



CARIBBEAN REGIONAL FISHERIES MECHANISM SECRETARIAT

REPORT ON THE INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF FISHERIES ADMINISTRATIONS AND FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS

SEPTEMBER 29TH – 30TH, 2003

GEORGETOWN, GUYANA

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Belize City, Belize
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1. PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

THE PURPOSE

It is generally acknowledged that the support and participation of the resource users in the decision making processes that go towards the planning, implementation and monitoring of fisheries management programmes are critical for the achievement of the sustainable utilization of the resources, including biodiversity conservation. It logically follows that in order to facilitate the participation of the resource users, the latter need to be organized and their organizations strengthened. It would be impossible to achieve this goal if the resource users are to be dealt with individually. It is well known that in spite of attempts by the erstwhile CFU in collaboration with the Fisheries Administrations of the countries in the region and the laudable achievements obtained so far, there still remain structural and operational weaknesses within some of the fisher-folk organizations; weaknesses that need to be addressed urgently.

The purpose of this two-day conference was to bring to the same table, leaders of fisher folk organizations and representatives of the fisheries administration responsible for Extension work, to assess the problems, seek solutions and collectively formulate strategies for dealing with the issues involved. The need to promote the formation of national umbrella organizations is even more critical since it is the national organizations that could liaise with the relevant regional organizations, particularly the budding Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), to participate effectively in the promotion of the sustainable development and management of the fisheries resources of the region.

THE OBJECTIVES

As stated in the Information Note in the section below, dealing with the preparatory work that led to the holding of this Conference, the two objectives are as follows:

- i) To introduce participants to some key concepts on organization building and strengthening and empowerment.
- ii) To collectively formulate strategies for strengthening primary and secondary organizations in Member States of the CRFM.

Further details on the thinking behind the organization of this Conference could be found in the Information Note in the next section dealing with the Pre-Conference Arrangements.

2. PRE-CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS

In preparation for the conference, communication links were developed with the fisheries administration concerned and the decision-making authorities; in this case, the authorities in eight participating countries and the host country. A copy each of the letters sent to the Fisheries Administrations and the Permanent Secretaries are shown below in this section. The communication links are needed for agreement to be reached on pertinent details such as dates, venue, logistics, and the selection of participants, and to provide them with the relevant details of the Conference.

3. PARTICIPANTS

The final list of participants is provided in the list that follows below. It would be noticed that due to some administrative and personal difficulties, one participant from the Bahamas, another from Belize and the two expected from Barbados did not turn up. However, the host country, Guyana, gained two additional places.



CARIBBEAN REGIONAL FISHERIES MECHANISM SECRETARIAT

P.O. Box 642, Princess Margaret Dr., Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Tel: 501-223-4443 Fax: 501-223-4446
e-mail: crfm@btl.net

Our File:

18th August, 2003

Dear Colleagues,

INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE IN GUYANA.

Following my last letter that requested a listing of all the primary and national umbrella organizations, to which only a number of Member States of the CRFM have so far responded, we wish to announce the holding of a conference of selected representatives of fisher folk organizations and their counterparts in the relevant fisheries divisions/departments. This conference is to set the stage for a series of activities relating to a number of projects that are in the final stages of being funded by external donor agencies.

Details of this conference are attached in the form of a draft information note and an annotated agenda. Each of the selected Member States would be expected to nominate two representatives of the fisher folk organizations and the fisheries administrations, except for Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago that are expected to nominate three each, for reasons indicated in the attached Information Note.

Please note that the representative nominees for each Member State participating in the Conference will be expected to submit a written report on the Status of the Fishers' Organizations in their country to the organizers at the conference and make an oral presentation of about 15 – 20 minutes duration. The Table under the sub-title 'Presentation of National Reports' in the Information Note provides hints on areas for emphasis for each Member State.

Kindly forward your nominations to The Administrative Secretary, CRFM secretariat at the following address:

cframp@btl.net or audinett@caricom-fisheries.com,

Sincerely yours,

.....
David N. Brown, Ph. D
Program Coordinator,
Advocacy, Policy and Planning
Secretariat of the CRFM.
Belize City
Belize.

e-mail: dbrown@caricom-fisheries.com.



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11-9-03

Our File:
September 9, 2003

Mr. Bowhan Balkaran
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock
Regent and Vlissengen Road
Georgetown, GUYANA

Dear Mr. Balkaran:

**SUBJECT: INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE, GUYANA, 29th and 30th
SEPTEMBER, 2003**

The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat presents its compliments and wishes to announce the holding of a conference of representatives of eight Member States of the CRFM to formulate strategies for the revival, formation and strengthening of primary fishers organizations and national umbrella organizations. This conference will set the stage for a series of activities relating to the implementation of a number of project activities.

The countries identified to participate are The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad & Tobago. Each country will be represented by two (2) participants, namely one Fisher' and one (1) Fisheries Extension Officer. Trinidad & Tobago will be represented by three participants, namely two Fishers' and one Fisheries Extension Officer. Each national delegation will be presenting a report on the status of the fisher folk organizations in their country.

Organizers will introduce a number of concepts for discussion, and the formulation of strategies will take the form of Round Table Discussions and Panel Discussions. A Questionnaire for assessing the Organizational Needs of Caribbean Fisher folk Organizations will be developed and finalized at the Conference for administering in the respective countries after the Conference.

We have been in contact with the Chief Fisheries Officers/Directors of Fisheries over the past two months and now formally request official confirmation of your country's participation and named participants.

We urgently await a reply.

With best regards,



Hugh Saul
Executive Director

c.c. Chief Fisheries Officers/Directors of Fisheries/Fisheries Administrator
Corporate Services Manager

**INSTITUTION BUILDING CONFERENCE FOR LEADERS OF FISHER FOLK
ORGANIZATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF SELECTED FISHERIES
ADMINISTRATIONS
[GUYANA, SEPTEMBER 29 & 30, 2003]**

INFORMATION NOTE

The ability of Resource User Groups to effectively participate in the management decision making process depends on the presence of strong fisherfolk organizations able to deal with government officials on equal terms, make their own decisions and become proactive organizations. Self-governing organizations are critical pre-requisites for building successful resource co-management regimes, both at the community and the national levels. One of the critical ingredients for the establishment of co-management institutional structures is the creation of national umbrella bodies that would spearhead the effective involvement of the organizations at decision making forums, at both the national and regional levels. Projects that would subsequently be implemented by the CRFM would build on this foundation.

The objectives of this activity are first, to facilitate the revival of moribund primary organizations or support the formation of new organizations. Second, to promote national representation of fishers through the formation of new national umbrella organizations or interim national representative bodies. The main medium through which the activity would be implemented is the holding of a strategy formulating and National Consultative Meeting of representatives of the National Fisheries Administrations and National Fisher folk organizations or other representative body in the absence of an authentic umbrella organization. At this meeting, the following will be the main focus:

- First, strategies will be collectively formulated for the formation of new primary organizations or the revival of old inactive ones, including setting annual targets.
- Second, strategies for the formation or revival of National Fisher-folk Organizations or interim representative committees or councils.

This two-day meeting will be held in Guyana, and the following countries will be represented apart from the host country: Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, St. Lucia, Dominica, The Bahamas, Belize, and Jamaica.

The Conference Organizer will be responsible for introducing participants to the critical concepts such as Umbrella Organization, Primary Organizations, Secondary Organizations, Fisheries Advocacy and stimulating discussion. The discussions generated from these conceptual clarifications and detailing of content, and the information garnered from the experiences of participating countries would inform the strategies to be formulated. Representatives of participating countries would therefore be expected to prepare reports on their national experiences, especially issues that are peculiar to their circumstances, for presentation at the two-day meeting.

CONFERENCE METHODOLOGY

Most of the interaction at the conference will take the form of open discussions on the problems that hinder progress, weaken the organizations and make them unstable. These would be collectively discussed and strategies for reversing the negative trends and strengthen the organizations would be discussed. Presentations would be made by the delegation of each country represented, supplemented by the introduction of the main concepts by the conference organizer e.g. primary and secondary organizations; the three tier model of fisher folk organizations; Empowerment and Advocacy, Organizations as business enterprises and organizational Networking

Presentation of National Reports

Presenters of the national reports would be provided with guidelines as to what areas should be emphasized in order to generate lively discussion as shown in the following table:

COUNTRIES	NO. OF REPS.	RECOMMENDED AREAS OF EMPHASIS
The Bahamas	2	Unstable primary organizations, linkages among islands, no national union.
Barbados	2	Checkered history, unstable primary organizations, recent revival, fledging national union.
Belize	2	Model on longevity, stable primary and secondary organizations, national organization as business enterprise.
Dominica	2	Stable primary organizations, Concept of Study Groups, problems with forming national union.
Guyana	2	Stable primary organizations, service and business approach, problems with forming national union.
Jamaica	2	NGO-sponsored organizations as a model; National Union as a business enterprise; stable national union.
St. Lucia	2	Stable primary organizations; problems with maintaining national union.
Trinidad & Tobago	3	Stable primary organizations, linkages between islands, problems with maintaining national union.

OTHER PRESENTATIONS BY CONFERENCE ORGANIZER

1. The Three-Tier Model of Organizations
2. Structure and Functions of Primary and Secondary organizations.
3. Organizational Networking
4. Empowerment and Advocacy
5. Strengthening Fisher folk Organizations

ROUND TABLE OR PANEL DISCUSSIONS

- Improving the economic viability of fisher folk organizations.
- Alternative Livelihood or Additional Income-Generation Strategies.
- Organizations as Business concerns

OBJECTIVES OF CONFERENCE

1. To introduce participants to key concepts on organizational building and strengthening and empowerment.
2. Formulate strategies for strengthening primary and secondary organizations in Member States of the CRFM.

EXPECTED OUTPUT

Groundwork for strengthening moribund primary organizations and solidifying national umbrella organizations accomplished.

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Participants would be representatives of the respective fisheries administrations and selected representatives of the national fisher folk organizations. With the exception of Trinidad & Tobago, all the other countries will be represented by 1 fisher with leadership credentials and 1 Fisheries Officer with Extension Work experience. Trinidad & Tobago would be represented at the conference by two fishers with the third from the Extension Unit of the Fisheries Administration.

SCHEDULE:

Dates: 29 & 30 September 2003.

Venue: Cheddi Jagan Research Centre, Georgetown, Guyana.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

See Annotated Agenda attached.

LOGISTICS

Responsibility for travel of participants would be done by the Secretariat of the CRFM in Belize, whilst detailed arrangements in Guyana would be done by the CRFM and the Guyana Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock.

**INSTITUTION BUILDING CONFERENCE FOR LEADERS OF FISHER FOLK
ORGANIZATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF SELECTED FISHERIES
ADMINISTRATIONS**
[GUYANA, SEPTEMBER 29 & 30, 2003]

ANNOTATED AGENDA [ICRAFD WBS. 533.1]

MONDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

9:00 – 10:00

Opening Session, Introduction to Conference Agenda & Logistical Arrangements

10:00 – 11:30

Presentations on Key Concepts

- i) The Three-Tier Model of Fisher folk Organizations.
- ii) The Structure and Functions of the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary fisher folk organizations.
- iii) 'Round Table' Discussion of Issues, Problems and Formulation of Strategies.

11:30 – 11:40 COFFEE BREAK

11:40 – 12:30

Presentation on Key Concepts

- i) Organizational Strengthening
- ii) Organizational Networking
- iii) Introduction of Questionnaire
- iv) 'Round Table' Discussion of Issues, Problems and Formulation of Strategies.

12:30 – 2:00 LUNCH BREAK

2:00 - 3:15 PRESENTATION OF NATIONAL REPORTS

- i) Guyana
- ii) Belize
- iii) Dominica

iv) Barbados

v) Open Discussion of issues raised, problems being encountered and formulation of strategies for developing solutions.

3:15 – 3:30 COFFEE BREAK

3:30 – 4:30 PANEL DISCUSSION

Strategies for Improving the Economic Viability of Fisher folk Organizations
(Primary & Secondary)

TUESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2003

9:00 – 10:15 PRESENTATION ON KEY CONCEPTS

- i) Leadership of Fisher folk Organizations
- ii) Fisheries Advocacy
- iii) Empowerment of Fishers Organizations
- iv) Questionnaire Improvement
- v) Discussion of key issues, problems and formulation of strategies for improvement.

10:15 – 11:30 PANEL DISCUSSION

- i) Organizations as Business Concerns
- ii) Open Discussion of regional experiences

11:30 – 11:40 COFFEE BREAK

11:40 – 12:30 PRESENTATION OF NATIONAL REPORTS

- i) Jamaica: National Union
- ii) St. Lucia
- iii) The Bahamas
- iv) Trinidad & Tobago

12:30 – 2:00 LUNCH

2:00 – 3:15 WRAP UP ON NATIONAL REPORTS

Key Issues Introduced, Major problems and Suggestions for Solutions.

3:15 – 3:30 BREAK

3:30 – 4:00 Conference Evaluation

- Future Plans

4:00 – 4:30 CLOSING FORMALITIES

INSTITUTION BUILDING CONFERENCE, GUYANA
29 & 30 SEPTEMBER 2003.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

THE BAHAMAS

1. Caswelt Mounts

Fisheries Superintendent,
New Providence

BELIZE:

2. Charles Heusner,

Chairman, National Fishermen
Cooperative Society Ltd.

DOMINICA

3. Desmond Bertrand

Fisherman

4. Kerr Bernadette Sarrant

Fisheries Extension Officer

GUYANA

5. George Mohabir

Fisherman

6. Irvin McLennan

Fisheries Extension Officer,
Essequibo Coast
Fisherman

7. S. Mohammed

8. M. Sasenarine

Fisherman

JAMAICA

9. Howard Bromfield

Senior Fisheries Inspector

10. Hovelon Honneyghan

Chairman, Gillings Gully Fishermen
Cooperative

ST. LUCIA

11. Petronilla Polius

Fisheries Extension Officer

12. McArthur Fowell

Fisherman/ Vice-President, Castries
Fishermen Cooperative Society.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

13. Michelle Picou – Gill

Fisheries Officer

14. Emille Louis,

President, All Tobago Fisher folk
Association.

15. Stephen McClatchie

President, Toco Fishing Cooperative
Society Ltd.

RESOURCE PERSONS

16. Dawn Maison

Ag. Chief Fisheries Officer

17. Carl Thom

Fisheries Officer

ORGANIZER

18. Dr. David N. Brown

Coordinator, Advocacy/ Policy &
Planning, CRFM Secretariat, Belize.

INTRODUCING THE

THE THREE-TIER MODEL

OF

FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS

Institution Building Conference for Fisheries Field Officers
Georgetown, Guyana, 29 &30 September 2003

Creating a Regional Network of Fisher folk Organizations:

INTRODUCING THE THREE -TIER MODEL

WHAT IS NETWORKING?

Network: Individuals or organizations willing to assist one another or collaborate. It is informal and fluid. Easy to create and maintain

Bringing about strong working and social relationships among Fisher folk Organizations i.e. Integration.

There are two possibilities: Vertical and Lateral Integration.

This integration process should be extended laterally to include other relevant organization such as Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations, Research and Academic Institutions and other Stakeholder Organizations.

WHAT IS A THREE-TIER STRUCTURE?

There are three levels of vertical integration; the community level, the national level and the regional level.

The bottom level represents the Primary Fisher folk Organizations, the next vertical level stands for the Secondary Fisher folk Organizations and the top represents the Regional Fisher folk Organization.

HOW ARE THESE LEVELS ORGANIZED?

Primary Organizations (Community Level) are vertically integrated to Secondary Umbrella Unions (National Level) and again vertically integrated to Apex or Tertiary Federation (Regional Level).

WHAT ARE THEIR FUNCTIONS?

They have different functions depending on their level of organization.

Level 1: The Primary or Community Level Fisher folk Organizations.

Establish strong management and working partnerships with national fisheries administrations and relevant NGOs, and private sector entities.

Leaders to collaborate with fisheries administrators to implement capacity building programs, for effective participation of fishers in management decision-making and resource co-management.

Community-based organizations to be vertically integrated to National Umbrella Organizations (Secondary Unions).

To elect representatives for leadership positions on, and for membership of, the national unions.

Members to be regularly consulted by their representatives on the secondary unions on vital issues for deliberations at that level.

Demand feedback and accountability from representatives at the secondary level.

Establish lateral linkages with other regional primary organizations for:

Regular exchange of information and opportunities to learn from each other's experience and knowledge.

Implement exchange visits and study tours with each other.

Jointly organize social activities.

Collaborate with each other to develop common strategies

Develop common strategies for conflict resolution.

Promote the development of alternative income earning sources (micro-enterprises) for members and for the organization.

Strive for developing organizations into self-governing organizations, capable of making own decisions and gearing towards economic self-sufficiency: i.e. Empowerment.

Level 2: The Secondary Unions or National Umbrella Organizations.

Coordinate programs and activities of the Primary Organizations.

Mainly establish strong working relations with national fisheries administrations and government.

Effectively participate in promoting capacity building programs for primary organizations towards resource co-management.

Represent the voices of the primary organizations at national decision-making forums, including:

National Fisheries Advisory Committees

National Fisheries Dialogue/Advocacy Groups

National Legislative Enforcement Agencies.

Participate in resolving conflict situations among primary organizations.

Develop consultative and feedback links with primary organizations on matters of national and regional importance.

