REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE CRFM / CARICOM FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE PRIORITY COMMODITY WORKING GROUP (FISHCOM WG)

30 January 2019
Report of the Third Meeting of the CRFM/CARICOM Fisheries and Aquaculture Priority Commodity Working Group (FISHCOM WG)

CRFM Secretariat
Belize, 2019
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CABA</td>
<td>Caribbean Agri-Business Association</td>
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<td>CARICOM</td>
<td>Caribbean Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>CARISEC</td>
<td>CARICOM Secretariat</td>
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<td>CFTDI</td>
<td>Caribbean Fisheries Training Institute</td>
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<td>CLME</td>
<td>Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem</td>
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<td>CRFM</td>
<td>Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>DED</td>
<td>Deputy Executive Director</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>FISHCOM WG</td>
<td>Fisheries and Aquaculture Priority Commodity Working Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>IICA</td>
<td>Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>OECS</td>
<td>Organization of Eastern Caribbean Studies</td>
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<td>PMFMD</td>
<td>Programme Manager, Fisheries Management and Development</td>
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<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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<td>US AID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>UWI</td>
<td>University of the West Indies</td>
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<td>WGA</td>
<td>Working Group on Agriculture</td>
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1. CALL TO ORDER AND PRAYER

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by the Minister with responsibility for fisheries, Montserrat, Hon. David Osborne. At the Chairperson’s request, Dr. Singh-Renton led the Meeting in an opening prayer.

2. REGISTRATION OF ATTENDANCE & INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairperson invited participants to introduce themselves. The list of the Meeting’s participants follows. Participants’ full contact data are provided in Appendix 1.

1. Hon. Minister Osborne, Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Lands, Housing and the Environment, Montserrat
2. Ms. Melissa O’Garro (Director of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture, Montserrat)
3. Mr. Alwyn Ponteen (Chief Fisheries and Ocean Governance Officer, Fisheries Department, Montserrat);
4. Mr. Nigel Durrant (CARICOM Secretariat)
5. Mr. Allister Glean (IICA);
6. Mr. Harnarine Lalla (Trinidad & Tobago) – Observer
7. Mr. Terrence Phillips (FAO) – Observer
8. Dr. Susan Singh-Renton (CRFM Secretariat);
9. Mr. Peter A. Murray (CRFM Secretariat);
10. Ms. June Masters (CRFM Secretariat);

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Chairperson drew the meeting’s attention to the draft annotated agenda and enquired if there were any proposed changes. No changes were proposed. A motion for the adoption of the agenda was moved by Mr. Peter A. Murray (CRFM Secretariat) and seconded by Mr. Terrence Phillips (FAO). The agenda is given at Appendix 2.

4. REGISTRATION OF MEETING DOCUMENTS

At the Chairperson’s invitation, Dr. Singh-Renton presented this item. The meeting documentation included the Meeting’s Information Note and Draft Annotated Agenda; Reference Document (Revised Working Group TORs); and Working Documents (Report of Second FISHCOM WG Meeting and Updated, Revised Proposal for Policy Framework(s) for Fisheries and Aquaculture Industries). Dr. Singh-Renton further advised that Document 05 was a revised proposal that the WG had requested at its second meeting. There was also Document 05A, which contained the CARICOM Secretariat’s comments on Document 05 (Revised Proposal); and Document 05B which was a revised version of Document 05 based on the CARICOM Secretariat’s comments.

5. REPORT OF SECOND MEETING

Dr. Singh-Renton presented this item for consideration. She referred to the relevant working document, and gave an overview of the report. In her overview, Dr. Singh-Renton noted that the second meeting of
the FISHCOM WG took place on 05 September 2018 and was fairly well attended, with representation from CARICOM Secretariat, UWI, IICA and CRFM Secretariat, including representation from several CRFM sub-committees. She then highlighted the substantive items addressed by the Meeting, which included: Preliminary Industry Analysis; Proposal for Policy Framework(s) for Fisheries and Aquaculture Industries; and proponent responses to FISHCOM WG’s queries on National Agency-led Commodity Development Briefs. She also highlighted the conclusions and recommendations, and provided the following updates on the work done in the inter-sessional period to address the decisions/recommendations of the Second FISHCOM WG Meeting.

