



**WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION (WECAFC)**

**SIXTEENTH SESSION**

**Guadeloupe, 20-24 June 2016**

**Report by the Secretary on the financial and administrative affairs of the Commission**

1. This document aims to report on administrative and financial issues related to the actions taken during the 2014-2015 intersessional period. It should be read in conjunction with working document WECAFC/XVI/2016/4 (intersessional activities). It includes issues such as staffing, meetings, publications, the membership of the Commission, contributions by FAO, members and others to the Programme of Work (2014 -2015) of the Commission and expenditures made.

**Administrative issues**

*Regular activities*

2. During the intersession, the Secretariat coordinated and actively contributed to the preparation and delivery of the activities and meetings agreed by the Commission, namely i) the seventh session of the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) and 9 meetings of (joint) Working Groups.

*Executive Committee of the Commission*

3. During the intersessional period, liaison was maintained at a good level of coordination and consultation with the Executive Committee of WECAFC and the conveners of the Working Groups. The chairperson of WECAFC, Mrs. Christine Chan A Shing and vice-chairpersons actively contributed with advice and suggestions to the daily operations carried out by the Secretariat.

*Secretariat to the Commission*

4. During the intersessional period the Secretariat consisted of a part-time Secretary, Dr Raymon van Anrooy, and a part-time Programme Assistant, Ms Sonya Thompson. Moreover, liaison assistance was obtained (part-time) from Ms Bertha Simmons and Ms Luisan Rogers. Administrative, operational and travel/logistics staff of FAO's Subregional Office for the Caribbean in Barbados also assisted with meetings and procurement matters. The Secretariat did not have any full-time staff in the intersessional period.

*Framework programme activities*

5. As specified in document WECAFC/XVI/2016/4 most activities under the programme of work were carried out (fully or partly) in the intersessional period. Various technical workshops were supported (e.g. lobster, queen conch, shrimp and groundfish, seacucumber and lionfish, recreational fisheries, MPAs, Deep sea fisheries, FIRMS, REBYC II LAC, Climate Change and Disaster risk management in fisheries, and 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop on WECAFC strategic reorientation) to address specific issues and requests from members. In addition, joint working group meetings were held by CRFM, including meetings on FADs and flying fish, which contributed to WECAFC's programme of work.
6. WECAFC intersessional activities (meetings, cooperation, publications and other issues) are presented in Working Document WECAFC/XVI/2016/4. The SAG technically reviewed the activities implemented and the draft Programme of Work (2016 -2017), which is presented in working document WECAFC/XVI/2016/11.

*WECAFC Reorientation*

7. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, with support from the European Union' DG Mare and FAO hosted on 1-2 December 2015 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop on WECAFC Strategic Reorientation. The contributions by these partners to the workshop organization and background information preparation added up to over 120 000 USD.

*Membership*

8. No changes to the membership have taken place since WECAFC 15. WECAFC has 34 members, including 33 countries and the European Union.

*Project hosting at Secretariat*

9. In the 2014-2015 period various projects that were formulated and approved by resource partners required full-time staff for 6 months or longer. Four of such projects are hosted by the WECAFC Secretariat at the FAO Subregional Office in Barbados. These include:
  - Sustainable management of bycatch in Latin America and Caribbean trawl fisheries (REBYC-II LAC) (GCP/RLA/201/GFF) 5.8 million USD - Carlos Fuentesvilla
  - Caribbean Billfish Project (GCP/SLC/001/WBK) 1.9 million USD – Manuel Perez
  - Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector (CC4FISH) (GCP/SLC/202/SCF) 5.4 million USD
  - CITES-FAO collaboration on immediate action in support of the implementation of the CITES listings of sharks and rays (EP/INT/227/UEP) 100 000 USD - Nikola Simpson

**Financial issues***FAO regular Programme*

10. WECAFC activities are funded from the FAO Regular Programme, FAO Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) and in-kind by other organizations, as described below. The total estimated budget required under the approved WECAFC Work Programme

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for the period 2014–2015 was some USD 5.6 million, apart from the three large Trust Fund projects mentioned above.

