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CASTRIES DECLARATION ON IUU FISHING: GETTING FISHERFOLK ON BOARD

Executive Summary

The fisheries of CRFM countries contribute significantly to income, employment, food security and social and economic stability. IUU fishing in the CRFM region, though not fully documented, poses a significant threat to the sustainable development, conservation and management of fisheries resources. On account of the nature of the fish stocks, the size of the area to be managed and the level and cost of regulatory enforcement mechanism, the Castries Declaration was proposed by the CRFM to tackle the problem as a region. The strategies to address the concerns of IUU fishing must be understood and accepted by all relevant stakeholders especially the fisher folk, if there is to be successful implementation. Active co-management can contribute significantly to good governance and can lead to improved cooperation and compliance; thus reducing some of the threats and costs of addressing IUU. Full participation, sound legal and institutional arrangements with appropriate financing and expertise are critical to the implementation of the Castries Declaration. Policy makers need to understand that only an all-inclusive management regime will be resilient to the complex nature of the system within which the threat of IUU fishing operates. All nations are improving their systems to reduce that threat by involving all institutions with functions related to addressing the IUU issues, fostering cooperation and coordination among government agencies and all stakeholders in keeping with requirements of FAO's IPOA-IUU. Because of the unique role of fisher folk, their involvement is a crucial policy option for the success of other policy options to address IUU issues. Resources must be mobilized to develop and implement the national and regional action plans to address IUU Fishing. There must also be also commitment and a mindset by the relevant stakeholders to implement the things to be done.

Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism - Our Regional Fisheries Advisory Authority

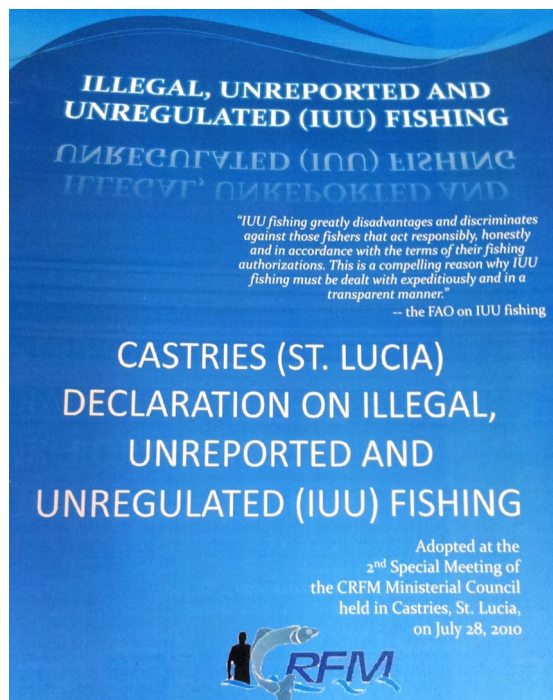
The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) is an indigenous, regional fisheries body established to promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of regions fisheries and other aquatic resources for economic and social benefit of the current and future populations of the region.

Presently, seventeen Caribbean states are members of the CRFM. One of the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) Agreement, adopted by the CRFM Ministerial Council in 2011 is: preventing, deterring and eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU), fishing and establishing and maintaining a monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) system.

In July 2010, CRFM member states identified illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing as a regional issue emphasizing its negative impacts to the national economies and sustainable fisheries.



This recognition was demonstrated through the Castries (St Lucia) Declaration on IUU, which does not bind any state to carry out the several actions for addressing IUU Fishing in the region. Instead it outlines the commitments expected of member states and establishes the following guidelines:



- Their duties and responsibilities as a flag, port or coastal state
- The need to become a signatory to applicable international agreements
- Establishing laws and regulations that promote integrated and Trans boundary management, control and surveillance of fish resources in the region and information sharing; and
- The need to create and implement their National Plan of Action (NPOA) for IUU.

The implementation of the Castries Declaration as a regional management tool requires the establishment of institutions, policies, and processes for effectiveness. It requires as its foundation in Member States (MSs) governance through legal, social, economic and political arrangements. This governance has international, national and local dimensions and should include legally binding rules as well as some customary social arrangements. National fisheries divisions, because they represent the State, have the authority to play a major role in fisheries governance.

Our Fisheries Sector

The Fisheries sector is an important contributor to income, employment, food security and social and economic stability especially in coastal communities throughout the Caribbean. At the national level across the region, fisheries are an important contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many countries as well as an important foreign exchange earner through commercial fisheries. The sector employs over 182,000 persons, directly or indirectly; mainly from small scale fisheries in rural communities lacking other income earning opportunities.