- The FISHCOM WG had accepted the Preliminary Industry Analysis and had agreed that it should be finalized and published as a CRFM Technical & Advisory Document. However, upon further consideration, it was thought that the Preliminary Industry Analysis, since it was a form of research, was better placed under the CRFM Research Document Series. As such, it was recommended that the Preliminary Industry Analysis be published as a CRFM Research Document.
- The WG had also agreed to consider options for the publication of the Preliminary Industry Analysis in another format suitable for wider circulation. This was yet to be done.
- Regarding the 1991 OECS Study, the PMFMD had been unable to locate a copy to share with the WG.
- The Sub-committee established to review the proposal, including resource mobilization options, revised the proposal based on the Second Meeting inputs and this was re-circulated to WG Members. The CARICOM Secretariat provided extensive comments on the revised proposal (Doc. 05A). An attempt was made to further update the proposal, taking on board to the extent possible, CARISEC’s comments. The updated Revised Proposal is included in the present Meeting’s documentation and would be further discussed at Agenda Item 6.
- Regarding the criteria for selection of the countries to be included in the assignment, draft criteria had been developed and were included in Doc. 05B.
- As agreed by the WG, the CRFM Secretariat prepared and dispatched letters to Dr. Wayne Ganpat, UWI and Mr. Vassel Stewart, CABA to request assistance in providing business planning support to the proponents of the commodity development briefs. Positive responses were received from both UWI (formal correspondence) and CABA (email), re-affirming their willingness to assist.
- With regard the sharing of best practices and lessons learned at the regional level, this activity was ongoing, as it was dependent on the progress made in developing and executing the commodity development initiatives.

Following her presentation of the report, Dr. Singh-Renton reminded the WG about the earlier request to publish the Preliminary Industry Analysis as a CRFM Research Document instead of a CRFM Technical & Advisory Document and sought the WG’s guidance on this. Dr. Singh-Renton also advised that the Report of the Second FISHCOM WG Meeting had been previously circulated to facilitate WG inputs, but noted that there were several persons attending this meeting who had not participated in the second FISHCOM WG meeting. In view of this, she suggested that the Second FISHCOM WG Meeting Report could be circulated again, including to the participants of the second meeting, and a week given for any final comments to be submitted.

Regarding the 1991 OECS Study, the PMFMD explained that there had been a single hard copy at the OECS Fisheries Unit in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and when the Unit relocated to Saint Lucia, the document was misplaced. No electronic copies of the document were available.
Conclusions/Recommendations:

1. The WG agreed that the Report of the Second Meeting of the FISHCOM WG should be re-circulated and a week given for further review and feedback, after which it would be considered adopted.
2. The WG agreed that the Preliminary Industry Analysis should be published as a CRFM Research Document instead of a CRFM Technical & Advisory Document.

6. UPDATED PROPOSAL FOR POLICY FRAMEWORK(S) FOR FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE INDUSTRIES

The Chairperson invited Dr. Singh-Renton to present this item for consideration. Dr. Singh-Renton drew the Meeting’s attention to Working Document 05 (Appendix 3), noting that the Second FISHCOM WG Meeting had established a small sub-committee (A. Ponteen, A. Glean, S. Singh-Renton, P. A. Murray) to review the proposal based on comments received in that meeting. Dr. Singh-Renton gave a summary presentation (powerpoint) on the Revised Proposal. The presentation is included at Appendix 4.

The Revised Proposal (Doc 05) had been re-circulated to WG members and substantive comments, captured in Doc. 05A, were received from the CARICOM Secretariat on the revised proposal. Dr. Singh-Renton referred to the Document 05A (Appendix 5) and gave a brief verbal presentation of it. She noted that CARISEC had provided comments particularly on the first few sections of the document. She highlighted the issues raised by CARISEC, noting that an attempt to update the revised proposal was made taking into account the comments provided by CARISEC. The updated Revised Proposal was circulated with the meeting documentation as Working Document 05B and is included in this report at Appendix 6.

In the discussion that followed the presentation of Working Documents 05 and 05A, the Meeting learnt that the CRFM Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA) at its second meeting had reviewed a number of proposals including the Proposal for Policy Framework(s) for Fisheries and Aquaculture, and had expressed concern generally with the extended time taken to receive feedback from donors on project proposals. The WGA had asked that the CRFM Secretariat give due attention to follow-up on these proposals, and asked that the Caribbean Fisheries Forum reiterate support for these project proposals and reaffirm that they were priority areas for the Countries. Essentially, the WGA endorsed the Proposal as presented in Document 05.

It was clarified that the ‘CARICOM Secretariat comments’ were really comments provided by the Resource Mobilization Section and were not necessarily the opinion of other sections within CARISEC. The Meeting was reminded that the objective of the proposal had to do with value chain development, which was a key area that needed to be addressed, and efforts should be made to ensure that any information collected helped to provide a better understanding about the status of value addition and level of investment in the various aspects and levels of processing. It was further noted that the fisheries sector in the region remained a producer of primary products both for export and the domestic markets. Traditionally, fairly high value products (lobster, conch, etc.) were exported and gained a fair amount of foreign exchange, and lower value products (mostly dried and salted products) were imported. Over time, imports of high value products have been increasing; however, the region’s fisheries sector has not in turn taken advantage of overseas or domestic markets to improve the value of fishery products produced. There was need to determine the levels of processing, packaging and branding and to determine why there have not been more investments in these areas, particularly branding, and what were the constraints, if any. On the issue of processing, packaging and branding, the Meeting was advised that some work in this regard had already been done in Trinidad and there were some lessons learnt that could be shared. The need for greater emphasis to be placed on the value chain to ensure an overall increase in the value of
outputs from the fisheries sector was highlighted. The Meeting was reminded that there was agreement on the need to conduct a more detailed industry analysis that will provide a deeper understanding of the current levels of operations, including the constraints. In order to take the industry to the next level, it was recognized that there was need to understand the present status - current levels of processing, packaging, branding; current constraints; capacity requirements; etc., and that these elements would be captured in the instructions for conducting the industry analysis. The detailed industry analysis was expected to inform the development of the Strategy for the industry, which should also include strategies for capacity improvement.

