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CRFM ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

CRFM SECOND STRATEGIC PLAN (2013 – 2021)

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**CRFM Secretariat
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CRFM ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT –CRFM Second Strategic Plan (2013 – 2021)

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Foreword

The first Strategic Plan in CRFM's short history, covering the period 2003 -2011 was endorsed by the 1st meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum held in Belize in March 2003, after which it was adopted by COTED in 2003. The Strategic Plan was implemented through two Medium Term Plans (MTPs), for the periods 2003- 2007 and 2008- 2011 respectively, which guided the formulation of annual or biennial work plans and budgets.

However, the Independent Performance Review of CRFM carried out at the end of 2012/early 2013 stated that the Strategic Plan was used as general guidance in the recent years; the Secretariat and CRFM members mainly used the Medium Term Plans as immediate reference documents. The Strategic Plan implementation was done in parallel with the important process of formulating the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy, a process that also started in 2003. The Independent Performance Review also noted that while the first Strategic Plan was technically sound, the human resource and financial constraints encountered over the last decade made it impossible to carry out all programmes foreseen under the first plan.

A Strategic Plan needs to be both aspirational and pragmatic. It needs to reflect the needs of the members as well as to motivate implementation and be rooted in reality. After all, many of the nine programme areas of the first Strategic plan are still ongoing and need further attention also in the future. The projects formulated under the first Strategic Plan and MTPs require additional funding and human resources that can be achieved by more emphasis on resource mobilization. Any forward looking document, including this second Strategic Plan, needs to start with an analysis of the situation (the historical context, what was accomplished) followed by an assessment of the context in which the CRFM operates and the challenges facing the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the Caribbean and the CRFM. This is the purpose of the first three sections of this Plan. These sections also provide a background for the 4th section, as to why the vision and goals in that section are what they are. The basis for section 4 is laid by the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy.

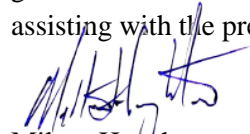
The same section also details the Strategic and Functional Objectives which are to constitute the major conceptual building blocks for CRFMs activities in the next 8 years. These high-level objectives are merely a reformulation of objectives and programmes that were considered important in the 1st Strategic Plan and the first two Medium Term Plans. They have been discussed at consultations with members in Jamaica (December 2012) and St Vincent and the Grenadines (January 2013) and equally intense discussions at the CRFM Secretariat in early 2013. The strategic planning process and the preparation of this document was done with funding and technically supported provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) under project TCP/SLC/3401 "Independent review of CRFM and preparation of a new strategic plan".

There is a mix of pure fisheries sector approaches presented in this Strategic Plan with those of a more multi-disciplinary nature, such as the ecosystem approach to fisheries, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. The objectives, as presented here reflect a fair measure of compromise among the many preferences and priorities expressed by the CRFM members. The Strategic and Functional Objectives are presented in abbreviated form here, with information about their relevance and the related

organizational results expected at the end of the 8 year period, in 2021. More information, presented in a logical framework approach, allowing detailed elaboration on the organizational results and the activities and inputs (including staff and funds) required will be articulated in the Third Medium Term Plan.

This Strategic Plan is in first instance a document for the CRFM Governing Bodies, being the Ministerial Council and the Caribbean Fisheries Forum. It was reviewed and endorsed by the Eleventh Meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum, April 2013, and approved as a provisional document, pending final approval of the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy, by the Seventh Meeting of the CRFM Ministerial Council in May 2013. It will become a valuable source of information and reference in order to meet the demands of the CRFM stakeholders, including member governments, development partners, research agencies, fisherfolk and others in the Caribbean region. This Strategic Plan will provide the guidance for the development and implementation of the biennial work programmes of CRFM during the period, 2014-2021.

On behalf of the Member States and partners of the CRFM, I take this opportunity to convey our sincere gratitude to the FAO for their generous support in undertaking the independent performance review and assisting with the preparation of this Strategic Plan.



Milton Haughton
Executive Director of CRFM

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARIFIS	Caribbean Fisheries Information System
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CCCFP	CARICOM Community Common Fisheries Policy
CCRF	Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CFMC	Caribbean Fishery Management Council
CFRAMP	CARICOM Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management Program
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CHOG	CARICOM Heads of Government
CLME	Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem
COFCOR	Council for Foreign and Community Relations
COFI	Committee on Fisheries
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development
COPESCAALC	Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EAA	Ecosystem approach to aquaculture
EAF	Ecosystem approach to fisheries
EBM	Ecosystem-Based Management
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IPOA	International Plan of Action
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated
IWC	International Whaling Commission
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoU	Memorandum Of Understanding
MTP	Medium Term Plan
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NGO	Non-governmental Organization

OLDEPESCA	Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development
OSPESCA	Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization
RAA	Aquaculture Network of the Americas
REMP	Regional Environmental Monitoring Programme
RFB	Regional Fishery Body
RFNSAP	Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SICA	Central American Integration System
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPS	Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary
SSF	Small-Scale Fisheries
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USA	United States of America
UWI	University of the West Indies
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
WECAFC	Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission
WGI	Working Group on ICCAT

1. Introduction

1.1 *CRFM Historical Context*

The origins of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) are to be found in a project funded largely by the Government of Canada and Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to address a need felt by the CARICOM Member States for development and proper management of their fisheries resources. This resulted in the conclusion of a Cooperation Agreement between CARICOM and the International Centre For Ocean Development (ICOD) in 1991, entitled CARICOM Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management Program (CFRAMP). CFRAMP had the following key objectives, namely:

- Establishment of a core group of Technical Expertise from the Region to advise CARICOM Member States on fisheries matters.
- Increasing the awareness of the importance of the fisheries sector.
- Improving and strengthening the capabilities of national fisheries authorities in the Community.
- Expanding the cadre of trained personnel in the Region.
- Improving the knowledge of conservation and fisheries management.
- Improving and expanding fisheries management information.
- Demonstration of the benefits of a collaborative approach to fisheries management in the region and fostering the establishment of the CARICOM Regional Fisheries Mechanism.

During this 8-year project, which got extended to facilitate the completion of outputs foreseen, the foundation was prepared for the CRFM to start working independently at the end of the project.¹

The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism was established by means of a regional intergovernmental agreement signed on 4 February 2002.² This agreement entered into force upon signature of any seven Member States or Associate Members of CARICOM. In fact, entering into force of the agreement happened on the same day.³ The organization adopted its own rules of procedure on 5 August 2002 and was officially inaugurated in Belize City, Belize, on 27 March 2003. The CRFM, in other words, is a rather recently established RFB, especially when compared with many other existing regional fisheries bodies.

¹ See CRFM Administrative Report, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Second Medium Term Plan 2008-2011 including a Review of the First Medium Term Plan, CRFM Secretariat, p. 1 (2009). Hereinafter CRFM Second Medium Term Plan. This close initial link with CARICOM is also reflected in the fact that the Host Country Agreements with the Government of Belize and of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which date back to 1991 and 1992 respectively and are still operational today, are both concluded with CARICOM as a partner.

² Agreement establishing the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism. Multilateral, signed on 4 February 2002, 2242 *United Nations Treaty Series* pp. 271, 273-290. This agreement entered into force on 4 February 2002 (as available at <<http://www.caricom-fisheries.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=k2y%2b0jOz%2ffY%3d&tabid=124>>. Hereinafter CRFM Agreement.

³ The following eight CARICOM Member States signed on 4 February 2002: Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

In its first years as RFB the CRFM developed and strengthened its institutional set-up consisting of the CRFM Ministerial Council, Caribbean Fisheries Forum and the Technical Unit/Secretariat. The Secretariat made an effort to increase the number of members and in a couple of years the membership increased to 17. Currently, the CRFM membership consists of the following CARICOM members and CARICOM associate members (which include some United Kingdom's Overseas Territories): 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 Turks and Caicos Islands. Under the CRFM Agreement they are all full members of the CRFM.

The work in the first five years generally focused on:

- (i) Advocacy, Policy and Planning
- (ii) Fisheries Statistics and Information
- (iii) Fisheries Research and Resource Assessment
- (iv) Fisheries Resource Management and Development
- (v) Corporate Services Programmes

The CRFM decided to establish within its Secretariat dedicated sections to deliver the first Strategic Plan and its associated Medium Term Plans (MTPs).

A start was also made to draw a common fisheries regime that was developed later into the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (see section 2.1). CRFM managed to mobilize some resources from donors in support of the implementation of its Medium Term Plans, programmes and projects. The results of the successful approach are clearly visible in the number of externally funded projects in recent years.

Emerging issues and challenges that got more important in the last five years and to which CRFM tried to respond included, among others: rising food prices, overexploitation of fisheries resources, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices, the increasing fish quality and safety requirements in fish trade. The scope of CRFM's work became wider and included for instance strengthening of fisherfolk organizations, promotion of aquaculture, aiming to introduce monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), small-business development, and development of disaster risk reduction programmes for fisheries. There was even an intension to work on credit and insurance. The focus on the core objectives of the CRFM, those agreed at its establishment, diminished somewhat as the same resources had to be allocated towards a broader set of new objectives.

These core objectives of the CRFM were the following.

- Efficient management and sustainable development of marine and other aquatic resources within the jurisdictions of its Member States;
- Promotion and establishment of co-operative arrangements among interested Member States for the efficient management of shared, straddling or highly migratory marine and other aquatic resources;
- Provision of technical advisory and consultative services to fisheries divisions of Member States to assist with the development, management and conservation of their marine and other aquatic resources.

The second Medium Term Plan (2008 -2011) was devoid of focus and was essentially an extensive list of multiple activities, which resulted in a CRFM doing a bit of everything, sometimes good – sometimes poor. The fisheries management and development and establishment of co-operative arrangements received less attention for a period; something which has recently (2012) been rectified with the CRFM-OSPESCA Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation. A renewed interest and attention to CRFMs original objectives is providing a base for this Strategic Planning period.