Be empowered to effectively participate in resource management decision-making processes at the national level.

Establish lateral linkages with other secondary organizations for regular sharing of information

Development of common strategies on regional policy matters

Establish strong linkages with relevant NGOs and other research and academic institutions, and relevant funding agencies, both regionally and extra-regionally.

Collaborate with the National Fisheries Administrations and other National Umbrella Unions in formulating joint regional and sub-regional marketing strategies.

Level 3: Regional Federation of Fisher-folk Organization (REFFO).

Develop strong structural and operational linkages with the Technical Secretariat of the **Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)** through the National Fisheries Administrations, for participating in negotiations and decision-making on matters relating to: Regional and extra-regional conflict situations, and The management of shared, straddling and highly migratory fish species.

Represent the voices of the National Umbrella Organizations via the National Fisheries Administrations in collaborative operations with the Secretariat of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) in other matters relating to the following:

Application of international fisheries laws and regulations

Development and enforcement of regional and sub-regional harmonized legislation.

Representation of resource user organizations at international fisheries forums.

Formulation and implementation of strategies for coping with the impact of external control of international fisheries laws.

Formulation and implementing of strategies for coping with restrictions imposed by outsiders on access to international markets.

Participation in fisheries research and sharing of information thereof.

Participation in the planning and implementing of regional and sub-regional fisheries projects.

Formulation and implementation of strategies for accessing project planning and implementation funds and other resources.

Fight for equity in resource access/use allocation and distribution of benefits

Forging of strong planning and operational alliances with other primary producing organizations, regional and sub-regional research institutions, relevant environmental NGOs and other stakeholder groups.

Building the Institutional Framework for Empowerment

Establishment of electronic communication centers in participating countries.

Establishment of a regional electronic communication network linking all the participating countries.

Regular publishing of a Quarterly Newsletter.

Publication of regional and international fisheries research findings of relevance to the development and management of the regional resources.

Organizing of a community women's leadership network.

Organizing of community development leadership network.

Organizing of 'fish workers' and women's wings of the fisher folk organizations.

**THE THREE - TIER ORGANIZATIONAL
STRUCTURE
OF THE
CARIBBEAN FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS**

**Tertiary
Level**

**CARIBBEAN REGIONAL FEDERATION
OF
FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS**

CRFM*

**Secondary
Level**

**NATIONAL UNION OF FISHER FOLK
ORGANIZATIONS**

**NATIONAL FISHERIES
ADMINISTRATIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL
NGOs

EDUC. & RESEARCH
INSTITUTIONS

FUNDING AGENCIES**

**Primary
Level**

**PRIMARY
FISHER FOLK
ORGANIZATION**

**PRIMARY
FISHER FOLK
ORGANIZATION**

**PRIMARY
FISHER FOLK
ORGANIZATION**

v)

Summary of Follow-Up Discussion

The discussion that followed the presentation on the Three-Tier Model generated some heated discussion, particularly initiated by a few who were at the Workshop held in Los Roques, Venezuela, where this concept was initially broached. Their experience was that their attempts to introduce new ideas from that model were initially opposed by some die-hard conservatives in their organizations, who would rather prefer to maintain the status quo. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, a move to initiate the formation of a new National Umbrella Organization met with strong official resistance partly because there existed a moribund national organization that had not been officially scrapped.

Participants who were hearing this talk for the first time were asked to examine the structure and functions of primary and secondary organizations and to compare it to the realities in their home countries. The general conclusion was that the two were far apart and that on their return to their countries they would endeavour to introduce some of the innovative ideas being introduced.

There was general agreement that the time was not right to begin to initiate moves towards the formation of a regional federation of fisher folk organizations. It was the consensus that the national organizations should be allowed to operate through the electronic communication and information sharing system for some time. The need for a regional organization would emerge when the time was ripe.

ON

STRENGTHENING

FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS

STRENGTHENING FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS

Self Governance

A self governing Organization is:

- ❑ Self Reliant
- ❑ Makes its own decisions
- ❑ Builds its capacity
- ❑ Exercises rights
- ❑ Observes responsibilities
- ❑ Rules of behaviour are made by the general membership

Its strength lies in its ability to make collective decisions.

RULE MAKING

- Who can be a member and who cannot be?
- Who can participate and who cannot?
- Who can exercise authority?
- How are rules established?
- How are rules enforced?
- Rules should be fair, agreed upon by all, and understood by all.
- Organizational Action to achieve goals and solve problems.
- Individual Action in the day-to-day operations.

SANCTIONS

- System of punishments for rule violation developed by members.
- Formal e.g. Fees and fines
- Informal e.g. peer pressure
- Should be known by all.
- Should be agreed to by all
- Sanctions should be proportional to offence.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

- ❖ Avoid rule breaking and violence
- ❖ Formal and informal
- ❖ Should be known and agreed to
- ❖ Should be fair and practical

EMPOWERMENT

- Sharing decision making with the government
- Authority to resolve problems
 - Capacity to co-manage the fisheries with the government

PERSONAL STAKE

- All members should feel that they have personal stake in group's success
- All contribute time, energy and ideas.
- All help to achieve goals

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- Love and commitment to goals
- Identify with members' needs
- Respect group's basic values
- Encourage innovative thinking
- Be a good listener
- Practice consensus building
- Promote group's interests
- Constant consultation with group
- Lead by example
- Avoid sectionalism
- Avoid elitist attitude
- Share information
- Be open minded and ready for change
- Be democratic

- Share leadership functions
- Set realistic goals and objectives
- Divide into sub-groups/ task forces to take on specific tasks according to expertise
- Spread responsibilities across all members
- Promote participatory planning and decision-making
- Foster trust and collaboration among members
- Keep members motivated by acknowledging their contributions.

ATTRACTING MEMBERS

- Increase/Expand benefit areas
- Develop extra income earning projects
- Encourage information sharing with public
- Publicize group's achievements
- Leaders should be accountable
- Organize educational and public awareness programmes
- Promote social activities
- Contribute to community welfare
- Form strategic alliances with other fishers' organizations
- Organize membership drive

vii) Summary of Follow-Up Discussion

The concept of self-governing organizations attracted much attention. The discussions linked it to freedom from over-dependence on government and striving to be self sufficient, by which way the organizations could make their own decisions and not to be relying on powerful outsiders to do so on their behalf. The implication of such a situation was appreciably discussed. The linkage between self-governance and empowerment was also noted; so was the linkage between advocacy and the involvement in the decision-making process.

The second concept that roused interest among the participants was Leadership. It was generally agreed that this was the weakest link in the organizational chain and that the organizations need good training in this area. Participants were provided with copies of the CFU booklet on Leadership for Fisher folk and encouraged to study it further and share the information with their colleagues back home.

The general discussion that followed touched upon several factors that militate against the organizations, the most serious being political interference and division among members in line with political differences. This weakens their ability to attract attention of governments to their problems, and weakens them. One of the ideas floated by some members was the idea of burying their political differences and affiliations and presenting a united front in attempting to win concessions from governments. The general thinking seemed to lean in that direction.

INTRODUCING

FISHERIES

ADVOCACY

Defining Advocacy

1. **Influencing outcomes through lobbying Decision-makers – influencing for change in policy.**
2. **Attempting to change “What is” to “What should be” – Changing the status of a policy, strategy or program.**
3. **To gain access and voice in the decision-making process – Empowerment.**
4. **Promote “participatory” planning and decision-making.**
5. **Strengthen civic participation and establish relations with decision-makers.**
6. **Advocacy organization draw their strength from and are accountable to people, and/or members of affected groups.**
7. **Change power relations and bringing a clear improvement in people’s lives.**

Why Advocacy?

- **Educate leaders, policy makers and others who make or carry out policy.**
- **Influence or reform existing policies, laws and budgets or developing new projects or programs.**
- **Create more participatory, accountable and transparent decision-making structures.**

Advocacy Concepts

- The need for 'Change' creates a role for Advocacy.
- Promotion
- Mobilization
- Representation
- Empowerment
- Participation
- Lobbying
- Pressure (group)
- Monitor
- Articulate
- Networking
- Critique
- Dialoguing and Negotiating
- Communication
- Proactive(ness) as opposed to Reactive(ness).

Three Views of Advocacy

- Speaking on behalf of the voiceless = Representation
- Encouraging others to speak with you = Mobilization
- Supporting the voiceless to speak for themselves = Empowerment

Advocacy as Promotion

- Advertising the achievements of the organization and its Members
- The role of the member-organizations in nation building.
- The importance of the fishing industry (fishers, vendors, processors)

Advocacy for Social Mobilization

- **Forging partnerships and networks with other organizations with similar persuasion**
- **Facilitating training for mobilization**
- **Facilitating information/experience sharing between fisher folk organizations and other organizations.**
- **Building capacity and skills of national social mobilization focal points**
- **Building partnerships, alliances and coalitions.**

Conservation and Environmental Advocacy

- **To address issues of Over fishing and habitat degradation**
- **Direct the public's attention to bad fishing practices and use of inappropriate equipment, including illegal acts, pollution by fishers and the general public; educating the public on these issues.**
- **Promote the concepts of conservation and restoration.**
- **Conserving global abundance and biodiversity (the diversity of marine life.**
- **Anti-pollution, Anti-sedimentation.**
- **Protecting essential habitat from negative human activities.**

Consumer Advocacy

- **Food safety is a public policy concern**

- **Raise the level of public demand for quality goods, and so to improve the competitiveness of product in the market place.**
- **Expand the regional and national network for monitoring and evaluating food safety.**
- **Consumer involvement will democratize food safety policy and decision-making.**
- **Food safety should never be compromised.**
- **Poor fish handling, preparation and processing.**
- **Expand Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) coverage to include source areas such as polluted waters.**
- **Citizens' consumer movements might have to be the ones to determine what should be the role of the State in ensuring their safety and the safety of the environment.**

Media Advocacy

- **The strategic use of the mass media to support community organizing to advance a social or policy initiative.**
- **Organizing attention-getting events to stimulate news coverage of an issue.**
- **Refocusing a problem and its solution from an individual level to a policy level.**
- **It is the purposeful and planned use of the mass media to bring problems and policy solutions to the attention of the community and decision-makers.**
- **It seeks to broaden the 'frame' of the news presentations in the public debate.**

- **To educate, motivate and mobilize the public.**

Steps in Advocacy

1. **Issue Identification**
2. **Building support through networks, coalitions and constituencies.**
3. **Targeting Audiences.**
4. **Data Collection and Research.**
5. **Developing a communication strategy.**
6. **Analyzing and developing solutions.**
7. **Plan for implementation of an advocacy campaign.**
8. **Monitoring and Evaluating progress**

Methods of Advocacy

1. **Always based on significant and sufficient membership support**
2. **Take alternative views into consideration.**
3. **Needs collaboration and support of other agencies and organizations.**

Forms of Advocacy:

- **Symposia or any educational forum.**

- Information dissemination
- Adopting and sending resolutions.
- Preparing a position paper
- Legislation briefing statements
- Advertising position stands on critical issues
- Sending a letter with a request for action or comments
- Developing training and information programs that foster awareness of and adherence to established advocacy protocols.

Education and Media – fact-finding, public forums, letters to the Editor, Press Conferences, Radio, Web Pages, Internet, TV, Paid Advertisements, Canvassing opinion.

Avoid public demonstrations/marches and litigation.

Risk

Not all advocacy strategies and tactics can be used universally. In some places, a direct action aimed at a focal decision maker on an issue may be politically dangerous and undermine the potential for long-term efforts at change. In some places, public criticism or pushing cultural change may provoke a backlash. As often as possible engage in advocacy to educate, to draw attention of the public to an issue.

xiii) Summary of Follow-Up Discussion

The concept of Advocacy aroused keen interest in Participants immediately after it was introduced. The Organizer took pains to disabuse the minds of participants who might take it to be a concept for encouraging confrontation with decision-makers. It was emphasized that it is essentially a means to educate the stakeholders and decision-makers alike and to develop awareness of the general public on issues relating to environmental preservation and restoration, consumer education and other pertinent issues such as pollution and habitat degradation.

This shifted much of the discussion to the methods and forms of Advocacy, particularly the role of the media. The various forms of the use of the media such as public forums, Letters to the Editor, Press Conferences, the Radio and other means should strictly be aimed at educating the public, and to draw attention of the public to an issue affecting the fisheries and the industry.

The issues directly connected to the fisheries such as Conservation and Environmental Advocacy and Consumer Advocacy were also discussed at length.

IMPROVEMENT OF QUESTIONNAIRE

The Participants were introduced to a virtually open-ended questionnaire meant to assess the Statuses and Needs of the fisher folk organizations. The interviewees were to be fishers who were members of primary fisher folk organizations. The Organizer went through the questionnaire painstakingly with the Participants to ascertain whether responses to the questions could in fact measure what they were meant to measure. Participants eagerly contributed ideas from their own experience of the workings of the fisher folk organizations in the region.

Participants were the asked to study the questionnaire overnight in groups and to prepare to assist in transforming the questions into close-ended ones, with all possible responses covered. The result of this exercise is the questionnaire below.

This will be further tested in the field before it could be utilized for a research work on the Assessment of the statuses and needs of fisher folk organizations in the region.

Questionnaire on Primary Fisher folk Organizations

by

The Secretariat of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)

NAME OF
COUNTRY:.....

NAME OF
ORGANIZATION:.....

LOCATION OF
ORGANIZATION:.....

Improved Version
September-October, 2003

Section 1

Structure and Functions

Please tick all statements that apply to the organization.

1.1 Reasons for the formation of the organization.

- ☐ To provide services (give examples....) in the community
- ☐ To gain access to credit facilities
- ☐ To create employment in the community
- ☐ To gain access to fishery resources
- ☐ To have a better say in the decision making
- ☐ To obtain subsidies from government
- ☐ To do group business with little or no investment
- ☐ To stimulate the local economy
- ☐ To participate in the better management of the fisheries stock
- ☐ To make contact with the national fisheries authorities easier
- ☐ Any other
(specify).....

1.2 Type of Organization:

- ☐ **Marketing or producer type:** to harvest and/or distribute and market fish and fish products, including processing and storage
- ☐ **Consumer or Supply type:** to supply members with various types of merchandise, including fishing gear, vessel parts, fuel, ice, which are in short supply or too costly to buy in the open market place.
- ☐ **Credit or Financial type:** to pool savings together for mutual aid eg.

credit union, with minimal rate of interest.

- ☐ **Service type:** to offer cultural and social facilities that do not exist in the community e.g. housing, funeral expenses, day care facility etc.
- ☐ **Lobby or Pressure Group type:** to represent the interest of members to government and other formal organizations.
- ☐ Any other
(specify).....

1.3 Characteristics of the Organization:

- ☐ **Active:** operates continually throughout the year.
- ☐ **Dormant:** comes alive only in times of crisis or in emergencies
- ☐ Voluntary membership
- ☐ Equal distribution of benefits
- ☐ Restriction in membership exists (provide a brief explanation).....
.....
.....
- ☐ Cooperation exists within the group
- ☐ There is cooperation with other sister organizations
- ☐ Leaders determine who gets/says what
- ☐ Any other
(specify).....

1.4 Membership and Leadership Structures:

How many members has your organization?

How many are boat owners?

How many are women?

How many are fishers/boat owners/fisheries crew

How many are non-fishers?

How many are joint boat owners?

The Executive/ Management Team

How many members serve on the executive?

On the executive how many are boat owners?

How many women are on the executive?

How many non-fishers are on the executive?

Democratic Practices

How long has the present executive been in office?

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ One year
- ☐ Two years
- ☐ Three years
- ☐ Four years
- ☐ More than four years

How long did the previous executive stay in office?

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ One year
- ☐ Two years
- ☐ Three years
- ☐ Four years
- ☐ More than four years

1.5 Operations of the Organization

How many general meetings are held in a year?

1.6 How would you describe the rate of attendance at meetings?

- ☐ Very high
- ☐ High
- ☐ Reasonable
- ☐ Low
- ☐ Very low

1.7 On which day(s) of the week are meeting usually held?

- ☐ Sunday
- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday
- ☐ Saturday
- ☐ Any day except on Sundays

1.8 During which times of the day are meetings usually held?

- ☐ Early morning
- ☐ Afternoon
- ☐ Evening

1.9 How often is election of office bearers held?

- ☐ Once in 1 year
- ☐ 2 years
- ☐ 3 years
- ☐ 4 years
- ☐ 5 years

Section 2

Working Relationships

- 2.1 Working relationships between your organization and other fisher folk organizations could be described using the following scale:

(
Very poor
Poor
Barely cordial
Cordial
Very cordial
Excellent

- 2.2 On this basis how would you describe the working relations between:
(Insert Excellent/Very Good/ Good/ Fair/ Not Good as appropriate)

The executive of your organization and the general membership?

Your organization and the community at large?

Your organization and other fishers' organization in the area in which your members operate?

Your organization and the fisheries department officials?

Your organization and the government?

- 2.3 Does your organization find it easy in presenting matters of concern to your members to Ministry/Fisheries officials?

☐ Yes ☐ No

- 2.3.1 If yes, how often do you get feedback?

☐ Regularly
☐ Sometimes
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

- 2.4 Does your Organization have easy access to information from fisheries department?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2.5 How would you describe the existing nature of fishers' organization participation in fisheries management?

