ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES NATIONAL REPORT TO THE CARIBBEAN FISHERIES FORUM

A DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL FISHING FLEET

The Fishing industry of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is small scale and artisanal, using traditional gear, method and vessels. Fishing vessels are open and powered by outboard engines (see table 1 in appendix). These vessels exploit both oceanic and inshore pelagics as well as shelf and deep slope demersals.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines also has a Highseas fishing fleet which are foreign owned vessels registered in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The Highseas fishing fleet is of an industrial nature, harvesting tuna and tuna like species. There are thirty-two (32) such vessels fishing in the Atlantic. (see table 2 in appendix).

B. STATISTICS, RESEARCH AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

The landing sites are zoned and categorized (stratified). There are seven zones and thirty six (36) landing sites. Categorically, a site is designated as either primary, secondary or tertiary according to the number of fishing boats that regularly land fish at the site, the amount of fish landed and the level of infra-structural development. There are two (2) primary sites (Kingstown and Barrouallie); fourteen (14) secondary and twenty (20) tertiary sites. In addition to these on-shore landing sites, several trading vessels take fish directly from the fishermen and they are also classified as landing sites.

The catch and effort data follows a stratified sampling methodology. In this approach all the identified fish landing sites within the country are first partitioned into groups or strata, and the sampling is then performed separately within each stratum.

The sampling units (landing sites) are stratified prior to sampling into three groups (primary, secondary and tertiary) based on the variables mentioned above. The technique of simple random sampling is then used to select the days of the month each landing site is sampled. Sampling is not carried out on Saturdays, Sundays and major holidays, nevertheless, every day is considered a potential fishing day. This simplifies data analysis and does not seem to be a great source of error since fishermen fish whenever they can regardless of what day it is.

An estimate of the amount of fish landed in the country is obtained by summing the totals of all the estimates for the individual landing sites.

In 2012, a total of 1,472,694 lbs of fish products with an estimated value of $8,935,174 was landed in St.Vincent and the Grenadines (see table 3 in appendix).

The Highseas tuna fishing vessels flagged with St. Vincent and the Grenadines and operating within the ICCAT Convention Area generally land and transship their catches at two major

transshipment ports in Trinidad and Tobago. While there is ongoing collaboration and good communication with ship owners for obtaining fishery statistics, St. Vincent and the Grenadines recognises the need to establish an independent port sampling programme to verify landings and transshipping activities at these ports. For this purpose, St. Vincent and the Grenadines has submitted a proposal to ICCAT to establish a 12-month sampling programme at Trinidad and Tobago's transshipment ports.

D. RESEARCH

In 2012, financial approval was given for the commencement of several research studies including a lobster and conch abundance and distribution survey. Funding was also identified for the upgrading of laboratory facilities at the Fisheries Division namely, the procurement of new equipment and materials and training for laboratory personnel.

Field surveys were also conducted in Canouan to observe possible impacts on marine habitats as a result of ongoing development at the Canouan Resort at Carenage Bay. Data was taken on fishing communities, invertebrate populations, reef structure and health as well as the status of other benthic coverage.

C. POLICY AND LEGISLATION

As part of CRFM led activities aimed at strengthening fisheries management across the Caribbean, The Fisheries Division under the ACP Fish 11 project engaged in a highly consultative process to develop a Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy for St.Vincent and the Grenadines. Through a series of public meetings with various governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders across St.Vincent and the Grenadines, a draft policy document currently under review, was developed.

In 2012, the Division commenced work to amend The Fish and Fish Products Regulations (2006). This was done to ensure harmonization with recent changes made to European Commission fish products regulations namely: Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004, Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 854/2004.

F. DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITES

Consistent with its drive to enhance fisheries development in St.Vincent and the Grenadines, two new Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) were deployed in March, 2012, one off the western coast of Bequia and the other off Barrouallie on the Leeward coast of St.Vincent. It is envisaged that deployment and subsequent use of these FADS will help to increase fish catches, increase fishing efficiency, reduce pressure on reef and insular shelf fish populations, increase financial contribution of fisheries to national economy, contribute to national food security and encourage greater collaboration among fishermen. Funding has already been identified for the development and deployment of an additional six more FADS around St.Vincent and the Grenadines.

In June 2012, the Fisheries Division introduced a 'fish in ice' pilot project where ice boxes were installed in four fishing vessels to be used during their fishing operations. The fish in ice project was conducted in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) which financed the project. The objectives of this project were to create greater awareness among fishermen about the importance of landing better quality fish and also to provide training in Fiber Reinforced Plastic ice box installation to local fishermen.