1.2 Independent performance review findings

An Independent Performance Review of the CRFM was carried out by FAO in close collaboration with the CRFM members and its secretariat in late 2012 and early 2013. The four-person review panel was requested to base its work on the obligations of the CRFM members in relation to the international fisheries instruments, guidelines, best practices, theories, approaches and recent developments; those that are widely accepted and agreed by the CRFM member countries in their strive for sustainable management and conservation of the shared fisheries resources. The performance against the most essential components of fisheries management is reviewed, with an emphasis on the objectives and principles of the CRFM agreement and the performance against the second Medium Term Plan (2008 – 2011) of CRFM.

The panel prepared two subsequent draft versions of the report, which were discussed at two regional workshops with the CRFM members and the CRFM Secretariat; observations and comments received were addressed where appropriate. Various surveys were conducted among the CRFM membership to obtain their opinion on CRFM performance and on the recommendations put forward. A total of 78 recommendations were produced by the review panel. The recommendations that were considered of highest priority (scoring >4 out on a five point scale) to the future performance of CRFM in the future were the following:

Recommendations on scientific work and management advice

- The current structure with Working Groups and Annual Scientific Meetings that report to the Forum should be maintained as it appears to function well. Similarly, the decision making, work planning, review and reporting lines between the Council, Forum and Secretariat are good and should be maintained.
- The report of the annual scientific meeting should contain clear and specific technical advice and recommendations from each working group to the fisheries forum, in order to enable the forum to discuss and agree on research priorities and utilize the condensed and key research findings for regional policy and decision making purposes, keeping in mind that the Council is CRFM's policy and main decision making body. This approach should be informed by the respective national Fisheries Management Plans.
- The process for producing fisheries management advice for endorsement at CRFM level needs to be streamlined. CRFM and member countries should ensure that the advice coming from these annual scientific meetings is formulated in a way that is easily understandable and useful for the decision makers in the Fisheries Forum and policy makers at the Ministerial Council.

- Advice for small-scale fisheries management should be prioritized in the near future as there is uncertainty about current levels of resource exploitation in inshore and reef areas and the consequences this has for the future livelihoods of the fishers and the sustainability of the resources.
- Socio-economic, environmental and climate change concerns should be incorporated in the management advice as these may receive less attention if not dealt with properly, which could result in reduced uptake by the stakeholders.
- The 2012 Review of Current Fisheries Management Performance and Conservation Measures in the Western Central Atlantic Region should be used by the CRFM Secretariat to provide clear advice to the CRFM members in terms of improvement and harmonization of fisheries management plans and filling gaps and addressing weaknesses.

Recommendations on strengthening collaboration with donors and partner organizations

- The Secretariat and working groups should continue to maintain and strengthen contacts with JICA, EU, USA, CDB and other potential donors in support of joint research in the region.
- The CRFM should continue the recent initiative to foster closer cooperation with OSPESCA, as evidenced by the first joint fisheries and aquaculture ministerial meeting held on September 3-4, 2012. It is recommended that similar initiatives should be undertaken with the other advisory fishery bodies in the area, and foremost with WECAFC and OLDEPESCA. This initiative will expand the skills and technical support base.

Recommendations on fisheries data and statistics collection, analysis and dissemination

- Member countries should ensure timely provision of statistics, other data and information to the CRFM Secretariat.
- Member countries should ensure support for officers at the national level, even in the present scenario of limited financial resources, to allow them time and resources to complete their data and information related tasks, which should also include additional capacity building, preferably to be provided during the annual scientific meetings, in a consistent manner, using protocols, manuals and standard methodologies.
- CRFM should continue to carry out socio-economic assessments of small-scale fisheries and ensure that the data and information enable valuation of the contribution of small-scale fisheries to employment, income and food security in the CRFM member countries.

Recommendations on networking, reaching regional agreement and harmonized adoption of legally binding fisheries instruments

- Efforts of the CRFM members towards ratification of the various legally binding fisheries instruments should be increased (always keeping in mind that these are political decisions of Member States), in line with calls made by the CRFM Secretariat and with the Resolution on strengthening the implementation of international fisheries instruments made at the 14th session of WECAFC.
- CRFM should strengthen its role as networking mechanism among fisheries administrations of the member countries, providing opportunities to discuss informally and formally the positions of its members and reach agreements.

The main strength of the CRFM is the highly motivated staff in the secretariat and a well functioning governing structure. The regular meetings and workshops create a good ground for networking and for

establishing a collaborative relationship between the Secretariat staff and the CRFM member countries' fisheries staff. The technical and operational work conducted by CRFM in recent years is extensive, considering the limited budget the CRFM operates on. The institutional capacities of the agencies responsible for fisheries in the CRFM member countries are generally weak and the agencies have limited human, technical and financial resources, which has negative consequences in terms of uptake of advice and recommendations.

Overall, the Panel rates the performance of CRFM as satisfactory to good. There is certainly scope for improvement in a range of areas, but steps made in recent years by the CRFM Secretariat and members towards better management of the fisheries resources are promising. The Panel has tried to provide a well-balanced and comprehensive review report that positively contributes to the future performance of CRFM.

1.3 The Strategic Planning Needs and Process

In 2002 a Strategic Plan was prepared to guide the organization's planning and programming activities. This first Strategic Plan provided an analysis of the fisheries situation in CRFM Member States, highlighted key global issues of regional concern, and formulated nine programmes to address priority needs identified at that time. Consideration was also given to the competency of the CRFM, as well as availability of resources and expertise to the CRFM, for successful delivery of the identified programmes.

This first Strategic Plan was typical for a newly established organization and included subjects imperative for that status, such as an assessment of the members' expectations with regards to institutionalization of the CFRAMP, an overview of institutional structures the CRFM should have in order to fulfill its mission and goals, a business plan and action plan. The first issues have been dealt with and are incorporated in the CRFM Agreement and its Rules of Procedures, while the latter issues are covered by CRFM's Medium Term Plans (MTPs). These matters will therefore not be included in the 2nd Strategic Plan.

The first Strategic Plan was implemented through two Medium Term Plans, for the periods April 2003-March 2007 and April 2008-March 2012 respectively, which guided the formulation of annual work plans and budgets.

As the first Strategic Plan and second Medium Term Plan reached completion, and a new 8 year Strategic Plan is required, it was considered essential for the CRFM to undertake a review and evaluation of the performance of the organization and of the state of fisheries management in its Member States with regard to agreed goals at national, regional and international levels. The Fifth meeting of the CRFM Ministerial Council, held in Roseau, Dominica on 13 October 2011 considered the need for a new strategic plan. The CRFM Secretariat, acting upon the request from the Council, addressed a letter to FAO on 9 March 2012 for technical assistance in view of FAO's neutral position and extensive past experience in this particular domain. The Caribbean Fisheries Forum later the same month endorsed the draft terms of reference for the performance review and recommended these terms of reference to be submitted to the Ministerial Council.⁴ The sixth meeting of the CRFM Ministerial Council, held in

⁴ CRFM, CRFM Management Report, PY 2012/13, Vol. 1, Report and Proceedings of the Tenth Meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum, Nassau, The Bahamas, 26-28 March 2012, pp. 113-114. Hereinafter Report Caribbean Fisheries Forum 2012.

Nassau, the Bahamas, on 15 June 2012 “Endorsed the performance review and the development of the Second Strategic Plan”. The Terms of Reference of the review were shared and noted.

FAO reacted positively to this request of the CRFM and established a Technical Cooperation Programme Facility (TCP/SLC/3401) project, entitled “Independent Review of CRFM and Preparation of a New Strategic Plan”. The project aimed “To strengthen the performance of CRFM to better address the sustainable development, conservation and management of the fisheries resources of the CARICOM region”.

A first meeting on the Strategic Planning Process was held in Belize, September 2012 as side – meeting of the CRFM-OSPESCA High Level Ministerial meeting. This meeting was followed by completion of a survey on CRFM’s performance and priorities and a CRFM performance review and strategic planning meeting, held in Kingston, Jamaica on 5 December 2012. The latter meeting was attended by 14 CRFM member countries: Anguilla, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos. That meeting, although dedicating more time to the draft performance review, determined that a focus on the CRFM core functions would remain for the 2nd strategic plan, with an emphasis on incorporating the Ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF). The meeting further recommended that the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP) should form the basis for this second Strategic Plan and that it should be assumed that the CRFM would be accorded the status of Competent Agency under the CCCFP. It further noted that assuming all functions of Competent Agency under the CCCFP would cost some 1 million USD additionally to CRFM’s annual operational budget. The meeting also stressed that the CRFM agreement should be consulted to re-emphasize or refocus the core business of CRFM in case funding is limited.

A first draft Strategic Plan was prepared by the FAO in close collaboration with the Secretariat in January 2013 based on the guidance received in Jamaica. It was presented for discussion at a Regional Workshop to develop the second Strategic Plan for the CRFM, held in Kingstown, St Vincent and the Grenadines on 30 January 2013. Recommendations and guidance obtained at this workshop and comments received afterwards from the CRFM members were incorporated to the extent possible. The revised second Strategic Plan was then presented by the Secretariat to the Eleventh Meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum, held in Barbados on 24-26 April 2013 for review and recommendation to the CRFM Ministerial Council for adoption. Subsequently, the Seventh Meeting of the CRFM Ministerial Council, held in May 2013, determined that the second Strategic Plan be adopted provisionally, pending formal adoption of the CCCFP by the CHOG.

2. Regional and International Context

2.1 Regional Context

2.1.1 Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy

The CRFM has been instrumental in preparing the way forward of the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy. An effort to establish a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime at the CARICOM level

was initiated at the Fourteenth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in Trinidad and Tobago, 14-15 February 2003. After eight years of sometimes difficult negotiations, stakeholders agreed on the text of the draft Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP). The formal endorsement of the CCCFP took place in Antigua and Barbuda on 20 May 2011 at the fourth meeting of the CRFM Ministerial Council. The same Ministerial Council agreed⁵ “to the next steps in terms of the Common Fisheries Policy, as follows –

- (i) The Draft Agreement should be submitted to the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) and the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) for formal consideration/endorsement;
- (ii) The Draft Agreement would then be submitted to the CARICOM Legal Affairs Committee (LAC) for review and refinement;
- (iii) Then submitted to the Conference of Heads of Government for their consideration and approval through the Community Council.

