



WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION Eleventh Session
WECAFC LESSER ANTILLES FISHERIES COMMITTEE Eighth Session
St. George's, Grenada, 21-24 October 2003
DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME OF WECAFC, 2003-05

Introduction

1. The Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) was established in 1973 by Resolution 4/61 of the FAO Council under Article 6 of the FAO Constitution in the light of the challenges faced by the fishing nations operating in the area. The purpose of the Commission was to assist in international cooperation efforts for the conservation, development and utilisation of living resources, especially shrimp, of the Western Central Atlantic.
2. WECAFC has contributed significantly to fisheries management and development in the region. For example, important contributions were made to fisheries management through the work of the Working Parties on Assessment of Marine Fishery Resources, on Fisheries Statistics, and on Economics and Planning. Significant contributions were made also by the Groups on Shrimp and Groundfish in the Brazil-Guianas shelf, on Caribbean Spiny lobster, on Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean and on the Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device Fishing in the Lesser Antilles. Expert consultations were held on specific subjects such as shared resources in the Lesser Antilles; the use of micro-computers in fisheries; the use of length-based stock assessment methods; and sustainable fisheries development in the WECAFC region. These activities produced a substantial body of literature on fisheries management and conservation in the region. In addition, the Lesser Antilles Committee provided a forum for articulating the special needs of these small island states.
3. The Commission also contributed significantly to human resource development and the strengthening of national institutional capacity through training courses in specific subjects such as tropical fish stock assessment and HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point).
4. Recent international agreements such as the 1993 Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (Compliance Agreement), the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (1995 UN Agreement on High Seas Fishery), and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, have all stressed the need for international co-operation among states through organisations at sub-regional, regional, and global levels, for the conservation, management and utilisation of living aquatic resources. These developments have generated renewed interest in collaboration at the regional level. All the agreements emphasise a need for collaboration and co-operation in the management of shared, straddling and highly migratory stocks which is typical of the WECAFC region.

5. The critical need to strengthen regional co-operation was further emphasised by the findings of the FAO Project, TCP/RLA/0070, which sought to assist CARICOM countries with formulating an approach to the development and management of large pelagic fisheries. The need for: (i) a regional arrangement for large coastal pelagics species contained mainly within the Western Central Atlantic; and (ii) more involvement by countries in ICCAT for oceanic species, were identified as the way forward.

The Strategy of the Commission

6. With respect to the role of the Commission, the Ninth Session of the Commission, Saint Lucia, September 1999, agreed that:
 - a regional approach to management of many of the region's fisheries was a feasible arrangement for achieving sustainable fisheries in the region, and that WECAFC is in a unique position to serve as an umbrella organisation for this purpose.
 - regional technical cooperation was a crucial element if members were to benefit from the current globalisation process within the context of clearly defined national and regional objectives for sustainable development and responsible fisheries management.
 - responsible fisheries management requires regional and sub-regional cooperation through working groups for the application of the precautionary approach to fisheries of the WECAFC region and recommended that the following *ad hoc* working groups should continue their activities:
 - Ad hoc Working Group on Shrimp and Ground Fish Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf;
 - Ad hoc Working Group on Spiny Lobster, *Panulirus argus*;
 - Ad hoc Working Group on Flying Fish of the Eastern Caribbean; and
 - Ad hoc Working Group on Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) Fishing in the Lesser Antilles.
7. The Ninth Session of WECAFC also agreed, in view of existing constraints, that the Commission should have a simple structure consisting of the Secretariat, a Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) which will act as advisory body to the Commission and *ad hoc* working groups with clearly defined Terms of Reference and time bound clauses, established as and when required.
8. The Secretariat of the Commission is now based in the region, at the FAO Sub-Regional Office in Barbados. Current FAO support to the Commission includes the Secretariat, the Secretary of the Commission, a part-time (30%) stock assessment specialist, a part-time (30%) fishery economist, a part-time fisheries officer, a secretary, *ad hoc* technical support from FAO Fisheries Department, the FAO library and documentation services, support of FAO network and contacts, and FAO communications infrastructure and network.