- ☐ Informed of decisions already made by government alone
- ☐ Responds to consultation at a late stage before final decisions are made
- ☐ Operates in partnership with fisheries officials in management
- ☐ Government has delegated certain powers to us in management of the fisheries
- ☐ Fishers organizations, including our own, are in complete control of management

Section 3

Condition of the Fisheries

3.1 Over the last 5 years what changes (if any) has your organization observed on the following:

- i. The volume of the catches
 - ☐ Increasing
 - ☐ Decreasing
 - ☐ Remained steady
- ii. The weight of individual fishes caught
 - ☐ Increasing
 - ☐ Decreasing
 - ☐ Remained steady
- iii. The size of the fishes caught
 - ☐ Increasing
 - ☐ Decreasing
 - ☐ Remained steady
- iv. The number of fishery ground
 - ☐ Increasing
 - ☐ Decreasing
 - ☐ Remained steady
- v. The population of fishes in the fishing grounds

- ☐ Increasing
- ☐ Decreasing
- ☐ Remained steady

3.2 List/Outline the problems in the condition of the fisheries in your area of operation which need to be addressed.

- ☐ Coastline development/ construction works
- ☐ Tourists activities
- ☐ Conflict among resource users
- ☐ Pollution
- ☐ Political interference
- ☐ Poaching and other illegal fishing activities
- ☐ Theft of gear, equipment etc.
- ☐ Increasing fishing pressure
- ☐ Any other? If yes,
specify:.....

3.3 List/Outline the specific measures which need to be taken to improve the situation.

- ☐ Deal with illegal fishing/fishers.
- ☐ Control issuance of fishing licenses.
- ☐ Educate fishers and other stakeholders on environment and responsible fishing
- ☐ Conduct research
- ☐ Ban/Restrict Destructive Gear

- 3.4 List/Outline your organization's views, based on the existing conditions, on the future of the fisheries in your area.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section 4

Fishery Management

- 4.1 What form of fisheries management would your organization prefer?

- ☐ By government only
- ☐ By government and fishers' organization
- ☐ By fishers' organization alone
- ☐ By the Private Sector
- ☐ By NGOs

- 4.2 Under a joint management system it has been suggested that fishers' organizations would be required or expected to:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i. Provide information to fisheries officers on conditions in the fisheries | Would your organization like to participate?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| ii. Assist in the self-policing of fisheries including turning in violators even from their own organizations and communities | Would your organization like to participate?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

- organizations and communities
- iii. Serve as surveillance agents in
keeping track of foreign fishing
fleet activities

Would your organization like to
participate?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4.3 Does your organization have the personnel and resources to do these things?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4.4 If not, list the resources your organization needs in order to be able to do these
things very well?

- ☐ Patrolling facilities
- ☐ Communication Equipment
- ☐ Training in Use of equipment
- ☐ Any other, please
specify:.....

Section 5

Needs Assessment

5.1 List/Outline the major problems facing fishers' organization like your own.

- ☐ Lack of management skills
- ☐ Political interference
- ☐ Financial mismanagement
- ☐ Poor leadership
- ☐ Lack of accountability
- ☐ Insufficient monitoring and surveillance

- ☐ Poor marketing skills
- ☐ Any other? Please specify"

5.2 List in order of priority from the highest downwards the resources your organization needs to enable it to function more effectively

- ☐ Financial resources
- ☐ Credit facilities
- ☐ Joint marketing strategies
- ☐ Sourcing cheap equipment
- ☐ Communication networking skills
- ☐ Any other: If so, please specify:.....

5.3 List/Outline in order of priority, from the most urgent/important, projects which need to be implemented in your area of operation in order to you're your organization become more effective..

- ☐ Aquaculture/Mariculture
- ☐ Fish processing facilities
- ☐ Training in marketing strategies
- ☐ Environmental Education
- ☐ Training in Patrolling
- ☐ Any other, please specify:.....

5.4 Do you see any need for members of your organization to undergo some training program(s) in the near future?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

5.4.1 If yes, define the subject area(s) for the training program.

- ☐ Organizational Management
- ☐ Financial Management
- ☐ Computer Literacy
- ☐ Post-harvest Techniques
- ☐ Out-board Motor Repair
- ☐ First Aid
- ☐ Safety-at-Sea
- ☐ Navigational skills
- ☐ Any other? Please

specify:.....

5.5 Do extension officers operate in your communities?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

5.5.1 If yes, list some of the activities they have been carrying out?

- ☐ Educational/Training Programmes
- ☐ Dissemination of Information
- ☐ Inspection of gear, license etc.
- ☐ Community Organizing
- ☐ Data Collection
- ☐ Monitoring of Sale of Fuel
- ☐ Any other, Please specify:.....

NATIONAL REPORTS ON THE STATUSES OF THE COUNTRIES' **FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS**

Fisher folk Leaders and Fisheries Field Extension Officers selected to participate in the Conference were required to prepare a report on the status of the organizations in their countries. With the exception of Barbados that was not represented at the Conference, all the other countries presented their reports. Jamaica's report was presented extemporaneously and the representatives were advised to transform it into written form and submit to the CRFM Secretariat.

The following are some of the highlights in the national reports:

- The Bahamas reports that most of the organizations remain in active until some crisis situation triggers temporary action.
- Trinidad & Tobago also reports on dormancy of many of the groups until a crisis situation triggers action, and that there are problems with the formation of a new umbrella organization, the National Organization of Fisher folk Organizations (NOFOTT) to replace a moribund national organization.
- Belize reports of a strong national umbrella organization (BFCA) with a strong business orientation, with checks and balances producing reliable leadership.

- Jamaica also reports of a strong national union with an equally strong business orientation, with checks and balances producing reliable leadership.
- Guyana reports of lack of team effort, poor communication and lack of business and leadership skills.
- Dominica reports of lack of the will to form national union because of political influences and a dependency syndrome.
- St. Lucia reports of poor financial management, low participatory rates and the dependency syndrome. St. Lucia is in the process of forming a new more vibrant national union.

These problems were subjects for heated discussions resulting in the formulation of strategies to overcome them.

**NATIONAL REPORT ON FISHERMEN COOPERATIVES & ASSOCIATIONS
IN
THE BAHAMAS**

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BACKGROUND

The Bahamas is an archipelago that extends from south Florida of the USA to the large island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean Sea. The Bahamas covers an area greater than 259 000 sq. km and has a mean temperature around 25°C. The shallow water banks have an average depth around 9 m but water depth can exceed 4 000 m in the Tongue of the Ocean. West of the Tongue of the Ocean is the world's third longest barrier reef, running along the west coast of Andros, the largest island in The Bahamas.

The commercial fishing industry of The Bahamas is based primarily on its shallow water banks, principally the Little Bahama Bank and the Great Bahama Bank. Other shallow water bank areas are also found adjacent to several of the southeastern islands. The principal categories of fishery products and resources caught and landed in commercial quantities in The Bahamas are crawfish, conch, shallow water scalefish (i.e. *groupers, jacks, snappers and grunts*), stone crab claws, deepwater scalefish (mainly snappers) and sponge. Results of the 1995 Fisheries Census indicated some 9,300 persons were employed in the commercial fishing industry. Fishermen comprise about 95% of the total while the remaining 5% are persons employed in processing plants or buying stations. The fishing fleet consists of over 4,000 vessels ranging in size from 3.1m - 30m of which 600 are over 6.1m. The smaller vessels are the actual fishing power of the majority of the larger licensed vessels and in this regard in excess of 1,500 of them work in conjunction with the larger vessels. Only vessels above 6m are required by law to be licensed to engage in commercial fishing. Four hundred and three (403) were licensed to engage in commercial fishing in The Bahamas during CY2002. Fishery products are also transported from the Family Islands to New Providence, the main market, by approximately 23 mail-boats that ply between New Providence and the Family Islands on a weekly basis.

HISTORY OF FISHERMEN ORGANIZATIONS

The dispersed nature of The Bahamas makes coordination of Bahamian fishermen a difficult task. The Government of The Bahamas has realized the importance and advantages of fishermen organizations. The government through the Department of Cooperative Development with the assistance of the Department of Fisheries has made attempts in the past and continues to do so to introduce the concept of fishermen cooperatives and associations. To date, there are some ten (10) semi-active and dormant fishermen cooperatives and associations in The Bahamas. Four (4) of the associations are located on the island of New Providence, two (2) on the island of Andros and one each on the islands of Abaco, Cat Island, Eleuthera and Grand Bahama.

In islands where fishermen cooperatives are functioning, they continue to make positive strides in their development and attraction of other fishermen. Presently, under the Agricultural Act of The Bahamas, producer cooperatives such as fishermen cooperatives are exempted from duty on the import of a selected group of items destined for the commercial fishing sector as an act of encouragement and goodwill.

The mode of operandi for most of the fishermen associations as opposed to that of the fishermen cooperatives is one of meeting on an ad hoc basis normally only in situations of crisis. The Department of Fisheries continues in its efforts to discourage this type of operation and continues to highlight the advantages of organizing and associating.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

As a result of a study done by CARICOM Fisheries Unit (CFU) in July 2000 on the Bahamian commercial fishing industry including the sportsfishing sector, a five year plan was prepared for The Bahamas. This plan is to be carried out in two year Work Plan Cycles and monitored by CFU and the Department of Fisheries under an agreed arrangement. The Work Plan will seek to address some of the important issues affecting the fisheries sector. A primary focus of the Work Plan will be the empowerment of resource users so that they can assume a greater responsibility for sustainable use and management of the fisheries.

A recommendation arising out of Work Plan was the coordination of a two day National Fisheries Workshop to discuss and evaluate some of the important issues arising out of the survey specifically with respect to the following:

- Fisher Folk/Fishermen Organizations
- Improving Representation on the Fisheries Advisory Committee
- Conflicts and Conflict Resolution
- The Goal of Fisheries Management Planning
- Promoting Co-Management in The Bahamas

The workshop was held in July 2001 in New Providence. Participants attending the workshop included representatives of fishermen's cooperatives/associations and other stakeholders inclusive of fish processors, local NGOs, Department of Fisheries personnel, other government agencies and family island representatives from throughout the Bahamas.

During the last day of the three day workshop, participants were given a comprehensive overview of the concept and function of a National Fisheries Dialogue Group (NFDG), which in its makeup would comprise representatives from all fishing communities throughout The Bahamas, sport fishing groups, local NGOs and law enforcement.

In September 2001, a meeting was convened to inaugurate the NFDG in The Bahamas. The group is to provide representation on behalf of fishermen throughout The Bahamas in having their concerns addressed at a national level. At the one (1) day meeting held in New Providence a Chairman, Secretary and a Treasurer were elected to head the group for the next year. Another meeting of the NFDG was scheduled for January 2002 but due to the adverse effect of the September 11th incident in the United States, funding was not available to the Department of Fisheries to host the meeting. Since that time, the NFDG has not met nor has it become fully functional. However, the Department of Fisheries remains committed to the development of the NFDG and the establishment of fishermen cooperatives and associations throughout The Bahamas in fishing communities.



**INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING CONFERENCE
GEORGETOWN, GUYANA, SEPTEMBER 29th – 30th, 2003.**

**Mr. Jaime Villanueva
Marine Capture Fisheries Unit**

STATUS OF THE FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS IN BELIZE

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INTRODUCTION

There are presently five functional fishermen cooperatives where lobster tails, conch, shrimp, finfish, fish fillet and lobster head meat are bought from fishermen. These cooperatives are required to sell about 5% of their processed fishery products locally. The fishing industry is a major contributor to the Belizean economy, primarily in foreign exchange earnings. Fishing activities in Belize have traditionally revolved around the lobster and conch fisheries. The fishing industry provides direct employment to over 3,411 registered fishers, and to over 500 processing and market workers.

Fishery products are caught throughout the inner reef system of the Barrier Reef and the three atolls (Glovers Reef, Lighthouse Reef and Turneffe Island) using hand lines, fish pots, free diving, lobster pots and shades or "casitas".

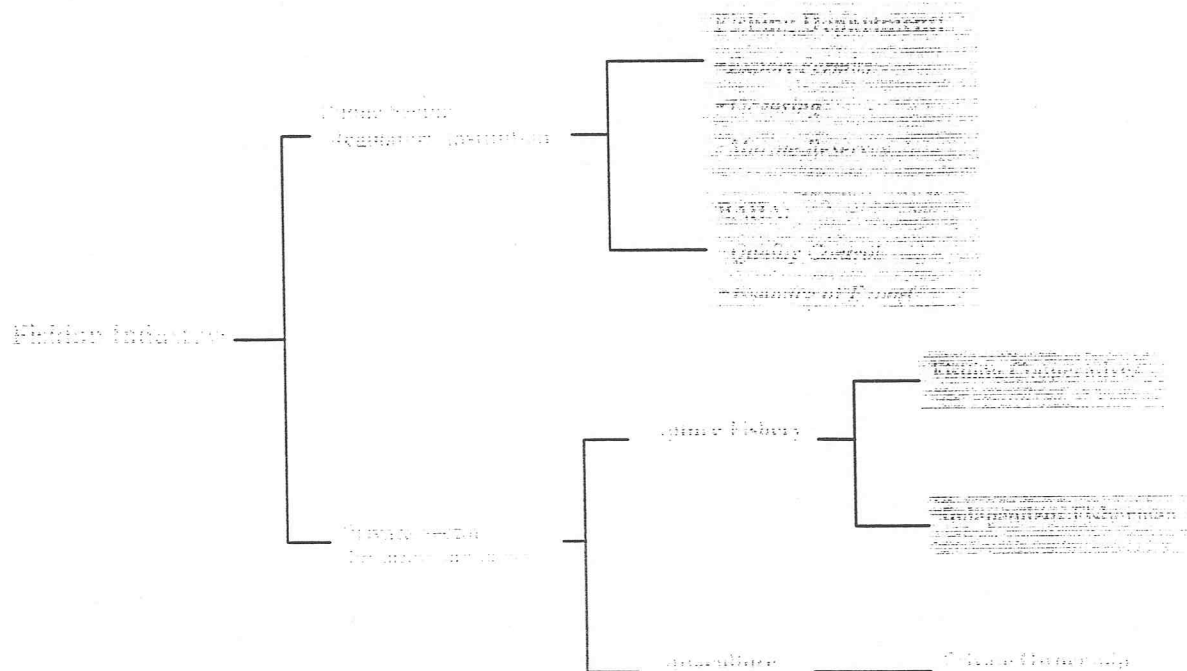
Over the past few years the lobster fishery has dominated the fishing industry by becoming the highest and most important income earner artisanal fishery. The conch fishery is the second commercially important capture fishery commodity in Belize. These artisanal fisheries are one of the main providers of employment. In Belize the Caribbean spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*) was seldom fished for profit before 1946 (Gordon, 1986) due to the difficulties encountered in accessing international markets by isolated coastal communities lacking infrastructure for transport and processing. In the 1960's Belize saw the formation of its first five fishermen cooperatives followed by three others in the 1970's.

On an average about 500,000 pounds (227 mt) of lobster tail and 400,000 pounds (182 mt) of conch are exported annually. These are a seasonal fishery, kept as "open access" for eight months of the year. Rising conch and lobster prices on the world market has placed tremendous pressure on the conch and lobster population.

In 1988 one of the cooperative started exporting lobster head meat as added value to lobster, since then there has been a yearly increase in production.

STRUCTURE OF THE BELIZE FISHING INDUSTRY

The Belize fishing industry is divided into two components, that is, a public sector and a private sector. The public sector is comprised of two regulatory institutions; the Fisheries Department and the Belize Agricultural Health Authority. The private sector is the productive sector and consists of the Independent Fishermen, Fishing Cooperatives and Shrimp Farms. The diagram below shows the structure of the Belize Fishing Industry and the responsibilities of the different institutions involved..



ROLE OF THE FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

The Fisheries Unit or Department was established on January 1st, 1965. Presently it falls under the auspices of the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. The Department is headed by a Fisheries Administrator who is directly responsible for the following:

- Conducting of research on commercial species,
- Administrating and managing the fisheries resources of Belize and to be a liaison between the fishing community and the government,
- Assisting and educating the fishermen on new fishing and processing techniques,
- Enforcing fisheries law and regulations,
- Advising the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries on all matters affecting the fishing industry.

ROLE OF THE FISHERY ADVISORY BOARD

The Fisheries Advisory Board (FAB) is an important advisory body of the fishing industry. The role of the FAB is to advise the Minister on all measures proposed for the organization of improvement, management and continued development of the fishing industry. It initiates proposals to government for the orderly continued development of the industry and advised the government on any matters pertinent to the fishing industry

which may from time to time arise. The FAB also recommends practical measures for the control of the industry and keeps a close watch on the marketing facilities both internationally and locally.

The FAB is composed of three persons from the public sector (Government) and eight persons from the private sector (two persons from a Non-Governmental Organization, five persons from the different Fishermen Cooperatives and one Independent Fisherman).

ROLE OF THE BELIZE FISHERMEN COOPERATION ASSOCIATION

The BFCA was established in 1970 and its members presently include the Rio Grande Fishermen Cooperative, the Placencia Fishermen Cooperative, the National Fishermen Cooperative, and the Caribena Fishermen Cooperative. The objectives of the association are to address all challenges faced by the cooperative members of the association and to seek or take advantage of every opportunity afforded to its membership where such opportunities enhance the growth and development and education of its members and the fishing industry. The BFCA has vigorously pursued these goals, at national and international forums, and has maintained a firm united front in representing the interest of the fishing cooperatives.

