

Project Update: December 2021

After a successful 2021, with the conclusion of the first stage of our project plan, we are submitting this first report.

During this first stage of the project, we collected data from the traditional community residing in the Rio Formoso Estuary (RFE). We interviewed a total of 25 fishermen who live and work in the RFE. In these interviews, it was possible to collect data on the occurrence of seahorses in the RFE, the threats they face, the knowledge that the local community has about the species, and the community's perception of the importance of seahorse conservation.

We also developed a participatory mapping exercise with all the fishermen who participated. In this exercise, it was possible to map the distribution of seahorses in the RFE based on traditional knowledge of fishermen and the points where seahorses may be exposed to threats.

We consider this stage to be extremely successful, as we obtained a wealth of data from the fishermen while establishing excellent initial contact with the local community, which will facilitate the future stages of our project.

Next steps:

- Analyse the data collected with the traditional community: January/February 2022 (we will send a new report as soon as we have the first results).
- Collect ecological data on the population structure of *Hippocampus reidi* in the RFE: January to July 2022.
- Organise and implement workshops for the local community on seahorse biology, threats, and conservation, and develop publicity material (folders, videos) on seahorse biology and conservation: April to July 2022.

Below some photographic records made during data collection with the local fishing community in the Rio Formoso Estuary (2021).









