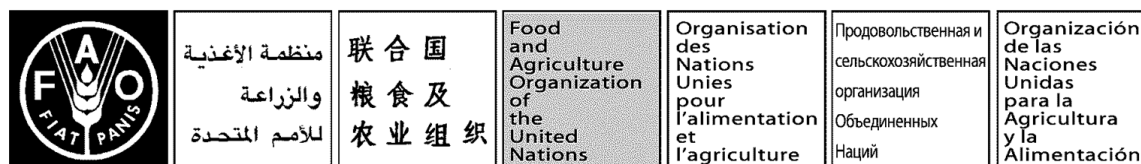


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WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION (WECAFC)
NINTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY GROUP (SAG)
Bridgetown, Barbados, 19-20 November 2018
Status of the implementation of the CLME+ Sub-project on the Flyingfish fishery

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Overview

The CRFM, in collaboration with WECAFC and with support provided during the corresponding case study under the CLME Project (GEF ID 1032), developed and finalized, in 2014, a Sub-regional Management Plan (Sub-regional FMP) for Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean. The Plan takes into account the relevant provisions of two key CRFM instruments, the Agreement on the Establishment of the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP), and the 2010

Castries (Saint Lucia) Declaration on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing. The Sub-regional FMP was endorsed by the 15th Session of WECAFC, by the Caribbean Fisheries Forum in April 2014, and by the CRFM Ministerial Council in May 2014, following extensive consultation with stakeholders at both the national and regional levels, and was cleared for implementation by range States.

The general management objectives outlined in the Sub-regional FMP are: (a) sustained Flyingfish resources (biological objective), (b) optimal use of the Flyingfish resource for long-term benefits (socio-economic objective) and (c) sustained ecosystem health (ecological objective). However, a 2016 evaluation of the implementation of the 2014 FMP¹ concluded that national efforts to implement the management measures agreed upon in the ECFF-FMP as well as other directives of the associated Ministerial Resolution were negligible.

A specific sub-strategy relating to Flyingfish fisheries was included under Strategy 5 of the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP). Sub-Strategy 5A of the SAP aims to enhance the governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystem approach to Flyingfish fisheries in the CLME+ region. The Sub-Project, of which this consultancy is a part, aims at contributing to the delivery of Output 3.2. (O3.2.) under COMPONENT 3 of the main CLME+ Project Document: “Transition to an ecosystem approach for the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish fisheries demonstrated”. It has been developed in response to the corresponding calls for action under (a) the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP), politically endorsed at the regional level in 2013 and (b) the approved Regional Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) for Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean.

As part of the subproject a number of consultancies were facilitated which contribute to fostering long-term human well-being of the (direct and indirect) stakeholders of the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish fishery by (a) enhancing governance arrangements for implementing an ecosystem approach for Flyingfish fisheries (b) enhancing data and information management for decision support to the fishery (c) enhancing Stakeholder education and participation in the Flyingfish fisheries management process (d) supporting implementation of management / stress reduction measures in the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish fishery (e) providing technical support to facilitate long-term enhancement of livelihoods and well-being for Flyingfish fisheries and (f) facilitating adaptive management for Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish fisheries. The status of expected deliverables of these consultancies (as at end of September 2018) are shown in appendix 1.

A Special Meeting of the Joint CRFM / WECAFC Working Group on Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean² was held at Blue Horizon Hotel, Christ Church, Barbados from 1 – 2 October 2018.

¹ Mohammed, E. 2016. Implementation Report (2014-2015): Sub-regional Fisheries Management Plan for Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean. *CRFM Technical & Advisory Document*, No. 2016/01. 29 pp + 6 Appendices.

² The Working Group seeks to facilitate the achievement of management objectives as outlined in the sub-regional management plan for Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean, through the application of international best practices consistent with the precautionary, ecosystem and participatory approaches to fisheries management. These management objectives are: a) sustained Flyingfish resources, b) optimal use of the Flyingfish resource for long-term benefit and c) sustained ecosystem health. Membership consists of all Member States of CRFM and WECAFC, including Overseas Territories and Departments, with a real interest in the Flyingfish fishery; as well as representatives of key Flyingfish stakeholders of Member States and relevant regional organizations and experts

The Joint WECAFC / CRFM Working Group on Flyingfish has the following terms of reference, *inter alia* to:

- Update and finalize the draft Sub-Regional Fisheries Management Plan for Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean, taking into account the need to develop an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) management and climate change issues;
- Establish and commence improved monitoring of fishery performance trends, consistent with agreed management objectives for the operation of the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish fishery;
- Monitor and advise on the implementation of the agreed Fisheries Management Plan;
- Provide advice on the status of the fishery and its management to the CRFM Ministerial Sub-Committee on Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish and to WECAFC; and
- Take other necessary actions on emerging issues pertaining to the sustainable use of Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish.