The BFCA has a managing committee of six members who actively participate in the management and operation of the association. The BFCA is further supported by a Director and a technical advisor; both of whom are supported by specific project funds.

ROLE OF THE BELIZE FISHERMEN COOPERATIVES

The private sector of the fishing industry is mostly constituted by the shrimp farms and secondly by the fishing cooperatives. Presently there are five fishermen cooperative operating in the country. These cooperatives are owned by Belizeans and employed about 120 employees who are responsible for processing, packaging and administrating the daily activities.

The fishermen at their annual general meeting elect from among themselves a managing committee comprising of seven fishermen. These seven fishermen are empowered with running the affairs of the organization for the day to day management of the organization. They employed an executive secretary or manager who in turn employs a plant manager, and an accounting staff.

For the secondary or association level each cooperative is represented on the managing committee of the BFCA by one representative appointed from its seven-men managing committee.

Below is a table (Table1) showing the different fishermen cooperatives with their location and number of producing and non-producing members.

TABLE 1.

COOPERATIVE	LOCATION	PROD.	NON-PROD.	TOTAL
NORTHERN	BELIZE CITY	367	258	625
NATIONAL	BELIZE CITY	315	147	462
CARIBENA	SAN PEDRO	32	103	135
PLACENCIA	PLACENCIA VILLAGE	23	32	55
RIO GRANDE	PUNTA GORDA	10	0	10

DESCRIPTION OF THE MARINE CAPTURE FISHERY

TYPES OF VESSELS AND SIZES /GEAR TYPE

Over the past decades the fishing industry grew as more fishermen ventured into the fishery for profitable returns. In the 1960's a sustainable increase of the landings was obtained as a result of the formation of five fishing cooperatives. Free divers mostly catch lobster and conch within the extensive inshore reef habitats along the coast of Belize and in the lagoons of three atolls, while others use wooden traps and shades or "casitas" in the shallow water (3-16 m) inside the Barrier Reef. The fishing fleet is comprised of small motor launches (5-10 m) using between 15 and 75 Hp engines, and wooden sailing sloops averaging eight meters with auxiliary outboard motors which carry 5 to 8 small canoes that are used for taking the product to the sailboat. These vessels can carry as many as 11 fishermen on board and remain out at sea for 6 to 12 days. Launches or skiffs are usually used by trap fishermen and sailing sloops by divers (FAO, 1965).

Presently there are over 3,411 registered part-time (28%) and full-time (72%) fishermen that are involved in the fishing industry of which 90% partake in the lobster and conch fisheries. In 2002 there were 1,746 licensed fishermen, which showed an increase of 2.3% from 2001. It was also recorded that 617 vessels were licensed (Table 2).

TABLE 2.

TABLE OF ISSUED LICENSES							
Licenses	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Fishermen	1676	1359	1718	2137	1872	1707	1746
Boat	794	977	759	728	750	1455	617

It was reported in 2000 that the fishing industry was utilizing over 62,000 lobster traps valued at \$ 25.00 US per trap. While at the same time there were 2,470 shades deployed at various fishing zones at a value of \$ 15.00 US per shade. In addition 100 used vehicle tires were recorded being used for fishing lobster at a value unknown because most of the tires are obtained as waste at mechanic shops. The report also included that over 730 hook sticks were used to dive lobster.

LOBSTER PRODUCTION

Presently most lobsters landed at the various Fishermen Cooperatives are mostly in the form of tails. Lobster tails production by the Fishermen Co-operatives has maintained fairly stable over the last five years ranging between 400,000 (181 mt) and 600,000 pounds (272 mt) with over 575,000 (261 mt) pounds of lobster tails been produced in 2002 (See Annex 1). The graph below shows lobster tails production for 1977-02 (Fig. 1).

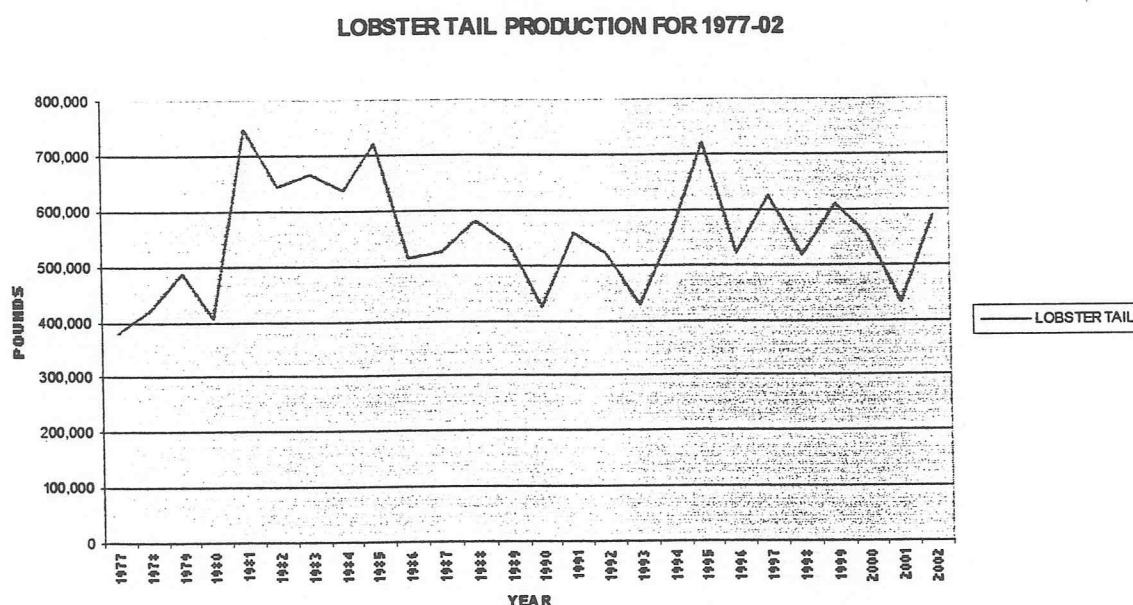


Fig. 1.

During the presence of Hurricane Mitch, which lingered off the coast of Honduras and Belize created wind and wave actions causing thousands of fish and lobster traps to be lost either by being washed away or covered with settling mud. The Fishermen Co-operatives members reported a total lost of 30,365 lobster traps, 130 crab traps, 95 Fish traps, 30 drums, 315 shades, 44 gear/equipment and 14 camps. The Fisheries sector experienced a total lost estimated over \$0.6 million US (Santos, 1999), however, this did not significantly affected the industry due to the contribution of the Southern Co-operative (Rio Grande Cooperative) that added to the production.

The table below shows the amount of lobster head meat in metric tonnes produced from 1989-2003 (Table3).

TABLE 3.

LOBSTER HEAD MEAT PRODUCTION IN MT FOR 1989-2002										
1989	4		1993	6		1997	17		2001	21
1990	7		1994	11		1998	17		2002	21
1991	9		1995	14		1999	22			
1992	6		1996	14		2000	23			

CONCH PRODUCTION

Conch production by the five Fishermen Co-operatives has maintained fairly stable over the last five years ranging between 141mt and 263 mt with over 188 mt produced in 2002. In 2001 there was over two hundred and sixty three metric tons (263 MT) of conch produced representing 28.5% decrease in production compared for the year 2002 (Fig 2). The graph (Fig. 2) shown below contain conch production over the past 26 years.

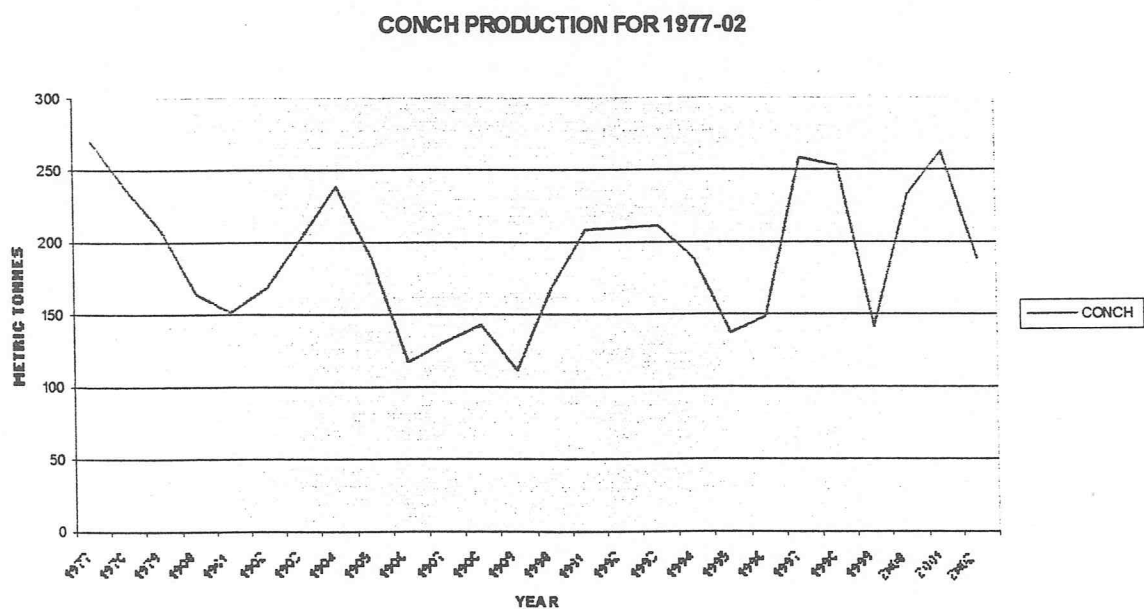


Fig. 2

TRADE STATISTICS

LOBSTER FISHERY

Belize enjoys duty-free access for all exports to the U.S.A. market under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). In 2002 the lobster fishery earned over \$6.6 million US and \$211.2 thousand US in foreign exchange on 200,282 kg (200 mt) and 28,375 kg (26 mt) of processed lobster tails and head meat exported to the U.S.A (See Annex 2&3)., respectively. The figure (Fig. 3 and 4) below shows the lobster export for Belize in kilograms and US dollars for 1977-02. *Note well.* Two Belize Dollar is equal to one American Dollar (2 BZE\$=1US\$).

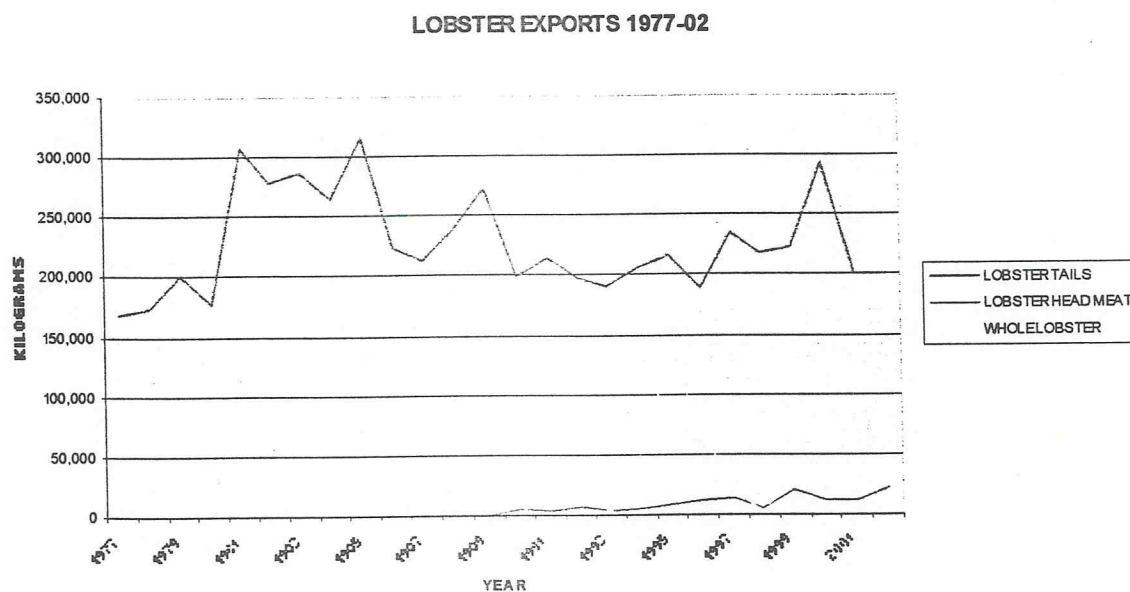


Fig. 3

At the end of 2002 there was an increase of 0.005 % and 104.1% in lobster tail and head meat export by weight as compared to the year of 2001 (Fig. 3).

LOBSTER EXPORT FIGURES IN US \$ FOR 1977-02

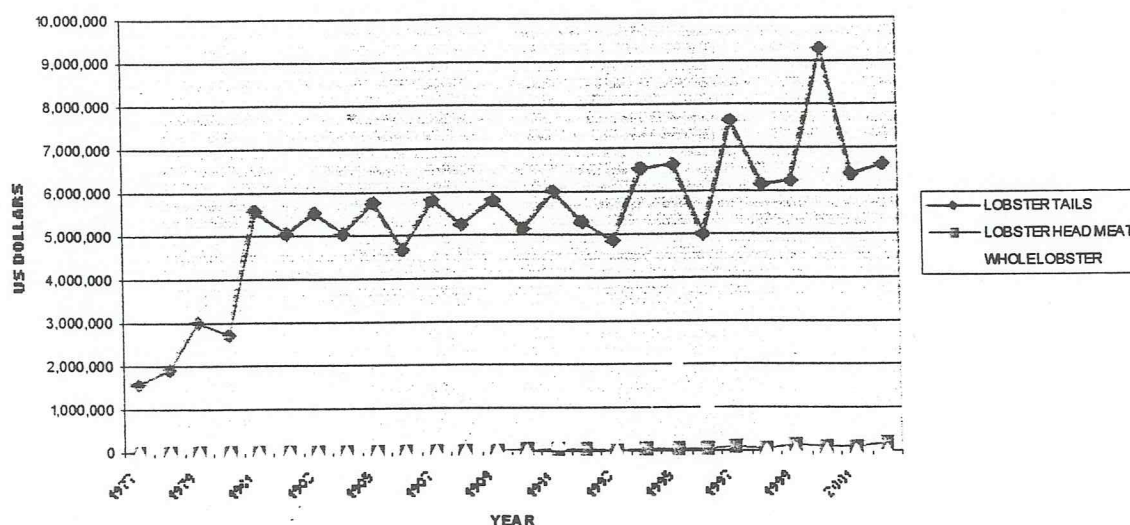


Fig. 4.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Belize for 2001 was \$470.9 million US. The Fisheries sector ranks as the third foreign exchange earner in the country and has contributed 7.2 % of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2001. The lobster fishery contributed 1.37% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2001.

CONCH FISHERY

In 2002 the conch fishery earned over \$1.3 million US, \$98.7 thousand US and \$3.4 thousand US in foreign exchange on 171,591 kg (172 MT), 13,705 kg (14 MT) and 318 kg of processed conch meat, trimmings and ground meat exported to the U.S.A., respectively. Rising conch prices on the world market has placed tremendous pressure on the conch fishery. The figures (Fig. 5&6) below shows conch meat and trimmings export for Belize in metric tonnes and US dollars for 1977-02.

In 2001 National Fishermen Cooperative started exporting ground conch meat as added value to conch, since then there has been a yearly increase in export.

CONCH EXPORTS FOR 1977-02

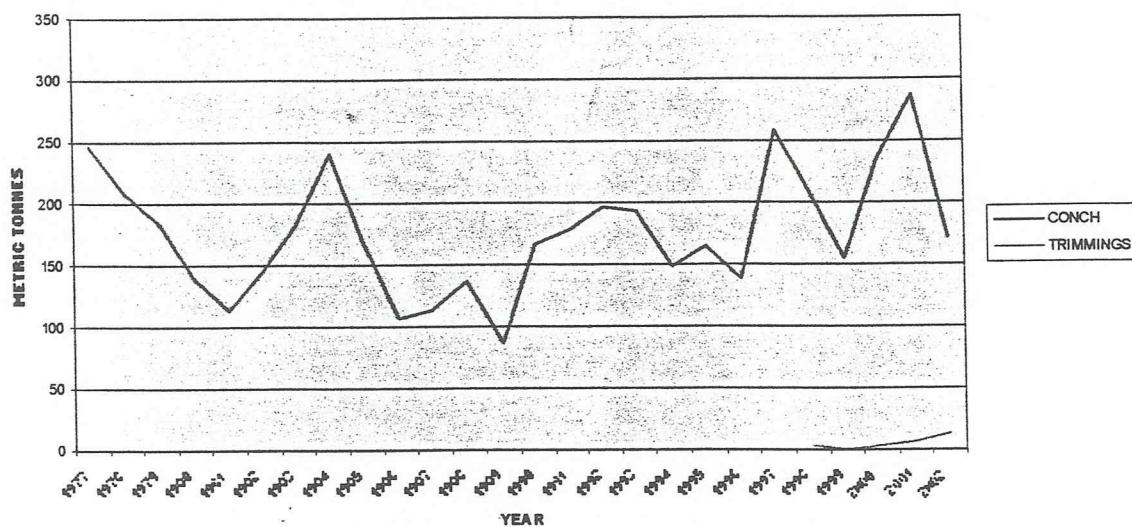


Fig.5.

