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FOREWORD



After six years of consultation and negotiation (1996 – 2002), CARICOM Heads of Government signed the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) on January 4th, 2002, as the planned successor of the erstwhile CFRAMP project. With the inauguration of the CRFM on March 26th, 2003, the CRFM became a legal entity, ready to play the leading role in the sustainable utilization of the fisheries resources of the CARICOM region.

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

The fulfillment of this mandate will be achieved through collaboration between its Secretariat and the Member States and will be based, among others, on the following Principles:

- Maintaining bio-diversity in the marine environment using the best available scientific approaches to management.
- Managing fishing capacity and fishing methods so as to facilitate resource sustainability.
- Encouraging the use of precautionary approaches to sustainable use and management of fisheries resources.
- Promoting awareness of responsible fisheries exploitation through education and training.
- According due recognition to the contribution of small scale and industrial fisheries to employment, income and food security, nationally and regionally.

The key instruments guiding the determination of programmes and projects are a Strategic Plan and a Medium Term Plan, that reflect the needs and priorities of the CRFM Member States, arrived at through intensive and extensive negotiation and consultation. These were formally approved by the Ministerial Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) in May 2003. The CRFM's programmes and projects are based on the following priority areas identified by the Member States:

- Research and data analysis to support policy formulation and decision-making.
- Preparation for global competitiveness.
- Resource assessment and management
- Human resource development and institutional strengthening.
- Strengthening of fishers' organizations and improved community participation.
- Promotion of the expansion and utilization of unutilized and under-utilized aquatic resources.
- Development and promotion of aquaculture.
- Development and promotion of risk reduction programmes for fishers.
- Development and promotion of programmes for conflict resolution among multi-users in coastal zones.

This first annual report, providing a vivid account and analysis of what transpired in the first year of the operations of the Secretariat of the CRFM, is an indication that the future looks bright. It shows that the



core staff of the Secretariat, working in collaboration with the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and Member States, including other regional and extra-regional organizations and States, is ready to tackle the challenges the organization might face in the future. The Report shows that the organization, in its very first year of existence, has recorded a number of impressive achievements.

Among the challenges facing the Secretariat in the future are, how to mobilise resources to facilitate development and implementation of project activities to benefit the Member States; how to overcome the problems involved in the complexities of coordinating working relationships with the numerous partners and collaborators of the organization, including the Ministerial Council, the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and its Executive Committee, the 18 Fisheries Administrations and future additional ones, and the Members, Associate Members and Observers, and at the same time ensure that these relationships remain positively focused and vibrant. Also, how to maintain and strengthen strategic alliances with relevant regional and extra-regional organizations, and to develop new ones as the need arise. Finally, the challenge of developing a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime for CARICOM.

It is hoped that in this endeavour, Member States would continue to meet their obligations to the CRFM in respect of its responsibilities and challenges.

Hugh Saul
Executive Director

1. INTRODUCTION:



Highlights of First Year Accomplishments

The CARICOM Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management Program (CFRAMP) project came to an end in March 2003 and was replaced by a functional CRFM with a Secretariat staffed by qualified and experienced technical specialists and a Forum and its Executive Committee in place to oversee the operations of the Secretariat. The European Union (EU) funded Integrated Caribbean Regional Agricultural and Fisheries Development (ICRAFD) Programme, initiated in 1999, will come to an end on the 30th April, 2004, and the Community Based Coastal Resources Management (CBCRM) Caribbean program funded by The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada, is winding up, with the positive prospect of a third cycle with a \$ 5 million budget and a 5-year duration, coming on stream.

Guided by a Strategic Plan and a Medium Term Plan, the fledgling CRFM Secretariat aggressively embarked on a resource mobilization drive, with project concept papers and proposals. The project proposals closely follow the Priority Areas identified by the Member States.

Under the CARICOM / Japan Co-operation Agreement, a number of project activities have been agreed upon to be implemented, beginning in the third quarter of 2004. These activities are Development and Management of Pelagic Fisheries, Community Based Fisheries Resource Management, Development of a Regional Fisheries Database, Human Resource Development, and Aquaculture Development.

Projects addressing the area of Strengthening of Fisher folk Organizations and Improvement of Community Participation include one being funded by the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the implementation of which is to begin shortly. The title is “Organizational Needs Assessment Research on Caribbean Fisher folk Organizations”. There is also a firm commitment by the Kingdom of Spain to fund another such project entitled, “Strengthening and Empowering Regional Fisher folk Organizations.”

In the area of Fisheries Resource Assessment and Management, there is a commitment by the European Development Fund for the region to benefit from the general ACP Fish 2 Programme, and the possible addition of a project tailored to the special needs of the Region, entitled, “Improving on the National and Regional Mechanisms / Systems of Fisheries Management and Development in the Caribbean.”

The Secretariat of the CRFM has adopted the Team Work approach to implementing project activities. Implementation is achieved through a programme delivery system, which represents a shift from the project mode of delivery under the CFRAMP Project. Additionally, the CRFM has firmly embraced the Working Group approach as the vehicle for delivery of its programmes, thereby placing the Member States at the forefront of the implementation process. To date six (6) Working Groups have been established and have commenced work. Considering the lean staffing make up of the Secretariat and the existence of skills in the Member States, project implementation will involve the utilization of in-country skills through Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) arrangements, and attachments to the Secretariat for specified periods.