At the moment of writing this second Strategic Plan, the Draft Agreement is under review by the CARICOM Legal Affairs Committee (LAC).

The CCCFP, being developed in partnership with all relevant stakeholders, is a document that has the buy-in of these stakeholders. The CCCFP is a policy that is in line with international and regional best-practice approaches, instruments and agreements on fisheries and aquaculture. As such the CCCFP, once approved by the CARICOM Heads of Government and implementation formally started; will make a major contribution to the efficient management and sustainable development of marine and other aquatic resources within the jurisdictions of the Members of CRFM. The CRFM played a key role in the CCCFP development process. The CRFM Secretariat is very likely to be designated as “Competent Agency” by Participating Parties in the CCCFP to support them in achieving the objectives of the CCCFP.

As a consequence it is logical that the CRFM adopts the recently formulated and agreed upon vision, goals and objectives, as well as its fundamental principles, of the CCCFP for the upcoming Eight-year Strategic Planning period. However, the implication of becoming designated as “Competent Agency” is large, both for the CRFM Members and its Secretariat. In section 4 of this Plan these implications are discussed in detail.

2.1.2 Castries (St. Lucia) Declaration on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing

At the 2nd Special Meeting of the CRFM Ministerial Council, which was held in Castries, St. Lucia on 28 July 2010 the CRFM issued a Declaration on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. The declaration stressed that IUU fishing is practiced by both local and foreign vessels and recognized that national, regional and global cooperation is necessary to effectively prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing.

This specific effort to resolve IUU fishing in the CRFM region was the start of renewed activities by various CRFM members on this subject. Nevertheless, the follow-up from the declaration in terms of

⁵ CRFM Management Report – PY 2011 / 12. Volume 1. Report and Proceedings of the Fourth Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, St. Mary’s, Antigua and Barbuda, 20 May 2011.

ratification and implementation of relevant international fisheries instruments (e.g. the FAO Compliance Agreement, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU) and UN General Assembly resolutions, has been very poor so far. Two and a half years after the declaration only one CRFM member (Antigua and Barbuda) has a National Plan of Action on IUU fishing and very limited progress has been made with the ratification of the international instruments. The only positive news in this respect is that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines accessed the UN Fish Stocks Agreement on 29 October 2010. Moreover, none of the CRFM members has accessed so far the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, which was approved by the FAO Conference at its Thirty-sixth Session on 22 November 2009, and is very relevant if the CRFM countries are seriously interested to combat IUU fishing.

In summary, the good intentions of the CRFM members in terms of combating IUU fishing have not (yet) resulted in real developments in this area. Therefore the implementation of this declaration needs specific attention under the second Strategic Plan.

2.1.3 Regional Collaboration on Fisheries

Various regional fishery bodies (RFBs) are active in the same area as the CRFM and have to a certain extent overlapping memberships and mandates with CRFM. These RFBs include the following:

- Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC)
- Organización del Sector Pesquero y Acuícola de Centroamérica/ Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA);
- Organización Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero/Organization for the development of Fisheries in Latin America (OLDEPESCA);
- Red de Acuicultura de las Américas/Aquaculture Network of the Americas (RAA);
- Comisión de Pesca Continental y Acuicultura para América Latina y el Caribe/ Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture for Latin America and the Caribbean (COPESCAALC).

Of the above, only the WECAFC and OSPESCA will be discussed here, as these are the only two RFBs in which either more than 2 members of CRFM are participating or these are the RFBs that collaborated with CRFM in recent years.

Apart from the RFBs it is noteworthy that the CRFM Secretariat and its Member States participated actively in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project, which produced a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for regional endorsement and implementation. The CLME and its SAP are therefore discussed below as well.

Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission

Various regional fishery bodies (RFBs) are active in the same area as the CRFM and have to a certain extent overlapping memberships and mandates with CRFM. These RFBs include the following:

- Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC)
- Organización del Sector Pesquero y Acuícola de Centroamérica/ Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA);

- Organización Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero/ Organization for the development of Fisheries in Latin America (OLDEPESCA);
- Red de Acuicultura de las Américas/ Aquaculture Network of the Americas (RAA);
- Comisión de Pesca Continental y Acuicultura para América Latina y el Caribe/ Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture for Latin America and the Caribbean (COPESCAALC).

Of the above, only the WECAFC and OSPESCA will be discussed here, as these are the only two RFBs in which either more than 2 members of CRFM are participating or these are the RFBs that collaborated with CRFM in recent years.

Apart from the RFBs it is noteworthy that the CRFM Secretariat and its Member States participated actively in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project, which produced a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for regional endorsement and implementation. The CLME and its SAP are therefore discussed below as well.

Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization

In December 1995 the Fisheries and Aquaculture Authorities of Central America, aware that fishery resources in their waters are common, that the great majority are migratory or highly migratory and opportunities and development challenges are similar, established the Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA for its acronym in Spanish). OSPESCA member countries are: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Panamá. The Dominican Republic is an associate State within the Central American Integration System (SICA for its acronym in Spanish). OSPESCA aims to promote a sustainable and coordinated development of fisheries and aquaculture in the context of the Central American integration process by developing, approving and implementing regional policies, strategies, programs and projects of fisheries and aquaculture. OSPESCA is, like CRFM and WECAFC, a Regional Fishery Advisory Body and as such cannot issue binding recommendations.

In September 2012 CRFM and OSPESCA signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation (MoU), accompanied by a Joint Action Plan.

At the same joint CRFM-OSPESCA Ministerial Meeting the “Belize Declaration on CRFM-OSPESCA cooperation for sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture resources” was issued. The latter was undersigned by the Ministers or Chiefs of delegations of the member countries of both organizations.

The specific priority areas for the Action Plan include:

1. Research and management of fisheries of regional interest, with a focus on Spiny lobster and Large pelagic fisheries.
2. Combating Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing through strengthened Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Systems (MCS)
3. Regional development of aquaculture.

Additional areas to be covered under the Action Plan include the following:

- Research, development and management of fisheries of regional interest, such as Queen Conch and Lionfish.
- Markets.
- Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project
- Disaster and climate change risk management and adaptation strategies

- Securing small scale fisheries and livelihood security, training of fishers, fisheries policy coordination
- Development potential of under-utilized and un-utilized resources

The Belize Declaration, MoU and Action Plan should be regarded as a strategic partnership under which collaboration between the two organizations is strengthened significantly. The current 8 Year Strategic Plan of CRFM therefore needs to reflect specific dedication to this partnership and ensure proper follow-up to the Belize Declaration.

Caribbean Marine Large Ecosystem (CLME) Project

The project produced a Strategic Action Programme for the sustainable management of the shared living marine resources of the Caribbean and north Brazil shelf large marine ecosystems (CLME+ SAP). The CLME+ SAP builds on the Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses (TDAs) conducted under the CLME Project as well as on the additional knowledge, insights and experiences acquired through a series of CLME Case Studies and Pilot Projects executed by a range of regional and global partner organizations, in collaboration with the CLME+ countries and stakeholders. The CRFM was instrumental in the TDAs as well as in the development of the SAP.

Following the CLME regional fisheries governance assessment the CRFM has been assigned in the SAP a major role in the implementation of the SAP and particularly in the following SAP strategies:

- Strategy 2: Enhance the regional governance arrangements for sustainable fisheries
- Strategy 4: Enhance the governance arrangements for ecosystem-based management of reefs and associated ecosystems (e.g. seagrass beds, mangroves, reef slopes and coastal lagoons)
 - Sub-Strategy 4A: Enhance the governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystems approach for spiny lobster fisheries
 - Sub-Strategy 4B: Enhance the governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystem approach for the queen conch fisheries
- Strategy 5: Enhance the governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystem approach for pelagic fisheries
 - Sub-strategy 5A: Enhance the governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystem approach for flyingfish fisheries
 - Sub-strategy 5B: Enhance the governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystem approach for large pelagics fisheries
- Strategy 6: Implement EBM/EAF of the Guianas-Brazil continental shelf with special reference to the shrimp and groundfish fishery

The implementation of the SAP (once approved by a majority of CLME+ States) is expected to be financed through:

- GEF co-financing support for the overall coordination and for the execution of high-priority Strategies and Actions of the CLME+ SAP
- Potential contributions from multi-lateral institutions and bi-lateral partners
- Commitments and financial contributions from the CLME+ countries and regional stakeholders (including, as feasible, the private sector)

It is clear that CRFM members, apart from beneficiaries will also be expected to contribute to the implementation of the relevant strategies under the SAP.

2.2 International Context

2.2.1 Relevant International Conventions

1996 International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT Convention)

This convention led to the establishment of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT). This commission is an inter-governmental fishery organization responsible for the conservation of tunas and tuna-like species in the Atlantic Ocean and its adjacent seas. ICCAT is established as regional fisheries management organization that deals with study and management of tunas and tuna-like fishes in the Atlantic Ocean. Such studies include research on biometry, ecology, and oceanography, with a principal focus on the effects of fishing on stock abundance. The Commission's work requires the collection and analysis of statistical information relative to current conditions and trends of the fishery resources in the Convention area. The Commission also undertakes work in the compilation of data for other fish species that are caught during tuna fishing ("bycatch", principally sharks) in the Convention area, and which are not investigated by another international fishery organization. Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Belize are currently contracting parties to ICCAT. Guyana was a Cooperating Party during 2003-2012, after which the status was lost due to lack of fulfillment of reporting obligations. Suriname has been a Cooperating Party since 2011. A country's cooperating party status is reviewed and renewed annually by ICCAT

The CRFM established a dedicated CRFM Working Group on ICCAT (WGI). This Working Group is expected to contribute to increasing awareness and build capacity among CRFM members to participate more effectively in ICCAT processes and eventually increase ICCAT membership in the region. The mandate of ICCAT and its work has effect on the fisheries in the CRFM area and as such collaboration of CRFM as observer in ICCAT and representative of CRFM member interests in ICCAT is required and needs further strengthening. The latter was also a recommendation of the recent Performance Review.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Levels (CITES) is based on the premise that exploitation and trade in certain animal and plant species together with other factors such as habitat loss, are capable of rapidly depleting their populations and even threaten to bring some species close to extinction. Its aim, therefore, is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. All CRFM members, except Anguilla and The Turks and Caicos Islands are contracting parties to CITES. The CITES Convention is important for the CRFM as queen conch (*Strombus gigas*) is listed under its appendix II since 1992. The recently (2012) established CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch has made recommendations to the 16th meeting of the CITES Conference of Parties (Bangkok, Thailand, 3-14 March 2013) about the management of Queen Conch at the regional level. These recommendations will require CRFM follow-up over the period of this Strategic Plan and probably further.

