

BOX 2 Fish Replenishment Zones

Fish Replenishment Zones (FRZs) are areas of the ocean that are protected from all extractive and destructive activities, and can be an effective tool to address local and global threats, improve fishing yields, protect biodiversity, enhance the resilience of marine populations and ecosystems, while supporting adaptation to climate and ocean chemistry changes (Green *et al.*, 2014).

According to the latest health assessment of the MAR prepared by the Healthy Reefs Initiative in 2022, "the biomass of commercial fish (snappers and groupers) in critical condition indicates the extent of overfishing, the destruction of critical

habitats, the loss of biodiversity potential and its dire ecological consequences." In addition, it shows that, unlike areas that are protected but allow regulated fishing (e.g., catch and release, temporary closure, special permits, and minimum harvest), areas that are categorized as no-take/fully protected report a higher fish biomass (HRI, 2022).

These results suggest that the strengthening and creation of FRZs should be considered as a priority activity within the MAR. Therefore, it is considered part of the activities of one of the two funding lines in this call for proposals.

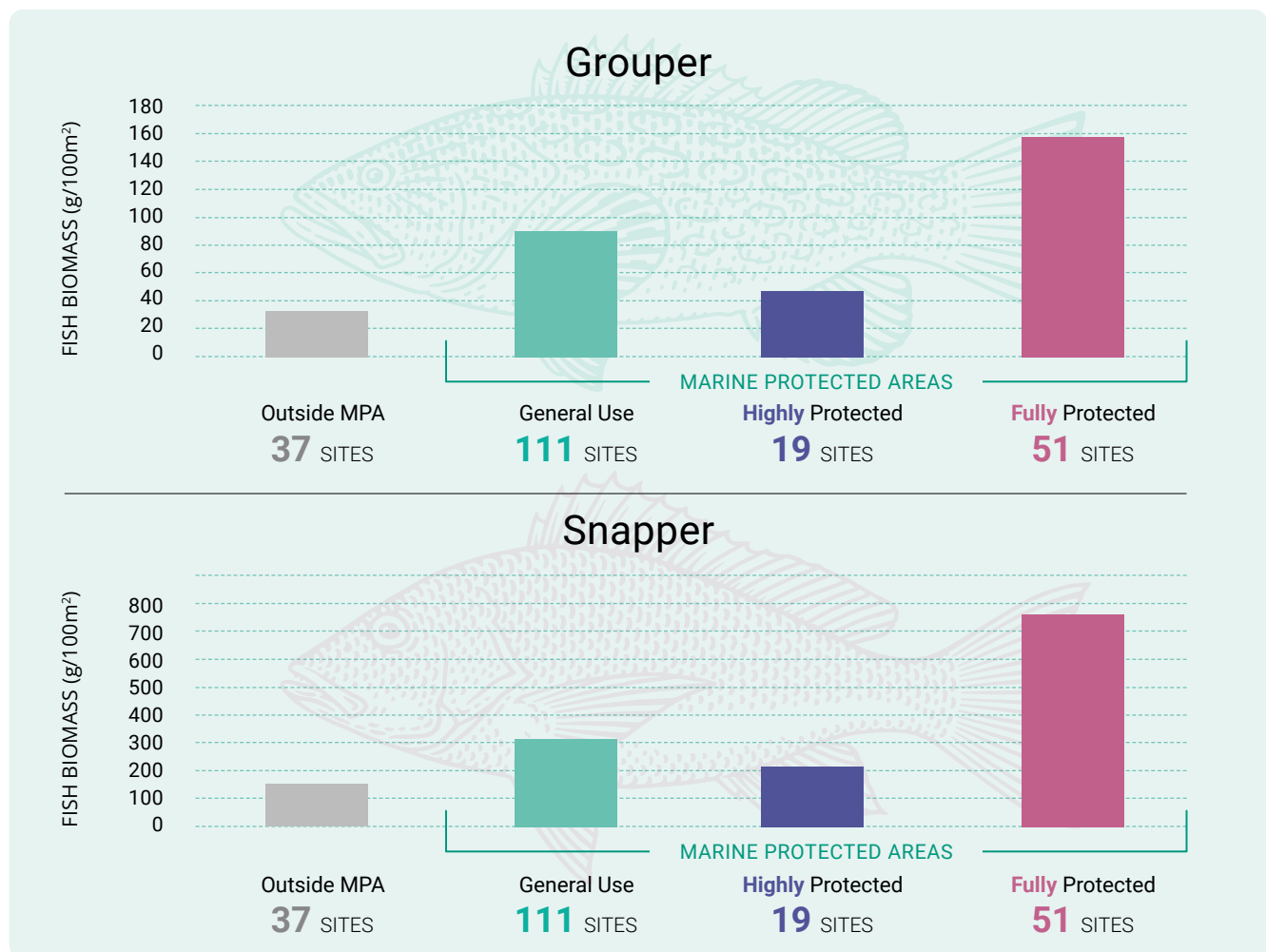


Figure 2. Fish biomass of the FRZs in the MAR (modified from COBI, 2020).