CONCH EXPORT FIGURES IN US\$ FOR 1977-02

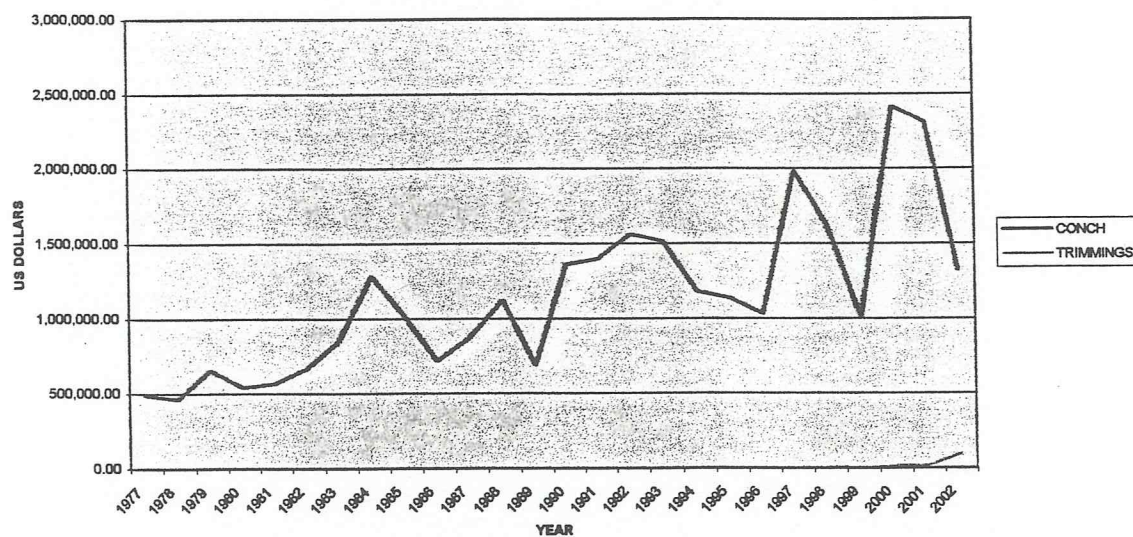


Fig. 6.

The conch fishery contributed 0.29% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2001.

Marine Shrimp Fishery

The Belize Shrimp Capture Fishery can be divided into the Industrial Trawl Fishery and the Coastal Artisanal Fishery. The Artisanal shrimp fishery is a small fishery; it is limited to fishing activities in the southern portion of the country where small skiff and canoes are utilized. The Industrial Trawl fishery consists of industrial fleet design as those as the Gulf of Mexico type trawlers.

The most commonly caught species are the *Panaeus duorarum* and *Panaeus schmitti*. The marine shrimp fishery showed an increase of 52.8% in production for 2001 as compared to the season of 2000. During the season of 2001 there were 10 trawlers operating mainly in the southern waters of Belize. Of the 10 trawlers that operated two belong to the Northern Fishermen Co-operative, while the others originated from Honduras, which operated under a joint venture with the co-operatives.

In 2002, one hundred and seventeen thousand and fifty (117,050) pounds of marine shrimp was exported valued at \$ US 0.7 M..

While the marine shrimp fishery appears to be important to the countries economy, however, there are negative impacts created as a result of this fishery. It has been recorded that there have been thousands of juvenile finfish and invertebrates that are discarded as by-catch. The Fisheries Department has identified and recognized the need to address such important issue. The Fisheries Department has conducted some investigations on board some shrimp trawlers identifying some of the faults and has remedy some.

Finfish Fishery

Most finfish that is landed at the co-operatives occurs mainly as an incidental catch. It has been documented in 1994 that most of the finfish landed is sold at local markets, hotels and private individuals (Richards, 1994). In addition most co-operatives do not receive finfish unless a reasonable and profitable quantity is landed, since it is not economically feasible for them to process a small quantity. It should be noted that the *Lutjanidae* family make up the largest single family of exported fish.

There was no whole fish exported in 2001 because of the high demand on the local market.

In 2002, one hundred and thirty five thousand (135,000) pounds of finfish was produced and thirty two thousand (32,000) pounds was exported.

CONCLUSION

As the Fisheries Department addresses the challenges and opportunities of a developing fishing industry the need for informed decision-making becomes increasingly evident. This requires the collection, processing, storage and retrieval of data on the status of the fishery resource of the Nation.

References:

Case Study Belize Data Collection Program

Fisheries Statistical Report 2002

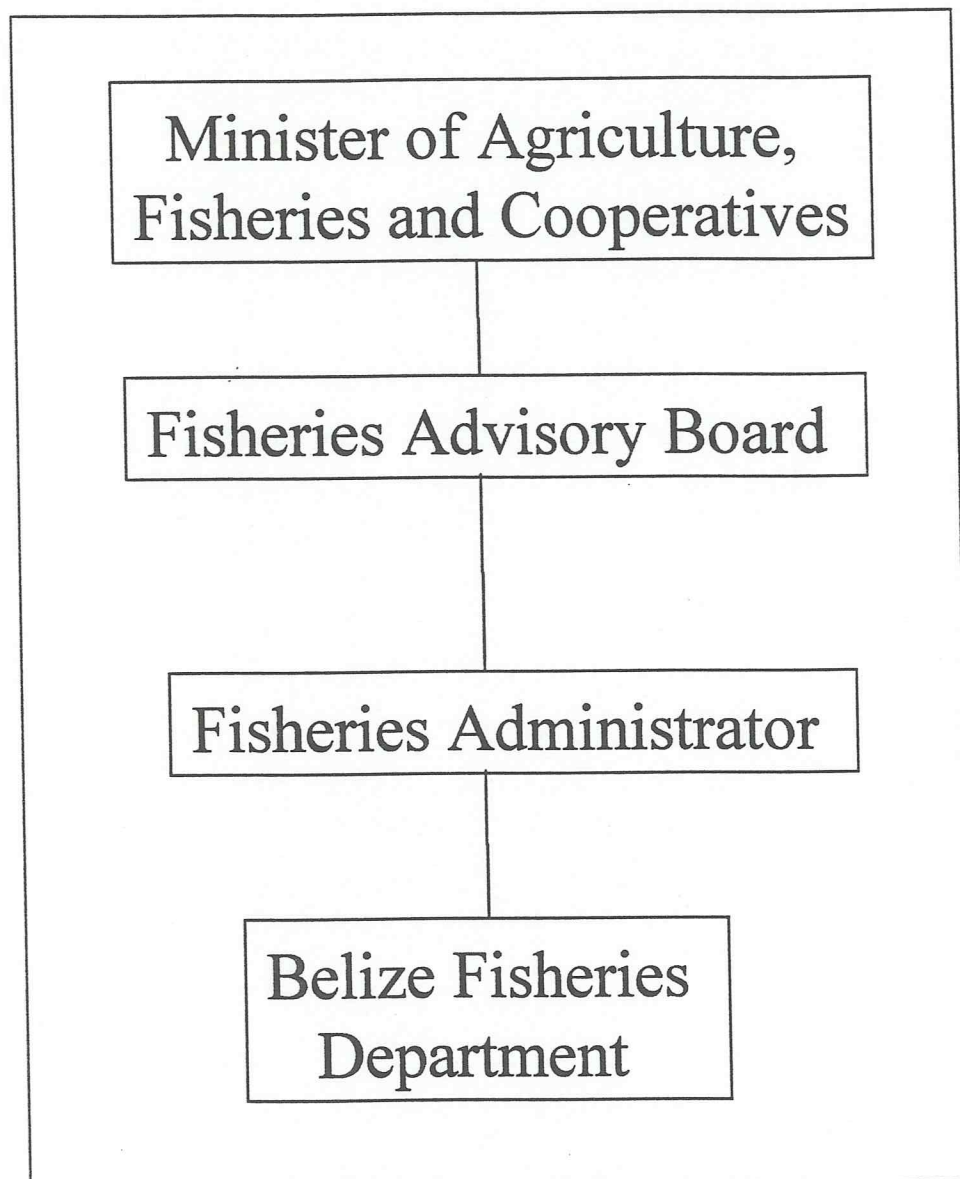
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ORGANOGRAM OF DECISION MAKING IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY



Annex 1.

FISHERIES COOPERATIVES PRODUCTION 2002

COMMODITY	NATIONAL COOP	NORTHERN COOP	PLACENCIA COOP	Rio Grande Coop	CARIBENA COOP	INDEPENDENT FISHERMEN	TOTAL
Fish Fillet	21,297.0	23,745.5	3,251.0	-	-	-	48,293.5
Lobster Meat	20,192.0	25,577.5	784.0	-	-	-	46,553.5
Lobster Tail	197,082.0	292,878.5	22,241.0	65,202.0	10,468.0	-	587,871.5
Conch	116,514.0	285,051.0	4,926.0	5,340.0	711.0	-	412,542.0
Stone Crab Claws	-	2,445.5	-	-	8.0	-	2,453.5
Sea Shrimp	48,171.0	133,686.0	-	-	-	-	181,857.0
Farmed Shrimp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dry Shark	-	-	-	-	-	10,000.0	10,000.0
Whole Fish	31,514.0	61,063.0	42,449.0	-	-	-	135,026.0
Aquarium Fish	-	-	-	-	-	3,186.0	3,186.0
Squid	-	469.0	-	-	-	-	469.0
TOTAL	434,770	824,916.00	73,651	70,542	11,187	10,000	1,425,066.0

N.B All figures are in pounds except for aquarium fish which are in units.

FISHERIES COOPERATIVES EXPORT FIGURES IN POUNDS FOR 2002

Commodities

	National Co-op	Northern Co-op	Independent Fishermen	Total
Lobster	204,840	235,780	-	440,620.0
Conch	111,900	265,600	-	377,500.0
Conch trimming	30,150	-	-	30,150.0
Ground Conch	700	-	-	700.0
Lobster meat	23,200	24,550	-	47,750.0
Dry Shark	-	-	10,000	10,000.0
Farm shrimp	-	-	450	450.0
Pink shrimp	30,000	87,050	-	117,050.0
Whole Fish	31,514	-	-	31,514.0
Fish Fillet	-	100	-	100.0
Aquarium fish	-	-	3,186	3,186.0
Total	432,304	613,080	10,450	1,055,834.0

N.B The total pounds of each commodity are in pounds except for Aquarium fishes which are in units.
Annex .2

FISHERIES COOPERATIVES EXPORT FOR 2002

Commodities

	National Co-op	Northern Co-op	Independent fishermen	Total
Lobster Tail	\$ 6,145,200.00	\$ 7,073,400.00	\$ -	\$ 13,218,600.00
Conch	\$ 783,300.00	\$ 1,859,200.00	\$ -	\$ 2,642,500.00
Conch trimming	\$ 197,331.68	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 197,331.68
Ground Conch	\$ 6,708.19	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,708.19
Lobster meat	\$ 162,400.00	\$ 193,326.95	\$ -	\$ 355,726.95
Shark	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00
Farm shrimp	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,431.81	\$ 9,431.81
Pink shrimp	\$ 332,887.50	\$ 1,072,861.12	\$ -	\$ 1,405,748.62
Whole Fish	\$ 127,159.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 127,159.00
Fish fillet	\$ -	\$ 706.13	\$ -	\$ 706.13
Aquarium fish	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 35,145.24	\$ 35,145.24
Total	\$ 7,754,986.37	\$ 10,199,494.20	\$ 57,077.05	\$ 18,011,557.62

N.B All values are in Belize Dollars.

Annex 3

**STABLE PRIMARY ORGANIZATIONS
CONCEPT OF STUDY GROUPS
PROBLEMS OF FORMING NATIONAL UNIONS**

PRESENTED BY

KERR BERNADETTE SERRANT / Fisheries Liaison Officer

DOMINICA

Name: Kerr Bernadette Serrant

Country: Commonwealth of Dominica

Organization: Fisheries Development Division

Present job and it's relation to the conference

My job as Fisheries Liaison Officer covers extension work,

- Monitoring of fishers.
- Monitoring of fisheries groups.
- Conduct training sessions in Safety at sea.
- Navigation.
- Fish capture, handling, Preservation.
- Gear construction and deployment.
- Monitoring of Data Collectors.

1. GEOGRAPHY

Area	750km coastline: 148km
Maritime Claims	contiguous Zone : 24km
EEZ	200nm
Shelf	900nm
Territorial Sea	12nm
International disputes	none
Climate	tropical; moderate by Northeast trade winds; heavy rainfall
Terrain	rugged mountains of volcanic origin.
Natural Resources	timber, water
Environment	flash floods a constant hazard, seasonal hurricanes Rainforest.

DEMOGRAPHY

Dominica is the most mountainous island in the Eastern Caribbean. It lies between the French islands Guadeloupe in the north and Martinique in the south. The rugged landscape, steep slopes, rushing streams, valleys and clouded drenched mountain peaks has given the island a legendary beauty. The environment has guided the course of the history of Dominica.

The northeast trade winds and the generally north-westerly equatorial current prevail there. Temperatures range throughout the year from 21 to 28 degrees centigrade. The extremely mountainous terrain is associated with a large number of small rivers and streams (about 365) which give reason to be concerned about accelerated run-off or sedimentation in the marine environment. Precipitation is heavy, the annual rainfall ranges from 80 to 150 inches per annum. The island lies within the path of the tropical hurricanes which, with their severe windstorms periodically cause extensive damage inshore and offshore in this region.

PRESENT SITUATION OF FISHERIES

Dominica's fishing industry is based on the activities of about 2500 fishermen who exploit the Demersal and Pelagic resources in small dugout canoes, wooden keel, Fibre Reinforced Plastic (FRP) boats. The fleet has about 950 registered boats scattered along the coast at 42 landing sites. Eight of these sites have official Fisheries Development Division Locker Rooms, Net loft, Slipway at various levels of development for storage of fishermen's engines, gear, tackle and fuel. Most of the other sites have sheds built by the fishermen as a temporary shelter for storage and use in their operations.

In some locations, particularly on the East Coast the rugged nature of the coastline allows only small areas of the bay to be accessible to fishing fleet. These have to be hauled ashore since mooring out at sea in these unsheltered areas is virtually impossible. Access to the bay from the sea and sea to bay in most cases is always difficult due to high energy waves which may prevail on certain days. This makes fishing in some areas a highly periodic operation. However, the shelf is more extensive and this is why the average catch is higher and the size of fish is larger. Most lobsters are also caught along the East Coast.

The limited continental shelf that surrounds the island is extensively used by fishermen. In vessels ranging from four to eight meters. Because of the nature of the island, there are more landing sites on the west coast which has even less continental shelf. The boats are complimented by the use of Fish traps, Gillnet. Hand lines, Bottom long lines for demersal species. Seine for inshore pelagics and FADS for Ocean pelagics.

Fisheries groups considered as stable organizations.

GROUP

Dominica Fisheries Co-Operative

New Town Fisheries Co-Operative

Fond St. Jean Fisheries Co-Operative

St. Peters Fisheries Co-Operative

These societies have shown a level of stability as far as consistency of management and organization is concerned. These groups fluctuate in terms of member participation and commitment.

Concepts of Study Groups

A study group is a group of individuals coming together to satisfy a particular need. This group undergoes training in Management, Co-Operative principles, Budgeting, Co-Operative Laws etc. upon being satisfied that the group has developed sufficiently, By-Laws are developed, and the group is then registered and given a Registration Certificate.

Problems with forming National Unions

The basic problem with forming national unions is the inability of fishermen to conduct their own affairs. Traditionally fishermen have been spoon fed by all factions of government that they have an opportunity to come in contact with. This has left lots of them unable to care for their own affairs and this is reflected in the disorganized way in which they conduct business. As a result it is very difficult for them to maintain any thing that they start. The Fisheries Division has given much training to fisher folk. Although it is still very difficult, but there are still a few groups/Co-Operatives that are hanging on and continuing the process.

The Fisheries Development Division has catered for the needs of fishermen by allotting to them space at the Roseau Fisheries complex for a National Fisheries Co-Operation (NAFCOP). However due to the fact that most of the Fisheries Study Groups have failed and are no longer in existence, the place is now occupied by another office.

It is still the intention of the Division to have this part of the complex used for its original purpose.

In the past fishermen never saw it fit to survive on their own, and they have become heavily dependent on assistance from the government through the Fisheries Division. With continued education and training fishers have learnt to be more independent.

