

always discriminate among growth stages. Adults and old adults are found inhabiting shallow and deep waters, whereas juveniles and pre-adults are mostly found in shallow waters. These results suggest that the deep distribution of old adults reported in the literature may be the consequence of the inexorable exploitation of *Strombus gigas* inhabiting shallow waters.

KEY WORDS: Queen conch, vertical distribution, shell morphology, *Strombus gigas*

Evaluaciones Poblacionales y Manejo Pesquero Sostenible del Caracol Reina (*Strombus gigas*) en las Principales Areas de Pesca de la Plataforma Cubana

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RESUMEN

Desde 1999 se ejecuta un Proyecto de Investigación por el Centro de Investigaciones Pesqueras dirigido al recurso *Strombus gigas* en al plataforma insular cubana. El objetivo principal es conocer el estado actual de la abundancia poblacional en las principales áreas de pesca, siguiendo las regulaciones de CITES en su explotación y comercialización. Se tienen los resultados de las evaluaciones y monitoreos efectuados durante los últimos tres años en las áreas tradicionales de pesca. Los aspectos biológicos que se tratan en los trabajos se limitan a las características poblacionales como talla, peso, edad, desembarques y composición por sexos. Toda la pesca se realiza por buceo libre en "apnea". En el 2002 se inician estudios biológicos complementarios para establecer las vedas y las posibilidades reales del maricultivo. Las zonas estudiadas han sido objeto de explotación (hasta 1997, cuando se declara la moratoria a nivel nacional) por diferentes empresas pesqueras estatales del país. Por los resultados de las densidades de individuos como índice de la abundancia y la estructura poblacional encontrada, como se puede presentar, se han propuesto cuotas de captura anuales bajo licencia, que alcanzan un total de 1,250 t (peso entero), como suele reportarse en Cuba, que equivalen a unas 88 t de carne limpia al 100% (foot weight). Además, se definen las estrategias de manejo pesquero para el uso sostenible de *Strombus gigas* en la pesquería del recurso en Cuba, teniendo en cuenta su conservación, el ambiente y la biodiversidad de las zonas costeras, como reclama CITES y las autoridades del Medio Ambiente.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Caracol reina, *Strombus gigas*, abundancia poblacional

Population Assessment and Fishery Sustainable Management of Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*) in the Main Fishing Grounds of the Cuban Shelf

From 1999 the Fisheries Research Center of Cuba is working on a Project aim to evaluate the population abundance and fishery stock assessment on Queen Conch *Strombus gigas* in the main fishing areas of the Cuban shelf. Investigations were developed according to know present status of the resource in our waters. We are working under CITES regulations on Conch for exploitation and trading. The objective is to evaluate the abundance and population composition (juveniles, adults and seniles). There are available the results of abundance indexes and monitoring for the last 3 years for the whole country fisheries, as we can present. Until now, results are given sizes, weight, conversions, ages, landings, and sex ratios. Fishing operation is always by free diving. Aqualungs and compressors are not allowed. At present, year 2002, we started to do some biological studies in order to determine the closing season for our populations and the possibilities for conch mariculture. All Cuban areas were fished until 1997, when conch exploitation was closed by CITES rules. Densities and population structure are showing that it is possible to propose year quotas under licences up to 1250 metric tons (living weight) as reported in Cuba, that means 88 tons of 100% clean meat (foot weight). Furthermore, the fishery management was established for a sustainable use of *Strombus gigas* in the Cuban shelf, according to its protection, the environmental conditions and the biodiversity of the coastal areas. CITES claims for that, and the environmental authorities.

KEY WORDS: Queen conch, *Strombus gigas*, population abundance

Education to Rescue *Strombus gigas* in Guadeloupe: Success for Failure?

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ABSTRACT

Efforts to minimize the fishing pressure on *Strombus gigas* in Guadeloupe, since more than 15 years associate various regulations, education, and repression. Successive regulations aim to protect the juveniles, to lower the fishing pressure on