Positive results are already emerging from the operations of the Secretariat. These include the provision of technical support and advice to Member States. Barbados and Trinidad & Tobago benefited in the process, obtaining membership of ICAAT (Contracting Party Status), and Guyana in obtaining Co-operating Party Status. The CRFM Secretariat also assisted in addressing difficulties faced by some Member States in complying with the rules and regulations of International Fisheries Resource Management Organizations such as ICAAT and CITES. As a result, Belize and St. Vincent and the Grenadines had trade sanctions imposed by ICAAT lifted, and capacity building programmes were implemented for Member States to deal with issues relating to controls imposed by CITES on Conch Management.

Other success stories during this reporting period include the completion of post-graduate training in fisheries science by three fisheries officers from Dominica, Belize and Haiti through CRFM scholarship awards, and the development of a data base software named CARIFIS for use region wide, beginning January 31st, 2004 under the Statistics and Information Programme.

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CRFM

The official launching of the CRFM and the inaugural meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum took place in Belize City, Belize on March 26th and 27th, 2003 respectively. The CRFM has been established to facilitate sustainable development, conservation and management of the fisheries resources of the region. It is expected to, *inter alia*, enhance regional cooperation in the sustainable management of the shared fishery resources; act in an advisory capacity to individual national governments in matters relating to fisheries resource development and management, and to further build the capacities of the participating countries in these directions.

Staff appointments to the CRFM Secretariat were completed during the second quarter of 2003/4 fiscal year. The Ministerial Council (COTED) formally approved the Strategic and Medium Term Plans for the CRFM in May 2003, and appointed, upon the recommendation of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum, Mr. Hugh Saul as Executive Director and Mr. Milton Haughton as Deputy Executive Director of the CRFM Secretariat. The operationalization of the Strategic and Medium Term Plans has been initiated with the development of a new functional organogram for the CRFM Secretariat. The appointment of other senior staff was completed, based upon the recommendation of the First Meeting of the Forum. The appointments made included: Dr. Susan Singh-Renton – Programme Manager, Research and Resource Assessment, Mr. Terrence Phillips – Programme Manager, Fisheries Management and Development, Mr. Anthony Mills - Corporate Services Manager and Dr. David Brown - Coordinator, Advocacy, Policy and Planning. The post of Programme Manager, Statistics and Information is vacant and will be advertised shortly.



Prime Minister Said Musa of Belize delivering the Keynote Address at the Inauguration of the CRFM

The first meetings of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and its Executive Committee were convened on March 27th, 2003 and December 12th, 2003 in Belize, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, respectively.

3. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

3.1 Donor Sources

3.1.1 CARIFORUM Project

During the period January 2002 to February 2004, implementation of activities continued in accordance with the approved Second Work Programme and Cost Estimates, January 2002 – March 2003 and Extension Rider, April 1st, 2003 to December 31st, 2003. In February 2004, the CRFM Secretariat secured a further extension of support from the EU by way of a Third Work Programme which resulted in an additional US \$345,000 to the fisheries programme and extension of the period of EU assistance to April 30th, 2004.

The Third Work Programme covering the period 16th February 2004 to 30th April 2004 was designed to facilitate the finalization of outstanding activities thereby allowing targeted outputs to be achieved. The number of activities were reduced and refocused to ensure cost-effective delivery within the limitation of the proposed budget and time frame, taking into consideration the absorptive capacity of the countries and the need for sustainability of the intervention.

3.1.2 IDRC funded Community-Based Coastal Resource Management (CBCRM) Programme in the Caribbean

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada funded Research Programme on Community-Based Coastal Resource Management provided support for Caribbean institutions undertaking interdisciplinary research in seeking solutions to problems of coastal resource management. Phase 1 of the CBCRM Project ended in March 2002. Prior to the end of Phase 1, the CFU / CRFM Secretariat in collaboration with Instituto Internacional del Oceano (IOI) prepared and submitted a proposal to IDRC for a second phase of the project. The proposal for Phase 2 was approved in February 2002 and implementation commenced in March 2002. Fifteen (15) projects were selected for funding during Phase 2 of the CBCRM project. Successful projects are distributed as follows: Belize (2), Dominica (1), Dominican Republic (1), Cuba (3), Grenada (1), Guatemala (1), Jamaica (1), Mexico (2), Panama (1), Trinidad and Tobago (1), and Venezuela (1). Field implementation of the projects commenced during the summer of 2002 and continued through 2003. Most of the projects have been fully implemented. Responsibility for monitoring the projects was divided between the CRFM Secretariat and the IOI. With the exception of one project in Dominica that had to be terminated, all projects have been making progress as planned. This second phase will come to an end with the publication of a book on project outcomes by December 2004.

3.1.3 CARICOM / JAPAN Cooperation in Fisheries

In February 2000, the CFU / CRFM Secretariat prepared and submitted seven project outlines to the Government of Japan for consideration of funding following the Joint CARICOM / Japan Co-operation Agreement Meeting, which was held in Guyana in November 1999 and which identified fisheries as a priority area for cooperation. After further discussions and consultation with Japan and Member States, the CRFM elaborated three regional fisheries project proposals which were submitted to the Government of Japan for consideration. The project proposals are:

- Establishment of the Regional Fisheries Mechanism and Regional Database;
- Preparation of a Master Plan for Expansion and Strengthening of Aquaculture and Mariculture in the Region; and
- Survey of Pelagic Fishes and Diamondback Squid in the Caribbean.