Draft Work Programme

9. The work of the Commission (refer to documents WECAFC/XI/03/5 and 6) over the last biennium (2001-2003) was carried out with the financial support of FAO Regular Programme Budget and extra-budgetary support from the global project GCP/INT/648/NOR – Assistance to Developing Countries for the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance and Improving the Provision of Scientific Advice for Fisheries Management (FISHCODE).
10. The draft work programme for the Commission for the next biennium (2003-2005) and potential sources of funding are found in Table 1.

Suggested Action by the Commission

11. The Commission is invited to review the proposed work programme for the 2003-05 biennium. In its review, the members are requested to take into account the limited resources (financial and human) available to the WECAFC Secretariat and the zero growth in the FAO Regular Programme Budget adopted at the 121th Session of the Council, July 2003. The WECAFC Secretariat depends on the FAO Regular Programme Budget for its running costs and for support services.

Table 1. Draft Work Programme of WECAFC, 2003-05 (subject to obtaining the required extra-budgetary support).

A. Brazil-Guianas Shrimp and Groundfish* (Brazil, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela)		
Activity	Time	Potential Funding
A1. Fishery Assessment and Management Workshop for developing/refining management plans for different species and fisheries	2004	EB, PC
A2. Second Round of National Workshops	2004	EB, PC
A3. Managers' Workshop on fisheries management to promote activities and cooperation in fisheries of the Brazil-Guianas shelf.	2005	EB, PC
B. Caribbean Spiny Lobster* (Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Saint Lucia, USA, Venezuela)		
B1. Fourth Assessment and Management Workshop on developing/refining management plans for each country	2004	EB, PC
B2. Managers'/Ministers' Meeting on the Management of Caribbean Spiny lobster	2005	EB, PC
C. Facilitating Responsible Fisheries Management in Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama)		
C1. Scoping Mission – identify local participants, review important fisheries and discuss project objectives and activities	2004	EB, RP, PC
D. Capacity Building in FlyingFish Working Group (Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago)		
D1. Assessment and Management Workshop – Preparation of Regional Management Programme	2004	EB, PC, RP
D2. Meeting of Managers and Ministers	2005	EB, PC, RP
E. Working Group on Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) Fishing in the Lesser Antilles (Antigua & Barbuda, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago)		
E1. Training in construction and deployment of Moored Fish Attracting Devices (Coordinated by IFREMER)	N/A	EB, PC, RP
E2. Third Meeting of the Working Group on Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device Fishing in the Lesser Antilles	2004	EB, PC, RP
F. Other Activities		
F1. Regional Workshop to develop national plans of action to prevent, deter and eliminated IUU fishing.	November, 2004	EB, RP, PC
F2. Subregional Workshops on MCS and VMS (Central America and continental countries; and Caribbean SIDs)	2004	EB, RP, PC

F3. Pilot activity on status and trends reporting in Coral Reef Fisheries in the Caribbean	2004	EB, RP, PC
F4. Regional Workshop on the use of demographic and socio-economic information on fishing communities in coastal and aquatic resources management.	2005	EB, RP, PC
F5. Expert Consultation on national fisheries policy and policy instruments in Caribbean countries – the emerging requirements from the changing international normative fisheries framework.	2005	EB, RP, PC

G. Coordination and Liaison		
G1. Twelfth Session of the Commission	October, 2005	RP, MC
G2. Third Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG)	April, 2005	RP
G3. Liaison with GEF Pipeline project – Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem.	2004/05	RP
G4. Support to International Queen Conch Initiative and Working Group (coordinated by CFMC)	2005	RP
G5. Liaison with regional and international agencies. Representation at meetings	N/A	RP

* FAO would provide technical support to these two groups if extra-budgetary funding is available for the proposed activities.

Legend: CFMC – Caribbean Fishery Management Council
EB – Extra-budgetary
IFREMER – Institut Français pour la Reserche de la Mer
MC – Member Countries
N/A – not applicable
PC – Participating Countries
RP – FAO Regular Programme Budget