The Fisheries Division commenced a nationwide vessel reinspection and registration programme in April 2012. The inspection aspect of this programme aimed to ensure that fishing vessels in St.Vincent and the Grenadines are in compliance with the local regulations and standards, particularly those governing safety at sea and fish processing and handling. The vessel registration aimed to collect socio-economic information on the industry to help provide the basis for the implementation of a licensing regime. This programme is ongoing and is expected to conclude in 2013.

Additionally, information exchanges were held between St.Vincent and the Grenadines and Antigua and Barbuda personnel, to highlight lessons learnt by the latter that could further assist St.Vincent in regaining certification to export to European markets.

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

In 2012, the Fisheries Division began work to develop Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU) Regulations. These proposed regulations seek to address issues pertaining to both local and Highseas IUU and are currently under review.

OTHER ISSUES

Mr. Ferique Shortte embarked on a one year Masters Programme, Fisheries Policy at the University of Wollongong, Australia.

Ms. Lucine Edwards attended the annual International Ocean Institute Ocean Governance: Policy, Law and Management training course at Dalhousie University, Canada. The course which ran from May to July 14th included training on the various component of Ocean Governance including Law of the Sea, Negotiation and Communication, Maritime Security and Fisheries Policy.

In September 2012, Ms. Alicia Martin embarked on a six month research fellowship at the Marine Research Institute, United Nations University Fisheries Training Programme, Reykjavik, Iceland. Ms. Martin specialized in Quality Management of Fish Handling and Processing.

Mr. Raymond Ryan, former Chief Fisheries Officer was promoted to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation and Industry in September 2012. Mrs. Jennifer Cruickshank-Howard former Senior Fisheries Officer, has been appointed Chief Fisheries Officer (Acting).

Appendix

Table 1: Description of local fishing fleet in St.Vincent and the Grenadines Source: Fisheries Division, CARIFIS 2011

Vessel Types	Description	No. of Vessels
Flat Transoms (Bow & Sterns	These are commonly called bow and stern or dories. They are open boats of 3 – 6 m (11- 27ft) in length. They are constructed from wood or marine plywood which in many cases are covered by epoxy or fiberglass, which provides a waterproof covering. They are often powered by one or two outboard gasoline engines ranging from 14 – 115 horsepower. Oars maybe the only form of propulsion on rare occasions. These vessels are used mainly in the lobster and conch fishery in the Grenadines.	230
Pirogues	These are open boats with a pointed bow and flat transom, however, the bow is much higher than that of the flat transom boats and they tend to be slightly larger, ranging from 7 – 10 m (19 – 30 ft) in length. They are constructed from fiberglass and powered by one or two outboard gasoline engines ranging from 40 -85 horsepower. These vessels are predominantly used in the trolling and demersal fisheries.	390
Double enders	Double enders or "two bows" are open wooden boats ranging from 3 – 9 m (10 – 29 ft) in length. Both ends of the boat are shaped like the bow of a boat. In most cases the only means of propulsion are oars, but occasionally, they may be powered by a small outboard gasoline engine specially rigged at one end of the boat. These engines range from 6 – 48 horsepower, These vessels are used mainly in the beach seine fishery.	69
Multipurpose	In SVG these vessels range from 34.7 ft – 48.5 ft in length. The main type of longliner is a Yanmar type made of glass reinforced plastic (GRP) powered by inboard diesel engines ranging from 90 – 190 hp. They are multi-purpose in nature and designed to operate up to 150 nautical miles from the islands with a 3 to 5 day stay at sea. These vessels are used primarily for tuna longline fishing, but may be utilized for trolling, bottom longline fishing, pot fishing and angling.	30
Others	These includes, canoes, rowboats etc.	18

*The CPUE for most of the vessels and fishery type is calculated using the gear, the number of trips per year and the sample weight in lbs per year.

Table 2: Summary of the St. Vincent High Seas fleets. (Source: Fisheries Division)

	landings in metric tonnes
Yellowfin tuna	927
Bigeye	37
Albacore	423
Spearfish	5
Swordish	14
Sailfish	4
Mahi mahi	4
Kingsfish	6
Miscellaneous	299
Total	1719

Table 3.Summary of landings by fishery for 2012 (Source Fisheries Division)

	% weight of total landings
Offshore pelagics - including blackfish tuna, kingfish, dolphin fish	24.0
Demersals - including snapper, red hind rock hind, parrotfishes , groupers	11.2
Inshore pelagics - including balahoo, jacks, robin, skipjacks	53.6
Pilot whales and porpoises	0.1
Rays and Sharks	1.3
Turtles	0.1
Shellfish	5.5