In September 2003 the Government of Japan sent a Project Formulation Study Team to gather additional data, conduct further analysis of the fisheries sector, and formulate proposals regarding Japan's assistance to the fisheries sector of the CARICOM region. The Study Team also examined the background, validity



Signing of the Minutes between the Project Formulation Study Team and the CRFM by Mr. Hugh Saul, Executive Director, CRFM; Dr. Tatsuro Matsuota, Leader of Japanese Study Team and Mr. Byron Blake, Assistant Secretary General, CARICOM, 18th September, 2003, Belize City, Belize.

and anticipated positive impacts of the proposals submitted by the CRFM.

At the end of the Mission the Study Team asked the CRFM to consolidate the three proposals into one and recommended that the overall time frame for the project should be 7 - 10 years. The CRFM Secretariat revised and resubmitted the consolidated project proposal in November 2003.

The project will include the following inter-linked components:

- Pelagic fisheries development and management
- Community-based fishery resource management
- Regional fishery database development
- Aquaculture development

JICA has indicated unofficially that the project activities are expected to get underway during the third quarter of the calendar year 2004.

3.1.4 ACP FISH II Programme

The ACP Fish II Programme seeks to support countries through transition from the historic open-access regime, where the incentive was to harvest fish before others did so, to the now emerging regime, where the incentive is to maximize the long-term benefits from fisheries resources.

In keeping with the consultative approach in conducting the feasibility study for the ACP Fish II Programme, the ACP Fish II Consultative Workshop for the CARIFORUM Countries was held in Jamaica, from August 20th to 21st, 2003. The purpose of this Consultation was to discuss the objectives of the ACP Fish II Programme; types of activities that will be undertaken; and relative emphasis to be placed on the different activities and the arrangements for implementation. The draft Workshop Report, and subsequently the Project Proposal: *Improving on the National and Regional Mechanisms / Systems for Fisheries Management and Development in the Caribbean*, were prepared and submitted to SIFAR / FAO.

The Programme Manager, Fisheries Management and Development, represented the CRFM at the Final ACP Fish II Feasibility Study Workshop, Rome, Italy, December 3rd – 4th, 2003. The purpose of the Workshop was to review and discuss important features of the draft ACP Fish II Feasibility Study prior to its finalization by the EU. Based on the discussions, the overall objective of the Programme was determined to be the sustainable and optimal management of fisheries in ACP countries for the benefit of present and future populations, with the specific purpose being to strengthen fisheries sectoral policy development and implementation in ACP countries.

During these discussions, it was indicated that the core funding for the whole ACP Group for ACP Fish II would be Euro 11.5 million. However, the European Commission had mentioned that there might be possible further funding of specific regional projects that relate well to the ACP Fish II project. Based on these discussions and subsequent advice from the SIFAR / FAO Coordinator, a Concept Note: *“Improving Regional and National Mechanisms for the Management and Sustainable Development of Shared Fisheries Resources in the Caribbean ACP Countries”*, was prepared and submitted to the SIFAR / FAO for consideration. The proposed project was budgeted at approximately US\$3 million.

3.2 Member States

Human Resource Mobilization

The CRFM supports the delivery of programmes and projects at the national, sub-regional and regional levels to make optimum use of existing in-country skills. The lean staff make up of the Secretariat of the



CRFM (Belize and St. Vincent & the Grenadines) makes it imperative to utilize in-country skills, particularly Fisheries Departments' staff who benefited from the CFU / CRFM long-term post-graduate scholarships. Skills utilization would include attachments for specified periods to the Secretariat of the CRFM, and to other Member States through TCDC arrangements.

4. COLLABORATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

4.1 The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

The CRFM continued its effort to improve countries' perspectives of what is required by ICCAT and to strengthen efforts to gain international respect and recognition of the Region's need to develop its large pelagic fisheries. During the reporting period, the CRFM provided specific technical assistance and advice to Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Belize, and Grenada in respect of handling ICCAT reporting and management issues. The CRFM participated in the 2003 annual ICCAT SCRS and Commission Meetings, and provided technical support to CARICOM country delegations in attendance. Consequently, in 2003, ICCAT lifted trade sanctions against Belize and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and granted Co-operating Party Status to Guyana.

4.2 Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations

4.2.1 WECAFC Ad Hoc Flying fish Working Group of the Eastern Caribbean

Given that the activities of this Working Group are coordinated by FAO, the CRFM monitors the progress of activities conducted by the WECAFC Working Group, and provides additional technical support, as required. The FAO Flyingfish Working Group did not meet during the reporting period. CRFM staff provided technical support with data analyses conducted during the last meeting of the Working Group and also drafted the fisher interview questionnaires for obtaining additional data on historical fishing trends in both Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. Since that time, the FAO has prepared a draft fisheries management plan for the flying fish fishery.