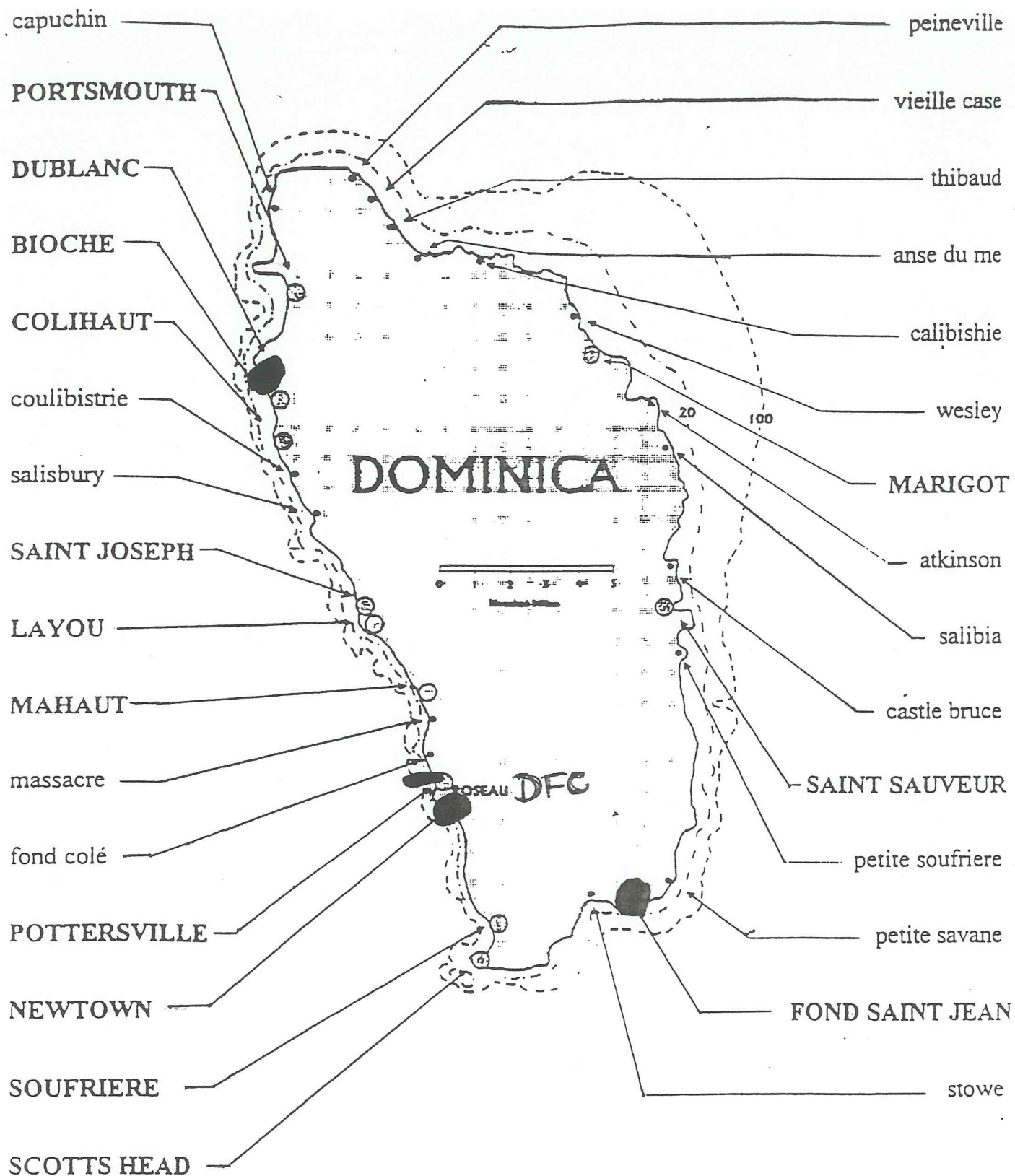


Figure 1. Map of Dominica with the landing sites (sites where data were collected and analyzed are shown in capital letters)

DOMINICA FISH PRODUCTION FOR THE LAST SEVEN YEARS FROM SAMPLED SITES

YEAR	TONS
1990	448.0
1991	551.6
1992	711.5
1993	794.5
1994	885.0
1995	946.0
1996	1018
1997	1079

ANNUAL LANDINGS BY MAJOR SPECIES CATEGORIES FOR 1997

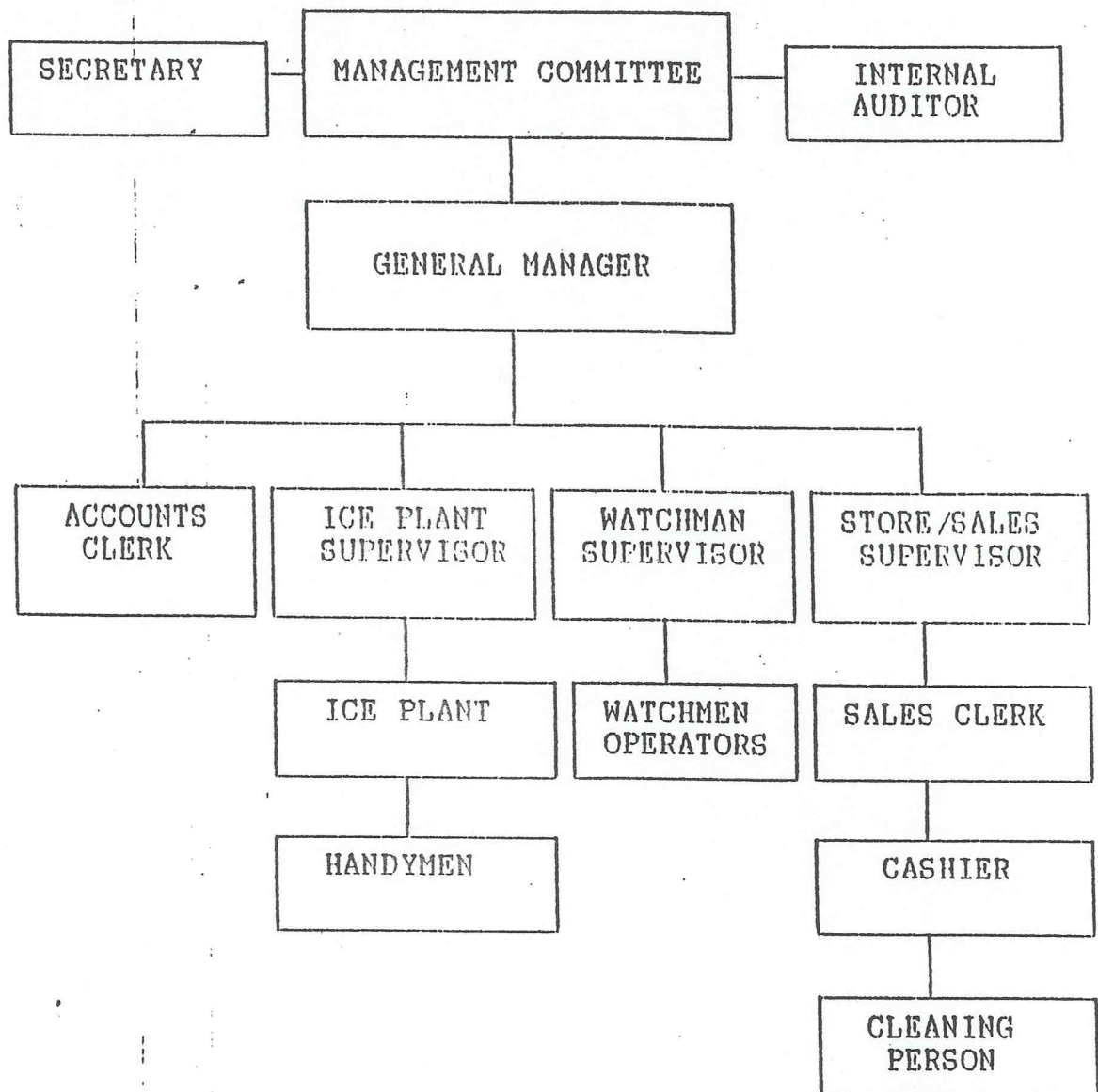
SPECIES	WEIGHT IN TONS
JACKS) (Carangidae)	59.3
FLYINGFISH(Exocoetidae)	148.2
BALLYHOO (Hemiramphidae)	73.6
SPRATS (Carangidae)	55.3
SNAPPER (Lutjanidae)	240.8
GROUPER (Serranidae)	9.0
PARROTFISH (Scaridae)	12.7
YELLOWFIN TUNA (Thunnus Albacares)	37.5
SKIPJACK TUNA (Katsuwonus Pelamis)	52.5
BLACKFIN TUNA (Thunnus Atlanticus)	33.6
WAHOO (Acanthocybium Solandri)	9.1
KING MACKEREL (Scomberomorus Cavalla)	63.0
DOLPHINFISH (Coryphaena hippurus)	67.4

THE
STATUS
OF
FISHER FOLK ORGANIZATIONS
IN
GUYANA

INTRODUCTION

- (1) Fisheries contribute towards food security, employment, foreign exchange earnings, development of rural and coastal communities' recreation and tourist.
- (2) It is vitally import that the Fishermen's Cooperative Societies plays an important role in the development of our fisher folks.
- (3) The active Fishermen's Cooperative Society
 - Greater Georgetown Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited
 - Rosignol Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited
 - Upper Corentyne Fishermen's Cooperative Society
 - Essequibo Island/West Demerara Fishermen's Cooperative Society

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE



PRESENT SITUATION

FISHING COMPLEXES AND FISHERMEN'S COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Fishing Complexes	Cooperative Societies
Inshore Fish port Complex, Meadow Bank, Georgetown (1987)	Greater Georgetown Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited.
Rosignol Inshore Fish port Complex, Berbice (1988)	Rosignol Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited.
#66 Inshore Fish port Complex, Berbice (1988).	Upper Corentyne Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited.
#43 Inshore Fish port Complex, Berbice (1990)	Corentyne Pin Seine Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited.
Lima Inshore Fish port Complex, Essequibo (1990)	Essequibo/Pomeroon Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited.
Parika Inshore Fish port Complex, Essequibo. (1991)	Essequibo Islands/West Demerara Fishermen's Cooperative Federation Limited.
Charity Fish port Complex	Charity Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited
Morawhanna Fish port Complex	Morawhanna Fishermen's Cooperative Society Limited.

PRESENT SITUATION

- (1) Reduction in the number of fishermen's cooperative society
- (2) Limited knowledge on cooperative laws and principles
- (3) Lack of team effort for the development of the fishermen's cooperative society
- (4) Poor communication between the management committee and its members
- (5) Diversification of business
- (6) Upgrading and maintenance of fish port complexes
- (7) Uninspired business management and leadership skills
- (8) Inadequate credit

MANAGEMENT PLAN TO ADDRESS OR IMPROVE SITUATION

- (1) Develop an awareness program on the role and responsibility of Fishermen's Cooperatives.
- (2) Identification of developmental projects.
- (3) Provide Social and Economic benefits for its members.
- (4) Revised Fishermen's Cooperative Society Legislation.
- (5) Government Intervention by providing incentive.
- (6) Establish a Management committee for monitoring of Fishermen's Cooperative Societies.
- (7) Establishment of Fishery Association Law.

Conclusion

In planning for the development of Cooperative Society, consideration should be given to Education training and other forms at social and economic investment i.e. adequate marketing and distributing infrastructure services and financing should be made an essential part of the development program.

Figure 2-AFI Complexes and Administrative Regions

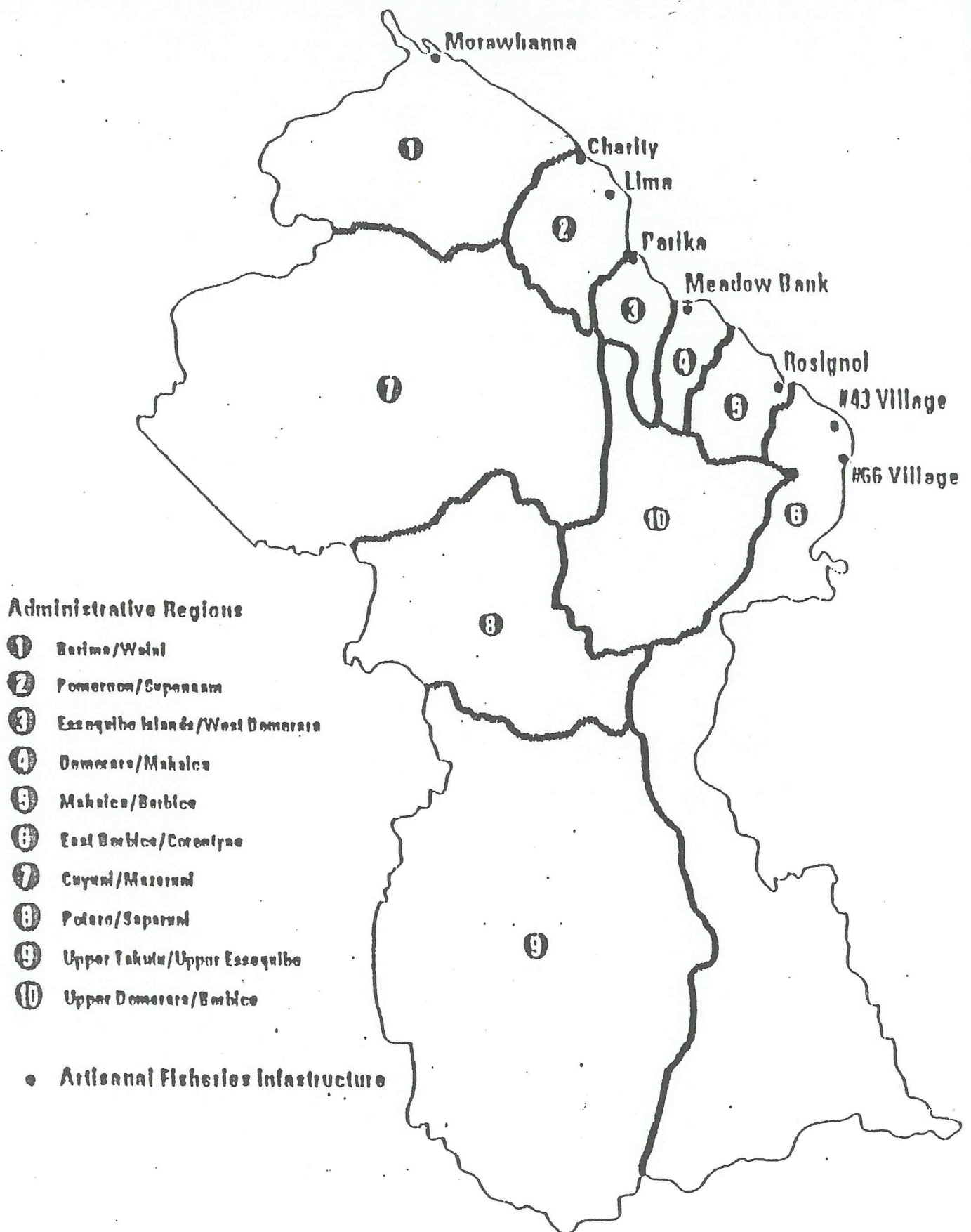
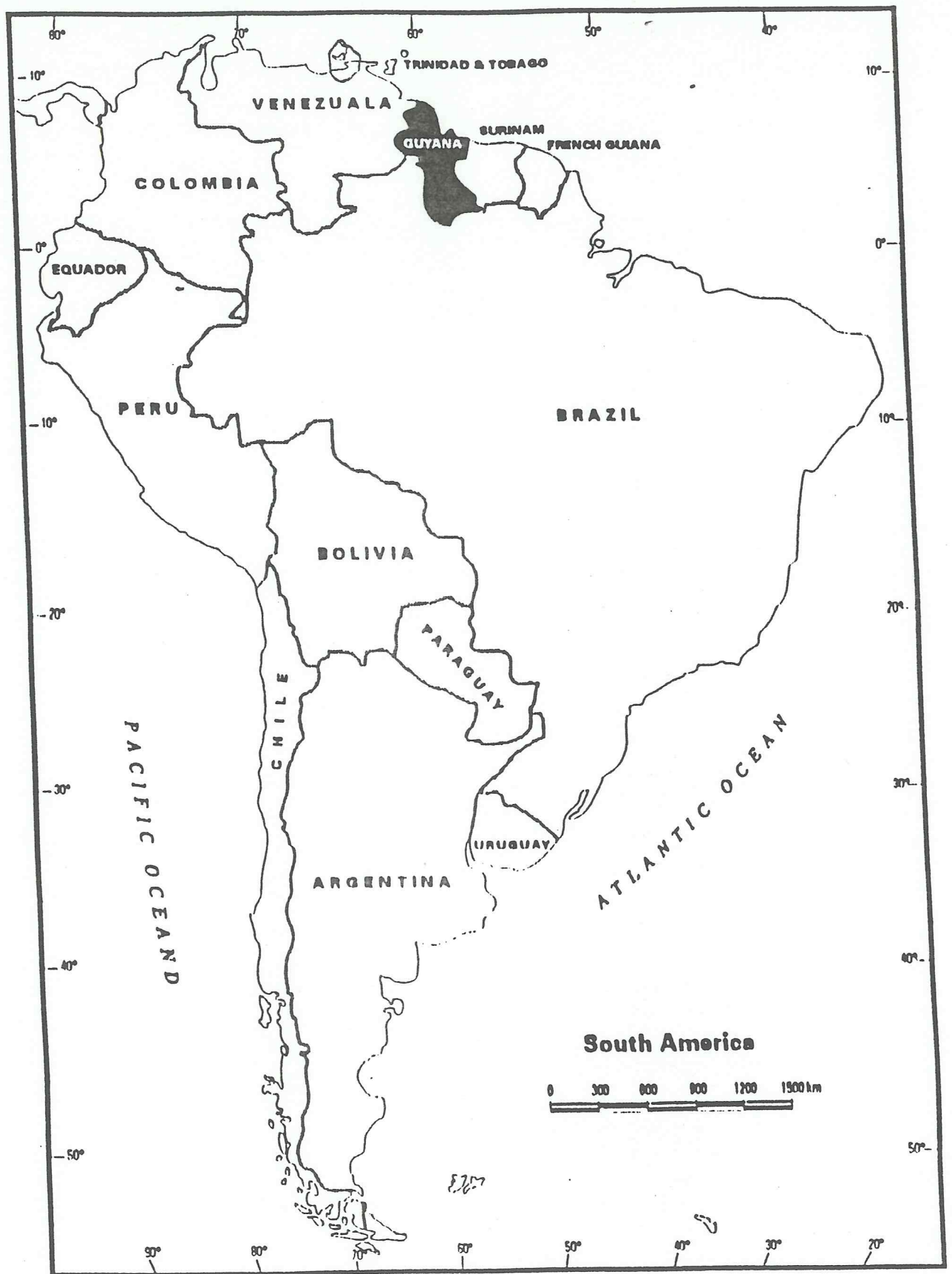


Figure 1 Guyana's Location on the South American Continent



Institutional Building Conference

Petronila Polius

Department of Fisheries

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and

Fisheries

Saint Lucia

The status of fisher's organisations as they exist now in Saint Lucia:

Approximately nine (9) fishermen's co-operatives comprising 868 persons as members.

