

June 2019

**E**

منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
Наций

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

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

**TENTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY GROUP (SAG)**

**Electronic SAG, 4 June 2019**

**Revised Terms of Reference of selected (Joint) Working Groups**

1. This document provides the revised terms of reference of WECAFC Joint Working Groups, as per their meetings held in 2018 and 2019.
2. SAG is invited to review, amend as appropriate and endorse

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE CRFM/WECAFC/JICA/IFREMER WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES USING MFADS**

Period 2019-2020

Convener: Manoel Cifuentes (OSPESCA)

### **1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

FAD fisheries began to develop in the Caribbean Islands at the end of the 1980s. This activity is still developing in several states. Moored FADs (MFADs) allow small-scale, artisanal vessels easier access to offshore pelagic resources by aggregating them at fixed locations. Their use leads to different fishing practices and consequently, may impact different resources, depending on the local circumstances. The communities involved in this type of fishery, consist to a great extent of fishers with low incomes and limited other livelihood options, and the fishery contributes significantly to local food and nutrition security. Although the use of MFADs increases the probability of catching fish and consequently the overall catches, increases the savings on fuel costs and reduces the search time when compared with other methods of targeting offshore pelagic species it has become evident that there is need to implement MFAD management measures at the onset if the resources on which the fishery depends is to be sustained in the long term.

At the Fourteenth Session of WECAFC, convened in Panama City, Panama from 06 to 09 February 2012, the Commission agreed to *continue all Working Groups (Spiny Lobster, Flying Fish, MFADs, Queen Conch, Nassau Grouper/Spawning Aggregations) as joint working groups of WECAFC with partner organizations. It was considered that a leading role could be played by these partners as well.* The Terms of Reference for the IFREMER/WECAFC Working Group on Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) Fishing in the Lesser Antilles was articulated at that time.

Subsequently, the CRFM-JICA CARIFICO/WECAFC-IFREMER MAGDELESA Workshop on FAD Fishery Management was convened in Kingstown, St Vincent and the Grenadines from 9 to 11 December 2013. In light of the overlapping aims of the MAGDELESA project and its termination at the end of October / November, 2013, the joint workshop provided an opportunity to transfer knowledge and experiences, consolidate linkages among existing networks for FAD fishery management and also to discuss the future of the IFREMER/WECAFC Working Group. The Workshop proposed that the current IFREMER / WECAFC Working Group on Development of Sustainable Moored FAD Fishing in the Lesser Antilles be transformed into a joint Working Group on FADs with the possible participation of JICA, IFREMER, CRFM and WECAFC. The joint Working Group would consist of one participant from all Caribbean countries with FAD fisheries, IFREMER, WECAFC and JICA / CARIFICO. The Workshop also agreed that the Terms of

Reference of the new Joint Working Group be made consistent with recommendations of the meeting.

This Terms of Reference for the Joint Working Group on FADs gives consideration to the recommendations by the 2013 CRFM-JICA CARIFICO/WECAFC-IFREMER MAGDELESA Workshop on FAD Fishery Management and recommendations of the Seventh Session of the WECAFC Scientific Advisory Group, which was convened in Panama City, Panama on 7 to 8 November 2015, while giving due cognisance for maintaining transparency and accountability in the operations of the Working Group.

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

### *2.1 Scope*

The scope of the ad hoc working group is the development and management of moored FAD fishing in the [WECAFC Area 31], in a manner that is consistent with the long-term sustainability of associated pelagic fish resources and through the application of international best practices consistent with the precautionary and ecosystem approaches to fisheries management. The working group will take a multidisciplinary and participatory approach to the sustainable development of moored MFAD fishing for pelagics and will contribute to the fulfillment of national and regional management responsibilities for shared pelagic fish stock management under the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and in particular Article 8.11: “Artificial reef and fish aggregation devices” as well as related management recommendations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). The Working Group is to function in a technical and advisory capacity.

### *2.2 Specific Terms of Reference for the period 2019 to 2021*

- a. To review data on MFAD fisheries and conduct analyses of pelagic fish resources including through collaboration with the Fisheries Data and Statistics Working Group;
- b. To provide technical advice and guidance based on the outputs of the JICA-CARIFICO Project and the Billfish Project;
- c. To collaborate with IFREMER, academia, and other research institutions on research of key pelagic species associated with MFAD fisheries, encourage pluridisciplinary research on MFADs including ecological socioeconomics and governance issues, and to consolidate information on MFAD fisheries in order to accurately characterize MFAD fisheries in the region;
- d. To develop and finalize manuals on best practices in the fisheries using MFADs. The manuals are to address interests in MFAD design, construction and deployment, maintaining good quality of MFAD-caught fish, fishing and business strategies for sustainable MFAD fisheries, safety and working conditions of MFAD fishers and governance of MFAD fisheries. These manuals should be presented during training sessions with fishers.
- e. To promote the reporting of MFADs fisheries statistics to ICCAT;
- f. To collaborate on co-management within MFADs fisheries, noting the successful examples in Grenada, Dominica, and Bonaire, and strengthen ties with the Recreational Fisheries Working Group;

- g. To facilitate the sharing of data, information, and experiences related to MFAD fisheries in the region in collaboration with the Fisheries Data and Statistics Working Group;
- h. To review the CRFM Sub-Regional Management Plan for FAD Fisheries in the Eastern Caribbean, adapt to a broader a WECAFC regional FAD management plan and support Member Members' efforts to develop (sub-) national FAD (co-)management plans.

### *2.3 Mode of Operation*

#### **2.3.1 Membership of the Working Group**

Membership shall consist of all Member States of CRFM and WECAFC, including Overseas Territories and Departments, with a real interest in fisheries which utilize MFADs.

