also includes actions which, although directed to other Parties, the CITES Secretariat or the Standing Committee, were analysed and assessed and considered appropriate to the national context.

It also refers to the agreements reached at the Meeting of Range, Transit and Consumer States of Totoaba, held in October 2021, and the significant task of consolidating the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group, which is not an exclusive responsibility of Mexico, but in which the country plays a key role in eliminating illegal trade of totoaba.

Finally, it is worth highlighting that the present Compliance Action Plan includes the specific actions to implement the Regulatory Agreement published in September 2020.

For all these reasons, this planning instrument should be read in its entirety including its seven lines of action and its annexes. It should be noted that the arrangement of targets under different lines of action is aimed at structuring the implementation processes and facilitate the planning, monitoring and follow-up of compliance with CITES instructions. However, the actions are interrelated and the Plan should be read as a whole.



LINE OF ACTION 1. MONITOR EFFECTIVE COMPLIANCE WITH REGARD TO AUTHORIZED DEPARTURE AND LANDING SITES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REGULATORY AGREEMENT

To strengthen actions implemented at sea and complement terrestrial patrols, Mexico has established surveillance measures with human and technological resources to verify effective compliance with rules on authorized departure and landing sites, in accordance with the Regulatory Agreement. Additionally, to keep control of departures and arrivals of fishing vessels, competent authorities in the UGC will assess the authorized departure and landing sites to confirm or modify each of them, considering involving the fishing communities of the UGC and state and municipal authorities.

CITES DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: SC75: DOC 7.5; COP19: 18.293 (REV. COP19) AND THE MEETING OF RANGE, TRANSIT AND CONSUMER STATES OF TOTOABA

Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
1.1 Verify all vessels departing from and arriving in authorized sites to conduct fishing activities.	CONAPESCA SEMAR PROFEPA	BL: There was not enough staff to verify all vessels in all the departure or landing sites in 2022. I: Number of vessels verified.	Milestone 1 (M1): An additional inspection and verification point to those already defined has been established in the boardwalk or <i>Malecón</i> of San Felipe.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The monthly report of verified vessels and corresponding penalties in all the inspection points, including the additional point of the <i>Malecón de San Felipe</i> , has been produced.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
1.2 Determine the functionality of departure and landing sites in the UGC.	CONAPESCA	BL: 8 authorized sites with no functionality analysis. I: Number of functional departure and landing sites.	Milestone 1 (M1): A diagnosis of the departure and landing sites has been made.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The proposal for the modification of departure and landing sites has been made.	Short term
1.3 Install a long-range video surveillance system in strategic sites.	SEMAR SEMARNAT SADER	BL: Strategic sites with no installed and operational long-range video surveillance system. I: Number of strategic sites with installed and operational video surveillance system.	Milestone 1 (M1): The project to install a long-range video surveillance system in strategic sites has been prepared.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The necessary resources for the installation of a long-range video surveillance system in strategic sites have been secured.	Medium term
			Milestone 3 (M3): The long-range video surveillance system has been installed in strategic sites.	Long term



Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
			Milestone 4 (M4): The system is consolidated as a source of information and intelligence for competent authorities.	Long term
1.4 Implement an awareness-raising programme for the fishing sector to change its behaviour and deter illegal fishing, use of illegal nets and their manufacture, trade and transport; and change negative perceptions of the vaquita.	CONAPESCA INAPESCA SEMAR PROFEPA	BL: Awareness-raising workshops held in 2022. I: Number of workshops held and number of fishers who participated in the awareness-raising programme.	Milestone 1 (M1): The comprehensive awareness-raising programme has been developed.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The workshops have been held.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): Quarterly reports of results of the programme implementation are prepared.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
1.5 Increase terrestrial inspection and surveillance activities	CONAPESCA SEMAR PROFEPA	BL: Inspections are conducted in authorized sites, but there is no strategy for random inspections. I: Percentage of increase in terrestrial inspections.	Milestone 1 (M1): A programme of extraordinary inspections of cooperatives, regulated artisanal and small-scale fishing camps, natural or legal persons, facilities and establishments dealing with fisheries products and their derivatives has been established.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): Extraordinary fishery and/or environmental inspections have been conducted.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): Random terrestrial fishery and/or environmental inspection and verification points have been established.	Short term

Short term: By August 2023.