4.2.2 Lesser Antilles Ecosystem Project

At present, this project is focused on estimating cetacean abundance in a specific part of the Eastern Caribbean region, and developing an ecosystem model of the living marine resources in the study area. The CRFM is monitoring the progress of this project. In February 2003, the FAO scientist for this project contacted the CRFM for assistance with a data substitution exercise. Fish surveys may also be considered and implemented by the project at a later date.

4.2.3 CRFM / FAO Cooperation

The CRFM Secretariat has been negotiating with the FAO to strengthen collaboration in the area of integrated fisheries management. Discussion commenced in November / December 2002 during the CARICOM/Japan Fisheries Management Training Workshop in Yokohama, Japan. In March 2004, Dr. Uwe Tietze of FAO, Rome, visited Belize to discuss and finalize arrangements with the CRFM Secretariat. Under the project, up to six senior National fisheries department and CRFM staff members will visit Malaysia and the



CRFM / FAO / MALMR

Regional Workshop on the Collection of Demographic Information on Coastal Fishing Communities and Its Use in Community Based Fisheries and Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Caribbean

Philippines to study the local experiences with Community Based Fisheries Management and Integrated Fisheries Management. This will be followed by the preparation of up to seven national case studies documenting the experiences and lessons learnt with integrated fisheries management in the CRFM Member States. These activities will be undertaken during the first and second quarters of the 2004/5 programme year. A regional workshop will be held in the final quarter of the 2004/5 programme year at which the results of the case studies will be presented and discussed by all the CRFM Member States. The workshop will also review and agree on a project proposal for further work to strengthen integrated fisheries management in the CRFM Member States.

4.3 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

CITES, the UN Secretariat that oversees the agreement to protect endangered species, based on an international agreement between governments to ensure that the international trade of endangered species do not threaten their survival, had in recent times stepped up pressure on a number of CRFM Member States for allegedly violating the conventions that protect the Queen conch. The CRFM took the following measures to provide technical assistance to the countries:

4.3.1 Special Queen Conch Workshop

The CRFM Secretariat organized and convened a Special Queen Conch Workshop in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, March 11th – 12th, 2004. The objective of this Workshop was to review the situation with regard to the management of the Queen conch fisheries in CARIFORUM Member States, to discuss and agree on a plan to address the concerns raised by CITES, and strengthen arrangements for the management of the Queen conch. The Special Regional Conch Management Meeting:

- reviewed the state of the resource and steps taken to address the concerns raised by CITES;
- reviewed the draft regional proposal for continued assessment and management of the conch resources; and
- identified the priority areas for immediate attention on a country by country basis to address the concerns raised by CITES and reviewed the draft proposal for establishment of a Regional Fisheries Management Organization for lobster and conch resources.

4.3.2 Strengthening of Conch Assessment and Management

The CRFM prepared a project proposal for urgently improving the management of Queen conch resources in consonance with the requirements of CITES. This project is designed to rehabilitate and strengthen the management of the Queen conch, *Strombus gigas*, resources in the region by strengthening regional management capability and empowering fisheries divisions to carry out their tasks through training, systems improvements, and provision of financial and technical assistance. The overall long-term goal of this project is to ensure sustainable utilization of Queen conch resources in the CARIFORUM Region through

greater networking, research, capacity building and improved management to rehabilitate and protect the stocks and ensure sustainability of the fisheries. The project aims at improving the overall management of and trade in the Queen conch, to the extent that could, to a large measure, insulate Member States from CITES' punitive measures. The budget for executing the project is US\$604,000 inclusive of US\$76,000 co-financing from local sources.

4.3.3 Preparation of Conch Management Recommendations for The Bahamas

The CRFM Secretariat reviewed the status of the Queen conch fisheries in The Bahamas and developed recommendations to improve management of the fisheries and address some of the major concerns raised by CITES regarding the fisheries. These recommendations were received by the Fisheries Department which is now in the process of adopting them for implementation.

5. COLLABORATION WITH REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

During this reporting period the CRFM Secretariat continued with the tradition of the CFU – CFRAMP to cooperate and collaborate with other relevant regional organizations in the planning and implementing of projects and programmes.

5.1 Caribbean Development Bank

The CDB financed a private sector micro project, through funding of a Consultancy and the provision of technical assistance to Mr. Chandradat Carpen of East Coast Berbice, Guyana, for the development of a Tilapia and Shrimp aquaculture farm. This micro project involves the establishment of hatcheries and production facilities. The CRFM Secretariat, supported by the Belize Department of Fisheries, provided the technical backstopping.

5.2 UWI / CERMES (Cave Hill) – Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies

CERMES of the University of the West Indies has had a long relationship with CRFM's predecessor, the CFU / CFRAMP project, through, among other things, technical assistance in the fish tagging programme and the assessment and management of Small Coastal Pelagics resources. During this reporting period, Dr. Hazel Oxenford, Acting Director of CERMES, participated in the First Meeting of the Working Group of the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime, held in December 2003 in St. Vincent & the Grenadines. CERMES was also contracted by the CRFM Secretariat to conduct DNA analysis of tissue samples of two Small Pelagic species aimed at developing a better knowledge and understanding of the biology and ecology of the species within the Caribbean, and to improve statistics and assessment and strengthen the regional information system for Small Coastal Pelagic resources.