International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1946)

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) was set up under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling which was signed in Washington DC on December 2, 1946. The purpose of the Convention is to provide for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus facilitate the orderly development of the whaling industry.

The main duty of the IWC is to review and revise as necessary the measures outlined in the Schedule to the Convention which governs the conduct of whaling throughout the world. These measures, *inter alia*, provide for complete protection of certain species; designate specified areas as whale sanctuaries; set limits on the numbers and size of whales which may be taken; prescribe open and closed seasons and areas for whaling; and prohibit the capture of suckling calves and female whales accompanied by calves. The compilation of catch reports and other statistical and biological records is also required.

In addition, the Commission encourages, co-ordinates and funds whale research, publishes the results of scientific research and promotes studies into related matters such as the humaneness of the killing operations⁶.

CRFM members in the IWC include Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Belize, St. Kitts Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. At present there is no formal relationship between CRFM and the IWC. Whale related issues are hardly discussed within the CRFM framework and this is not expected to change in the near future.

2.2.2 Relevant International Treaties and Agreements

The development of the international and regional policy and legal frameworks for fisheries and related subjects has taken off over the last three decades. All CRFM members have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), however, as the Independent Review showed the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement only attracts at present four (4) CRFM Member States, namely Barbados, Belize, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia, while nine (9) CRFM members have ratified the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement. There is thus scope for improvement here, also taking in consideration the Castries Declaration and the recently issued Resolution of the members of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission on strengthening the implementation of international fisheries instruments, a commission in which all CRFM members are represented as well.

Relevant binding international and regional fisheries instruments in which CRFM members are parties or in the process to become party:

- 1993 FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (FAO Compliance Agreement);
- 1995 United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UN Fish Stocks Agreement);

⁶ CRFM. 2009. Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Second Medium Term Plan 2008 - 2011. 103 pp

- 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (Port State Measures Agreement).

2.2.3 Relevant Non-binding Instruments

The 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

The Code of Conduct, which is voluntary, aims, *inter alia*, to establish principles for responsible fishing, in accordance with the relevant rules of international law, and to serve as an instrument of reference to help states establish or improve the legal, institutional and managerial arrangements required for responsible and sustainable fishing. It applies globally to all fisheries, including fisheries within the EEZ and the territorial sea as well as those on the high seas and to all stages of the fishing process, including capture and post-harvest production and trade⁷.

Under the Code of Conduct various International Plans of Actions (IPOAs) and technical guidelines have been developed that are of relevance to the CRFM and its members. These include, amongst others, the following:

- International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries;
- International Plan of Action for Conservation and Management of Sharks;
- International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity; and
- International Plan of Action for Illegal Unregulated Unreported Fishing.
- 1997 FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Development
- 2003 FAO Technical Guidelines on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF);
- 2008 FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas; and
- 2010 FAO International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards.

Moreover, a process to develop *International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries* (SSF Guidelines) is being conducted in which CRFM member countries participated extensively⁸. The SSF Guidelines will be internationally endorsed in 2014 and CRFM members will be expected to support national level implementation in the Caribbean region.

3 Challenges Facing Fisheries in the Caribbean

3.1 Trends, Risks and Opportunities

There are a number of global and regional trends that will affect fisheries and fisheries products at all levels in the coming years. It is expected that the impact of these trends will be felt strongly in the

⁷ CRFM. 2009. Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Second Medium Term Plan 2008 - 2011. 103 pp

⁸ FAO/CRFM/WECAFC Caribbean Regional Consultation on the Development of International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, Jamaica, 6-8 December 2012.

Caribbean region and particularly in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), many of which are members of CRFM.

Main challenges to the Caribbean countries in terms of fisheries and fisheries products include the increasing number of people vulnerable to food insecurity, increasing inequalities, rising numbers of poor and even undernourished people in the Caribbean, a situation which is aggravated by consequences of climate change and variability and the global competition for fisheries resources and fisheries products.

Key concerns in the region include, amongst others:

- The Caribbean countries are mostly characterized by low to negative GDP growth rates, high inflation rates and with increasing public debts; a situation which may have significant impacts on the investment in the fisheries sector.
- Persistent increases in the cost of food and fuel coupled with changes in market arrangements for traditional agriculture exports to the European Union and the fallout from the global financial crisis in recent years have all contributed to the intensification of socio-economic changes especially in the smaller countries. In particular the rising fuel costs affect the sector's performance negatively.
- An increase in the total number of undernourished people in the region, during the period 1990-2005, from 7.5 to 7.6 million people⁹.
- Increasing challenges associated with international trade, including trade of fish and fisheries products, through barriers to market access and trade distorting domestic subsidies.
- There is evidence of important climate variability in the Caribbean and as a result many Governments are preoccupied with the uncertainties related to this and the investment needed to prevent losses and mitigate impacts.
- Livelihoods continue to be threatened from frequent devastation caused by natural disasters, especially the increasing intensities of hurricanes, the variability in rainfall intensities and patterns, the potential impact on incidence of agriculture pests and diseases, as well as an increase of praedial larceny.
- Considerable pressure on the natural resources available, including land, water, aquatic resources, forests and biodiversity, which are causing and could fuel more conflicts.
- The need to implement food security, fisheries and aquaculture policies at national level; policies that aim to increase sustainable food production.
- The consumption patterns and trends in the region that show preferences for other animal protein sources and imported foodstuff over regionally produced and harvested fish and fisheries products.
- The limited political will in the region to prioritize fisheries and invest in sustainable fisheries management and provide adequate resources to fisheries administrations and fisherfolk to manage the resources. This is partly due to the lack of awareness and appreciation of the range of benefits afforded by the fisheries sector, compared to those afforded by other economic sectors that may even compete for space, usage and resources associated with the marine ecosystem.

Opportunities to address the above and other concerns include for instance:

⁹ Challenges and Outlook for the Caribbean Region, FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, 31st Session, April 2010.

- Introduction of fuel saving technologies (e.g. four-stroke outboard engines instead of two-stroke, in vessel design and gears) may produce higher profitability for the fleets.
- Fish remains among the cheapest animal protein sources in the Caribbean and is locally available; as such it can play a major role in reducing malnutrition and reduce the regional import bill for foodstuff.
- The shift in nutrition patterns in the Caribbean that has resulted in increasing rates of obesity, which in turn has contributed to an increase in nutrition-related Chronic Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) including diabetes and hypertension, may provide opportunities for the fisheries sector as source of more healthy products that fit in healthy and nutritious diets.
- Continued efforts to improve market access, eliminate export subsidies and reduce trade-distorting domestic support in the developed countries may provide opportunities for the fisheries sector if the necessary SPS requirements are met.
- RIO+20 outcomes and the CARICOM attention to climate change and disaster risk management can be mainstreamed in the fisheries sector and vice-versa to develop and implement prevention, early warning and mitigation mechanisms and introduce adaptation measures.
- Increased awareness of the general public of the environmental and health dimensions of food (including fish) production, trade and consumption supporting supply chains, puts pressure on governments, civil society and the private sector in the region to act and ensure that fisheries will be more environmentally compatible and sustainable.
- Scientific developments and lessons learned from fisheries management experiences elsewhere, along with active promotion and implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries will support a more responsible fisheries.
- Regional level fisheries agreements (such as the CCCFP) and other initiatives of regional collaboration (CRFM-OSPESCA MoU) and joint efforts (Castries IUU Declaration) that were developed recently will enable structural and coherent work on sustainable fisheries management by the CRFM.

3.2 *Population Projections in the Caribbean*

According to current projections the world population is likely to rise from 7 billion in 2011 to 9.2 billion by 2050 (UNFPA, 2012). The entire increase will take place in developing countries, including in the Caribbean region. Caribbean populations are young, and, in several countries, most persons now live in urban areas (UNDP 2012). An analysis of 7 Caribbean countries in the same report showed that the proportion of persons below the age of 25 years ranges from a high of 54 percent in Guyana to a low of 36 percent in Barbados, with the corresponding population proportion for this group of countries is 46 percent. Combined with high overall and high teenage birth rates the population pressure on the natural, including marine aquatic, resources is likely to increase further in the coming years. Youth Labour Force Participation Rates for men show a decreasing trend (from 67% in 2000 to 61% in 2010), while there is a slight increase seen for young women participation (42 to 43% over the same period).

When comparing the population in selected CRFM member countries over the last 20 years we see that the population has increased with an estimated 31%. Except for Dominica, all other members have seen an increase in population. The population in Belize, Antigua and Barbuda and Haiti increased with a

staggering 67%, 44% and 42% respectively. The consequences of this increase for the pressure on natural resources in these countries are wide.

Table 1: Population (in thousands) of selected CRFM Member States over the period 1990-2011.

	1990	2000	2010	2011	% change 1990 - 2011
Antigua and Barbuda	62.2	77.7	88.7	89.6	44
Bahamas	256.1	297.7	342.9	347.2	36
Barbados	259.5	267.5	273.3	273.9	6
Belize	190.2	250.5	311.6	317.9	67
Dominica	70.9	69.7	67.8	67.7	-5
Grenada	96.2	101.5	104.5	104.9	9
Guyana	724.9	733.1	754.5	756	4
Haiti	7,124.90	8,645.40	9,993.20	10,123.8 0	42
Jamaica	2,364.90	2,581.60	2,741.10	2,751.30	16
Saint Kitts and Nevis	40.7	46.1	52.4	53.1	30
Saint Lucia	138	157.1	174.3	176	28
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	107.4	107.9	109.3	109.4	2
Suriname	406.9	466.8	524.6	529.4	30
Trinidad and Tobago	1,215.50	1,292.10	1,341.50	1,346.40	11
total	13058.3	15094.7	16879.7	17046.6	31
Source					
Population, total both sexes (thousands): UNDESA (2011).					