Services Offered

Many offer :

- sale of gear and tackle
- Fuel and lubricants
- Limited credit facilities
- Patronage refund
- Administer duty free concessions on fuel
- Limited distress funds

Problems

- Perceived as “boat owner organisations”
- Lack of interest and limited benefits for non-boat owner fishers
- Financial management problems
- Human resource issues - {difficult to get members within the institution to participate}
- Co-operative Department focuses more on credit unions than fishers co-operatives – maybe because they are perceived as non-money making establishments
- Unhealthy competition among co-operatives
- Apparent dependences on duty free fuel concession payments

Recommendations

- Restructuring of these organisations from co-operatives to fisher folk organisations to generate interest among non-boat owner fishers.
- Encourage more social benefits

- Fisher folk organisations need to serve as the avenue for fishers to address issues like : – national insurance, pension, etc.
- Engage in joint marketing and distribution of fish and marine products
- Engage in joint marketing and distribution of fishing gear and tackle
- Participate more in Fisheries Department work programme activities {eg. FADs }
- Amalgamation of weaker organization e.g., zoning of co-operatives to have four larger co-operatives {North, South, East, West}
 - e.g. Canaries could merge with Soufriere

With the establishment of more modern fisheries facilities, the co-operative will seek to encourage fishers to:-

- Move away from the traditional dug-out canoe into the more modernized, stable fiberglass reinforced fishing pirogue and possibly in the near future, into small long liners;
- Assist fishers to modernize their technology and skills to result in higher fish landings and reduce the need for importation of fish and fish products;
- Encourage more fishers to engage in offshore fishing, so as to decrease the pressure on nearshore resources;
- Develop programmes which will assist fisher folk to improve their socio-economic well-being;
- Foster closer working relations with the department of fishers and allied agencies in executing their respective work programmes;
- Play a leading role in the management of the newly established fisheries facility, making it financially viable;
- Assist in negotiations and arrangements with the saint Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation and others;
- Source and supply appropriate fishing gear and other equipment, including safety equipment;

- Serve a lead role in negotiations with government agencies, non-governmental organisations and local and regional organisations
- Encourage a higher level of participation and involvement by fishermen;
- Provide greater benefits to members e.g. insurance (life, vessels, gear and tackle) and pension.

PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING A NEW NATIONAL UMBRELLA
ORGANIZATION IN ST. LUCIA

Specific Objectives:

1. Facilitate improved operational standards and skills within the fisheries sector, through organisational capacity building, education and training;
2. Enhance leadership skills within fisherfolk organisations for effective planning and management;
3. Empower fisherfolk and other stakeholders so that they may become more responsible partners in the conservation of fisheries resources and the sustainable development of the sector;
4. Encourage greater cooperation and cohesion within the fisheries sector, by coordinating and facilitating joint activities among fisherfolk and their organisations;
5. Carry out such services and functions that generate benefits to fisherfolk and their organisations through economies of scale, such as the bulk purchasing of fishing supplies and equipment and facilitating the provision of group insurance;
6. Facilitate effective marketing and distribution of products and services generated within the fisheries sector to ensure a reliable supply of high quality fish and fish products for local and external markets;

7. Inculcate thrift and business management skills of fisher folk and their organisations to increase the level of opportunity within the sector and improve the standards of living of fisherfolk;
8. Facilitate the provision of services such as insurance and social security benefits for fisherfolk;
9. Serve as the main body representing the interests of fisherfolk and their organisations in negotiations and other interactions with government and relevant national, regional and international agencies;
10. Conform with national regulations and policies governing the fisheries sector;
11. Maintain a close working relationship with the Department of Fisheries and the Cooperatives Department;
12. Engage in all other activities which are incidental, conducive or consequential to the attainment of the above objectives.

Area of Operation:

The area of operation of the [union/association/alliance] is Saint Lucia.

Membership:

The membership of the [union/association/alliance] is open to:

- Registered fishermen's cooperatives;
- Associations and other registered organisations of fish vendors and processors;

Entrance and Other Fees:

- Entrance fee- \$[100.00]
- Annual membership- \$[300.00]
- Other fees:

Funds:

The capital of the [union /association/alliance] shall consist of the following:

- Entrance and membership fees;
- Donations from Government and other organisations or persons;
- Project funds secured for targeted activities;
- Funds generated by activities of the [union /association/alliance].

The Coordinating Body:

The [union/association/alliance] will exist as a non-profit company, administered by an [Executive Committee]. The [Committee] will comprise:

- [4 fishermen's cooperatives;]
- [1 vendors association/organisation;]
- [2 processors association/organisation.]

[The Executive Committee would elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer]

The Consultative Body:

The [union/association/alliance] will also maintain a **Forum** whose role will be to undertake dialogue and consensus building to generate advice and recommendations relevant to the affairs of the [union/association/alliance] for consideration and subsequent action by the Executive Committee or other actors as they so determine.

The **Forum** will comprise:

Not more than 2 representatives of:

- Each fishermen's cooperative;
- [The Saint Lucia Sportfishing Association];
- The Department of Fisheries;
- The Cooperatives Department.

1 representative from:

- Fish Vendors from each geographic District (see Appendix I);
 - Fish Processors from each geographic District (see Appendix I)
 - The Saint Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation.
-
- 3 representatives of fishers

Other individuals with particular expertise may be co-opted to meetings of the Forum from time to time, based on specific aspects under consideration.

Name of Organisation:

[Fisherfolk Association of Saint Lucia or National [union /association/alliance] of Fisherfolk]

Location of the Organisation:

[to be determined]

Overall Objective:

To foster greater collaboration among fisherfolk and thier organisations with a view to improving their social and economic wellbeing.

NATIONAL REPORT ON FISHING ORGANISATIONS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Presented at the
Institutional Building
Conference, Guyana
29-30 September, 2003**

INTRODUCTION

The twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is situated between 10° and 11° North latitude and 61° and 62° West longitude. The marine environment of Trinidad and Tobago can be described as being mixed - freshwater and estuarine influences from being "downstream" of the major river systems of northeast South America, eg. the Orinoco and Amazon rivers.

The fishing industry is largely artisanal based on resources occurring in the coastal and territorial waters and consists of multi-species, multi-gear and multi-fleet operations. There are sixty five (65) landing sites in Trinidad (1998 census) and forty-five (45) in Tobago (1991 census). It has been estimated that 13,000 fishermen are directly involved in the fishing industry and 50,000 fishermen are indirectly involved in the fishing industry.

The Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources is responsible for managing the fisheries resources of Trinidad and Tobago in a sustainable manner, while conserving the environment, thereby abiding by the principles of responsible fisheries.

The Division seeks to attain its goals and objectives by promoting the participatory approach to fisheries management and conservation through the active involvement of the fishing communities. Subsequently, the Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC) was established on 21st October, 1997. This Committee provides a forum for stakeholders to meet, discuss and take action on issues that impact on the sustainability of the fisheries. It has afforded an opportunity for fishing industry representatives to have a direct involvement in policy formulation and decision making on matters that impact on their livelihood. Its membership consists of representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR), Institute of Marine Affairs, Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, Environmental Management Authority, Tobago House of Assembly, University of the West Indies, ten (10) fishing organizations and a community based organization-Fishermen and Friends of the Sea (Appendix 1).

STATUS OF FISHING ORGANIZATIONS

Commercial fishing is conducted by individuals or by companies that may or may not belong to structured fishers organizations. This could be due to a number of factors such as nature and hours of work, individualism, literacy level, cultural norms and social practice. In countries where there are functional structured fishers organizations, there is better management of the marine fisheries resources and the environment and the economic status and general well-being of the fishers are improved. In dealing with a structured cohesive group, it is easier for fisheries management to address current issues, introduce new concepts, principles, technology, as well as to resolve conflicts.

Thirty four (34) fishing organizations exist in Trinidad and Tobago of which twenty four (24) are located in Trinidad and ten (10) in Tobago (Appendix 2). Of the twenty four (24) organizations in Trinidad, sixteen (16) are associations and eight (8) are co-operatives. Out of the ten (10) organizations in Tobago, only one (1) is a co-operative.

Fishing associations consist mainly of groups of fishermen in respective communities. These are generally informal organizations with no legally binding commitments. Co-operatives are more organized and are legal entities. This means that they are registered societies with the Ministry of Labour and Co-operatives and consist of a Board of Directors, President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer etc.

The primary role of the fishing organizations in Trinidad and Tobago is to address issues that impact on the livelihood of the fishing community in an attempt to ensure that the fisherfolk enjoy the benefits of a regular income. Most of these organizations are dormant, but quickly regroup in reaction to events that may impact upon their fishing operations, as it is generally recognized that there is faster resolution of conflicts when representation is by a group as compared to individuals.

The majority of fishing organizations are non-functional or disbanded shortly after establishment because there appears to be mistrust among individuals where financial matters are concerned. It is perceived that some persons may seek their own interests over those of the organization.

The most stable fishermen's organization currently existing in Trinidad is the Cedros Fishing Cooperative. This co-operative covers an area of the South Western peninsula from Chatham to Icacos, therefore servicing the needs of families whose main source of income is derived from fishing. The co-operative operates a gas station and maintains a fishing complex. This complex consists of a boat and net repair shed and lockers. A nominal fee is charged for the use of the lockers, which goes toward the provision of a watchman for the facility. Unlike other fishing co-operatives in Trinidad, the Cedros Fishing Co-operative can be considered self-sufficient as it also operates a post office and a lottery outlet.

Until about the 1980s, commercial fishing in Tobago was primarily for the purpose of satisfying local demand, the surplus being sold in the markets of the capital town, Scarborough, "corned" (low cost form of preservation), or thrown away due to lack of adequate refrigeration. Fishers were mainly local owners of small vessels engaged in part-time artisanal fishing. There were also a small number of seasonal immigrants from the Grenadines who, using sail-powered larger vessels, were able to fish further from shore and therefore stay out for longer periods.

The introduction of processing flying fish (similar to the Barbadian model) in the 1980s, sparked new interest in commercial fishing for those on the South West coast of the island. There was a steady investment in fishing vessels, engines, tackle and gear. Processing and exporting factories, refrigerated warehousing, ice manufacturing and

other entrepreneurial activities associated with the growth and development of a fishing industry were taking place.

At this point, the Government, through its Fisheries Extension service, sought to streamline the industry by encouraging and assisting fishers in the formation of community-based organizations, the first of which were co-operatives. Although some of these organizations were successful, few remain functional today. The majority of members, upon finding that benefits and betterment were not being realized in the short or medium term, lost faith in the organizations and in most cases, withdrew their active participation.

Investment has come almost totally from the private sector and has outstripped investments in physical infrastructure and support services normally undertaken by the public sector wherever successful fishing industries exist. Ironically, now that the Government's interest in the creation of a Tobago fishing industry is a reality, the lack of government's support has come to be perceived by stakeholders as the major constraint to the survival and potential of the very industry. This has led to the resurgence of community based fishing organizations.

Four years ago, an umbrella organization, The All Tobago Fisherfolk Association (ATFA) was formed and is registered as a limited liability company. The Board of Directors of this Association consists of Presidents from the community fishing organizations. The achievements of this Association have influenced the fisherfolk to form a National Organization of Trinidad and Tobago (NOFOTT).

Appendix 1

MEMBERS OF THE MONITORING AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE	
Fisheries Division, MALMR	Fishermen and Friends of the Sea
Legal Officer, MALMR	Icacos Fishing Association
Tobago House of Assembly	Moruga /La Rufin Fishing Association
University of the West Indies	National Organization of Fishing and Allied Co-operatives Society Ltd
Institute of Marine Affairs	North Coast Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society/Las Cuevas Village Council
Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard	San Fernando Fishing Co-operative Society Ltd
Environmental Management Authority	Trinidad and Tobago Game Fishing Association
All Tobago Fisherfolk Association	Trinidad and Tobago Industrial Fishing Association
Erin Fishing Co-operative Society Ltd.	Toco Fishermen's Association

FISHING ASSOCIATIONS/CO-OPERATIVES

TRINIDAD	
Alcan Bay Fishing Association	Las Cuevas Fishing Association
Almoorings Fishing Cooperative Society Ltd.	Morne Diablo Fishing Association
Blanchisseuse Fishing Association	Moruga-Grand Chemin Fishing Association
Brickfield Fishermen Association	Moruga-La Rufin Fishing Association
Cacandee Fishing Association	National Organization of Fishing & Allied Cooperative Society (NOFACS)
Carenage Fisherman's Association	North Coast Multipurpose Fishing Cooperative Society Ltd.
Carli Bay Fishing Cooperative Society	Orange Valley Cooperative Society
Cedros Fishing Cooperative	Otaheite Fishing Association
Claxton Bay Fisherman's Association	San Fernando Fishing Cooperative Society Ltd.
Cocorite Fishing Association	Toco Fisherman's Association
Erin Fishing Cooperative Limited	Trinidad and Tobago Game Fishing Association
Icacos Fishing Association	Trinidad and Tobago Industrial Fishing Association
TOBAGO	
All Tobago Fisherfolk Association (ATFA)	Roxborough Fishermen's Association
Barbados Bay Fishermen Association	South/West Tobago Fishermen's Association
Black Rock/Plymouth Fishermen Association	Speyside Fishermen's Association
Castara Fishermen Association	Studley Park Fishermen's Association
Parlatuvier Fishermen Association	Tobago Fishing Cooperative Society Ltd

DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF FISHERFOLK OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

1. Objectives, Responsibilities and Membership

1.1. Name

The name of this organisation shall be the National Organisation of Fisherfolk of Trinidad and Tobago herein after referred to as "NOFOTT"

1.2. Address

1.2.1. The address of the organization shall be Neptune House Shaw Park Scarborough in Tobago and 34 Frederick Street Port of Spain in Trinidad or as shall be determined by the General Body of the NOFOTT.

1.2.2. Any change of address shall be intimated to the Director of Fisheries within seven (7) days of such change.

1.3. Objectives

The objectives of NOFOTT shall be to fulfill the requirements of the members including but not limited to those set out in Appendix A.

1.4. Authority

To achieve the above objectives NOFOTT shall be registered as a community based organization and shall have the authority to:

- 1.4.1. Purchase or rent capital items used in the fishing industry such as boats, engines, fishing gear and spare parts.
- 1.4.2. Sell, hire or supply on credit the items such as boats, engines, fishing gear and spare parts.
- 1.4.3. Acquire the required fixed assets.
- 1.4.4. Supply the necessary inputs and to provide facilities to the members to engage in the fishing industry.
- 1.4.5. Educate the members in activities pertaining to the fishing industry and related matters.
- 1.4.6. Inculcate the saving and thrift habit among the members.
- 1.4.7. Initiate and develop economically efficient methods of fishing and marketing of fish and fishery products.
- 1.4.8. Negotiate with government or other local or international agencies on matters of interest to members
- 1.4.9. Organize activities to the general welfare of the members
- 1.4.10. Engage in fisheries resources management and conservation and

1.4.11. Engage in all other activities incidental to the aforesaid objectives

1.5. Area of operation

The area of operation of NOFOTT shall be Trinidad and Tobago

1.6. Membership

1.6.1. The membership of NOFOTT shall be open to any registered Fisherfolk Association situated in the area of operation and where no such Association is existing or active, to individuals in the industry. Individual members shall be non-voting

1.6.2. No Fisherfolk Association shall be a member of NOFOTT unless it:

- (i) has fulfilled membership criteria provided herein and,
- (ii) has completed the membership application form

1.7. Membership fee

The one time membership fee shall be:

- (i) Two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) for Associations
- (ii) Twenty five dollars (\$25) for Individuals

Annual dues shall be:

- (i) Two hundred dollars (\$200) for Associations
- (ii) Twenty five dollars (\$25) for Individuals

1.8. Entry to the Membership

1.8.1. The Secretaries of Fisherfolk Associations, which are eligible for membership, shall fill in duplicate the membership form and forward it with a copy of the resolution passed at a General Meeting of the Association for obtaining the membership, duly certified by the President and the Secretary and the membership of the Board of Directors through the Secretary of NOFOTT

1.8.2. The Board of Directors of NOFOTT may enroll members subject to confirmation by the General Body

1.9. Membership Register

1.9.1. NOFOTT shall maintain a register of the member Fisherfolk Associations by filing the original applications for membership in serial order. The copy

of the application shall be filed in an individual file, maintained in respect of each member.