5.3 The Institute of Marine Affairs

The Institute of Marine Affairs has also had a long history of collaborating with the CFU / CFRAMP through MOUs and LOAs in the area of Age and Growth determination of fish species in their laboratories. During this reporting period, the IMA was contracted by the CRFM to complement the work of CERMES on Small Coastal Pelagics by processing hard parts of two Small Pelagic species, geared towards providing data for improving statistics and assessment activities, and to strengthen the regional information support system for Small Coastal Pelagics.

5.4 The Caribbean Agricultural Research & Development Institute (CARDI)

CARDI is the organization through which the Secretariat of the CRFM applied for, and obtained funding from the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) for the conduct of a region-wide Needs Assessment of Fisher folk Organizations in the CARIFORUM countries, to be followed by the organizing of a Stakeholder Feedback Workshop in October 2004, for the discussion of the findings of the research and the identification of the constraints hindering the development of the fisherfolk organizations. This is expected to lead to further development of projects for strengthening and empowering the primary and umbrella fisher folk organizations in the region, through regional networking and ultimately the formation of a regional federation of fisher folk organizations.

5.5 OECS – ESDU (Environmental Sustainable Development Unit)

The CRFM Secretariat, through its predecessor, the CFU / CFRAMP, has had a long cooperative relationship with the OECS Secretariat, through its marine environmental management unit. Mr. Peter Murray, Programme Officer of the OECS – ESDU represented the OECS-ESDU at the First Meeting of the Working Group on the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime. The institution also provided appreciable technical support to the CRFM Secretariat in the development of a data base software, CARIFIS, now being utilized throughout the CARICOM Region.

5.6 The CARICOM Secretariat

As has always been the case, the CARICOM Secretariat continues to provide technical, administrative and financial back stopping, to the CRFM Secretariat. The CARICOM Secretariat is in the forefront of mobilizing resources for the development of a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime and projects identified in our Medium Term Plan. It has conducted internal financial audits of the CFU / CFRAMP, and now for the Secretariat of the CRFM.

6. TOWARDS A COMMON FISHERIES POLICY AND REGIME FOR CARICOM

6.1 Background

The Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, at their Fourteenth Inter-Sessional Meeting in Trinidad and Tobago in February 2003, considered the issue of the adoption of a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime for CARICOM. Discussion on the issue stemmed from a proposal submitted by the Government of Barbados. It was argued strongly that the principles being advocated and pursued within the CARICOM Single Market and Economy should not be limited in application to goods and services, and capital and labour in respect of the land mass of Member States, but should also include the marine space of countries. The proposal noted the apparent more favourable treatment some Member States extended to un-named third countries with respect to access to their waters and strongly urged that CARICOM countries implement a harmonized approach that allows access to the fisheries resources within their EEZs to other countries of the Caribbean Community.



H.E. Edwin W. Carrington - Secretary General of CARICOM delivering remarks at the Inauguration of the CRFM

Arising out of those deliberations the Heads of Government, among other things:

Mandated the CARICOM Secretariat to carry out the necessary research with a view to proposing for the consideration of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Conference, a framework for the exploitation and conservation of fisheries resources in the Region, based on stipulated guidelines; and

Instructed that, in the conduct of the research, the CARICOM Secretariat takes note and includes in the research the overlapping maritime boundaries between Member States of the Community and Third States.

In keeping with the Mandate given to the CARICOM Secretariat by the Heads of Government, the CRFM Secretariat, as implementing agency, convened a meeting of a Multidisciplinary Working Group on the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime on June 5th and 6th, 2003 in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Working Group identified some key issues to be addressed in the discharge of the Mandate from the Heads of Government. These included:

- (i) organizational matters such as membership and the scope of coverage of the Policy and Regime;
- (ii) legal issues such as the delimitation of National Maritime Boundaries and Multilateral and Bilateral Agreements such as the UNCLOS;
- (iii) socio-economic issues such as contribution to national output and employment, including self employment, distribution of incomes and food security; and
- (iv) linkage issues, including the multi-functional role of the fisheries industry and the roles of the various institutions involved.

A three year programme and budget valued at approximately US\$700,000 was also developed.

7. PROGRAMME DELIVERY SYSTEM

7.1 Fisheries Data Management (Statistics and Fisheries Data Management System)

7.1.1 Data base Software Development (CARFIS) Project

The objective of this project is to develop an upgraded Windows version of the TIP and LRS software programme. Project activities commenced in mid-2001 and have matured to the stage at which many Member States have commenced using CARIFIS from January 31st, 2004. An Expert Working Group made up of fisheries personnel drawn from CARIFORUM Member States and CFU / CRFM Secretariat technical staff, worked with a Consultant, Dr. Paul Medley, in upgrading the software. In order to facilitate the introduction of the upgraded CARIFIS software and training of the fisheries personnel in the Member States, the CFU / CRFM Secretariat held a Training of Trainers Workshop in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in December 2002 to train fisheries personnel and CFU / CRFM Secretariat staff as trainers.