Medium term: By December 2023.

Long term: By September 2024.





LINE OF ACTION 2. PREVENT THE ENTRY OF VESSELS TO THE ZO AND KEEP IT FREE OF GILLNETS TOGETHER WITH THE VRA.

To prevent the entry of vessels to the Zero Tolerance Area (Zo) and keep it free of gillnets together with the Refuge Area for the Protection of the Vaquita (VRA), Mexico proposes to develop and implement a legal interpretation and harmonization protocol aimed at coordinated action, under which competent authorities will continue conducting maritime, terrestrial and aerial patrols jointly; the protocol will clearly define the inspection and penalizing measures that each authority should take when appropriate as a result of the surveillance actions. Mexico has also defined the steps to make an efficient use of the technological, material and human resources available in the region to continuously monitor the Zo and VRA.

CITES DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: SC75: DOC 7.5; COP19: 18.293 (REV. COP19) AND THE MEETING OF RANGE, TRANSIT AND CONSUMER STATES OF TOTOABA

Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
2.1 Keep the boundaries of the Zo clearly indicated and inform the maritime and fishing community about them.	SEMAR PROFEPA	BL: Number of operational buoys in 2022. I: Number of buoys installed and functioning and number of navigational warnings.	Milestone 1 (M1): A programme of monthly maritime itineraries to monitor the position and operation of the buoys delimiting the Zo has been established.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The operation of malfunctioning or lost buoys has been re-established.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): Navigational warnings are shared twice a year with the maritime community of the region.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
2.2 Keep monitoring the Zo continuously through the maritime radar system of the assigned ocean patrol.	SEMAR	BL: Number of vessels detected in 2022. I: Number of vessels detected within the Zo.	Milestone 1 (M1): 24/7 radar monitoring in the Zo is ensured.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): Information on vessel detection has been used to activate the response protocol of SEMAR.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): A monthly record of detections has been drawn up to assess the relevance of activating the so-called <i>factores detonantes</i> or 'triggering factors' (i.e., situations that can lead to prohibitions or closures if certain limits are exceeded)	Ongoing implementation from the short term
2.3 Continue to monitor the VRA through the terrestrial radar system.	SEMAR	BL: Number of vessels detected in 2022.	Milestone 1 (M1): 24/7 radar monitoring in the VRA is ensured.	Short term





Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
		I: Number of vessels detected in the VRA.	Milestone 2 (M2): Information on vessel detection has been used to activate the response protocol of SEMAR.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3). A monthly record of detections has been drawn up to assess the intensification of patrols aimed at inspecting and penalizing any unauthorized activities.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
2.4. Intensify maritime, terrestrial and aerial patrols with manned and unmanned vehicles during authorized fishing seasons, ensuring permanent surveillance and law enforcement in the Zo and VRA.	SEMAR CONAPESCA PROFEPA	BL: Routes patrolled in 2022.	Milestone 1 (M1): A programme has been established to strengthen maritime, terrestrial and aerial patrols with manned and unmanned vehicles during authorized fishing seasons.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
		I: Percentage of increase in patrol routes, human and material resources compared to the previous year.	Milestone 2 (M2): Maritime and terrestrial surveillance routes have been intensified during the gulf corvina fishing season, associated with illegal fishing of totoaba.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): Aerial inspections using manned and unmanned vehicles have been intensified during the authorized gulf corvina fishing season.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
			Milestone 4 (M4): Based on the 'Agreement on triggering factors', protocols have been applied to reduce or increase resources and staff according to the prevailing circumstances and the number of fishers detected in the Zo.	Short term
2.5 Keep the Zo free of all types of nets and of the presence of vessels through the project of deploying concrete blocks.	SEMAR CONANP CONAPESCA PROFEPA INAPESCA Local community and civil society organizations.	BL: Concrete blocks deployed in the Zo.	Milestone 1 (M1): A programme for the removal and management of trapped nets has been implemented.	Short term
		I: Number of nets removed from the devices placed within the Zo.	Milestone 2 (M2): A monthly record of the number of nets removed has been drawn up.	Ongoing implementation from the short term





Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
			Milestone 3 (M3): A monthly record has been drawn up of the number of vessels present to analyse the correlation between the deployment of blocks and the decrease of vessels in the Zo.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
2.6 Systematically apply procedures and penalties against anybody entering the Zo for any unauthorized activity.	PROFEPA SEMAR CONAPESCA FGR	BL: Number of people and vessels detected in the Zo. I: Number of penalties applied by category (e.g., seizures, fines, arrests)	Milestone 1 (M1): An information document has been completed and will be made available to fishers on the penalties incurred for operating illegally in the Zo.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): At least three information sessions have been organized to inform fishers of the penalties incurred for operating illegally in the Zo.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): Administrative penalties have been imposed on all fishers detected operating illegally in the Zo.	Short term
2.7 Destroy all the nets found in the Zo.	SEMAR CONAPESCA	BL: Number of nets found and destroyed in 2022. I: Absence of nets in the Zo.	Milestone 1 (M1): Generate a monthly report.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
2.8 VRA free of ghost nets.	SEMAR CONAPESCA PROFEPA	BL: Number of ghost nets detected in the VRA in 2022. I: Absence of ghost nets in the VRA.	Milestone 1 (M1): The working programme for the detection, removal and destruction of ghost nets has been launched.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): A quarterly report of activities and results of the working programme has been prepared.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
2.9 Apply procedures and penalties against anybody entering the VRA for any unauthorized activity.	CONAPESCA SEMAR	BL: Number of people and vessels detected in the VRA performing unauthorized activities. I: Number of penalties applied.	Milestone 1 (M1): A quarterly report of activities and results of the working programme has been prepared.	Ongoing implementation from the short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): At least three information sessions have been organized to inform fishers of the standard incremental penalties incurred for unauthorized or illegal operation in the Zo.	Short term





Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
			Milestone 3 (M3): Administrative penalties have been imposed on all fishers detected operating in the Zo.	Short term
2.10 Establish a protocol for consistent interpretation and joint action aimed at the enforcement of laws, regulations and rules relating to fisheries, environmental issues, maritime and coast guard authorities.	PROFEPA SEMAR CONAPESCA FGR	BL: The relevant authorities act according to their powers but there is no protocol facilitating a consistent interpretation and implementation of the current regulatory framework. I: Protocol developed.	Milestone 1 (M1): The draft protocol has been prepared and circulated for its review by competent authorities.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The observations of relevant authorities have been compiled.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): The final protocol has been adopted in the framework of the GIS and is ready to be implemented.	Short term
2.11 Build the capacity of the staff of competent authorities operating in the UGC on the Protocol and monitor activities to ensure its effective implementation.	PROFEPA CONAPESCA SEMAR	BL: The relevant authorities act according to their powers but there is no protocol or training facilitating a consistent interpretation and implementation of the current regulatory framework. I: Percentage of trained staff in the competent authorities operating in the UGC.	Milestone 1(M1): The protocol has been shared with all the competent staff.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): At least 50% of the total number of officials operating in the UGC have received training.	Short term
			Milestone 3(M3): 100% of the officials operating in the UGC have received training.	Medium term
			Milestone 4 (M4): Ongoing training has been given to all recently hired officials, and officials recently deployed in the UGC have received refresher training to ensure that they work according to the Protocol.	Medium term
			Milestone 5 (M5): The training delivered has been assessed to identify any aspects that can be improved.	Long term
2.12 Put in operation a system to locate minor vessels.	CONAPESCA SEMAR	BL: There is no system in place to locate minor vessels. I: A system to locate minor vessels is operational.	Milestone 1 (M1): The project to install a system to locate minor vessels has been developed.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The necessary resources for the installation of the system have been secured.	Medium term





Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
			Milestone 3 (M3): The operation of the tracking and location system has been integrated through the Command and Control Centre of SEMAR.	Long term
			Milestone 4 (M4): The system to track minor vessels is consolidated as a source of information and intelligence for competent authorities.	Long term

Short term: By August 2023.

