

# **TERMS OF REFERENCE WECAFC/CRFM/IFREMER Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish in the Northern Brazil-Guianas Shelf**

## **1. ROLE OF THE WORKING GROUP**

### **1.1 Scope**

The scope of the working group is to provide scientific and management advice for the sustainable management of the shrimp and groundfish resources of the Northern Brazil-Guianas shelf in the WECAFC Region. In undertaking its work, the working group will pay due attention to the Code of Conduct's Article 6.4 of the general principles<sup>2</sup> and the principles of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries.

Using a multidisciplinary approach the working group will contribute to the sustainable management of the shrimp and groundfish resources of the Brazil-Guianas shelf by providing management advice to Members of WECAFC based on the best available knowledge.

In pursuing this goal the working group will contribute to the fulfilment of national and regional responsibilities for the marine environment and for the management of the shrimp and groundfish resources and related or interacting species or fisheries in the WECAFC Region under the code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, in line with the principles of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and in accordance with agreed, documented management goals.

### **1.3 Terms of Reference (TORs)**

Some shrimp and groundfish resources are transboundary and therefore the TORs may apply at sub-regional and/or national levels as appropriate. The working group, with the support of FAO, WECAFC Secretariat, CRFM and UNEP-CEP, will act in an advisory capacity to guide and facilitate the sustainable management of the shrimp and groundfish resources.

Specifically, the working group will:

- (a) Share available data and information on shrimp and groundfish resources.
- (b) Develop common methods for assessment and monitoring of shrimp and groundfish stocks, possibly involving the private sector formally in data collection.
- (c) Undertake, review and validate stock assessments of shrimp and groundfish resources in the Brazil-Guianas shelf
- (d) Monitor changes in availability, distribution and abundance of shrimp and groundfish resources in the Brazil-Guianas shelf
- (e) Compile and analyse data on catch, effort, size composition, changes in habitat and reproductive patterns () of shrimp and groundfish fisheries in the sub-region and monitor and evaluate changes.
- (f) Compile and analyse data and information about the social and economic importance of shrimp and groundfish fisheries.
- (g) Propose a sub-regional management plan for shrimp and groundfish in the Northern Brazil-Guianas shelf, considering the recommendations from plan for investment in EAF management, and taking into account regional strategy on the management of trawl fisheries by-catch including co-management arrangement tested in pilote studies.
- (h) Establish communication between the members of the working group, and between the working group and interested parties including the private sector.

(i) Evaluate and make recommendations on emerging issues regarding the shrimp and groundfish resources, such as environmental changes of local or global economic context. Wherever relevant, address issues dealing with pollution and habitat degradation and their impacts on the shrimp and groundfish resources in collaboration with appropriate national, sub-regional and/or regional institutions or stakeholders.

(j) Establish links with the CRFM continental shelf fisheries working group as appropriate, in order to avoid duplicating efforts and tasks and optimize use of technical and financial resources.

(k) Establish link with other sub-regional initiatives (ex. CLME+, ReByC II projects) for mutual benefits.

(l) Collaborate with IUU working group on development and implementation of the regional plan of action on IUU fishing.

(m) Report to WECAFC and CRFM on the outcome of each session.

## **1.4 Mode of Operation**

### *1.4.1 Role of Countries*

The members of the working group will play a leading role in its activities through the following activities and commitments:

- Participate in agreed activities of the working group, and ensure the participation of appropriate experts;
- Implement, at the National level, the work identified in the agreed work plan of the Group;
- Host working group meetings on a rotational basis.

### *1.4.2 Role of Convenor*

The Convenor of the working group will play a leading role during the organization of the meetings by coordinating the inputs of the members of the working group:

- Call for meetings as appropriate;
- Ensure that contributions are received in a timely manner and in the appropriate format;
- Ensure that outputs are delivered as agreed during each meeting;
- Collaborate closely with FAO-WECAFC and other sub-regional and regional organizations as appropriate.

### *1.4.3 Role of FAO*

The FAO/WECAFC Secretariat will play a supporting role in the activities of the working group by assisting in:

- Co-coordinating the activities of the working group (including facilitate procurement of funding);
- Providing a technical secretary and technical backstopping;
- Providing technical assistance and support to research;
- Facilitating training.

### *1.4.4 Role of other organisations (e.g. CRFM, UNEP-CEP, IFREMER, NOAA)*

Subregional organisations have an important role to play in assisting their member countries to participate fully in the activities of the working group by:

- Providing technical assistance and support;
- Facilitating procurement of funding when possible;
- Facilitating the decision-making process at the Subregional level.

### **1.5 Communication**

A mechanism for on-going communication among working group members (Video conference, Skype and email), is essential to ensure that the work of the group is sustained between meetings. It must include all working group members.

The successful functioning of the working group also requires that each member country and organization/ agency identify a national focal point through which communications will be directed. The outputs of the working group will be communicated through working group reports to WECAFC, CRFM, UNEP-CEP, IFREMER and national fishery administrations via the WECAFC Secretariat.

### **1.6 Working Group meetings**

Working Group meetings will be organized according to the workplan and depending on resources available.