The goal of the Meeting was to discuss progress, challenges, and next steps for implementing the sub-regional Flyingfish fishery management plan (FMP) and associated outputs to further Flyingfish and other fishery resource management in the Eastern Caribbean³. These outputs resulted from the work of the consultancies referred to above. The Working Group Meeting was attended by technical-level participants including but not limited to representatives of: national fisheries divisions and fishers organisations of Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago, authorities of Martinique, OECS Commission, FAO / WECAFC, and the CRFM Secretariat.

Recommendations of the Special Meeting

Updated Fisheries Management Plan

The Meeting:

Recommended that in updating the FMP, in terms of document structure, the following should be considered: streamline background and supporting information; clarify management advice and implementation steps; add additional guiding documents as annexes; ensure readability for all stakeholder audiences.

Also recommended adding the following topics to the ECFF-FMP: emphasize key framing elements of the updated plan; highlight topical priorities; lay groundwork for future stock assessments; specify management measures; specify research needs; emphasize the precautionary principle; and consider how to add value to Flyingfish.

Further recommended that prioritizing effort and supporting implementation include: providing a realistic roadmap to implementation; harmonize data collection and communication; support collaboration; and, facilitate adoption of the FMP.

³ The meeting was supported by the CLME+ Sub-Project # 3: EAF for the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish

Agreed that the plan should also identify capacity gaps and a corresponding strategy, all geared to an enabling framework for resource users.

Highlighted the need to be mindful of the impact of current extreme accumulations of Sargassum;

Recommended that WECAFC consider supporting the development of an FMP implementation plan / strategy; possibly through the use of a case study approach, taking into account the lessons learned from attempting to implement the 2014 FMP

Proposed that the revised FMP include an outline of a (1 - 2 page) national implementation plan.

Recommended that in reviewing the FMP, there is need to be mindful of new (international) management regimes and laws coming into effect, like port state measures and IUU fishing.;

Asked that consideration be given to drafting the FMP such that its outcomes are incremental, rather than making definitive statements of outcome which may be impacted by on-the-ground realities as time progresses;

Noted that the annual harvest rates of 5,000 tonnes referred to in the 2014 Plan, was not mindful of the lowering of harvest rates consequent upon accumulation of Sargassum;

Expressed concern with regard any closure of the Flyingfish fishery, especially in relation to the use of the term “trigger point”; and

Recommended that the trigger points should be considered as points that engender engagement of fishers and review of the fisheries rather than fishery closure.

Data policy

One expected output of the consultancy to enhance governance arrangements is a draft Sub-Regional Data Policy for the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Fishery (the Data Policy). The purpose of this Data Policy is to outline the data collection priorities, data sources, and approach to integrated data collection, management, and sharing among countries and regional bodies that participate in the harvest and management of Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish. The initial draft of the Data Policy was developed based on preliminary input from stakeholders in Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago; input from the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM); and information from relevant documents and examples of other data-related policies. The consultants revised the first draft based on comments from stakeholders gathered by national fisheries officers through consultative meetings held in Saint Lucia and Dominica.

The Meeting:

Recommended that the policy should set a framework that is common to everyone, given that some countries may not (ideally) have all the data required;

Also recommended that the policy should enunciate principles, objectives, but also provide some specificity such as what may be included in strategic plans. This should include:

- types of data needed for Flyingfish that all countries should collect.
- format for submission,
- elements for confidentiality and how data or elements of it is treated,
- what other countries can access: whether raw data or not, or data that has been analyzed by WGs in aggregated form

Further recommended that the general principles referred to in the data policy should be applicable to all fisheries; such that while the policy that will be relevant to Flyingfish, and be tested using this species, it can be modified for applicability to others; mindful that general commitments / principles are already outlined in the CCCFP;

Asked that consideration should be given, by Member States to the incentives to encourage submission of data and sanctions for non-submission / collection of data;

Noted that it is also important to ensure that any proposed data collection / management scheme is consistent with what countries currently have the capacity to do; and hence, its implementation should not increase the current burden on countries;

Proposed that consideration should be given to utilisation of a data sheet that can be used in all countries, and which can be adapted for other species as appropriate;

Recommended that the data policy should relate both to data collection and data use and might also define what data products need to be generated;

Noted that the WCS-supported Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool (SMART), which was created for monitoring protected areas, could be used for fisheries data capture;

Proposed that the policy include a statement about the use of technology and the exploration of tools that can be piloted; and

Recommended that CRFM be charged with enforcing the data policy, this mindful that there are currently a number of arrangements in CRFM that are dealing with data collection and analysis.