Medium term: By December 2023.

Long term: By September 2024.





LINE OF ACTION 3. STRENGTHEN INTELLIGENCE ACTIONS TO COMBAT TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME INVOLVED IN ILLEGAL TRADE OF TOTOABA.

The effective application of the legal and regulatory framework requires cross-cutting coordination between the authorities in charge of combating illegal trade of totoaba, and special cooperation to identify and prevent the funding of this activity in Mexico. To this end, exchange, communication and access to information about his subject will consolidate established processes; the involvement of other international players is also key.

Line of Action 3 and its targets and milestones are aimed at investigating, preventing and prosecuting aspects related to the fight against transnational organized crime involved in illegal trade of totoaba, their probability of occurrence and impact, their different variables and causal relationship; these actions are only conducted to contribute to the pursuit of justice.

Because of this, safeguarding the information will make it possible to implement each of the measures included in the Action Plan without compromising or impeding the action of the competent authorities. To this end, both the General Act on Transparency and Access to Public Information and the Federal Act on Transparency and Access to Public Information provide for mechanisms to withhold information that could compromise public safety as well as the prevention and prosecution of crime.

CITES DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: COP19: 18.292 (REV. COP19); 18.293 (REV. COP19); 18.294 (REV. COP19) AND THE MEETING OF RANGE, TRANSIT AND CONSUMER STATES OF TOTOABA

LINE OF ACTION 4. IMPLEMENT A PROGRAMME FOR ALTERNATIVE FISHING GEAR AND THE MARKING AND FISHING EQUIPMENT PROGRAMME FOR MINOR VESSELS.

To reconcile fishing activity with the protection of endemic species of the UGC, fishers and fisheries organizations of the communities of the region are granted commercial fishing permits once they have in place the alternative fishing systems considered in the permits issued by the National Commission for Aquaculture and Fisheries (CONAPESCA), recommended by the National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INAPESCA), and have received the training, guidance and advice required to perform the commercial fishing activities.

To provide alternative fishing systems to the fishers of the UGC, INAPESCA has undertaken various projects and studies since 2004 in coordination with the fisheries organizations of the communities concerned and civil society organizations such as WWF. The selective fishing systems developed have been internationally supported by ECOFT (Expert Committee on Fishing Technology), which concluded that “the compilation of studies on fishing gear shows that there are replacements for gillnets that can be used immediately and incrementally in the UGC[...]”.

CITES DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: 18.293 (REV. COP19) AND THE MEETING OF RANGE, TRANSIT AND CONSUMER STATES OF TOTOABA.



Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
4.1 Continuously update a programme of registration and licensing of active fishers in the Upper Gulf of California.	CONAPESCA	BL: Latest census of fishers in the area. I: Number of licensed fishers.	Milestone 1 (M1): A census of licensed and active fishers in the Upper Gulf of California has been updated.	Medium term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The monthly report of licensed fishers has been prepared.	Ongoing implementation since the medium term
4.2 Issue all the permits for commercial fisheries with the alternative gear systems.	CONAPESCA INAPESCA	BL: Permits for fishers with authorized alternative systems are not granted timely. I: Percentage of applications processed timely once the full dossier is available.	Milestone 1 (M1): The technical opinion of INAPESCA on alternative gear systems has been obtained.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): All timely applications meeting the requirements have led to the granting of a permit.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): New permits have been granted as applicable.	Short term
4.3 Provide training to 100% of organizations with alternative fishing systems authorized in the permits issued by CONAPESCA.	INAPESCA CONAPESCA	BL: 100% of fisheries organizations are given advice and guidance on the use of suripera nets but this remains to be done for shrimp trawls, traps and hook lines. I: Number of organizations that have received training on fishing systems authorized in the permits.	Milestone 1 (M1): 100% of permit holders have received training on authorized shrimp trawls and suripera nets.	Medium term
			Milestone 2 (M2): 100% of permit holders have received training on authorized nets for non-cartilaginous fish, traps and hook lines.	Medium term
4.4. Implement the Special Marking and Fishing Equipment Programme for minor vessels, in accordance with the Regulatory Agreement.	CONAPESCA INAPESCA	BL: There is currently no marking of fishing gear in minor vessels. I: Percentage of marked fishing gear in minor vessels.	Milestone 1 (M1): The Special Marking and Fishing Equipment Programme has been developed and publicized.	Medium term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The Special Marking and Fishing Equipment Programme has been implemented in at least 50% of the registered vessels of the region.	Long term
			Milestone 3 (M3): The Special Marking and Fishing Equipment Programme has been implemented in 100% of the registered vessels of the region.	Long term





Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
4.5 Implement the continuous improvement programme for the development of alternative fishing systems to catch gulf corvina	INAPESCA CONAPESCA	BL: There is currently no programme for continuous improvement of authorized alternative fishing systems. I: Number of improvements made in the fishing systems/number of improvements suggested.	Milestone 1 (M1): A diagnosis of necessary improvements has been made with the suggestions of fishers.	Medium term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The continuous improvement programme for the development of selective fishing systems to catch gulf corvina has been prepared.	Long term

Short term: By August 2023.

Medium term: By December 2023.

Long term: By September 2024.





LINE OF ACTION 5. MONITOR THE VAQUITA POPULATION.

CONANP has been implementing the Vaquita Acoustic Monitoring Programme since 2011 and has detected acoustic activity on every occasion; for this reason, this action will be replicated with a research cruise in waters of the Upper Gulf of California and River Colorado Delta Biosphere Reserve. The purpose is to photo-identify vaquitas and verify the presence, size and characteristics of the population. In compliance with Article 15 of the Regulatory Agreement, on scientific research, and additionally with the monitoring of the vaquita population, local capacities are leveraged and strengthened and the participation of the local population in the conservation of species at risk is incentivized.

CITES DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: COP19: 19.75; 18.293 (REV. COP19)

Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
5.1 Estimate the population trend of the vaquita.	CONANP	BL: Acoustic monitoring protocols implemented in previous years. I: Acoustic monitoring protocol implemented in 2023.	Milestone 1 (M1): The elements of the Community Conservation component of the Programme for the Protection and Restoration of Priority Species and Ecosystems (PROREST) have been published.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The working plan has been drawn up.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3). 85 acoustic detectors have been acquired and delivered to replace those missing.	Short term
			Milestone 4 (M4). Fieldwork has been conducted (i.e., <i>Placement of acoustic detectors to compile data in at least 30 sites in the Zo during a minimum of four sampling periods at neap tide</i>).	Medium term
			Milestone 5 (M5). The findings on acoustic monitoring have been submitted to the GIS.	Medium term
5.2 Undertake a research cruise for visual detection of vaquitas to determine their minimum number in the Zo.	CONANP	BL: Protocol applied in previous cruises. I: Cruise carried out.	Milestone 1 (M1): The mission has been planned.	Short term
			Milestone 2(M2): The coordination and logistic actions for conducting the observation cruise have been implemented.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): The observation cruise has been conducted.	Short term
			Milestone 4 (M4): The expert workshop has taken place.	Short term





Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
			Milestone 5 (M5): The report has been submitted to CONANP.	Medium term
			Milestone 6 (M6): CONANP has submitted the report to the GIS.	Medium term

Short term: By August 2023.

Medium term: By December 2023.

Long term: By September 2024.





