



CARIBBEAN REGIONAL FISHERIES MECHANISM SECRETARIAT

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CRFM states to expand use of Fish Aggregating Devices in 2014

Belize City, Belize, Tuesday, December 17, 2013—Several Caribbean countries are exploring the use of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) to bolster earnings, increase employment opportunities and improve management and conservation of ocean pelagic species within their jurisdictions.

The expanding role of FADs in the Caribbean was explored at the CRFM / WECAFC-IFREMER-MAGDELESA / CARIFICO Workshop on FAD Fishery Management held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines from December 9 – 11, 2013.

Milton Haughton, Executive Director, CRFM Secretariat, said at the three-day workshop that, "Pelagic species, such as, yellowfin tuna, wahoo, blackfin tuna, marlin, and dolphinfish--which are the ones targeted by the use of fish aggregating devices--are very important to Caribbean countries because of their contribution to food and nutrition security and livelihoods in coastal communities."

Haughton said that the reason why countries and



Participants in FAD Workshop



*Experimental FAD built from
bamboo in Belize*

fishers in the region are very interested in FADs is because they provide cost effective means by which the people of the region can obtain a greater share and optimum sustainable benefits from these straddling and highly migratory fish stocks which are utilized by several States within the region and beyond, in some cases.

He noted that the CARIFICO Project is not just about constructing FADS and increasing catches: "It is really about building local capacity of stakeholders and information base for co-management, improved conservation, and achieving optimum sustainable use of the fish stocks while safeguarding the marine ecosystems in which they are found."

Through the CRFM's cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan has committed over US\$3.26 million to improving the contribution of fisheries sector of the CARICOM States by way of the Caribbean Fisheries Co-management (CARIFICO) Project, designed to develop a fishery co-management approach suitable for each target country. "The application for the CARIFICO project was submitted to the Government of Japan in August 2011 and field implementation commenced May 2013, less than 24 months later. That is rapid turnaround for a project of this nature," Haughton said.



Billfishes are caught using FADs

CARIFICO is currently working towards enhancing the partnership among fisher and countries through FADs co-management in six countries within the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), to promote sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources by development, management and conservation of these resources, in collaboration with stakeholders.

The Fisheries Division of Dominica noted that FAD fishing has helped to reduce pressure on the reef fish population, while encouraging new entrants into the fisheries sector. Nearly 60% of the fish catch in Dominica is now coming from FADs.

Whereas Belize has not yet deployed FADs for commercial fishing, two experimental FADs were constructed and deployed around Turneffe atoll as part of a pilot project initiated in 2002. Fish species found around the FADs included snappers (*Lutjanus spp*), jacks (*Carangidae spp*) and dolphinfish (*Coryphaenidae*).

Antigua and Barbuda is well on the way with the development of a FAD fishery. They plan to update regulations to include FAD fishing licenses. They have begun consultation on policies for operating around FADs and in early 2014, fishers will receive training in FAD design and construction.

Although there is no FAD fishery in Trinidad, in Tobago, approximately around 100 fishers (25% of fishers) use FAD during the flying fish season. Fisheries officials in that country report that FADs have been constructed from mangrove wood or bamboo at costs ranging from \$800 to \$2,500 TT (\$125 - \$390 US). The average weight of the catch is 250 to 400 lbs of dolphinfish and 1000 lbs of flying fish.

The FAO/WECAFC, IFREMER, and the French funded MAGDELESA Project co-hosted the recent FAD workshop, along with the CARIFICO Project and the CRFM.

All CARICOM States with the exception of Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica were represented at the workshop. St. Eustacius, representing the Netherlands Caribbean Islands,

Martinique and Guadeloupe participated.



Group photo taken at the conclusion of the workshop

Officials of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO), the University of the West Indies, the University of Florida Sea Grant, and the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project were in attendance.

Link to workshop documents and photos:

<http://www.crfm.net/index.php/projects/other-regional-projects-3/crfm-administrative-reports-10/item/265-fad-workshop-december-2013-documents.html>

ABOUT THE CRFM:

The [Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism](#) (CRFM) was officially inaugurated on March 27, 2003, in Belize City, Belize, where it is headquartered, following the signing of the “[Agreement Establishing the CRFM](#)” on February 4, 2002. It is an inter-governmental organization with its mission being “to promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of the region's fisheries and other aquatic resources for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region.”

The CRFM consists of three bodies: the Ministerial Council, the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and the CRFM Secretariat. Its 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. (For more visit <http://www.caricom-fisheries.com>)