

BOX 1 Fish Spawning Aggregations

Fish Spawning Aggregations (FSAs) are defined as large temporary concentrations of fish of the same species for breeding purposes. During aggregation periods, fish densities are up to three times higher than in non-reproductive periods, making them highly vulnerable to fishing. The few sites and seasons in which FSAs occur account for most –if not all– of the annual reproductive output of the species that aggregate there.

FSA monitoring contributes to the understanding of the connectivity and health of fisheries and can provide information on the impact of climate change on FSAs to benefit fisheries and the communities that depend on them.

According to the Community and Biodiversity (COBI) report on the status of FSAs in the MAR (2020), only **22 of 36 FSAs** are within fully protected areas for grouper and snapper fisheries (Fig.1).

These results suggest that monitoring and protection of FSA sites should be considered a priority activity within the MAR.

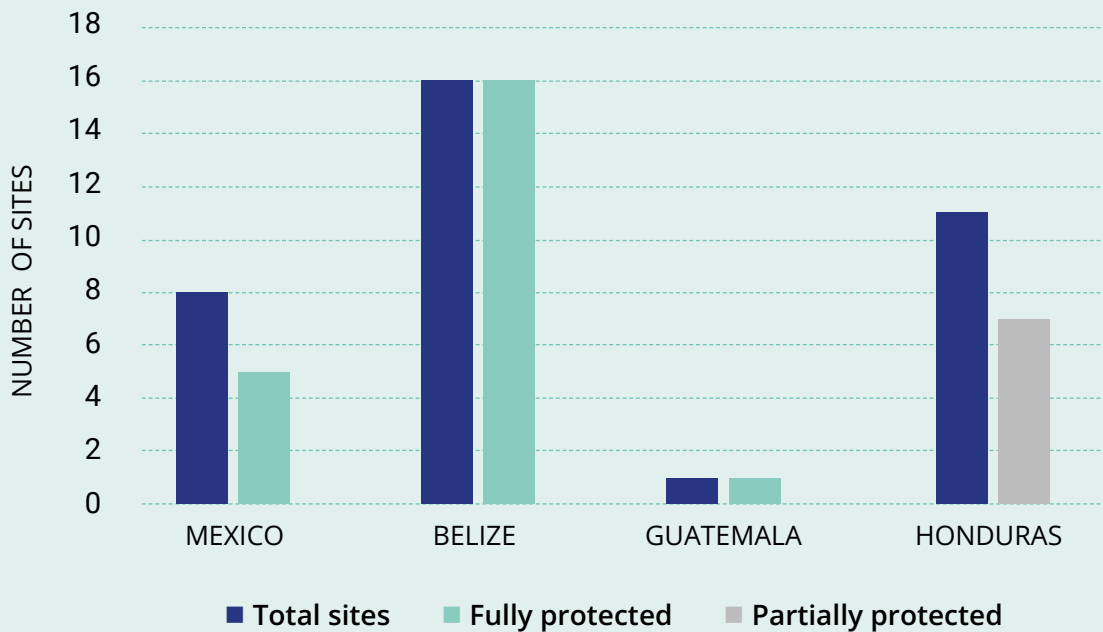


Figure 1. FSA sites protection status in the MAR (modified from COBI, 2020).