Following the testing of the CARIFIS software during the Workshop, an upgraded version of CARIFIS was prepared and used at the CFU/FAO Fisheries Statistics and Data Management Workshop in March 2003. Based on the recommendations coming out of the March 2003 Workshop for the implementation of CARIFIS at the Member States' level, a CARIFIS Version 1.2 and a CARIFIS Training CD were prepared and delivered to the Member States to facilitate the commencement of the use of CARIFIS from January 31st, 2004. Critical to the successful implementation of CARIFIS is the transfer of the TIP and LRS legacy databases to

CARIFIS, as well as technical backstopping support and assistance in training staff to use CARIFIS. Each country is also being provided with a computer system to use the new CARIFIS programme. The first set of computers were bought and distributed to the countries between February and March 2004.

7.1.2 Training Workshops in Data Collection (Guyana & Haiti)

A workshop to train fisheries staff in field data collection techniques was conducted in Guyana in August 2003. Although all aspects of field data collection were covered, the primary aim of the Guyana workshop was to improve reporting of shark catches at the individual species level. In December 2003, the CRFM Secretariat conducted a workshop in Haiti to training staff there in techniques of data collection. The CRFM is working to provide equipment to facilitate commencement of at least a simple data collection programme in Haiti.

7.1.3 Review / Development of Data Forms (Guyana & Haiti)

The CRFM Secretariat carried out a detailed review of a set of six data forms currently used by Guyana's Fisheries Department, and developed revised data forms for Guyana. Field testing of these forms is anticipated in the near future. Fisheries catch and effort and biological data forms were also developed for Haiti, and would be tested as soon as the field-sampling programme commences.

7.1.4 Surveys - A National Fisheries Survey of Haiti

This activity that commenced in late 2002 is nearing completion. Of sixteen zones proposed for sampling coverage, a total of 13 zones have been completed to date. The remaining 3 zones are to be completed by May 2004. A training attachment facilitated participation of a Haitian Fisheries staff in analyses of the survey data collected so far and the preparation of a report. A multi-disciplinary fisheries survey was completed for Haiti in 2002. The report of this survey was finalized and delivered to Government Officials in Haiti. The findings of the latter would constitute the subject matter to be discussed at a National Fisheries Workshop of Stakeholders.

7.1.5 Monitoring and Provision of Technical Assistance for Development of Statistics

The provision of technical assistance to fisheries departments and divisions and other stakeholders is an ongoing activity. Monitoring and support to stakeholders is increasingly being provided via electronic communication and also using the opportunity provided by visits to the countries to implement other activities and regional meetings. Additional technical assistance is also being provided to those countries handling increased statistical reporting obligations and enhanced data collection activities in response to specific ICCAT requests: specifically enhanced billfish sampling in Grenada, and enhanced shark data collection and reporting by Guyana.

8. FISHERIES RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Strategic Review and Upgrading Organizational Structure of the Fisheries Departments

The activity to undertake a strategic review of the organizational structures of the fisheries departments of Suriname, Guyana, Dominican Republic and The Bahamas in order to make recommendations for institutional strengthening in relation to their roles and functions, has been completed. During this reporting period, the strategic and technical review for Haiti was completed and the Secretariat is in the process of

implementing the recommended activities to strengthen the capacity of the fisheries department in Haiti. Also, at the request of the Government of Belize, support has been provided to undertake a consultancy to review the roles, functions and operations of the Fisheries Department and Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute and recommend an appropriate mechanism for the institutional rationalization of coastal zone management in Belize.

8.2 Preparation / Update National Fisheries Management Plans

Work continued on the preparation of National Fisheries Management Plans for The Bahamas and the Dominican Republic, using data and information collected by the CFU / CFRAMP over the past three years. The FMPs clearly identify the management objectives for the fisheries, their status and problems, the strategy and actions needed to achieve the objectives, and the timeframe and resources needed to implement the plans. Elaboration of the FMPs continued during the review period. A National Stakeholder consultation was held in The Bahamas from November 6th – 7th, 2003 to review, discuss and elaborate a FMP. A similar stakeholder workshop to discuss, review and elaborate a FMP for the Dominican Republic was organized in February 2004 in Santo Domingo. A draft FMP is being prepared for Haiti. A consultation workshop with stakeholders from Haiti had to be postponed due to the political unrest in the Country. FMPs prepared for the other CARIFORUM countries, were updated.

8.3 Study of the Impact of Globalization on Fisheries

Based on the information gathered from a desk study, the CRFM Secretariat prepared a detailed Terms of Reference for a consultancy: *“Review the Effects of Liberalization and Trade-Related Policies on Fisheries and Measures Required for their Sustainable Development in the CARIFORUM / CARICOM Region.”* The objectives of the consultancy, among other things, are to review the situation regarding globalization and identify the critical issues that could affect the development of the fisheries sector in the CARIFORUM / CARICOM Region; and to address the issues that could hinder development of the fisheries sector, as well as restrict the Region’s ability to influence current trade negotiations and the opportunities to benefit from the resulting trade liberalization agreements.

The consultancy is currently under implementation with The Bahamas, Guyana, Suriname, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica chosen as the main

countries in which the study would be conducted. The outputs from this Consultancy will be a review of the current situation on globalization and recommendations for policy reforms to ensure sustainable fisheries development. A strategy and a project proposal will be formulated to address the issues involved.

