This report will document enforcement gaps in the Magdalena Bay Scallop Fishery and recommendations for improving monitoring/control/surveillance.

Part 1: Enforcement Gaps noted in the fishery, as of May 31 2023

The following enforcement gaps and improvements are evident to the Magdalena Bay Scallop Fishery Improvement Project, which is hosted by Don Savely of Don’s Gulf Select and his local counterpart Hernan Orduna. These notes are based in how the fishery has been operating in 2023 following the fishery’s annual 3 month closure. The objective of these notes is to improve enforcement to sustain scallop stocks in Magdalena Bay in a systematic manner Improvements are important to note because CONAPESCA has successfully enforced 3 closures of the dedicated scallop fishery this year.

Enforcement Gap 1:

Without detection, fishing on scallops can occur anywhere on the bay and scallops landed in multiple places during fishery closures

The dedicated scallop fishery has been closed throughout most of the pandemic so there is little oversight of IUU scallop landings or fishing anywhere in the bay.

Enforcement Gap 2:

Fishing on scallops occurs in the shrimp fishery (and others) during scallop fishery closures

Evidence suggests that shrimp fishers fish for scallops within the directed shrimp fishery and the FIP is not aware of enforcement controls which prevent this from occurring with the result that fishing pressure on scallops is not controlled.

Enforcement Gap 3:

Landings are not validated; Centralized landings have not materialized

Pre-pandemic, the FIP was involved in discussions about centralizing the purchasing location (Don’t Gulf Select) as a way to draw fishers to one location where fishery authorities could observe landings. However with the dedicated fishery remaining mostly closed, there is no purchasing and this has not progressed.

Improvements: Real time catch monitoring has allowed for decisive enforcement

In March 2023, CONAPESCA opened the dedicated scallop fishery in the bay then quickly closed the fishery again when catches were small (2 day opening). In May 2023, CONAPESCA sent then withdrew licences for scallop fishing on the bay within 24 hours, then sent out licenses for a limited fishery in the Northern Channels and closed it again when catches were small. This shows improvement in CONAPESCA’s enforcement measures for Magdalena scallops.

The FIP will continue to monitor for gaps and progress in enforcement.

Part 2: Recommendations for improving MCS

To be written in June 2023…