The projected further increase in population in the Caribbean together with the impact of a growing tourism industry (and higher incomes) in the region will spur demand for food (including fish). The demographic trends may aggravate the fragile food security situation (see also section 3.3) in the Caribbean, particularly as the trend of urbanization also here seems to continue.

Information from UNDESA¹⁰ (2010) reveals that the urbanization levels vary largely between the CRFM members. Particular increases in the degree of urbanization were seen over the last two decades in Barbados (from 33% to 45%), Grenada (from 33% to 40%), Haiti (from 29 to 54%) and Trinidad (from 9 to 14%).

FAO estimates that global agricultural output needs to expand by some 70% to meet all the food needs of the population expected in 2050. The main challenge is not at the global level, but at the regional level, in order to sustain food security and support increased incomes and livelihoods.

¹⁰ UNDESA, 2011. Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and development: An International Perspective. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 378 pp.

A growing population in the Caribbean along with the urbanization trend will have its effects on the location of food (including fish) production. It is recognized that some CARICOM countries have the intention to serve as supplier for the whole Caribbean, but currently the majority of food imports are originating from outside the region. The population increase is expected to increase pressure on fisheries resources in the region; a pressure which may be added to also if import substitution will become official government policy by CRFM members to improve the trade balance (see also section 3.3).

3.3 Food Production, Demand and Trade Issues

The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012¹¹ estimates that at present 17.8% of the population in the Caribbean region, is undernourished. This percentage has come down from 28.5% in 1990, indicating that major improvements have been made over the last two decades. The same report showed that consumption of animal-source foods (including fish) increases significantly as per capita incomes grow. In fact, with the longer-term economic growth observed worldwide since the early 1960s, growth in consumption of animal-source foods has markedly outpaced growth in that of other major food groups. Consumption of milk per person has almost doubled in developing countries, meat and fish consumption has tripled, and egg consumption has increased by a factor of five. Growth has been strongest in Eastern and South- Eastern Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean, whereas it stagnated in sub-Saharan Africa.

At global level, the trade in fish and fisheries products continues to increase. In 2010 the global fish trade was worth USD 109 billion. 38% of all fish caught and produced is being exported. At present developing countries account for over 50% of world fish exports in quantity terms.

These global trends in food consumption and trade of fish in particular are visible also in the Caribbean, where the imports of fish and fisheries products have increased from around 150 000 tonnes annually in the late 1990s to over 250 000 tonnes since 2009. At the same time the exports have been stable at around 50 000 tonnes. Imports are generally of relatively low-value products (around 2 USD/kg CiF) while exports are often of high-value products (e.g. conch, shrimp and lobster) at prices between 6 and 9 USD/kg.

Figures from CRFM show that in 2009 56 000 tonnes were exported and 68 000 tonnes imported by CRFM members. Main exporters are Guyana, Suriname, Cuba, Belize, Bahamas and Dominican Republic. Exports consist mainly in high value species (lobster, conch, shrimp, reef fish, etc.). In terms of trade there are issues with some species which are under discussion to be classified as endangered.

The State of Food and Agriculture 2012 (FAO, 2012) reveals that the economically active population in Agriculture in most of the CRFM member countries shows a decreasing trend over the last decades. The same report shows that actual crop yields as percentage of potential yields are around 35% in the

¹¹ FAO, WFP and IFAD. 2012. The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012. Economic growth is necessary but not sufficient to accelerate reduction of hunger and malnutrition. Rome, FAO.

Caribbean and Central America, which is the second lowest of the world after Sub-Saharan Africa. Much can be gained in this subject in the region.

The Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (RFNSAP), which was approved by COTED in 2012, states that “it is clear that the immediate, urgent problems concern household access and nutritional adequacy. This means a departure from equating food security with food availability. For although sufficient food calories are available to meet recommended population goals in the region, food security is being compromised through lack of access and excessive utilization/consumption of sweeteners and fats/oils”. The RFNSAP further emphasized that “issues related to inadequate access to food and dietary patterns are of greater and more immediate concern to food and nutrition security in CARICOM than lack of food availability itself. This is evidenced by research which shows that high levels of obesity exist alongside high levels of under-nourishment and malnutrition”.

The CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (also endorsed in 2012) further recognized that imports are to be substituted wherever possible, to reduce the trade balance deficit for agricultural commodities. The region’s food import bill was estimated at US\$3.5 billion in 2008¹² and food importation in the region continues to trend upwards.

The initial priority commodities for food security, competitive import replacement and export for the CARICOM region include rice, maize, dried coconuts, wheat flour substitutes (cassava flour, etc.) starchy roots and tubers (sweet potato, cassava, dasheen, yam), legume grains (cowpeas, red kidney beans), sugar, fish (yellowfin tuna, snapper, grouper, trout, tilapia, conch, shrimp and lobster), poultry, small ruminants (sheep and goats), spices, condiments and fruits and vegetables (salad vegetables, onions, carrots, pumpkin, squash, bora beans, bananas, plantain, mangoes, golden apples, pineapples, papaya, melons, avocados, breadfruit and ackee)¹³. As can be seen in this list, fish and fisheries products are among the main commodities that the CARICOM strategy identified as priority.

The rising food prices trend, which was noted of importance in the 2nd MTP, has affected the Caribbean in recent years. Although prices of many main staple commodities have increased the volatility is high. The current situation is different from 2008 in the sense that the rice market remained undisturbed, improved market information systems have been established as well as other institutional instruments to respond to high grain prices, due to the economic crises in some regions there is less demand for grain (less income reduces the demand for meat and this reduces the demand on grain for animal feed).

3.4 Fisheries

The FAO State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012 (FAO, 2012) reported that in 2010 an estimated 128 million tonnes of fish was produced for food. This means that a record 18.4 kg/capita was available for consumption. Fish is providing for 15% of animal protein intake for 4.3 billion people; as such the fisheries sector is a very important contributor to world food security.

¹² CARICOM Statistical Office

¹³ Developing an Action Plan Nutrition challenges in the Caribbean, Henry, CFNI for Promotion of a Regional Agribusiness Sector and Targeted Commodity Enterprises – Landell Mills Development Consultants – Final Report – February 2011

Marine capture fisheries production in 2011 was recorded at 82 million tonnes¹⁴. An estimated 30% of the fish stocks world-wide are currently being overexploited, 58% is full-exploited and only 12% are not fully exploited at global level. There is no reason to believe that the situation is better in the Caribbean. The absence of proper fish stock assessments and fisheries management plans for even most of the major targeted commercial stocks in the Caribbean means that in effect no or very limited information is available on the status of the stocks.

During the period 1997-2010, the estimated annual average marine capture fishery production in CRFM States was estimated to be just over 150,000 tons (live weight)¹⁵, representing a small fraction of world production. Notwithstanding, the CARICOM countries employ over 182 000 people in fisheries, operate 25 000 boats and produce 161 000 tonnes for a value of about 700 million USD per year. Post-harvest activities and aquaculture also provide significant employment opportunities in the region.

The trends in fisheries require that efforts are to be made to maintain current levels of catch in the Caribbean (from marine and inland sources), while ensuring long-term sustainability of fisheries resources, through improved management, using an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF), as well as through adoption of proper regulatory and institutional measures to address overfishing, overcapacity and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the CRFM member states.

The role of small-scale fisheries (and small scale aquaculture) should be recognized when developing and managing a sector striving for economic and ecological sustainability in compatibility with social and environmental objectives. The adoption at regional level and implementation at all levels of the *International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries* is a pre-requisite in the CRFM region where a large majority of the fisheries can be characterized as small-scale operations.

3.5 Aquaculture

At global level aquaculture continues to grow rapidly. The FAO State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012 (FAO, 2012) states that aquaculture is the fastest-growing food sector, with an annual growth rate of 8.8%, a production of 62 million tonnes in 2011 and an estimated value of US\$127 billion. China produces more than 60% of total production in the world. 40% of the total fish production in 2011 was realized by aquaculture. At regional level in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) a high degree of concentration in 3 countries is visible (Chile, Brazil and Ecuador), along with a slow diversification process. At present the LAC region cultures 86 species, but 75% production is based on top 5 species. The contribution of aquaculture to total fish production in the region has risen from 0.1 to 9.6 % in 30 years. There is a wide variety in technology levels (industrial – pro-poor family farms) and the contribution of the sector to rural livelihoods is increasing. LAC as region contributed in 2011 some 3.8 percent (2.4 million tonnes) to the global aquaculture production.

The aquaculture sector is not well developed in the CARICOM region, with significant development limited to countries like Jamaica and Belize. Other countries like Guyana, Haiti, Suriname and Trinidad

¹⁴ Fishstat 2013

¹⁵ Masters, J. 2012. CRFM Statistics and Information Report - 2010. 65pp.

and Tobago have begun to put more emphasis on aquaculture as an area for development. The practices mainly involve the use of ponds to culture such species as penaeid shrimp, tilapia, carp and cachama (pacu). Also, there is long line culture for algae in St. Lucia and the mangrove oyster in Jamaica. Total aquaculture production in Caribbean countries is very small at 28 500 tonnes in 2011, with a declining trend over the years.

Most CARICOM states have limited land and fresh water resources, however some, like Belize, Guyana and Suriname, do have ample supplies. On the other hand, most states have larger expanses of marine space than land mass, which offers the potential for the promotion and development of mariculture. As such, the approach to aquaculture development will have to be multifaceted in its focus, design and implementation in order to address the needs of those with ample land and fresh water resources and those with less of these resource endowments.

Because of the limited potential growth of wild catches in the Caribbean region, sustainable expansion and intensification of fish production through responsible aquaculture development should be a major objective for the countries in the region.