8.4 Regional Approach to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is a significant problem in all CARICOM / CARIFORUM countries. Among the growing concerns of the countries is their current inability to monitor and control



Landing Site at Nieuw Amsterdam 'Back Sluice' used by Artisanal Fishers - Suriname

fishing activities in their Exclusive Economic Zones mainly due to the high cost of doing so. With the above in mind, Terms of Reference were prepared for a consultancy: “*Review of the current situation on IUU fishing and monitoring, control and surveillance in the fisheries sector of the CARIFORUM / CARICOM Region*”, with the objectives being to review and document the extent of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the CARIFORUM / CARICOM states; to review and assess the situation regarding monitoring, control and surveillance in the fisheries sector of the CARIFORUM / CARICOM Region. A Consultant has been recruited and the consultancy is being implemented, with field visits being made to Suriname, Guyana, Barbados, The Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St. Lucia, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

8.5 Post-Harvest Handling, Processing and Marketing Project

The objective of this project is to review the situation regarding post-harvest handling, processing, quality control and marketing of fish and fish products in CARIFORUM countries in order to define a strategy and project proposal for enhancing the regional institutional capability, to meet the requirements necessary to maintain and expand on the trade in fish and fish products locally, regionally and internationally. Dr. Roland Vanthuyne of Belgium was selected as the Consultant to undertake the regional review and prepare the proposal. A comprehensive draft diagnostic report and a draft project proposal to strengthen regional capacity in fisheries post-harvest issues were prepared by the Consultant. A revised project proposal “*Fishery Products Health Conditions in CARICOM / CARIFORUM Member States and OCT Countries,*” consistent with the directives of the COTED, namely the preservation of the regional approach and addressing the priority needs of Member States, has been submitted to the Commission of the European Union, Brussels, for consideration of funding under the Global Financing Proposal of the 8th EDF. The EU did not include the Proposal under the “All ACP / OCT” Project. However, the CRFM Secretariat has been in contact with the implementing agency for the “All ACP / OCT” project to see whether the Region could benefit on a regional basis by participating in the delivery of this project in the Caribbean area.



Fresh Fish for sale: Belize City

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8.6 Long-term Training of Fisheries Department Staff

To date, under the EU funded ICRAFD programme, twelve long-term scholarships have been awarded to candidates from the CARIFORUM region to pursue Masters degree programmes in fisheries at the University of the West Indies and universities in the United Kingdom and Spain. Mr. Wilner Romain of Haiti, and two persons from Belize (Mr. Mauro Gongora) and Dominica (Mr. Harold Guiste) were awarded scholarships in 2002. Mr. Wilner Romain returned to Haiti in June 2003 to finalize work on his Thesis. The scholars from Belize and Dominica completed their studies including their theses and returned to their respective countries in September 2003. In addition, arrangements have been finalised for the short-term training of personnel from the private and public sectors in Suriname to become Fish Quality Control Managers.

8.7 Institution Capacity Building Conference of Representatives of Fisheries Administrations and Fisher folk Organizations

The objectives of the Conference were to introduce participants to some key concepts in organization building and strengthening and empowerment, and to collectively formulate strategies for strengthening primary organizations and solidifying secondary organizations.

This Conference organized by the CRFM was held in Georgetown, Guyana, September 29th and 30th, 2003. Eighteen participants from The Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago attended the Conference. Participants were introduced to the following concepts which were discussed in detail: the Three-tier Model of Fisher folk Organizations, the Structure and Functions of Primary and Secondary Organizations, Organizational Networking, Empowerment and Advocacy and the Strengthening of Fisher folk Organizations.

Additionally, a round-table discussion of the following topics was organized: improving the economic viability of fisher folk organizations, and organizations as business concerns. Country representatives presented reports on the Status of Fisher folk Organizations in their countries. The output was that the groundwork for strengthening moribund fisher folk organizations was laid.

9. FISHERIES RESEARCH & RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

9.1 Fisheries Assessments

Assessment activities are planned and conducted by various CRFM Resource Working Groups.

9.1.1 Conch and Lobster Resources

The CRFM Conch and Lobster Working Group held a meeting in June 2003. This meeting reviewed the status of the lobster and conch resources in the countries, and developed plans for future research and management of these valuable species. This meeting also agreed on concrete recommendations to strengthen research and management of these species.

9.1.2 Shrimp and Ground fish Resources

During the last quarter of 2003 and the first quarter of 2004, the CRFM Secretariat organized and conducted a series of in-country shrimp and ground fish stock assessment workshops (Joint Guyana / Suriname Shrimp and Ground fish Resource Assessment Workshop, November 24th – 28th, 2003; Joint Belize / Jamaica Shrimp and Ground fish Resource Assessment Workshop, December 1st – 5th, 2003; In-country Shrimp and Ground fish Resource Assessment Workshop – Trinidad & Tobago, January 26th – 30th, 2004). The aim was to review existing catch, effort and biological data on shrimp and ground fish, based on the types of data available and the management objectives for the shrimp and ground fish fisheries. They were also aimed at conducting appropriate analyses to obtain information for decision-making and fisheries management, and developing the skills of national staff in data analysis and report preparation. The three workshops yielded valuable information for the management of the sea bob fisheries of Guyana and Suriname; the red snapper fishery of Guyana, and the penaeid shrimp and ground fish fisheries of Belize, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. They also served in developing the skills of national staff in data analysis and report preparation.