Over exploitation of fisheries resources can be caused by:

- Poor management of resources
 - Open access fisheries
 - Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing
- CARICOM countries generally are unable to sufficiently monitor the fisheries sector and are therefore vulnerable to IUU fishing by local and foreign fisher folk.

Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing has been identified as one of the main threats to sustainable fisheries globally. It has been described as having far reaching ecological, environmental, social and economic impacts. Some of the drivers or causes of IUU have been identified as follows:

- High level of demand for fish
- Overcapacity in fishing sector
- Weak enforcement
- Organized crime even involving drugs (undeclared money)
- Inadequate Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS)
- Uncoordinated management
- Lack of political and community will to address the problem
- Money to be made from high value species i.e. financial profit

- Lack of adequate legal and policy framework for sustainable fisheries at national and regional level..

The Components of IUU Fishing.

Illegal

Refers to fishing when national or foreign vessels operate in violation of the laws of a fishery governed under either State legislation, international obligations or in the case of the high sea area or EEZ on coastal States regulated by regional organisations

Unreported

Refers to fishing that is either unreported or misreported to the governing agency or regional organisation in contravention of national laws or regulations or the reporting procedures of the appropriate organization.

Unregulated

Refers to fishing by un-flagged vessels or those flying the flag of a country which is not party to international or regional convention governing that fishing area or species; in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures in place. It also refers to fishing for stocks or in areas where the fisheries resources are not adequately covered by laws, or conservation and management measures, but in any case carried out in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for conservation of living marine resources under international law

The main IUU issues identified in CRFM member states in a 2005 study on IUU fishing in the CARICOM/CARIFORUM region were:

- IUU fishing of national operators in national waters (all fleets from small scale to industrial)
- Poaching of neighboring (regional) fleets (mostly small scale and semi industrial) in national waters (inshore waters and offshore banks); and
- Poaching of industrial scale tuna fleets in national offshore (deeper EEZ) waters

In CARICOM, IUU fishing is estimated at between 17% and 20% annual catch. The impact is not well documented, but it definitely costs tens of millions

of US dollars annually. However, 80% of Member States identified it as one of the main threats to sustainability and development of fish stocks in the region. IUU fishing in the EEZs of CARICOM countries is perpetrated to a great extent by national artisanal fisheries. Authorities in Guyana estimate that IUU fishing by artisanal.

Fisheries are a greater threat to their fishing sector than distant water fleets (Franklin 2006). A report by the Commonwealth Fisheries Programme (2009) estimates that Belize loses approximately US\$10 million a year due to IUU Fishing in its territorial waters. IUU Fishing has particular relevance to the whole issue of fish for food security in some Member States and the ability for States to continue to benefit significantly from the production of fisheries products.

What Is The Response To IUU?

CRFM developed a regional status report on IUU fishing in the region and a regional monitoring control and surveillance strategy in 2005. This strategy was recently reviewed and a draft revised strategy now exists. The objectives of the strategy are:

- Establishing an integrated cost effective Monitoring, Control, Surveillance (MCS)
- and enforcement system nationally and regionally, thereby; (a) increasing the level of compliance with fisheries and related regulations; (b) raising the cost of operations of IUU fishing; and, (c) reducing the relative benefits to illegal fisher folk.
- Making management more efficient, as inefficient domestic fisheries management works as a driver for IUU fishing.
- Establishing effective penalties as a deterrent to IUU fishing. In most countries, the current level of penalties and the risk of being apprehended are not generally sufficient deterrents to IUU.

Organizations like Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has given tremendous guidance on ways of dealing with IUU problems in the form of documents like the International Plan of Action (IPOA) for IUU fishing and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). These documents can serve as useful references for our

regional and national plans of action. Actions to be taken entail two approaches namely:

- Preventative approach: to encourage voluntary compliance through a process of education and awareness to obtain support for fisheries management strategies and efforts to combat IUU fishing. This point to the need for co-management.
- Deterrent/enforcement approach: to ensure compliance by fisher folk or other stakeholders who do not comply with the various rules.

All actions to advance this strategy within the mandate of the Castries Declaration will require capacity building, information and institutional support. Because of the conflicting nature of management objectives, fisher folk can be affected and maybe required to make certain changes in their operations.