Major trends in aquaculture development world-wide include:

- Restricted aquaculture expansion (in spatial terms) will tend towards increasing intensification
- Continued diversification of species and need for their responsible use
- Continued diversification of production systems
- Increasing influence of markets, trade and consumption
- Enhanced regulation and better governance
- Drive for better management

The Phuket Consensus 2010 of the Global Aquaculture Conference: Farming the Waters for Food and People, recommended the sector to:

- Increase effectiveness of governance
- Encourage investments in scientific, technical and social innovations
- Conduct assessments on contribution of aquaculture to food security, poverty reduction and economic development.
- Intensify assistance to small-scale farmers
- Support gender sensitive policies and programmes
- Increase collaboration and partnerships
- Give emphasis to least aquaculturally developed countries

Major challenges for aquaculture development in the Caribbean include:

- Availability of freshwater (for land based aquaculture systems) in the SIDS (in view of climate change and variability)
- Technology transfer (e.g. through the Aquaculture Network of the Americas)
- Feed access and availability
- Small-scale farmers – “new” technical assistance

- Governance and political willingness (e.g. in terms of developing and implementing of policy and legal frameworks in support of aquaculture development and management)
- Application of the Ecosystem Approach to Aquaculture.

The CRFM had identified the promotion and development of aquaculture as one of the programme areas within its Strategic Plan and Medium Term Plans 2004/2007 and 2008/2011. With this in mind, aquaculture development policy formulation was included and addressed in the recently completed CARICOM/CRFM/JICA Study on the Formulation of a Master Plan on Sustainable Use of Fisheries Resources for Coastal Community Development in the Caribbean, which proposed a strategy and plan for small-scale aquaculture development, including the development of a CARICOM/CRFM network of aquaculture organizations.

In 2012, the CRFM established a Working Group to Promote Sustainable Aquaculture Development, with the objectives of the group being to:

- promote sustainable aquaculture development at the national and regional levels, mainly for the purposes of:
 - increasing food production and security;
 - improving rural income and employment;
 - diversifying farm production;
 - increasing foreign exchange earnings and savings; and
 - advise the Forum on policies, programmes and projects to promote the development of aquaculture.

3.6 *Natural Resources and Climate Variability and Change*

It has become clear that the fisheries sector has not been using the available natural aquatic resources optimally over the last decades. As a consequence of overfishing and non-management the catches have reduced and the catch-per-unit of effort has decreased for a number of key commercially targeted marine species (flying fish, tuna, dolphin, conch, lobster, and shrimp). The economic viability of the sector is under pressure due to lower catches, higher fuel prices, relatively cheap imports of fish and low market prices in the domestic markets in the CRFM states. At the same time the pressure on the natural resources is not reducing; instead it has increased over the last few decades under influence of the population increase and improving livelihoods.

People involved in the fisheries sector are vulnerable to hazards and disasters such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and disease outbreaks. Vulnerability is partly inherent to the dynamic nature of land-water interfaces, but it is growing because of increased incidences of hazards and the influences of climate variability and change. If we are to ensure that the benefits which flow to communities and nations from fisheries and aquaculture are to continue then it is essential that appropriate strategy and action plans are developed to deal with the increasing vulnerability of the sector to the risks of disasters and climate change.

Interconnectedness of hazards and climate change suggests the need for an integrated approach to address them simultaneously in disaster risk management (DRM) and climate change adaptation (CCA).

Ecosystem-based and precautionary approaches to fisheries and aquaculture are essential. These need to be closely linked to wider development processes and be fully mainstreamed into sectoral and cross-sectoral development policies and plans. In this respect it is particularly important to strengthen linkages with the environment and coastal management sectors, as well as with the coast guards/navy, port authorities, customs and other sectors that are essential for addressing IUU fishing in the CRFM member states.

The RIO+20 declaration “the future we want” requires implementation by all countries, including the CRFM Member States. The related United Nations General Assembly resolution (66/228) reaffirms (in para 178) that SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities, including their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global environmental challenges and external economic shocks, including to a large range of impacts from climate change and potentially more frequent and intense natural disasters. Effective disaster risk management and climate change adaptation require coordination, consultation and cooperation among global, regional, sub-regional, national and local stakeholders and partners.

4 Vision, Goals, Objectives and Principles for CRFM and its Members

4.1 Vision, Goal and Mission

In adopting the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP), at the Fourth CRFM Ministerial Council, held in Antigua and Barbuda on 20 May 2011, a vision and goal for the CARICOM members was approved. The CRFM (as CARICOM institution) plans to share and incorporate the CCCFP vision and goal.

Vision

Effective cooperation and collaboration among Participating Parties in the conservation, management and sustainable utilization of the fisheries resources and related ecosystems in the Caribbean region in order to secure the maximum benefits from those resources for the Caribbean peoples and for the Caribbean region as a whole.

Goal

To establish, within the context of the Revised Treaty¹⁶, appropriate measures for: the conservation, management, sustainable utilisation and development of fisheries resources and related ecosystems; the building of capacity amongst fishers and the optimisation of the social and economic returns from their fisheries; and the promotion of competitive trade and stable market conditions.

The CRFM approved the following mission statement, along with its first Strategic Plan in 2002.

¹⁶ Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, signed by Heads of Government in Nassau, Bahamas on 5 July 2001

Mission

The mission of the CRFM 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.

4.2 General Objectives

Consistent with Article 4 of the CRFM Agreement and issues of critical importance that have emerged in the region, the general objectives for this second Strategic Plan are as follows:

- (a) the efficient management and sustainable development of marine and other aquatic resources within the jurisdictions of Member States;
- (b) the promotion and establishment of co-operative arrangements among interested States for the efficient management of shared, straddling or highly migratory marine and other aquatic resources;
- (c) the provision of technical advisory and consultative services to fisheries divisions of Member States in the development, management and conservation of their marine and other aquatic resources;

For this second Strategic Plan two objectives have been added, which are in line with Article 4.3 of the CCCFP:

- (d) the prevention, determent and elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including by promoting the establishment and maintenance of effective monitoring, control, and surveillance systems;
- (e) the integration of environmental, coastal and marine management considerations into fisheries policy so as to safeguard fisheries and associated ecosystems from anthropogenic threats and to mitigate the impacts of climate change and natural disasters

4.3 Principles

For this second Strategic Plan the General Principles [Article 5 of the CRFM Agreement] continue to provide the necessary guidance to CRFM in the implementation of this Strategic Plan. Aligned to these principles, transparency and accountability is critical, further, the emergence of related issues mandates the inclusion of the Ecosystem approach as well as the participatory approach to management of the fisheries and other aquatic resources. The General Principles are therefore the following:

- (a) Maintaining bio-diversity in the marine environment using the best available scientific approaches to management;

- (b) Managing fishing capacity and fishing methods so as to facilitate resource sustainability;
- (c) Encouraging the use of precautionary approaches and ecosystem approaches to fisheries (EAF) to sustainable use and management of fisheries resources;
- (d) Promoting awareness of responsible fisheries exploitation through education and training;
- (e) According due recognition to the contribution of small scale and industrial fisheries to employment, income and food security, nationally and regionally, and
- (f) Promoting aquaculture as a means of enhancing employment opportunities and food security, nationally and regionally.

In view of the functions to be performed by the CRFM in support of the CCCFP, this second Strategic Plan also adopts the Fundamental Principles [Article 5 of the CCCFP Agreement]. These Fundamental Principles are:

- (g) use of the best available scientific information in fisheries management decision-making, taking into consideration traditional knowledge concerning the resources and their habitats as well as environmental, economic and social factors;
- (h) application of internationally-recognised standards and approaches, in particular the precautionary approach to fisheries management and the ecosystem approach to fisheries management;
- (i) the principle that the level of fishing effort should not exceed that commensurate with the sustainable use of fisheries resources;
- (j) the participatory approach, including consideration of the particular rights and special needs of traditional, subsistence, artisanal and small scale fishers;
- (k) principles of good governance, accountability and transparency, including the equitable allocation of rights, obligations, responsibilities and benefits; and
- (l) the principle of subsidiarity, in particular that the Competent Agency will only perform those tasks which cannot be more effectively achieved by individual Participating Parties.

5 Strategic Goals for the Period 2013-2021

To foster the achievement of the above vision, goal, mission and general objectives of the CRFM Agreement and the CCCFP, the Millennium Development Goals, the RIO+20 Declaration, the priorities of the CRFM-OSPESCA joint Action Plan, and in-line with the Regional Food And Nutrition Security Policy and the recommendations from the Independent Performance Review, the CRFM will promote specifically the following 3 Strategic Goals:

- 1) Sustainable management and utilization of fisheries and aquaculture resources in the Caribbean region for the benefit of future generations.
- 2) Improve the welfare and sustainable livelihoods of fishing and aquaculture communities in the Caribbean region, by providing income and employment opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture sectors.
- 3) Ensure the Caribbean population has at all time sufficient safe and nutritious fish that meets the dietary requirements and is needed for an active and healthy life.

6 Functions of CRFM as Competent Authority

The Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP) provides for the establishment of a “Competent Agency”. This is an organisation designated by the Participating Parties in the CCCFP to support them in achieving the objectives of the CCCFP.

The CCCFP has not yet entered into force, as this will only happen upon 8 signatures from CARICOM members. It is however very likely that the Agreement will enter into force in 2013/2014. In fact the CRFM Ministerial Council has requested the members to start implementation of the Agreement without delay¹⁷.

CRFM, being the fisheries organization of CARICOM, is expected to be assigned as Competent Agency, expanding its current role and duties and assuming the functions foreseen for the Competent Agency.

Article 8 Role of the Competent Agency of the CCCFP states the following in this respect:

- 8.1. The Competent Agency, where requested by one or more Participating Parties, and in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity in Article 5(f), shall cooperate with and provide assistance to those Participating Parties in order to support them in achieving the objectives of this Agreement or in discharging their obligations under it.
- 8.2. The functions which may be performed by the Competent Agency pursuant to Article 8.1, shall include:
 - (a) providing technical assistance and advice in connection with the implementation of this Agreement, including where appropriate technical assistance and advice on national policy, management or law or on subregional, regional or global policy, management or law;
 - (b) making recommendations on any of the matters referred to in paragraph (a);
 - (c) coordinating or undertaking data collection, research and development activities;
 - (d) providing coordination or cooperation facilities, services or mechanisms, as may be required to fulfill the objectives of this Agreement;
 - (e) identifying and mobilising technical and financial resources, in collaboration with multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, to build the research, administrative and management capacities of Participating Parties;
 - (f) supporting Participating Parties in their relations with Third States, directly or in relevant international organisations, including by providing representation at the international level of the Participating Parties collectively;
 - (g) any other functions which may be requested by one or more Participating Parties for purposes related to implementation of this Agreement.