9.1.3 Large Pelagic Fish Resources, Small Coastal Pelagic Fish Resources, and Reef and Deep Slope Fish Resources

Assessment activities of the CRFM Large Pelagic Fisheries Resource Working Group, the CRFM Small

Coastal Pelagic Fisheries Resource Working Group, and the CRFM Reef and Slope Fisheries Resource Working Group were merged during the reporting period. For these Working Groups, assessment work focused on the implementation of agreed inter-sessional activities.

Three ad-hoc working groups were established for overseeing the implementation of inter-sessional activities, and relevant terms of reference were developed for each. To date, the ad hoc working group on improving recreational fisheries statistics developed a questionnaire for gathering detailed data on the nature and extent of recreational fishing activities in CRFM countries. The ad hoc working group on data quality control completed a literature review of data quality control procedures, and this document is being used to develop customized guidelines for controlling the quality of data collected by CRFM countries.

9.2 Research Studies and Projects

9.2.1 Conch and Lobster Visual Surveys: The Bahamas and Dominican Republic

Following training in field techniques, and procurement of field equipment for planned underwater surveys and biological studies, these activities were commenced in the Dominican Republic but are still on-going and additional funds are needed to complete them. In the case of the activities in The Bahamas there has been a delay in their implementation owing to shortage of staff (two staff members are on study leave) of the Fisheries Department.

9.2.2 Conch and Lobster Census in the Dominican Republic

Following training of data collection staff in October 2002, a national census of the lobster and conch fisheries in the Dominican Republic was implemented, and the data collected to date have been computerized. Over 1,700 interviews were conducted around the country. Data analysis and preparation of the report of the study is in progress.

9.2.3 Conch and Lobster Underwater Survey in Belize

A research proposal was developed by the Fisheries Department and the CRFM Secretariat in August/September 2003 to conduct a density study of the Queen conch populations in Belize. The fieldwork was undertaken in November / December 2003 and the data was analyzed during a one-week workshop in March 2004. The results showed that densities had increased by nearly three-fold since the last study was done in 1996.

9.2.4 Lobster Research and Management Plan for Belize

The CRFM assisted in developing a plan for research and management of the lobster fishery of Belize. The plan was submitted for funding consideration by the Fisheries Department.

9.2.5 Habitat Mapping Study in The Bahamas

The Bahamian Archipelago Eco-Regional Plan (BEP) Project and The Bahamian Archipelago Land Cover Mapping (BALM) project collected data on coral reef habitats in The Bahamas. A preliminary exercise was therefore conducted to use data from these projects to estimate potential yield for a selected area in The Bahamas. The final report of this analysis is being prepared.

9.2.6 Small Coastal Pelagic Feasibility Study

This study is intended to investigate the optimum experimental procedures for determination of the stock movements, distribution and migration; validation of growth rates; unit stock determination; the reproduc-

tive biology and the feeding ecology of the two small coastal pelagic species jacks (*Selar crumenophthalmus*) and robins (*Decapterus macarellus*). Fieldwork commenced in November 2003, and field trials would be completed by May 2004. The findings of this study will be used to develop a proposal for a larger-scale study.

9.2.7 Age and Growth Research

During a regional joint meeting of CRFM Pelagic and Reef Working Groups in 2002, fisheries officers recommended that the IMA laboratory's research programme should be allowed to continue as part of a growing regional effort to coordinate fish resource assessment and management activities. The laboratory submitted a status report during October 2003, and this report was circulated to countries for their review and comments on the way forward. Age and growth research activities continued to provide input data for planned assessment working group meetings.

9.2.8 Gear Selectivity Study in Suriname

This study is examining gear selectivity in gill nets and trawls used in the Surinamese fishery in order to correct for biases in commercial data and also to determine optimum mesh sizes for fisheries management. To date, the literature review has been completed, and the study proposal is being prepared.

10. CORPORATE SERVICES PROGRAMME

10.1 Technical Evaluation

An external technical review of the first Work Programme (February 1999 to December 2001) of the CRFM - ICRAFD project was undertaken by Dr. Hazel A. Oxenford of the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), University of the West Indies. The evaluation exercise was to determine the progress made since the commencement of the project in terms of achievements, benefits and impacts on the national and regional fisheries. Secondly, the evaluation was to determine the constraints and bottlenecks in implementing the project, and thirdly, to identify current needs and priorities in focus countries, and recommend refinements and adjustments to improve project delivery. The Final Report was prepared by the consultant, Dr. Hazel A. Oxenford in December 2001.

10.2 Financial Audit

The Financial Audit of the First Work Programme was also completed by Auditors Deloitte and Touche, Belize. The Deputy Regional Authorising Officer (DRAO) of the ICRAFD is finalizing the preparation of Tender Dossiers for a technical evaluation, and Financial Audit of the ICRAFD Second Work Programme (January 2002 to February 2004). This technical evaluation and Financial Audit is expected to be completed by May 2004.

Member States Contributions to the CFU / CFRAMP for the periods 1992 to March 31st, 2002, and for programme year April 1st, 2002 to March 31st, 2003 were also audited by Deloitte and Touche, Belize.

10.2.1 CRFM Consolidated Statements of Member States Contributions and Fund Accountability:

Attached hereto as *Annex I* is the Audited Financial Statements of the CRFM Secretariat for the Program Year April 1st, 2003 to March 31st, 2004.