

Protection of Fish Spawning Aggregations (FSA) in the Mesoamerican Reef System (MAR): *A Pillar for Conservation and Sustainable Fisheries*



The FSAs are concentrations of fish that gather to reproduce in the MAR, with groupers and snappers being the most representative species, essential for regional fisheries.

Context

- Historically, fishing had little impact on FSAs due to limited technical capacity and a smaller fishing sector.
- Today, FSAs are seen as opportunistic fishing targets during specific seasons or for cultural events.

Ecological Importance of FSAs

FSAs play a critical role within the marine ecosystem:

- They enable the mass reproduction of key species.
- They serve as a biological interaction network, attracting predators and supporting diverse marine species.
- They act as critical hotspots for marine life that depend on these sites for reproduction, feeding, and survival.



Status of FSAs

AROUND THE WORLD:

52% of documented FSAs **have not been assessed.**

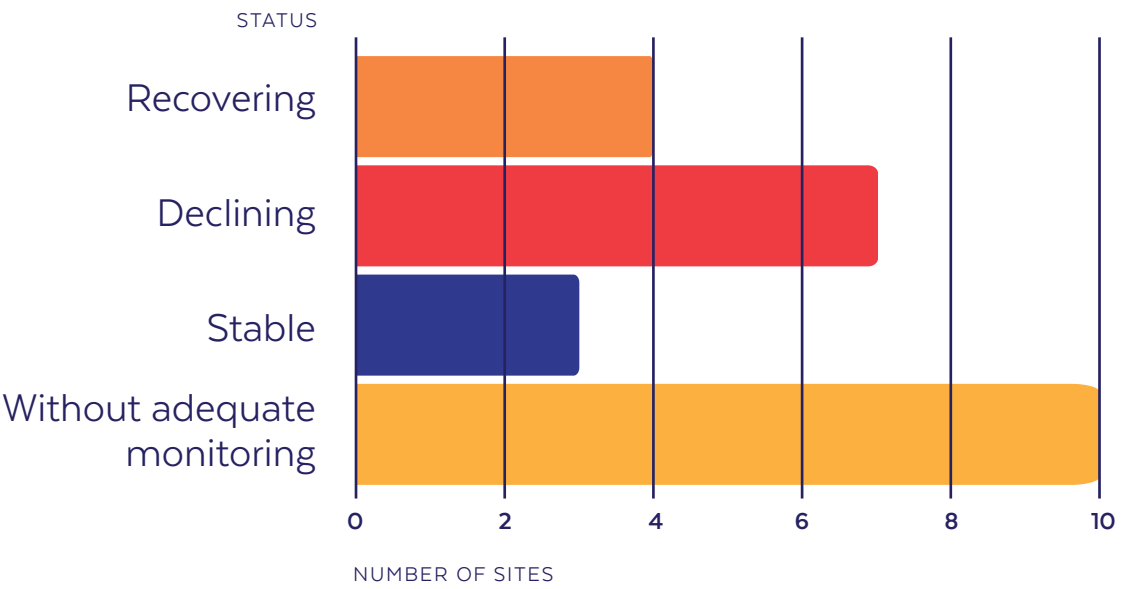
35% Less than 35% are **protected** with any type of management.

25% Only 25% are being **monitored.**

53% of those assessed are **declining.**

15% have already **disappeared.**

Current Status of FSA Sites in the MAR



Why Protect FSAs?



They ensure marine biodiversity.



They support the well-being of coastal communities.



They contribute to the resilience of marine ecosystems.



Key Actions *to Protect FSAs:*



- Establishing robust legal frameworks.
- Promoting regional cooperation to manage shared resources.
- Conducting science-based monitoring and studies to understand ecological dynamics.
- Creating protected areas for strategic FSAs.