Unique Role of Fisher folk

For many people in the fishery, dependency and vulnerability are key features that keep them operating – they often have few alternative employment opportunities and there are strong cultural bonds that tie them to fishing. Though these pressures which affect fisher folk make them unique, their behavior is also influenced by public perception and attitudes. It is therefore also important that the public be made aware of the threats of IUU so they can influence appropriate fisher folk behavior towards IUU.



Strengthening Collaborative Co-Management

The awareness of the resource users, their traditional knowledge and advice on the issues will be crucial to overcoming difficulties on the way forward as they are closest to and most dependent on the resources. A participatory type approach, where fisher folk can be empowered to share management responsibility and authority required to address IUU and other fisheries management issues, is necessary. This would ensure collaborative co-management where fisher folk can be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

The table below shows 3 types of co-management arrangement that exist in the Caribbean:

Government agencies have most control		
Co-management arrangement	Consultative	Government interacts often, but makes all the decision
	Collaborative	Government and the stakeholders work closely and share decisions
	Delegated	Governments lets formerly organized users/stakeholders make decisions
People in civil society have most control		

Within the context of key regional policies such as IUU, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Coordination (CTA) project – Implementing the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy: Positioning and engaging fisher folk organization is being implemented by CNFO, CRFM and other partners. This project is facilitating continuous engagement of fisher folk organizations with policy processes and decision makers for the implementation of key regional fisheries policies. A four day consultation held in Guyana in February 2013 attended by fisher folk Leaders and other resource persons was the first activity of this project. Mr. Milton Haughton, Executive Director of CRFM, said at the opening ceremony that “The CFP and the Castries Declaration on IUU fishing were policies to address fisheries governance in the region and that fisher folk were critical to the successful implementation of these policies”.

Fisher folk Getting Ready To Get Onboard

At that meeting, it was reported that fisher folk wanted to be more involved in policy development in the region but found that many of the mechanisms used; such as submitting written comments on policies and participating in ad hoc consultations, were not conducive to participatory policy development. Fisher folk lamented that they were not involved in the development of recent policy processes in the region.



Mr. Jose Fonseca, Senior Programme Coordinator of the CTA speaking in the CRFM/CNFO/CTA consultation in February stated that “policy influencing required that fisher folk were capable of articulating their own demands: this implied that there was a need for communication, advocacy and mobilization to reach those who make and implement policy.”

One of the regional policy issues discussed at the workshop was the Castries Declaration. Actions were identified for CNFO and National Fisheries organizations with respect to this declaration.

Among other areas they examined were outdated fisheries laws in the region, the need for states to sign on to the CFP and to help with MCS for IUU. They also recognize that combating IUU is a challenge and they examined various actions which required their involvement at the regional and national levels. They also noted that they would require resources and to build capacity to be able to lobby for policies and participate in the process.

The movement to get meaningful involvement of fisher folk in policy requires leadership, training and capacity building and financial resources. It requires an appropriate policy environment and

government willingness to engage in participatory management. It also requires appropriate government institutions to interact with fisher folk organizations. This is imperative if fisher folk are to be effective in carrying out their responsibilities in management. Recognizing this, the CNFO at the workshop requested technical and organizational capacity building. The technical capacity included the skills, knowledge and ability to conduct fishing efficiently/effectively. The organizational capacity included the attitude skills knowledge and abilities to effectively manage an organization.

The Process and Challenges

The IUU policy to put into action the Castries Declaration is being initiated through ACP Fish II funded projects that include reviewing the 2005 MCS study, and updating the enforcement and prosecution manuals. Addressing IUU issues is also dependent on Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) and requires appropriate systems and all stakeholders onboard. Though one may see shared costs as a benefit, to do MCS through CRFM there is need to ensure that enforcement officers are well trained. A strong legal system involving effective methods of prosecution and realistic fines is also required. If economics is the key driving force behind IUU fishing it makes sense to use economic principles to make the practice less attractive. There is the need to make it riskier through increasing the likelihood of getting caught and raising the penalties placed on perpetrators of IUU if caught.

An important requirement for the MCS for ocean-going fishing operations is a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) i.e. an electronic automatic location and communication device placed upon a fishing vessel that monitors where the vessel is, sending back information via satellite in real time to a control station. While not without some technical issues, compulsory use of VMS can place significant pressure on IUU vessels. The VMS system should be in accordance with relevant national, regional or international standards, to track vessels authorized to fish in the EEZs and on the high seas.