LINE OF ACTION 6. RAISE AWARENESS OF ILLEGAL TRADE IN TOTOABA AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR CONSERVATION.

The dissemination of information helps interiorize models of critical thought in society. Thus, it is necessary to use various communication tools to inform local communities about the multidimensional importance of the conservation of the vaquita as well as the negative impacts of illegal trade in totoaba. In this regard, articulating the different participating bodies of the Federal Government into a comprehensive communication strategy will increase the impact of promoting knowledge and value building to raise awareness among the population about this issue.

CITES DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: 18.292 (REV. COP19) AND THE MEETING OF RANGE, TRANSIT AND CONSUMER STATES OF TOTOABA

Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
6.1 Implement the Strategy for the Promotion of the Culture of Peace and Reconstruction of the Social Fabric to promote a behavioural change in the population.	SEGOB	BL1: Public spaces for community sharing are inappropriate for the community. I1: Number of actions performed in accordance with the work plan.	Milestone 1 (M1): The Community Participation Committee has been set up.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The work plan for the rehabilitation of a public space has been prepared.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): The work plan has been implemented.	Short term
			Milestone 4 (M4): Participatory information about the community's perception of the actions implemented has been collected.	Short term
		BL2: There is weak community participation and the dialogue between the community and the authorities takes place mainly through formal channels. I2: Number of community meetings or conversations held-/number of community meetings or conversations planned.	Milestone 1 (M1): Fishers in San Felipe have been approached to learn about their perspectives and opinions.	Short term
			Milestone (M2): Conversations have taken place with various sectors of the community of San Felipe.	Medium term
			Milestones 3 (M3): The findings of the community meetings or conversations have been compiled and analysed to develop alternative proposals.	Medium term
		BL3: Children and adolescents have little information about protective factors.	Milestone 1 (M1): Lectures and workshops about environmental protection have been conducted with children and adolescents of the San Felipe community.	Medium term





Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
		I3: Number of children and adolescents who have participated in the workshops held in elementary and middle schools.		
6.2 Implement a comprehensive awareness-raising strategy for local communities on illegal trade of totoaba and its serious consequences for the conservation of the vaquita.	SEMARNAT SEMAR SADER	BL: Awareness-raising actions are conducted within the responsibilities of each institution, and there is no comprehensive awareness-raising strategy through the media. I: Comprehensive awareness-raising strategy through the media implemented.	Milestone 1 (M1): A media strategy has been developed.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The communication campaigns of the Mexican Government's Comprehensive Awareness-raising Strategy have been launched.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): An assessment of the impact and reach of the Comprehensive Awareness-raising Strategy has been conducted.	Medium term

Short term: By August 2023.

Medium term: By December 2023.

Long term: By September 2024.





LINE OF ACTION 7. OPERATIONALIZE THE TRILATERAL ENFORCEMENT CONTACT GROUP.

To strengthen cooperation and information exchange, as well as the activities aimed at addressing the illegal supply of totoaba swim bladders, Mexico, China and the United States will set up the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group for Combating Illegal Trade of Totoaba (TECG), recognizing their joint responsibility in dealing with this problem.

Line of Action 7 and its targets and milestones depend to a large extent on the will of the governments of the United States and the People’s Republic of China to conclude the terms of reference, and also on the support provided by the Secretariat through notifications and/or recommendations directed to both Parties for the implementation of this Line of Action.

CITES DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS: COP19: 19.74 AND THE MEETING OF RANGE, TRANSIT AND CONSUMER STATES OF TOTOABA

Target	Authority in charge	Baseline (BL) and Indicator (I)	Milestones	Deadline
7.1 China-US-Mexico Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group in operation.	SRE	BL: National authorities act unilaterally in accordance with their regulatory frameworks with limited potential results in their jurisdiction due to the lack of a legal instrument enabling coordinated, joint and collaborative action. I: Establishment and launch of the TECG.	Milestone 1 (M1): The existing discrepancies on the text of the terms of reference (ToR) for the creation of the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group (TECG) have been solved.	Short term
			Milestone 2 (M2): The definition of signatories for each country has been clarified.	Short term
			Milestone 3 (M3): The mechanism for participating has been solved.	Short term
			Milestone 4 (M4): There are sufficient legal conditions to start the operations of the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group.	Short term

Short term: By August 2023.
Medium term: By December 2023.
Long term: By September 2024.