1.9.2. The membership register should have the following information:

- (i) The full name and address of the member
Fisherfolk Association
- (ii) Date of Registration of the member and date of application
- (iii) Date of admission to membership
- (iv) The date of cancellation of membership (if any)

1.10. Cancellation of membership

The membership may be cancelled due to one or more of the following:

- 1.10.1. Non-payment of annual dues for a period of two years
- 1.10.2. Cancellation of registration
- 1.10.3. Non-conformity with membership criteria
- 1.10.4. On written resignation from membership with thirty (30) days notice, along with a copy of the Resolution passed at a General Meeting, duly certified by the President and Secretary of the Association addressed to the Secretary of NOFOTT
- 1.10.5. Expulsion from membership

1.11. Expulsion from membership

Any member who acts in contravention to this constitution or willfully disrupts the progress shall be liable to expulsion after giving fourteen (14) days to explain charges communicated to the member in writing by the Secretary. If the explanation on charges is not satisfactory in the opinion of the Committee or the explanation is not submitted prior to the lapse of fourteen (14) days, the matter should be reported at a General Meeting with the observations of the Committee. The attendance at this General Meeting shall be not less than one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the total membership and the expulsion of the member shall be effected with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority or more at a vote taken for the purpose

2. **Funds**

The capital of NOFOTT shall consist of the following:

- 2.1. The membership fees and annual dues of the members
- 2.2. Funds obtained from non-members and deposits
- 2.3. Profits from business activities

2.4. Donations from government or other organizations

2.5. Any other funds received or earned in accordance with this Constitution.

3. **Maximum Credit Limit**

At general meetings, NOFOTT shall determine from time to time the maximum limit of credit that should be obtained for the fulfillment of the objectives.

4. **Utilisation of Funds**

4.1. The funds of NOFOTT shall be used to achieve its objectives.

4.2. By resolutions passed at General Meetings, NOFOTT shall maintain bank accounts as necessary. The signatories to the accounts shall be the President or the Vice President and the Treasurer.

4.3. The funds collected by NOFOTT shall be deposited in a bank account as soon as practicable, in any case not later than the following working day.

5. **Security Fund**

NOFOTT shall have a security fund to be used in case of emergency as determined by the Committee. As soon as practicable, in any case not later than one month, a complete report outlining circumstances under which the expenditure was incurred shall be forwarded at a General Meeting for approval. A portion of any profits and donations may be deposited in the security fund as shall be determined at a General Meeting.

6. **Financial Year**

The financial year of NOFOTT is from the First (1st) of January to the Thirty-First (31st) of December of that year.

7. **General Body of NOFOTT**

There shall be a General Body of NOFOTT. It shall be constituted of the Board of Directors and the Presidents and Secretaries of each of the Member Associations joined in accordance with Section 1.6. The power of NOFOTT is vested fully in the General Body.

7.1. Before the expiry of three (3) months after the end of the financial year, the Board of Directors shall summon the Annual General Meeting of NOFOTT.

- 7.2. Except for the Annual General Meeting, all other meetings of the General Body shall be called Special General Meetings.
- 7.3. A General Meeting of the Association shall be summoned by the President or the Board of Directors.
- 7.4. When the President or the Board of Directors inform the Secretary in writing, the Secretary shall summon a general meeting.
- 7.5. When one third ($1/3$) of the membership or not less than three (3) members request in writing the Board of Directors shall summon a special meeting within one month. Such request shall contain the resolutions to be forwarded at the special General Meeting and shall be included in the notice calling for the Special General Meeting.
- 7.6. A written notice of at least seven (7) days indicating the resolutions shall be given in the case of Special General Meetings.
- 7.7. In the case of the Annual General Meeting, at least twenty one (21) days notice shall be given in writing to the eligible members. The resolutions to be taken up at the Annual General Meeting shall be circulated among eligible members at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. If a member wishes to forward a resolution at the Annual General Meeting, such resolution shall be sent to the Secretary in duplicate at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. Such resolutions shall be included in the agenda of the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.8. In case of a resolution to amend this constitution, such a resolution with a brief explanation shall be brought to the notice of the eligible members at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The resolution shall be included in the agenda and shall be circulated at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

8. Quorum

- 8.1. The quorum for the General Meeting shall be one-fourth ($1/4$) of the membership or three (3) members, whichever is less.
- 8.2. The business of the General Meeting is conducted by resolutions. At a meeting where there is a proper quorum, a resolution shall be passed with a simple majority. To amend a resolution passed at a General Meeting within a period of six (6) months shall require at least two-thirds ($2/3$) majority.

- 8.3. To elect the members of the Board of Directors, the nominations duly proposed and seconded and shall be forwarded to the General Meeting. Each member present shall have an equal number of votes to the number of Committee members to be elected but only one vote shall be cast in favour of one candidate. Candidates polling the highest number of votes shall be elected.
- 8.4. Each member attending the General Meeting shall have one vote. The vote shall be taken either by show of hands or secret ballot and shall be determined by the person chairing the General Meeting in consultation with the General Body.
- 8.5. If the President is absent at the General Meeting, the Vice President shall chair the meeting and if both are absent, a Chairman shall be selected from the members present by consensus. If the votes cast are equal, the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote.
- 8.6. It is the duty of the Secretary of the NOFOTT to invite the Director of Fisheries or his/her Representative for General Meetings and Committee meetings. Notwithstanding this provision, the Director of Fisheries or his/her Representative shall have the authority to attend only General Meetings or Committee meetings of NOFOTT for which such and invitation is extended.

9. Records of Meetings

At a General Meeting, once a decision on any agenda item is arrived at, it shall be recorded as a brief statement in the Minute Book or other record where minutes are maintained by the Secretary, read to the General Body and Signed by the Secretary and the President or the person chairing the meeting. The Secretary shall forward the minutes of every General Meeting to the first Committee meeting held immediately thereafter.

10. Powers and Duties of the General Body

- 10.1. The election of not more than five (5) members to the Board of Directors and when necessary, the suspension and removal.
- 10.2. Consideration of the Annual Budget and Audit Report.
- 10.3. To uphold the provisions of the Constitution with respect to the funds
- 10.4. Amendments to the Constitutions when necessary
- 10.5. The confirmation of the membership of new members, taking decisions on appeals of members and expulsion of members.

- 10.6. Determination of the maximum credit limit of members
- 10.7. Determination of credit limit of members
- 10.8. Consideration of the Annual Report of the Board of Directors for the last year and the work programme for the following year.
- 10.9. Decision to dispose of or write-off bad debts or non recoverable assets of NOFOTT
- 10.10. To authorize the Committee to purchase, sell , mortgage, rent, lease, repair or deal with appropriately any land, buildings, fishing boats, gear, equipment and o\any other assets to achieve the objectives of the Association
- 10.11. To authorize the Board of Directors or any special sub-committee to negotiate with government and other organization on behalf of the membership in matters pertaining to the objectives of NOFOTT
- 10.12. To appoint special committee of women for the welfare of women where necessary
- 10.13. To decide on the policy on credit to members and,
- 10.14. To decide on any other matter for achieving the objectives of NOFOTT

11. The Board of Directors

- 11.1. There shall be a Board of Directors to NOFOTT with a membership of not more than five (5) members
- 11.2. The members to the Board of Directors shall be elected at an annual general meeting for a period of one year until the next annual general meeting. If the annual general meeting is not held due to any reason, the members of the Committee may continue until a new Committee is appointed. However, it shall be the duty of the general body to elect a new Committee before the expiry of eighteen (18) months from the date of the appointment of the Committee.
- 11.3. A person who:
 - (i) is of age less than 18 years
 - (ii) has been declared bankrupt by a court of law
 - (iii) is a non-member of a member Association
 - (iv) is a paid employee of NOFOTT or a member Association
 - (v) is involved in the purchase of an asset of NOFOTT or a member Association or has entered into an agreement with

- NOFOTT or a member Association with respect to supply of items or other financial transactions or
- (vi) has defaulted the payment of membership fee of the member Association shall not be eligible to be elected as a member of the Board of Directors.

11.4. An elected member shall lose his/her post in the Board of Directors due to any of the following reasons:

- (i) loss of membership of the member Association
- (ii) a written notice of thirty (30) days to the Secretary resigning from the Board of Directors
- (iii) removal from the post by a no-confidence motion duly passed at a general meeting

11.5. The office of an elected member shall end at the following annual general meeting and could be re-elected if he/she continues to be a member. A member of the Board of Directors or the whole Board of Directors shall not be re-elected before the expiry of at least one year, if they have resigned from their posts without serving the full term of office.

11.6. After the death or the resignation of a Board Member, the Board of Directors shall arrange for a special general meeting to be held as soon as possible for the filling of the vacancy

12. The Business of the Board of Directors

Subject to the provisions of this Constitution and the decisions of the General Body, the Board of Directors shall undertake the following activities:

- 12.1. Selection of suitable members to fill the vacancies of the Board. Such selected members shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting
- 12.2. Finding financial resources to implement the work programme of NOFOTT within the limits determined by the General Body of NOFOTT and to decide conditions under which these financial resources shall be spent
- 12.3. Employment of persons to implement the work programme as necessary
- 12.4. Acquisition of fixed assets for NOFOTT
- 12.5. Sale of fixed assets as determined by the General Body
- 12.6. Formulation of suitable credit schemes for the membership

- 12.7. Appointment of sub-committees as required to achieve the objectives of NOFOTT
- 12.8. Appointment of suitable persons for the custody of finances of NOFOTT

13. **The Duties of the Board of Directors**

Subject to the provisions of this Constitution and the decisions of the General Body, the Board shall undertake the following:

- 13.1. Summoning of the annual general meeting and as required, other meetings of the General Body
- 13.2. Consideration of the proposals and advice of the membership and issuing instructions to the management for implementation
- 13.3. Maintenance of all records of NOFOTT including financial documents with a balance sheet of assets and liabilities of NOFOTT and table them at the annual general meeting with an audit report
- 13.4. Submission of an annual budget and work programme for the ensuing year to the annual general meeting at least two months before the commencement of the financial year
- 13.5. Ensuring that NOFOTT achieves its objectives

14. **The Minutes of the Board Meetings**

All the discussions of the Board meetings and the decisions arrived thereof shall be recorded and the signatures of the member who chaired and the other committee members present shall be obtained at the end of the meeting. To this end, all members present shall be required to sign an Attendance Book.

15. **President and the Vice President**

- 15.1. The General Meeting shall appoint among the members a President and a Vice President. They shall function until the following annual general meeting or removal from office in accordance with this Constitution or resignation by letter sent to Secretary with at least thirty (30) days' notice.
- 15.2. The President of NOFOTT shall also be the President of the Board. He/she shall preside at the general meetings and Board meetings when present. The President shall be responsible for upholding the Constitution of NOFOTT and the implementation of the decisions of the general and Board meetings effectively.

- 15.3. The Vice President of NOFOTT shall also be the Vice President of the Board and shall preside at general and Board meetings when the President is absent. When the President is overseas or ill, the Vice President may act for the President.

16. Secretary

- 16.1. The General Meeting shall appoint a member or an employee as the Secretary. When an employee is appointed as the Secretary, he/she shall not have a vote at the meetings of NOFOTT. The Secretary shall summon general meetings and Board meetings when instructed to do so by an authorized person and shall record the minutes of these meetings. Further, in this respect, he/she shall act in accordance with the directives given by the President or the Board.
- 16.2. The Secretary shall maintain a register of the Board members. It shall contain the name of the member and the Association, date of election to the Board, how elected and the date of termination and shall forward such information to the Director of Fisheries within fourteen (14) days after the annual general meeting. If there is a change in the Board, it shall be brought to the notice of the Director of Fisheries within seven (7) days

17. Manager/Treasurer

The Board shall appoint a Manager. He/she shall be the Chief Executive Officer and shall be responsible to the Board for the efficient functioning of NOFOTT. In case that the Board can not employ a manager at the commencement of operations, a Treasurer to perform financial functions of NOFOTT shall be elected by the General Meeting until a Manager is appointed.

18. Business Activities

To achieve the objectives of NOFOTT and as approved by the general body, business activities such as sale of fuel, provisions for fishing trips, fishing gear, boats and other equipment may be undertaken by the Board. Only cash sales shall be transacted. However, the members may be given credit facilities.

19. The Seal of NOFOTT

The seal of NOFOTT shall be in the custody of the Secretary.

20. Standing Orders of the Board

The Committee shall formulate standing orders on the following subjects:

- 20.1. Membership enrolment
20.2. Utilization of the funds of NOFOTT
20.3. Collection of funds and control

- 20.4. Business Activities
- 20.5. Development activities for women in the community
- 20.6. Code of conduct for the members of the Board
- 20.7. Membership drives, education and extension

21. Amendments to the Constitution

- 21.1. The Constitution of NOFOTT shall be amended by a resolution at a general meeting with a vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of the total membership
- 21.2. The resolution shall be included in the notice calling for the general meeting and at least fourteen days' notice shall be given prior to the meeting
- 21.3. The Constitution and any amendments thereof shall be registered with the Director of Fisheries.

22. Interpretation

In this Constitution, unless otherwise specified, the "members" mean Fisherfolk Associations duly registered with the Director of Fisheries in accordance to the provisions of this Constitution.

23. Tobago

For the same reason that there is a Tobago House of Assembly within the Government structure of Trinidad and Tobago which has among its responsibilities the administration of fishing in Tobago, the All Tobago Fisherfolk Association (ATFA) will act with the full authority of NOFOTT in all organizational matters concerning Tobago.

ATFA's constitution will be the NOFOTT constitution.

There will be dual administration and management structures in both islands in both islands and the Executive of ATFA will have a bloc vote at NOFOTT's meetings and will represent Tobago on all matters of national fishing interest.

Wherever reference is made to the Director of Fisheries in the constitution, in the Tobago context this will mean the Director of Fisheries in the Tobago House of Assembly.

The above Constitution of the National Association of Fisherfolk of Trinidad and Tobago was adopted at the Inaugural General Meeting held on this _____ day of the month of _____

_____ at _____. In witness thereof, we, the members of the Union present at the Inaugural General Meeting place our signatures as appended, which forms part of this document.

APPENDIX A

- Coordinate programs and activities of the Local Fisherfolk
- Mainly establish strong working relations with national fisheries administrations and government
- Effectively participate in promoting capacity building programs for primary organizations towards resource co-management
- Represent the voices of the local organizations at national decision making forums, including:
 - National Fisheries Advisory Committees
 - National Fisheries Dialogue Groups
 - National Legislative Enforcement Agencies
- Participate in resolving conflict situations among local organizations
- Develop consultative and feedback links with local organizations on matters of national and regional importance
- Be empowered to effectively participate in resource management decision-making processes at the national level
- Establish lateral linkages with other national organizations for:
 - Regular sharing of information
 - Development of common strategies on regional policy matters
- Establish strong linkages with relevant NGOs and other research and academic institutions and relevant funding agencies, both regionally and extra-regionally
- Collaborate with the National Fisheries Administrations and other National Umbrella Unions in formulating joint regional and sub-regional marketing strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock of Guyana, Mr. Bowham Balkaran, was on hand on the opening day of the two-day conference. He delivered a short extemporaneous speech in which he welcomed the participants from outside Guyana and expressed the hope that they would return on their own as visitors. He emphasized the growing importance of fisheries to the economies of the region, and regretted that the European Union and the United States are setting certain stringent standards that would make it difficult for fish and fish products from the region to enter their markets. He suggested a concerted effort by Member States of the CRFM to fight against all discriminatory measures being implemented against the region.

There were 13 Participants from six countries, namely The Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, St. Lucia and Trinidad & Tobago. The Three- Tier Model Of fisher folk organizations was the first topic to be discussed at the Conference. It was the consensus opinion of the Participants that the time was not yet ripe for thinking of forming a regional body. Rather, it was time to strengthen the national bodies for regional networking. It was further agreed that it is critical that every Member State should have a national umbrella organization or pending that, to have a temporary committee of representatives of the existing primary organizations. The structure and functions of the primary and secondary organizations in the model was compared to the realities in the Member States and strategies were adopted to move towards adopting the case as contained in the Model.

The Belizean and the Jamaican national bodies were considered as models, with transparent leadership, democratic structures and processes and serious business approach to their functions. It was acknowledged that political interference and bureaucratic impediments engender difficulties in the running of the organizations and suggestions for avoiding these were discussed. In discussing the strengthening of organizations, the concepts of Self- Governance, Empowerment and Leadership emerged as the most popular and discussions tended to focus on them.

The Participants were not quite au fait with the real meaning of the concept of Advocacy until it was defined. The types of Advocacy such as Consumer Advocacy and Conservation and Environmental Advocacy were discussed at length because of their close relevance to fishing. However, care was taken to emphasize that Advocacy must be confined, as far as possible, to education and awareness building, rather than as a tool for confrontation with civil authorities.

Work on improving the questionnaire for assessing the status and needs of fisher folk organizations and discussions on improving the financial standing of the organizations took the form of round table discussions by which participants engaged in open dialogue and came to consensus positions.

Presenters of national reports emphasized the problems of political interference and over-dependence on government handouts as the factors that weaken solidarity in the organizations. There was also consensus that the organizations must strive to become

self-governing entities and that the efforts must be geared at building and solidifying their economic bases. Participants overwhelmingly opined that such conferences should be organized regularly for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of views and information among the organizations.