Data collection approaches

The consultancy on enhancing data and information systems sought, *inter alia*, to identify key data and information requirements, associated sources of data and information and the mechanisms for data and information sharing, including provisions for further development of data collection systems at the regional, national, sectoral and local levels to inform development of a DSS, consistent with the sub-regional FMP. The consultants' recommendations in this regard were presented to the working group.

The Meeting:

Noted that there is some scope for individual fishers providing data directly;

Proposed that consideration be given to utilise fishers' (more literate / numerate) family members as the conduit for data. It was **also recommended** that consideration should be given to the use of electronic logbooks;

Emphasised that giving useful feedback to fishers who have provided data would be an incentive that might work better than mandatory reporting;

Noted, however, that this required identification of the types of data required to be collected, then subsequently determining how to best go about collecting them; and

Recommended that, given that data collection is enormously difficult especially with current capacity limitations, focus should be on strengthening capacity of both government and fishers' organisations; supported by enhanced political commitment for evidence-based decision making that requires long-term data collection.

Cooperation agreement

As part of the Governance enhancement consultancy, the consultants were charged with developing a management partnership / cooperation agreement that would support active cooperation between CRFM and France regarding Flyingfish conservation and management. The consultants first produced a draft cooperation agreement, on which Fisheries Officers from 6 countries commented; two countries (Saint Lucia and Dominica) held stakeholder consultative meetings to provide feedback and their feedback was integrated into the draft. Goals for Flyingfish and other major shared living marine resources are to: establish and implement an effective arrangement for cooperation between the Participating Parties management; coordinate activities between Participating Parties to leverage existing capacities; fill gaps in capacities and maximize efficiency; and develop and implement shared management recommendations.

The Meeting:

Recommended that the issue of intellectual property should be included in the cooperation agreement;

Noted that in the available time, seeking to have a political level agreement is impractical; so, it is best to focus at a technical level in the first instance / short term;

Also recommended that notwithstanding the initiative is being funded in the context of one species, it is incumbent to use the opportunity to develop a wider scoped agreement, which would provide more opportunities for living resources management; aiming for a simple agreement that "begins" a cooperative arrangement that can grow; and

Agreed CRFM should be one party / signatory to the agreement, on behalf of its Member States, with an appropriate entity on behalf of France / Martinique.

Stakeholder participation

Pursuant to the consultancy to enhance stakeholder participation in management of the Flyingfish fishery, the consultants sought to improve education and awareness-building of the National Intersectoral Coordination Mechanisms (NICs) and Fisheries Advisory Committees (FACs) through, *inter alia*, facilitating the production and dissemination of information customized to target a range of stakeholders at varying levels (general public, decision-makers, advisors, fishers, processors, civil society, private sector / business). In addition, through a number of national consultations, they engaged stakeholders in identifying solutions for addressing socio-economic, ecological and governance issues and for refining the management; such consultations also sought to provide for broad stakeholder review of any proposed amendments to the Sub-regional Management Plan. The consultants presented the results of these consultations and a first round of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) studies, together with a number of stakeholder information and awareness products: including a 16-minute documentary entitled “Spotlight on the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Fishery” aimed at improving awareness of the governance and management challenges impacting the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Fishery and the critical role of the “Sub-Regional Fisheries Management Plan for Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean” in addressing these challenges.

The Meeting:

Commended the consultants on the awareness materials; noting that, in the main, they sought to speak to the current situation regarding management of the Flyingfish fishery;

Noted the challenges in getting NICs and FACs involvement in consultative processes, especially given that these entities were either non-existent or inoperative in most countries;

Expressed concern that this inefficacy may be a function of their composition and mandate, and until these are rectified, there will always be the issue of whether or not these committees are in a position to carry out the roles expected of them (in management plans and / or the SAP);

Noted that the effectiveness of NICs and FACs will always be less than optimal unless there are legal grounds to require implementation of recommendations from such entities and legal recourse if this is not done; and

Recommended that NICs and FACs, as a prerequisite of national fisheries-sector decision-making processes, should be specifically mentioned in law.

