Lobster stock enhancement in order to fisheries productivity development in south coast of Iran: with emphasis on spiny rock lobster *Panulirus homarus*

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Abstract:
Spiny lobsters are one of the most important commercial and highly priced crustaceans along the Southern coast of Iran (Sistan and Baluchistan province). In the last three decades, the economy of a large part of the fishermen population was directly dependent on it. The lobster fishing rate has decreased from 42 t in 1989 to 7 t and then 1 t in 2003 and 2004, respectively. This has been attributed to the effects of improper fishing methods and overfishing. Meanwhile, Oman as a leading country in the fishing industry in the Gulf of Oman produced 430 t of lobster in 2016, compared to 416 t in 2015. Little attention has been paid to lobsters by related organizations, and this neglect in framing and enforcing fishing regulations has led to heavy fishing pressure on this vulnerable resource along the south coast of Iran. For this reason, some efforts have been made by researchers at the Iranian fisheries science research institute, such as: preliminary study of lobster biology, feeding biology and ecology, design the appropriate lobster trap, designed artificial reef as a shelter for lobster and some experimental researches are currently underway to assess population dynamic and maximum sustainable yield (MSY). Furthermore, release of artificially raised lobster juveniles is a program to contribute to re-establishment or enhancement of lobster stocks. However, one of the key problems for successful stock enhancement has been the lack of cost effective methodologies for producing juveniles.