

The Mexican fishery industry expresses concern over the gulfweed situation's effect on lobsters harvesting.

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The Mexican fishermen expressed concern about the tons of gulfweed (Sargassum) that hit the shoreline along the Caribbean coast of the state of Quintana Roo, eastern part of the Yucatan Peninsula, especially in the municipality of Maria Elena, that may affect lobster harvesting season coming this July.

Mr. Jose Angel Canto Noh, president of the local fishery sector, said that the concern over the potential risks to the coming lobster harvesting season arises from the damages that cost millions of pesos occurred last year, caused by the huge amount of gulfweed (Sargassum) that hit the shoreline after the lobster harvesting season. The fishery sector has expressed this concern before, but has not received any attention from the government who focuses on solving this problem only in the tourist area, without paying attention to the fishery sector.

In addition, Mr. Jose Angel added that the amount of the gulfweed this year has increased from the previous year by a huge amount. Previously, the raft of gulfweed covered from 10 to 15 meters from the coast. But this year, it covers 100 to 200 meters from the coast and reaches the lobster traps area. Lobster is a source of livelihoods that generates over 80% of the income to over 2,000 people in the Bay of Bahia de Espiritu Santo area of the municipality of Maria Elena.

Mexico has been facing the problem Sargassum being blown into the Caribbean coast, eastern part of the country, for 5 years consecutively. This year, it is expected that over 24 million cubic meters of gulfweed, equivalent to 3,000 football stadiums, or 300% more than the amount of last year, will be blown up to the coastline causing considerable damages to tourism and fishery sectors in the area.

Sources: <https://agronoticias.com.mx/2019/06/06/sector-pesquero-preocupado-por-el-sargazo/>
and <https://www.reportur.com/hoteles/2019/05/07/sargazo-expertos-preven-aribo-300-mayor-al-del-2018/>

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