Next steps

Having discussed progress and challenges, in implementing the CLME+ Flyingfish Sub-project, in the context of revision of the sub-regional Flyingfish fishery management plan (FMP) and associated outputs, to further Flyingfish and other fishery resource management in the Eastern Caribbean; as summarised above:

- It was **agreed** that the Consultants will seek to update the plan, both in terms as content as well as format (to make them more “user-friendly”). It was agreed that ERG would made amendments, to the outputs presented, within the next 2 weeks and then circulate to participants, who will have one month to respond.
- It was **recommended** that elements of a national plan to implement the (sub-)regional plan should be identified; which should include ideas for resource mobilization.
- It was **emphasised** that the plan should be seen as living document that should be revised from time to time.
- Participants **proposed** that recommendations in the revised FMP should also address the issue of its implementation.
- It was **understood** that once the workshop report is circulated, clear actions for decision making could be identified for incorporation into the revised FMP.

Appendix 1 - CLME+ Flyingfish sub-project expected consultancy deliverables
(as at end of September 2018)

Flyingfish sub-project outputs	Status
Revised Sub-regional FMP for Eastern Caribbean flyingfish	Development ongoing
Baseline Stakeholder KAP and Report of First consultations	Done
Summary Report of Second Stakeholder Consultations	Done
Report of the third set of four national consultations	Not yet prepared
Report of a second KAP study conducted to determine if and by how much stakeholder involvement in the flyingfish policy cycle has improved	Data capture ongoing
Flyingfish sub-project Governance consultancy - Project Design, Preparation, and Cooperation Report	Done
Flyingfish sub-project Governance consultancy Mid-term Report	Done
Flyingfish sub-project Governance, adaptive management consultancies - Impact Assessment Tools	Done
Flyingfish sub-project Livelihoods consultancy -Variable Impacts Report	Done
Mini-documentary – “Spotlight on the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Fishery”	Done
Information brief – “From Hook to Cook and Beyond”	Done
Information brief – “From Policy to Practice”	Done
Infographic – Overview of the Flyingfish sub-project	Done
Infographic – ERG’s consultancies in Flyingfish sub-project	Done
Info Sheet - Fisheries Advisory Committees	Done
Info Sheet National Intersectoral Committees	Done
Report on strengthening and testing of proposed cooperation frameworks at the national and regional levels	Done
Report of meetings at the national level for awareness-building and discussions on issues related to ecosystem- based management of flyingfish, and for enhanced management performance monitoring and accountability	Not yet prepared
CRFM data and information repository for EAF management of Eastern Caribbean flyingfish	Done. Awaiting upload to CRFM website
An online, keyword searchable, bibliographic database with facility for download of published documents	Done. Awaiting upload to CRFM website
Up-to-date, broadened, multi-objective assessment of the Eastern Caribbean flyingfish fisheries (Incorporating results of a comprehensive and gender-sensitive, social and economic valuation of the current and potential future contribution of flyingfish and associated pelagic fisheries; as well as, refined operational objectives, indicators and reference points for monitoring and evaluation of management measures)	Ongoing
National level recommendations consistent with the revised sub-regional FMP (including provisions for further development of data collection and management systems)	Development ongoing
A proposal for decision support system for Eastern Caribbean flyingfish	Not yet prepared; Development ongoing
Updated FIRMS resource and fisheries inventories for the eastern Caribbean stock of four-wing flyingfish	Not yet prepared; Development ongoing
Sub-Project After-Life Plan	Not yet prepared
Report of value chain analysis, including associated stakeholder consultations	Not yet prepared; Development ongoing
Business activity proposal document(s)	Not yet prepared

Flyingfish sub-project outputs	Status
Business proposal implementation and evaluation report	Not yet prepared
Reports of training / capacity building courses	Not yet prepared
Portfolio of training materials	Not yet prepared
Reports of national censuses of flyingfish fishing vessels; model vessel licensing regulations	Development ongoing
Report on the review of fisheries operations and related data collection systems as well as general national data collection systems in (at least) 3 countries	Development ongoing
Reports of evaluations of the processes of implementation of the recommendations for national-level management and improvements in national data collection systems	Not yet prepared