Use and Characterization of Habitat by the Antillean Manatee (Trichechus manatus manatus) in the South of Veracruz, Mexico.

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In México, the Antillean Manatee lives at coastal lagoons, estuaries and rivers from Veracruz, Tabasco, Chiapas, and Quintana Roo states. Their main threats are illegal hunting, pollution and habitat loss.

In Veracruz, the northern boundary of its distribution had been reported for the Alvarado Lagoon System (ALS) (Rodas-Trejo, 2008; Daniel-Rentería et al., 2012) and population trends remain unknown.

However, there are anecdotal reports about its presence at the south of Veracruz in the Coatzacoalcos river.

RESULTS

SIGHTINGS

234 navigation hours
1,200 km surveyed

INDIRECT SIGHTINGS

Main activities:
Social, breeding, play, traveling

FURTHERMORE...

Boat-based surveys in Coatzacoalcos

Reported as high-priority habitat due to its conservation status and several human activities. These new findings are relevant to update data of the species distribution in the country (Morales-García & Martinez-Serrano, 2013); to find where the manatees go in the web of water channels present in this area, in order to promote their conservation; and to prioritize the zone as resting or calving area, due to the tributary’s characteristics: calm waters, full of feeding resources and free of death reports by boat collisions, entanglements or hunting.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess systematically the manatee presence at ALS
- To know the distribution inside the ALS
- To determine habitat preferences

METHODS

Four regions, three seasons
Indirect sightings: interviews with local people

TO DO:

- All the habitat characterization
- To take physical and chemical parameters in Coatzacoalcos
- To conduct behavioral studies
- To estimate abundance and other population parameters
- Social and economical studies around manatee conservation

REFERENCES