11. An estimated 80% of the activities listed under the work programme were actually implemented to a greater or lesser extent, but real funding obtained was inadequate to fully achieve what the members agreed on. Much of the funding provided under TCP (see working document WECAFC/XVI/2016/4) went to activities that have only limited linkage with WECAFC and substantial in-kind support was needed.
12. The FAO subregional office has an annual budget from the FAO Regular Programme, which is distributed to the various technical disciplines. Until 2007 - 2008 the allocation for WECAFC came directly from the FAO Fisheries (and Aquaculture) Department and the Commission received around USD 300 000 per biennium in support of its work. However, the funds received are now confounded with the overall SLC budget.
13. A budget prepared for the last biennium (2014 – 2015) requested nearly USD 180 000 but the allocation was made at the level of USD 110 000. Approximately one-third of the allocated budget has been used for WECAFC 15. The costs of the session were significantly lower than for WECAFC 14 and 13, as the host country Trinidad and Tobago, generously contributed to interpretation and translation services (English, Spanish, French).
14. Approximately USD 12 000 was used for the 7<sup>th</sup> SAG session (travel, organization), which was lower than usual due to organizing the SAG back-to-back with the inception workshop of the Caribbean Billfish Project. Some USD 10 000 was spent on supporting the organization of Working Group meetings and covering travel for some SIDS experts. Moreover, some USD 6 000 was spent on supporting travel for Cuban experts to enable them to join in specific Working Group activities.
15. Finally, some USD 11 000 was used for General office support (mainly administrative/liaison assistant support) and 5 000 USD on legal assistance.
16. Travel and participation costs of Headquarters staff in WECAFC activities added up to some 20 000 USD, which is relatively low, as various Trust Fund projects could cover the travel related costs, reducing the need for Regular Programme support.
17. Moreover, the FAO Regular Programme provides for (in-kind) contribution to the Secretariat in terms of 50% of the SLC Fishery and Aquaculture Officer (P4 level) staff time, which should be valued at USD 70 000 per year and the office, furniture and administrative support infrastructure, which can be valued at USD 60 000 per year. FAO Headquarters technical assistance to the Commission can be valued at an average of USD 70 000 per year. Some fluctuation could be noticed in the support provided in recent years.
18. In total, the FAO contribution to the WECAF Commission can be valued between 200 and 220 000 USD per year. Table 3 in Reference Document WECAFC/XVI/2016/Ref.14 provides a comparison with the 2012-2013 period.

*WECAFC Trust Fund*

19. Although (at the request of the 14<sup>th</sup> session) a dedicated WECAFC Trust Fund was established, in support of the WECAFC Work Programme, with a Project servicing fee of only 5.9%, not any contributions were received into this fund in 2014 -2015.

*Other FAO - WECAFC Trust Fund projects*

20. Working document WECAFC/XVI/2016/4 (intersessional activities) contains a list of trust fund and TCP projects. The total budget of all active fisheries Trust fund projects benefiting WECAFC members is approximately USD 20 million. In terms of regional Trust Fund projects that were prepared by the WECAFC Secretariat and Executive Committee, the total resources allocated in the 2014-2015 period added up to USD 9 million. The delivery on these regional trust funds in this biennium was approximately USD 4 million. It should be noted that the projects started at different moments and some large project started only recently, which has effect on the delivery.

*In-kind support by partner agencies*

21. In-kind contributions, with an estimated combined total of around USD 200 000, were received from:

- CFMC– 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Queen Conch Working Group
- CRFM – Flying Fish Working Group (virtual meetings)
- IFREMER/JICA/CRFM – FAD Working Group (two meetings)

*FAO TCP projects*

22. Support for WECAFC member countries in fisheries and aquaculture under the FAO TCP programme in the 2014 -2015 biennium added up to some USD 3.5 million. However, much of this funding went to activities that have only limited linkage with WECAFC; it should be noted that many of the TCP and Trust Fund activities were not carried out under the WECAFC umbrella.

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION**

23. The Commission is invited to review this administrative and financial report and provide general guidance, particularly on issues relating to the strengthening of the Secretariat and implementation of the Programme of Work (2016 -2017).

24. The Commission is further invited to take into account the current financial situation when discussing the Programme of Work 2016 -2017, and to provide guidance to the Secretariat and Executive Committee, as appropriate, on how and where to mobilize resources for implementation of the Programme of Work.