Fisheries and scientific observers who are well trained can assist to reduce under-reporting or help to assess the magnitude of the problem. For this to be effective there has to be collaboration and coordination among States and in particular regional cooperation in Port State control. Regular port inspection

can ensure that fish have been caught in accordance with relevant conservation and management measures.

Governments need to create the enabling environment for collaboration among the relevant departments and make the appropriate investments in them so that they can collaboratively tackle the problems of IUU fishing. Some fisheries departments may also require assistance from international agencies and organizations. Each Member State needs to have a NPOA for IUU fishing. The private sector can also play an important role and there should be closer co-operation between the purchasers of fish and data collectors.

EEZs in some member states are subject to overlapping claims or are even the subject of sovereignty disputes. Failure to settle these claims, and to demarcate, will pose challenges for management of the resources in these areas by the Member States or the CRFM on behalf of the States. Boundary delimitation negotiations require expertise which many of our States lack. Assistance of international agencies and institutions or through bilateral channels is required to facilitate various stages of the process.

Moving Forward

High levels of compliance and enforcement can help to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing. Fisher folk education and involvement in policy can assist compliance and enforcement. Addressing the problem associated with fisheries regulations is crucial to this process. Some of the member States do not have regulations and among those who do, it does not adequately address IUU fishing. When governments recognize that fisheries resources are no longer commodities but elements of an ecosystem which support essential processes as human needs, the role of fisher folk in governance will increase. Fisher folk should be involved in the policy-making process ideally from the beginning. This is not only because they are going to gain or lose the most, but also because of their intimate knowledge and experience of the fisheries. They should be effectively involved in the process right through the implementation. Once implemented there will be the need for continued governance, learning and adaptive management. The policies will need to be adapted to evolving circumstances.

Strategies to continue communication under IUU problem and to highlight its consideration in fisheries policy will increase efforts to reduce the incentives to fish illegally. Harmonization and cooperation will reduce the occurrence of violators exploiting loopholes. It may be that IUU fishing will never be eliminated; however there is scope for reducing it. We have to build our capacity to improve MCS to delay collapse of our fisheries and, by extension, our economies. Increased participation of fisher folk in governance is definitely part of the solution.



Conclusion and Recommendations

IUU fishing is an urgent problem, which requires short-term and long-term interventions. There must be clear goals for any policy since IUU issues will have to be addressed through multiple objectives, which must be consistent. These objectives may be realized in many different ways such as through best practices from other geographical areas dealing with the problems of IUU fishing. Any policy chosen must best fit the local and regional circumstances. In policy implementation all actions in the policy process must possess a clear understanding of the policy and what is required to carry it out. Those implementing the policy must have the same information, interpret it in the same way and communicate well with each other.

A key step for the success of any policy implementation is compliance. In terms of IUU fishing, compliance will reduce the associated costs and therefore, in order to get fisher folk to play their stewardship role, inclusion in the decision making process is an imperative. The way fisher folk perceive

policies and policy change can significantly affect their behavior towards it and since fisher folk are the main actors in IUU fishing, managing the whole fishery; including fisher folk, is crucial.

CRFM State the enabling environment through their National The short-term policy option is to create in each

Plan of Action to address IUU by:

- Signing on to the relevant regional and international agreements (e.g. Castries Declaration on IUU)
- Increasing and improving the human and technical capacity of fisheries and other relevant departments.
- Broadening representation of relevant stakeholders in the policy making process (strengthen relationships and encourages compliance)



It is only by putting this foundation at the national level that the integration of the national MCS system through harmonization of policies, legislation and national fisheries institutions can be harnessed for an effective regional MCS strategy as contemplated by the Castries Declaration. The cost and success of implementation of any policy should have at its center the role of fisher folk in governance. As a very short-term measure all efforts nationally, should strengthen the fisher folk organizations and CFNO to facilitate meaningful levels of involvement by fisher folk in all aspects of fisheries management. This preventative approach is key to all other steps nationally toward our efforts to address IUU fishing in the CRFM region.

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CNFO

The Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) is a non-profit regional network operating in the CARICOM countries. Its mission is to “Improve the quality of life for fisherfolk and develop a sustainable and profitable fishing industry through networking, advocacy, representation and capacity building.

CRFM

The CRFM is an inter-governmental organisation whose mission is to “Promote and facilitate the responsible utilisation of the region’s fisheries and other aquatic resources for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region”. The CRFM consists of three bodies – the Ministerial Council, the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and the CRFM Secretariat.

CRFM members are Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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