ANNEX I. LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CONANP	<i>Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas</i> National Commission on Natural Protected Areas
CONAPESCA	<i>Comisión Nacional de Acuacultura y Pesca</i> National Commission for Aquaculture and Fisheries
COP18	18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES
COP19	19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES
ECOFT	Expert Committee on Fishing Technology
FGR	<i>Fiscalía General de la República</i> Office of the Attorney-General of the Republic
TECG	Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group <i>Grupo de Contacto Trilateral para la Aplicación of the Ley</i>
GIS	<i>Grupo Intragubernamental sobre la Sustentabilidad en el Alto Golfo de California</i> Intragovernmental Group for Sustainability in the Upper Gulf of California
INAPESCA	<i>Instituto Nacional de Pesca y Acuacultura</i> National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture
INTERPOL	The International Criminal Police Organization
LGEEPA	<i>Ley General del Equilibrio Ecológico and Protección al Ambiente</i> General Law of Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection
LGPAS	<i>Ley General de Pesca y Acuacultura Sustentables</i> General Law for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
LNCM	<i>Ley de Navegación y Comercio Marítimos</i> Navigation and Maritime Trade Law
PROFEPA	<i>Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente</i> Federal Environmental Protection Agency





Acronym	Meaning
SADER	<i>Secretaría de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural</i> Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
SC75	75th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee
SEGOB	<i>Secretaría de Gobernación</i> Ministry of the Interior
SEMAR	<i>Secretaría de Marina</i> Ministry of the Navy
SEMARNAT	<i>Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales</i> Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources
SRE	<i>Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores</i> Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UGC	Upper Gulf of California
VRA	Refuge Area for the Protection of the Vaquita or Vaquita Refuge Area <i>Área de Refugio para la Protección de la Vaquita marina</i>
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
Zo	Zero Tolerance Area <i>Zona de Tolerancia Cero</i>





ANNEX II. DEFINITIONS

Concept	Definition
Authorized departure and landing sites	Those established in Art. 9 of the Regulatory Agreement in the Gulf of Santa Clara, Sonora, San Felipe, Baja California and El Indiviso/Bajo Río, Baja California.
Authorized fishing gear or nets	Shrimp trawl nets, trawl nets for non-cartilaginous fish, suripera nets, hook lines, longlines, traps, scuba diving and hookah diving (Art. 2 of the Regulatory Agreement).
Buoy	Floating object attached to a sinker at the bottom of the sea or a lake, estuary, river, etc. which usually indicates dangerous places, the entrance to ports, navigation channels or submerged objects or serves as a mooring device. (Art. 4.116 of Official Mexican Standard NOM-002-SCT4-2013, Maritime-Port Terminology. Ministry of Communications and Transportation – General Coordination of Ports and Merchant Navy).
Control	Inspection, surveillance and enforcement of the necessary measures to comply with the provisions set out in this regulation. (Art. 3, Section IX of the LGEEPA).
Fishing gear or net	Instrument, equipment or structure with which aquatic species of flora and fauna are caught or harvested (Art. 4, Section V of the LGPAS).
Fishing vessel	Construction of any shape or size used for fishing activities and able to stay afloat or ride the surface waters. (Art. 4, Section XVIII of the LGPAS).
Ghost nets	Any fishing net that has been abandoned, lost or discarded (Global Ghost Gear Initiative).
Gillnets	Fishing gear of active or passive type, rectangular in shape, used fixed to the bottom or adrift, either attached to the vessel or free. It is made up of several sections of webbing made of multifilament or monofilament thread, attached to two strands, ropes or support lines called <i>relingas</i> ; the floating one in its upper part and the sinking one in its lower part, keeping the net extended vertically in the water column.
Inspection	Preventive restriction of a right by means of a written order from the competent authority that grounds and motivates the legal cause of the procedure.
Mexican marine zones	a) The territorial sea; b) the Internal Marine Waters; c) the Contiguous Zone; d) the Exclusive Economic Zone; e) the Continental Shelf and Insular Shelves and; f) any other zone permitted by international law. (Art. 3 of the Federal Law of the Sea).
Minor vessel	Fishing vessel with or without outboard and a maximum length of 10.5 m, with or without the use of ice for preserving the catch, and able to stay at sea for a maximum of 3 days. (Art. 4, Section XVII of the LGPAS).





