

# PRESS RELEASE

## Fisher exchange with Grenada prepares Turks and Caicos Islands for launch of a sustainable FAD fishery



Representatives of Grenada, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the CRFM Secretariat based in Belize partnered to provide invaluable hands-on learning on FAD fishing technology for sustainable livelihoods

*(Photo: Minister of Blue Economy and Marine Affairs, Grenada)*

Belize City, Belize, 23 March 2026 (CRFM)—Fishers from the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) recently concluded a very successful exchange in Grenada. From March 16-19, a delegation of six fishers, supported by two fisheries officers, gained firsthand knowledge on the construction and deployment of fish aggregating devices (FADs). FADs can be very effective in attracting fish in the open sea, thereby boosting production, exports, and economic impacts. The Turks and Caicos Islands hopes to also reap these long-term benefits from the recent fisher exchange.

Grenada’s FAD technology has been modernized under the World Bank-funded project titled, Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC), which commenced implementation in 2022. However, Grenada was also one of six Member States of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) which benefited from the mainstreaming of FAD fishing technology under the Japan-funded Caribbean Fisheries Co-management (CARIFICO) project, implemented between 2012-2017 in partnership with the CRFM. Since then, the CRFM has been facilitating knowledge transfer to other Member States, building upon this foundational work. It previously facilitated a similar exchange through which Grenada also shared its FAD expertise with Jamaica. This exchange, executed through the fisheries authorities in Grenada and TCI, was also facilitated by the CRFM.

Grenada’s Minister of Blue Economy and Marine Affairs, Hon. Lennox Andrews, said: “I see this as one very good example where, as a people, we can come together and work together to share our knowledge, share experiences, and create the competence and the human resources that we all need to develop our region.”

CRFM Deputy Executive Director, Dr. Sandra Grant, noted that this fisher exchange will provide TCI fishers with an initial understanding of FAD technology and an opportunity to reflect on how it can be applied in the Turks and Caicos Islands to provide year-round income generation for fishers.

The goal of the fisher exchange was to strengthen regional fisheries cooperation and support sustainable livelihoods. The visit of the TCI delegation to Grenada provided valuable hands-on exposure to Grenada’s well-established FAD fishery, allowing participants to observe operations, fishing techniques, and the harvesting of key pelagic species, including yellowfin tunas weighing over 100 pounds. Participants also took part in the construction of FADs, gaining practical, technical experience that will be directly applicable to TCI’s planned FAD pilot programme.



Turks and Caicos Islands fishers learn to build FADs in Grenada

*(Photo: Minister of Blue Economy and Marine Affairs, Grenada)*



FADs deliver prized catch (105 lbs)

*(Photo: Minister of Blue Economy and Marine Affairs, Grenada)*

By the end of the fisher exchange, it was clear that the Grenada experience—which enabled TCI fishers to witness the scale and efficiency of Grenada’s FAD operations—had a monumental impact upon the fishers who participated. In a closing session held last Thursday, Mr. David Clare said, “It’s the greatest fishing [technology] I’ve ever seen in my life, and it works perfectly!”

Another fisher, Mr. Kevin Harvey, noted how effective the FADs were in capturing fish in the middle of the ocean compared with trolling from shore to where the FADs had been deployed.

For his part, Mr. Dwaine Cox shared Mr. Clare’s enthusiasm for this invaluable learning opportunity. He said that they have been talking for a while about the need for the TCI to diversify its fishing industry, and the time has now come to do so.

The Director of the TCI’s Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources Management, Mr. Alwyn R. Ponteen, stated: “The Department deeply values the traditional knowledge and dedication of the TCI fishers. They demonstrate a readiness to embrace new techniques with a progressive mindset. This programme represents a strategic and sustainable investment in the youths, men, and women who form the backbone of our fisheries sector. It also advances our collective commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 2, 8 and 14 - 'Zero Hunger', 'Decent Work and Economic Growth' and 'Life Below Water', respectively.”

Mr. Nigel Gibbs, Chief Fisheries Officer (Ag.), Fisheries Division, Grenada, said: “We do look forward to continued collaboration and believe that this is the beginning of a lasting Caribbean relationship that will grow stronger in the future.”

The collaborators expressed their gratitude to Jamaica for its hospitality towards the TCI delegation during their stopover on their way to Grenada.



The TCI delegation with Dr. Grant of the CRFM  
*(Photo: Minister of Blue Economy and Marine Affairs, Grenada)*

The Turks and Caicos Islands Government (TCIG) remains resolute in its commitment to develop a sustainable FAD fishery as part of its Sustainable Livelihoods Strategy. TCIG plans to launch its FAD pilot programme in the coming months. This will include robust stakeholder consultations, FAD construction and deployment, development of a fisheries management plan grounded in best practices, and advancement of the necessary legislative reforms to support a sustainable FAD fishery.

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## ABOUT THE CRFM:

The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) was officially inaugurated on 27 March 2003 in Belize City, Belize, where it is headquartered, following the signing of the Agreement Establishing the CRFM on 4 February 2002. It 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.