

## Mexico Baja California Peninsula ocean whitefish - trap/handline

### Overview

#### FIP Description

The Cooperative Ensenada is located on the west coast of the state of Baja California (BC) and has been active since 1940. Currently, this cooperative has 84 members and 159 people employed in the processing plant (129 men and 30 women) and has two concessions: abalone and red lobster. This cooperative serves the local and global market, under social responsibility (with the members of the Cooperative, their families and the rural community of El Rosario) and a deep commitment to the species they sell, respecting the closures and quotas. Likewise, the members of this cooperative are leaders in the repopulation and conservation programs of banks of particular species, operating with an adequate combination of performance and value. The cooperative Ensenada has 3 main fishing fields: Punta Baja, La Lobera and Faro de San Jose.

The Productores Nacionales de Abulón Cooperative has been active since 1936. This fishing cooperative captures fishing resources from clean and rich waters that surround Cedros Island and the San Benito Islands, located in the Pacific Ocean, off the Baja California Peninsula.

The cooperative California de San Ignacio was established on April 6, 1939, with an initial register of 45 members. It is located in Bahia Asuncion, Baja California Sur, where they capture and process several marine species among the ocean whitefish captured with handlines. They will participate in the FIP only with this species. Its mission is fundamentally based on teamwork, the best quality in seafood, development and effort by its members and the community, care for the environment; the strengthening of our social organization, activities, and attitudes that are always present in our cooperative society.

The finfish fisheries are multi-specific and use multiple gears the most used are handlines and traps. Two of the most selective fishing gears that have a minimal impact on the habitats where it is used, however, this fishery can target a wide variety of fish, with very different life-history characteristics. The fishers from both cooperatives are aware of the high pressure being exerted to the main species captured Ocean whitefish (*C. princeps*), California sheephead (*Semicossyphus pulcher*), barred sand bass (*P. nebulifer*), starry rockfish (*Sebastes constellatus*) and vermilion rockfish (*S. miniatus*), in the BC peninsula in the last years and they are interested in developing a sustainable fishery to set an example in the region. Commercial harvest for these groups of fishes is conducted in small vessels using different fishing gears, hook and lines with live bait (sardine and mackerel)

and traps in open seas and areas near the coast.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of biological and fishery information for this fishery in Mexico. In the National Fishery Chart (INAPESCA, 2010) the above-mentioned species are classified as coastal finfish. This group is composed of a large diversity of species, with different life cycles, including those that inhabit the coast and lagoons up to the border of the external continental shelf which can reach near 200 meters depth. This group is managed without short and long-term species-specific objectives. For this reason, the cooperative Ensenada approached Comunidad y Biodiversidad, A. C. (COBI) to ask for guidance on how to reach international fishery standards, in order to continue with the good practices applied and the sustainable use of the marine resources.

This FIP is going to a Comprehensive (2020-2024).

In 2020, this FIP was aimed at a multi-species fishery, which included five species: whitefish (*Caulolatilus princeps*), greenfish (*Paralabrax nebulifer*), sea bass (*Semicossyphus pulcher*), starfish (*Sebastes constellatus*) and red rockfish (*S. miniatus*). However, from November 2024, the FIP will be aimed only at the Ocean whitefish (*C. princeps*) fishery.

## How is this FIP Doing?

### Current Status:



**Actions Progress** This shows the proportion of actions in the workplan that the FIP has completed.



**Actions Overview** This shows the proportion of actions that are behind schedule, on track, completed, or not yet started.

Behind	On Track	Complete	Future
0%	80%	20%	0%

**Red Indicator Progress** This shows the proportion of actions specifically addressing red indicators that are behind schedule, on track, completed, or not yet started. This helps users understand the progress the FIP is making on the biggest challenges in the fishery.

Behind	On Track	Complete	Future
0%	67%	33%	0%

### FIP Progress Rating



**FIP Objective(s)**

The objective of this FIP is to generate biological and population information on the Ocean whitefish, to propose management strategies to transform the management of artisanal trap and handline fishery in the Baja California Peninsula, through the implementation of all 28 indicators of the sustainable fishing standard MSC, and achieve certification of this fishery by 2026.

Specifically, the FIP aims to achieve the following by 2026:

- 1- Implement a biological-fishery monitoring system that allows for improving UoA data and monitoring the interactions of the Ocean whitefish fishery with species bycatch (July 2026).
- 2- Improve fishing practices and product management (e.g. traceability, production process improvements, etc.), to add value to the ocean whitefish fishery and access preferential (better-paid) markets that value sustainability (December 2025).
- 3- Ensure that the Ocean whitefish fishery in Peninsula Baja California is managed consistent with ecosystem requirements and respective MSC standards (December 2026).
- 4- Promote the development of regulations of specific harvest strategies in the ocean whitefish fishery (December 2025).

**FIP Type**

Comprehensive

**FIP Stage**

Stage 5: Improvements on the Water

**Start and Projected End Dates**

December, 2017 -  
December, 2026

**Species****Common Name**

Ocean Whitefish

**Scientific Name**

Caulolatilus princeps

**Gear Type**

[Handline](#)

[Pot/Trap](#)

## Location

### FAO Major Fishing Area

[Area 77 \(Pacific, Eastern Central\)](#)

### Exclusive Economic Zones

#### Country

Mexico

#### Geographic Scope

Costa Oeste de la Península de Baja California

## Estimated Total FIP Landings

182 metric tons

## FIP Leads

### Organization Name

SmartFish Rescate de Valor, A.C.

### Organization Type

NGO

### Primary Contact

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