Modus operandi	Latin expression that means 'method of operation' and is used to refer to a special way of acting or working to achieve a goal. Regarding illegal activities, it refers to the way they are performed.
Navigation	Activity performed by a vessel to move through waterways from one point to another with a given direction and purpose. (Art. 2, Section II of the LNCM).
Priority species	Those determined by the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources according to the criteria set out in the General Wildlife Act, to channel and optimize conservation and recovery efforts. (Art. 3, XIX of the <i>Ley General de Vida Silvestre</i>)
Prohibited fishing gear or nets	Prohibited nets in the area delimited by Article 1 of the Regulatory Agreement. Specifically, all gillnets, whether made with single filament or multifilament nylon or with any modification thereof and whether operated for use in fishing activities in an active or passive manner, and nets used in actively operated purse seine fishing in the gulf corvina and Pacific sierra fishery in the Upper Gulf of California. (Art. 2 of the Regulatory Agreement).
Refuge Area for the Protection of the Vaquita or Vaquita Refuge Area	Polygon comprising the western part of the Upper Gulf of California off the coast of the state of Baja California to enable and promote the recovery of the population of the vaquita (<i>Phocoena sinus</i>), delimited through the Agreement published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on 8 September 2005 and amended on 20 April 2018.
Register	The National Register of Fisheries and Aquaculture. (Art. 4 of Section XL of the LGPAS).
Regulatory Agreement	Agreement which regulates fishing gear, systems, methods, techniques and hours for fishing activities with minor and large vessels in Mexican marine zones in the Northern Gulf of California, and which establishes landing sites and mandates the use of monitoring systems for such vessels. Published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on 24 September 2020.
Seizure	Penalty that consists of the deprivation of property directly related to the infringements or offences committed by order of a judicial or administrative authority. (Art. 171, Section IV of the LGEEPA, Art. 133, Section VI of the LGPAS and Art. 422, Section II of the National Code of Criminal Proceedings).
Surveillance	Administrative procedure to verify the degree of compliance with fishing provisions.
Sustainable use	The use of natural fish resources in a way that respects the functional integrity and carrying capacity of the ecosystems of which they are part, for an indefinite period of time (Art. 3, Section III of the LGEEPA).
Unauthorized activities	Any fishing activity with any type of vessel, including recreational fishing, transit or navigation in the area (except with written permission from the competent authority), use or transport of any type of fishing gear (Art. 13 of the Regulatory Agreement).





Upper Gulf of California	Protected natural area with the status of a Biosphere Reserve, known as the “Upper Gulf of California and Colorado River Delta”, located in the waters of the Gulf of California and the municipalities of Mexicali, in the state of Baja California, and Puerto Peñasco and San Luis Río Colorado, in the state of Sonora. Decree published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on 10 June 1993.
Vaquita Acoustic Monitoring Programme	Implemented since 2011, the Vaquita Acoustic Monitoring Programme is aimed at photo-identifying vaquitas and verifying the presence, size and characteristics of the population, as per the Regulatory Agreement.
Vessel	Any craft designed to navigate on or under waterways. (Art. 2, Section IV of the LNCM).
Zero Tolerance Area	Polygon delimited in Article 13 of the Regulatory Agreement.