The use of the logic model in developing the Proposal was noted and it was suggested that a log frame should be included in the Proposal to facilitate a better appreciation of the logic model. It was noted that several elements of the log frame were included in the text of the proposal, but the suggestion was accepted and the information would be presented in tabular format (log frame) in the next iteration of the Proposal.

It was observed that a fair amount of focus had been placed on reaching out to existing foreign exchange markets as well as other potential foreign markets, possibly in Latin America. The extent to which the tourism industry and its demand for seafood and value added seafood as a potential sector to which seafood could be supplied and from which foreign exchange could be earned, was queried. It was explained that the detailed industry analyses would be expected to address all potential areas, including possible local and regional tourism markets. The Meeting was also informed that integration into the global economy was identified as an outcome in the CARICOM Strategic Plan, however, the WG would attempt to consider all options, including local and regional markets. On the issue of export markets, the need to recognize that regional exporters would be price takers on the international markets was noted.

A query was raised as to the extent to which the industrial fisheries (larger vessels) had been separated out from small-scale fisheries, which was how most fishing operations in the Caribbean could be described, so as to ensure proper focus of the value chain analyses to be conducted. It was explained that this issue required discussion as the large-scale and small-scale fisheries had different value chains and different value networks so what would work in both cases would have to be examined. Further, the selection of the countries will bring out the sort of differences that should be considered and the areas where more effort should be focused.

Dr. Singh-Renton, at the Chairperson’s invitation, then referred to Working Document 05B and gave a brief oral presentation of it. Dr. Singh-Renton indicated that most of the comments received from the Resource Mobilization Section in CARISEC were on the sections titled ‘Introduction’, ‘Overall Objective’ and ‘Purpose’. She then highlighted the changes made in these three sections, and which were documented in Document 5B. The information in the Introduction had been re-arranged into sub-sections and additional information included. Sub-sections included a general background; problems faced by the industries; root causes; relevant plans, policies and directives; CRFM’s comparative advantage; complementary initiatives; and project rationale. The overall objective was re-written to better reflect the intended focus on promoting social and economic resilience - two strategic priorities identified by CARCIOM in its Strategic Plan. The Purpose was also revised to make the links between the root causes and how they would be addressed. The remainder of the document had not been changed much, as the content was essentially still sound and valid. There was also an intention to include the log frame as suggested earlier to add clarity to the document.

The attempt to make linkages with existing projects and programme in the revision (Doc 05B) was acknowledged and it was further suggested that these linkages be fully explored, as there were regional initiatives, in which some CRFM Member States were participating, that were undertaking business training, value chain analyses, gender analyses and capacity building, among others. The links should be
made not only so that effort was not duplicated, but that these experiences could be gathered in developing this proposal.

The meeting appreciated that climate change and climate proofing of businesses should be cross-cutting in much the same way as issues such as gender and youth, particularly in the context of small-scale fisheries. Also, in addressing small-scale fisheries, consideration should be given to promoting small and micro enterprise within the value chain. In this regard, the Meeting was reminded that the CRFM Ministerial Council at its 8th Special Meeting had “... accepted that international and national norms regarding issues pertaining to gender, youth, and decent work be adhered to, and be incorporated into all CRFM policies, protocols, programmes, and plans.”

Following the discussions, it was proposed that Document 05B be circulated to the FISHCOM WG for their inputs. It was also suggested that the Updated Proposal be taken to the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and the CRFM Ministerial Council for endorsement to continue with the development of the proposal and the pursuit of some sponsorship options.

Conclusions/Recommendations:
1. The WG agreed that the Updated Proposal be circulated to WG Members for review and feedback.
2. The WG agreed that the Updated Proposal should be taken forward to the Forum and Ministerial Council to get the approval of these bodies to continue development of the Proposal.