¹⁷ CRFM 2012. *Report and Proceedings of the Sixth Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, Nassau, The Bahamas, 15 June 2012. Volume 2. CRFM Management Report – PY 2012 / 13. 86p.*

- 8.3. In providing assistance and facilitation under Article 8.1 and in carrying out its functions under this Agreement, the Competent Agency shall:
 - (a) give effect, as far as possible, to the Vision, Goal and Objectives set out in Article 4; and
 - (b) be guided by the Principles set out in Article 5 and by applicable principles set out in the Community Agricultural Policy and the Fisheries Management and Development provisions of the Revised Treaty and by principles provided for in any other applicable international agreements concerning fisheries.
- 8.4. Participating Parties and the Competent Agency shall agree on rules of procedure, including as necessary any budgetary contributions or other financial regulations, for the carrying out functions by the Competent Agency under this Agreement.
- 8.5. The Participating Parties shall review the role and functions set out for the Competent Agency by this Agreement and if necessary shall modify, supplement or remove those functions by means, as appropriate, of a Protocol adopted under Article 20 or by amendment to this Agreement under Article 22.

Assignment of CRFM as Competent Agency will require the following steps:

- 1) Formal agreement from the CRFM Ministerial Council, COTED, COFCOR and CHOG that CRFM becomes the Competent Agency
- 2) Review of the Agreement establishing CRFM
- 3) Amendment of the Agreement establishing CRFM to incorporate new functions and tasks.
- 4) Development of a Protocol for CRFM as Competent Agency under the CCCFP
- 5) Formal endorsement of the amendments by the CRFM Ministerial Council, COTED, COFCOR and CHOG
- 6) Review and amendment of the Rules of Procedure of CRFM and endorsement by the CRFM Ministerial Council
- 7) Development and agreement of the other protocols foreseen under Article 20 of the CCCFP, which will enable the Competent Agency to carry out its role and functions.

Not all these steps may be completed within the Strategic planning period and some steps may take place in parallel or in another sequence.

In order for CRFM to assume the role and functions of Competent Agency, the organization will require additional resources (staff and funding) on top of its current core budget. The CRFM members should not assume that donors will absorb these costs, but should seek internally for innovative solutions.

During the CRFM Independent Performance Review process it was calculated that assuming the roles and functions of the Competent Agency would require an increase of 750 000 USD annually of the current 1.1 million USD annual core budget.

7 Strategic and Functional Objectives of the CRFM

Results-based management generally starts with an analysis phase in which stakeholders, problems, potential objectives and options/strategies are analyzed. The first Strategic Plan, second MTP (2008 - 2011) and the Independent Performance Review provide for such analysis.

It is obvious that the core functions of CRFM main entities (Ministerial Council, Fisheries Forum and Technical Unit/Secretariat) remain valid until the final approval of the Common Fisheries Policy, which may have implications for the legal documents and arrangements within the CRFM. This may result in transfer of functions between these entities and/or to other entities.

The Strategic objectives reflect the general and strategic goals, as well as the vision and mission of CRFM. They aim to focus on where CRFM can best assist its members in achieving sustainable impacts over the next 8 years, addressing challenges to fisheries (see chapter 3), building on lessons learned and attend to some major recommendations of the Independent Performance Review.

The approach taken to formulating the objectives is based on the logical framework hierarchy of results, and supports the results-based management. The nine Strategic objectives are generally interlinked and involve also cross-sectoral linkages with for instance food security, climate change and variability, gender and disaster risk management.

The functional objectives that complement the strategic objectives are formulated to ensure an enabling environment for technical delivery by CRFM as organization and guarantee attention to efficiency and savings.

Strategic Objective A: Information on status and trends in the fisheries and aquaculture sector

Relevance

The assembly and provision of information, knowledge and statistics on fisheries resources, fisheries and aquaculture production, fleets, gears used, fish and fisheries products trade is among the core functions of CRFM. Information collection and information management in general are instrumental for proper decision making, planning and policy formulation and implementation of fisheries management and development plans. Coherent and harmonized approaches towards data and information collection and sharing are required that assess and take into account the capacities of CRFM members (in terms of technological and institutional capacity) and the capacity building needs to be developed in support of these approaches. In this respect, coordination and linkage with the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Strategic Action Programme (SAP) Regional Environmental Monitoring Programme (REMP) is required. Provision of support to the CRFM members to improve their capacity to collect, compile, analyze, store and disseminate/share relevant statistics and information in a timely manner, is required as well. The databases used by CRFM (CARIFIS and others) require updating or replacing with databases that are accessible through internet, in order to make data sharing and regional level analysis possible for the Secretariat and the members.

Organizational Results

A1 – Countries and the CRFM Secretariat have strengthened capacities to collect, manage, analyze and use data and information for decision making, planning, policy formulation and implementation.

A2 - Appropriate (regional) standards for data and information sharing are adopted by the Countries, supported by a protocol for data and information sharing.

A3 - A regional database on fisheries and aquaculture statistics and information from the CRFM members is established and maintained at the Secretariat offices.

A4 – A CRFM Statistics and Information report is published annually.

Strategic Objective B: Research & Development

Relevance

Research is critical in order to: ascertain the status of fish stocks; determine the effects of environmental changes on fisheries and aquatic ecosystems; analyze the effectiveness of management and conservation measures; evaluate the social and economic performance of fisheries and aquaculture; determine the development potential of underutilized and unutilized fisheries resources; and otherwise contribute to the fulfillment of the general objectives of this second Strategic Plan. The CRFM established in its first decade of operation structures to carry out a collaborative research agenda and share research findings at regional level in support of improving fisheries management through informed and balanced advice. Annual scientific meetings and joint working groups with other relevant institutions active in the region (e.g. OSPESCA, ICCAT, WECAFC) provide suitable ways to develop and implement this research agenda and deliver the specific technical advice and recommendations required to inform fisheries management planning and implementation at national and regional level.

Organizational Results

B1 - The social and economic performance of fisheries and aquaculture is evaluated and enhanced through appropriate measures (such as fuel saving technologies).

B2 – A regional (collaborative) fisheries and aquaculture research agenda is effectively implemented through annual scientific meetings, joint species specific Working Groups, and targeted research projects and collaboration with national, regional and international academic and research institutions.

B3 – The status of the ten most important commercially targeted fisheries stocks in the CRFM region is known, management performance relative to agreed targets is determined', as well as the need for conservation and potential scope for increase in production.

B4 - The effectiveness of management and conservation measures is monitored and evaluated in line with internationally accepted indicators, and results are made publicly available.

B5 – Best-practices fisheries technologies and gears are introduced by CRFM members, accompanied by technology transfer compliant with international standards.

Strategic Objective C: Sustainable management of fisheries resources

Relevance

This Strategic Objective forms the base for CRFM's existence. It directly addresses the general objectives of CRFM as provided in Article 4 of the Agreement establishing CRFM. This implies that the issues to be dealt with during the period of this Strategic Plan are merely a continuation of earlier objectives and programmes with only slight adjustments. It recognizes the importance of responsible fisheries management and conservation, in line with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), the CCCFP and the Castries Declaration on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, as well as emerging challenges (such as high fuel prices, climate change and variability, invasive species). Various recommendations from the Independent Performance Review are addressed under this strategic objective. Emphasis is given to the establishment of proper legal, policy and institutional frameworks supportive of sustainable fisheries in the CRFM countries. The identified lack of management plans for most commercially targeted fisheries resources in the CRFM member states is a gap that needs to be addressed urgently

Organizational Results

C1 – Policies, institutional arrangements and standards that facilitate the implementation of the CCCFP and the CCRF and other regional/international fisheries instruments have improved.

C2 – The Precautionary approach (PA), Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) and the Castries Declaration on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing are actively implemented by the CRFM.

C3 – Fisheries legal frameworks in the CRFM member countries, in support of sustainable utilization of the fisheries resources, are updated and harmonized where possible.

C4 - Fisheries management and development plans and other fishery-specific conservation, management and recovery plans are prepared, adopted and implemented at national level and regional level where appropriate.

C5 – The state of fisheries resources and aquatic ecosystems in general in the CRFM mandate area is improved through effecting change to more sustainable fisheries practices.

C6 - Fisheries operations by all CRFM members are made more transparent, efficient, safer and compliant with rules at all levels through established and functioning Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) systems, including a regional vessel monitoring system (VMS).

Strategic Objective D: Sustainable use of fisheries resources

Relevance:

Fisheries Management does not exist in isolation from commercial use of the fisheries resources. CRFM has to ensure to work closely with all stakeholders, including fish harvesters, fish traders and fish processors. The role of women in all levels of the value chain has to be highlighted and due attention has to be given to gender mainstreaming. The need to increase attention to small-scale fisheries has recently appeared at global and regional level and the earlier work of CRFM on strengthening fisherfolk organizations requires continuation. International developments in terms of establishment of vessel registries, application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), measures to reduce by-catch, the design and enforcement of the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, all require follow-up by the CRFM and its members.

Organizational results

D1 Small-scale fisherfolk organizations in CRFM member countries play an active role in planning, managing and monitoring fisheries.

D2- Post-harvest losses are reduced and fish and fisheries products quality and safety are improved in the CRFM member countries.

D3–The infrastructure for marketing and trade of fish and fisheries products in the CRFM member countries is improved and meets domestic needs and international standards where required.

D4 The role of women in all levels of the fish value chain has been strengthened.