7. TECHNICAL SUPPORT UPDATES FOR NATIONAL AGENCY-LED COMMODITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Dr. Singh-Renton noted that neither UWI nor CABA were represented at this meeting. She reminded the meeting that both entities had agreed to provide assistance to the proponents of the commodity briefs particularly in the area of business planning. CABA had also indicated that that association could also assist with the request for training at a facility in Guyana. Dr. Singh-Renton further advised that UWI had indicated that the Secretariat’s request in September 2018 was submitted too late to benefit from students’ projects in that term, and had also raised the need for a formal MOU with CFTDI. Dr. Singh-Renton then shared with the FISHCOM WG an email update received from Dr. Sharon Hutchinson, the main UWI liaison. Dr. Singh-Renton referred to the email and explained that there was no graduate or undergraduate student available at this time to undertake development of the business plan for CFTDI, an undertaking that would require the bilateral MOU between UWI and CFTDI to clarify issues of data ownership and publication rights to be in place. In the meantime until the bilateral MOU was in place, a PhD student had been identified who had indicated willingness to provide some informal assistance to CFTDI in business plan development, once a CFTDI staff was available to lead the process. Also, CFTDI had recently employed a former UWI MSc. student, Mr. Keegan Slinger, who had the requisite training in business plan development. Dr. Singh-Renton added that there were a couple of options that UWI were pursuing with CFTDI informally. However, the CRFM needed to work with UWI and CFTDI to develop and finalize the MOU to formalize the process.

With regard to CABA, Dr. Singh-Renton said that Mr. Stewart had indicated that he was very busy but he would attempt to meet with CFTDI in the last week of January. Dr. Singh-Renton indicated that she was unsure whether the meeting would proceed as planned, as she had not received a response to her email enquiry in this regard. Dr. Singh-Renton shared that there were challenges in moving the process forward as the WG was relying on these institutions (CABA and UWI) for in-kind support, which was constrained by these institutions’ schedules.
The Meeting learnt through the IICA representative, that CABA’s President, Mr. Vassel Stewart, had indicated that he was unable to participate in this Meeting due to a prior commitment, but that CABA remained committed to supporting the exercise and would review the Meeting report and contribute as required.

The Meeting was reminded that one output of the CLME flyingfish sub-project consultancy on "Long-term enhancement of livelihoods and well-being", was a business activity proposal document.

Conclusions/ Recommendations:
1. The CRFM Secretariat will continue to work with UWI and CFTDI to develop and finalize the bilateral MOU between UWI and CFTDI.
2. The CRFM will continue to follow-up with CABA regarding support to the proponents of the commodity development initiatives.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT

Bearing in mind the dates of the Forum and CRFM Ministerial Council Meetings and given that the proposal was expected to be reviewed by these meetings, it was suggested that the next FISHCOM WG meeting be tentatively set for the end of June 2019. There was general agreement to this suggestion.

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked all for their participation and wished all a good day.

In her turn, Dr. Singh-Renton thanked the Minister for taking time out to chair the meeting. Dr. Singh-Renton also thanked participants for their time and attention.

Following other expressions of thanks by participants the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.
# APPENDIX 1: LIST OF MEETING PARTICIPANTS

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<tr>
<th>Name &amp; Designation</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Email Contact</th>
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APPENDIX 2: DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA

| ITEM 1 | Call to order and prayer  
| The Chairperson will call the meeting to order, and will invite a selected volunteer to offer a prayer. | 1000 - 1010 |

| ITEM 2 | Registration of Attendance & Introductions  
| The Chairperson will confirm the persons in attendance and invite them to introduce themselves. | |

| ITEM 3 | Adoption of Agenda  
| The Chairperson will seek feedback to inform adoption of the Meeting Agenda. | |

| ITEM 4 | Registration of meeting documents  
| The Chairperson will review and register formally the following documents prepared for the meeting:  
1. Revised Working Group TORs (Reference Document)  
3. Proposal for Policy Framework(s) for Fisheries and Aquaculture Industries (Working Document) | 1010 - 1015 |

| ITEM 5 | Report of Second Meeting  
| The Chairperson will facilitate review and adoption of report, as well as discussion of any matters arising. | 1015 – 1030 |

| ITEM 6 | Revised Proposal for Policy Framework(s) for Fisheries and Aquaculture Industries  
| The Chairperson will facilitate review and discussion of the updated working document. | 1030 – 1115 |

| ITEM 7 | Technical Support Updates for National agency-led Commodity Development Initiatives  
| The Chairperson will facilitate review and discussion of any developments regarding the technical support identified for proponents of national-level commodity development initiatives. | 1115-1130 |

| ITEM 8 | Date of next meeting and adjournment  
| The Chairperson will invite the Group to agree on the date of its next meeting, summarize the meeting’s discussions and conclusions. This will be followed by adjournment. | 1130 - 1145 |
The CRFM is an inter-governmental organization whose mission is to “Promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of the region’s fisheries and other aquatic resources for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region”. The CRFM consists of three bodies – the Ministerial Council, the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and the CRFM Secretariat. CRFM members are Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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