Strategic objective E: Sustainable development of aquaculture

Relevance

To promote and facilitate the development of aquaculture as one of the strategies for increasing the sustainable supply of fish, shell-fish and other fishery products has been among CRFM's objectives since the development of the Strategy and first Medium Term Plan. Utilizing the strategy and plan developed under the CARICOM/CRFM/JICA Study on the Formulation of a Master Plan on Sustainable Use of Fisheries Resources for Coastal Community Development in the Caribbean and under the leadership of the Working Group to Promote Sustainable Aquaculture Development, the CRFM should set out to promote sustainable aquaculture development in the region. Given that aquaculture has not developed sufficiently in the Caribbean over the last decade the efforts towards growth of this sub-sector require a boost. Policy and legal frameworks that enable aquaculture development and sustainable management in the CRFM member countries are largely absent. A major overtaking stroke is needed in this subject, as well as in terms of development of technical capacity for production, processing and marketing of aquaculture products. The Ecosystem Approach to Aquaculture (EAA) is widely recognized as providing a valuable framework for sustainable development of the sector. International standards, guidelines and better management practices for aquaculture and for certification of the products from aquaculture are available that need to be adopted by the CRFM members if export markets are targeted. Major challenges for aquaculture development in the SIDS members of CRFM include inadequate policy, legal and

institutional frameworks and plans to enable sustainable aquaculture development, inadequate technical capacity for production, processing and marketing of aquaculture products, limited local availability of and access to fertilized eggs/fry and feed, high costs of transport, high competition with marine fisheries products and cheap imports from Asia and South America, but through a collaborative approach it must be possible to overcome these.

Organizational Results

E1 – Policy, institutional and legal frameworks enabling responsible aquaculture development have been established in the CRFM member countries.

E2 – Most CRFM members have increased production of fish and fish products through improved aquaculture planning, sustainable expansion, diversification of species and intensification of aquaculture production systems.

E3 – Voluntary guidelines, best management practices and standards for sustainable aquaculture in the Caribbean developed and adopted by the stakeholders.

Strategic Objective F: Adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management in fisheries

Relevance

Climate change and variability and how the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the Caribbean could best adapt to these have become an important subject in recent years. In collaboration with the relevant regional and international organizations (CDEMA, CCCCC, UWI, FAO and WECAFC) CRFM carried out an assessment in 2012 and developed a regional Strategy, action plan and programme proposal on disaster risk management, and climate change adaptation in fisheries and aquaculture in the CARICOM region. This regional Strategy is to be linked with the Regional Framework to “Establish and guide the Caribbean’s direction for the continued building of resilience to the impacts of global climate change by CARICOM States” and the 2012-2022 Implementation Plan developed by the CCCCC. CRFM was requested by its members and the other partners to further this regional Strategy and take a leading or coordinating role in the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan and collaborate closely with CDEMA and the CCCCC.

Organizational Results

F1- CRFM members have incorporated the “CARICOM strategy and action plan on climate change adaptation and disaster risk management in fisheries and aquaculture” in their national programmes and plans and are effectively implementing at national level.

F2 – Fisherfolk and fishing communities’ vulnerability to crisis, threats and emergencies is reduced through better preparedness and integration of disaster risk management approaches (planning and decision-making).

F3 - Partnerships with CDEMA, CCCCC, FAO and others are strengthened to effectively address climate change adaptation issues in fisheries and aquaculture and enable the CRFM to play a more active role and coordinating role in this subject.

F4 –The establishment of fisheries and aquaculture insurance schemes is promoted and technically supported by CRFM.

Strategic Objective G: Capacity building and institutional strengthening

Relevance

At the core of CRFM's work and particularly of its Technical Unit, the Secretariat, lays the provision of technical and advisory services, enhancement of institutional capacity and development of capacity on fisheries aspects in the widest sense. Capacity building requires an enabling environment, specific institutional set-up and the human resources to deliver and receive.

Capacity building and institutional strengthening have been integral parts of the CRFM work over the last decade and the work of CRFM in this field should continue in line with the programmes and activities initiated by the first strategic plan and the second MTP of CRFM. The Independent Performance Review indicated that CRFM members judged the capacity building activities as generally very positive. Building capacity in the fisheries departments and divisions of CRFM member countries should be a priority, especially as it relates to fisheries dependent and independent data collection, data processing and analysis, fisheries stock assessment, report (technical) writing and fisheries management training. It is important to mainstream EAF, DRM, CCA and gender aspects in these capacity building efforts. The capacity building initiatives should preferably start with institutional- and human resource needs assessments. For future capacity building activities the Performance Review pointed out that these should cater specifically to the needs of Member States, and that the training should be directed at the middle and junior levels of staff in the Fisheries Departments and divisions.

Organizational Results

G1 - Fisheries governance is benefiting from strengthened national fisheries administrations and other supporting institutional frameworks.

G2 – Fisherfolk organizations and their representatives are competent and capable to collaborate and participate actively in fisheries management and conservation processes at local, national and regional level.

G3 – Dedicated fisheries skills development programmes designed and implemented at national and regional level through strengthened fisheries extension services.

G4 – CRFM member countries and stakeholders have access to formal fisheries and aquaculture education programmes designed and implemented at CARICOM level.

G5 – Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) active in the fisheries sector in the CRFM member states have business plans and access to micro-finance, credit and investment facilities.

Functional Objective H: Effective collaboration with member states and stakeholders

Relevance

The Independent Performance Review showed that collaboration between CRFM members, the Technical Unit/Secretariat and other stakeholders was sub-optimal. Areas which were specifically mentioned include sharing of fisheries data and statistics and development and implementation of joint/regional fishery management measures and plans. Increasing public awareness in the CRFM member states about the value of the industry for their economies is essential and requires a proper communication strategy. The CRFM relies on effective delivery of services, in-house and in collaboration with members and partners (e.g. OSPESCA, ICCAT, WECAFC, RAA and other RFBs and networks) in order to achieve the results expected from it. Some of these services go beyond the scope of pure CRFM management and administration. Issues like the allocation of staff time within the CRFM Secretariat and in the member countries and issues related to planning of programme and project activities, meetings and other events require proper governance and oversight of the CRFM in its totality. In order to be successful in resource mobilization and project development and implementation it is important that CRFM members collaborate in a coherent and transparent manner with the CRFM Secretariat and donors. Similarly, in terms of representation of CRFM members at international conferences, meetings and events of relevance to the Caribbean region and its objectives significant improvements can be made. This functional objective addresses these issues, embodies these necessary services and provides an enabling environment for effective achievement of the organizational results under the strategic objectives.

Organizational Results

H1 – Effective programme and project development that addresses CRFM members needs and priorities, accompanied by efficient resource mobilization, monitoring, implementation and reporting mechanisms.

H2 – The process of provision of fisheries management advice is streamlined within the CRFM structure.

H3 – The CRFM Communication Strategy is effectively implemented, addressing communication and information needs of CRFM members, Secretariat and other stakeholders.

H4 – The joint CRFM-OSPESCA Action Plan and other key partnerships and alliances that contribute to and complement the CRFM work are implemented effectively.

H5 – The Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Strategic Action Programme (SAP) is implemented actively by the CRFM.

H6 – The presence of CRFM at ICCAT sessions and in ICCAT decision making processes has significantly increased.

H7 – Effective direction of CRFM by the Ministerial Council and Fisheries Forum through improved governance, conflict resolution capacity and oversight.

H8 – Enhanced representation of CRFM countries in regional/international fora (ICCAT, UNCLOS, COFI) and events through its members or the Secretariat.

H9 - CRFM's status and role within the region as an effective RFB, and its capacity for project management and coordination is strengthened and consolidated

Functional Objective I: Efficient and Effective administration

Relevance

The work of CRFM with its members and other stakeholders requires effective administration. This functional objective seems obvious at first sight, but is introduced to further strengthen and improve the capacity of CRFM to deliver services that make implementation of its technical work more efficient and effective. Particular points it addresses in human resource management, finance and in administrative services, such as respectively staffing (e.g. succession planning, and timely filling of posts), staff development, administrative procedures, host country agreement issues, contributions of members to the (core) budget, and membership issues. This objective responds to the remarks of the Independent Performance Review that found certain mismatch between the structure of the CRFM and the documentary framework in which it operates, especially given the small number of people employed in the operational arm of that organization, i.e. the Secretariat. A similar remark seems to apply as a consequence to the structure of the Secretariat. The division of so little staff over two offices seems difficult to justify. This functional objective will also allow for identification of savings, efficiency gains and enhancement of administrative services.

Organizational Results

I1 – CRFM Member States are paying their annual contributions to CRFM in a timely manner, encouraged by the achievements, successes and benefits of CRFM membership and by the sanctions in the CRFM Agreement for non-payment of the contributions.

I2 – Improved capacity in and resources available to the CRFM Secretariat to programme, plan and implement its activities in an effective and efficient manner.

I3 – CRFM is recognized as provider of accurate and relevant administrative, financial and management information to its members.

I4 – Strengthened capacity of the CRFM Secretariat to assume the additional responsibilities that accompany the role of CRFM as Competent Agency to support implementation of the CCCFP.

I5 – Efficiency savings and gains identified, agreed and implemented.

8 Monitoring and Evaluation

The development and implementation process of this Strategic Plan (2013 -2021) is subject to a transparent and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. The CRFM will establish and maintain an M&E system that assures accountability for results. Such a system will include

mechanisms for collecting, analyzing, organizing and storing data and the monitoring and recording of progress against the agreed results.

The performance monitoring process will focus on the progress made towards achieving higher level results (outcomes) and will make use of identified and agreed performance indicators. Monitoring will take place annually and is also intended to add to strategic plan ownership by all stakeholders and include the delivery partner agencies (e.g. OSPESCA, ICCAT, etc).

In order for CRFM to learn and adapt an evaluation will be carried out after 4 years (mid-term) and after 8 years (terminal evaluation). The evaluations will analyze (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact) in relation to the stated results. They are particularly important for re-aligning and adaption of the medium term plans and for the development of the third Strategic Plan.

The main components of the CRFM M&E system are the following:

- The logical framework (including indicators on which it is easy to collect information in a cost-effective manner).
- A simple M&E plan for data collection and analysis, covering baseline, ongoing monitoring and evaluation (to be applied by the CRFM Secretariat).
- Reporting flows and formats (to ensure timely availability to the Fisheries Forum).
- A feedback and review plan (if necessary).
- An implementation schedule.
- A small budget that allows cost-effective monitoring on an annual base and external evaluation every four years.