#### **2.3.1 Election of Chair of the Working Group**

The Working Group shall elect a Chair from among its Members States to serve during the working group meeting.

#### **2.3.2 Role of Member States of WECAFC [Countries]**

- a. To develop, implement, monitor and adapt accordingly, national systems for improving the quality of catch and effort data on the fisheries using MFADs, including historical time series data;
- b. To develop, implement, monitor and adapt accordingly, national systems for collecting socio-economic data on fisheries using MFADs;
- c. To implement inter-sessional activities, agreed upon by the Working Group, at the national level;
- d. To maintain active discussion on assessment and management issues, share data and information, and monitor implementation of inter-sessional activities of the Working Group using available ICT tools or other cost-effective methods;
- e. To facilitate expert participation by their designated representatives at meetings of the Working Group.

#### **2.3.3 Role of WECAFC Secretariat**

- a. To assist with the procurement of funds for the activities of the Working Group;
- b. To coordinate the formulation and adoption of recommendations by the Working Group, so as to facilitate the decision-making process at the regional level.

#### **2.3.4 Role of IFREMER**

- a. To assist in research, technical assistance, and implementation of the Work Plan;

### ***2.3.5 Role of the CRFM Secretariat***

- a. To assist with coordination of activities of the Working Group, at the regional level;
- b. To assist with the procurement of funds for the activities of the Working Group;
- c. To assist with convening of meetings of the Working Group;
- d. To coordinate the formulation and adoption of recommendations by the Working Group, so as to facilitate the decision-making process at the sub-regional level.

### ***2.3.6 Role of the convener***

Over the two year period, the convener will:

- a. Convene meetings of the Working Group;
- b. Technically guide the group work and determine the subjects to be discussed;
- c. Represent the group in regional and international meetings, as appropriate;
- d. Invite new Members and other experts to participate in working group meetings;
- e. Take a leading role in securing funding for working group meetings;
- f. Review messages and communications regarding information on MFAD activities in the region.

### ***2.3.7 Communication***

Communication is critical to the efficient execution of the work programme of the Working Group, particularly during the intersessional periods, so as to maximize the quality of outputs. Consequently, each country should designate a National Focal Point for this purpose. The

National Focal Point is to liaise with the Convener/Chair of the Working Group as well as the CRFM, OSPESCA, and WECAFC Secretariats to facilitate effective implementation of the Terms of Reference and communication among all entities. Available ICT tools should be utilized for this purpose as far as possible. The outputs of the Working Group will be communicated through the CRFM, OSPESCA, and WECAFC Secretariats to the respective Member States.

### ***2.3.8 Working Group Meetings***

Face-to-face meetings of the Working Group should be convened ideally once a year, or at least once every two years, or as resources are available. Such meeting arrangements should be cost-effective. Where possible the use of available ICT tools to facilitate electronic meetings should be maximized. Meetings shall be announced by the Convener and chaired by the Chair of the Working Group. Regional organizations and experts may be invited to participate in the meetings as required. The Convener shall coordinate intersessional activities of the Working Group.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WECAFC-CRFM-OSPESCA FISHERIES DATA AND STATISTICS  
WORKING GROUP (FDS-WG)  
(Period 2018-2019)**

**Convener:** Nancie Cummings (NOAA)

**Preamble:**

CRFM, OSPESCA and WECAFC, in January 2016, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate, support and strengthen the coordination of actions among the three RFBs to increase the sustainability of fisheries. WECAFC in its 16th session held in Guadeloupe, France, 20-24 June 2016 agreed to establish a working group for fisheries data and statistics matters (FDS-WG), based on the ongoing work of the WECAFC-FIRMS partnership and in support of the development of a regional database in collaboration with the Members and partners in the region.

The aim of the envisioned FDS working group was to strengthen collaboration on fisheries data and statistics matters among the three regional fisheries bodies. The European Commission General Directorate for Fisheries (DG MARE) agreed to support financially the organization of the first meeting of the FDS-WG in the context of the WECAFC-FIRMS project phase II.

**The FDS-WG will report to the WECAFC Commission**

- Formulate recommendations and guidelines for data collection and statistics.
- Develop standardized data collection formats and templates to be collectively considered for coordinated national and regional implementation.
- Conduct work under direction from the WECAFC Commission, and in close interaction with the WECAFC Secretariat.
- Develop annual work plans prioritizing activities and identify actions to be taken, and annually provide a report of activities, outputs, and prioritized future work plans (1-2 years) to the Secretariat.

**The FDS-WG will interact/liaise with:**

- All working groups under the WECAFC and regional fishery bodies (CRFM), OSPESCA, CFMC and their working groups with the aim to strengthen the coordination of actions among the three RFBs to increase the sustainability of fisheries.
- Intergovernmental institutions, including those that constitute the Interim Coordination Mechanism of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems

**The Membership of the FDS-WG:**

National Officers responsible of Fishery Statistics and Data in WECAFC Member Countries ( e.g., statisticians, data managers, directors of fisheries statistics, or fisheries offices, etc.) with activities related to the following domains: statistical analyses of fisheries data, data collection, designing data collection systems, analysing statistics for statistical bulletins, report preparation, organizing and managing data collection, storage and dissemination according to a variety of needs (e.g., RFMO reporting, departmental, scientific meetings, etc.)

- Regional Officers from the three Regional Fisheries Bodies (CRFM, OSPESCA and WECAFC) involved in the same domains related to fisheries data and statistics as listed above;
- The WECAFC Secretariat.

**Sessions of the FDS-WG:**

- The FDS-WG shall meet ideally annually face-to-face, and at least once every two years.
- The FDS-WG elects a convener (and vice convener) every two years among its members.
- The vice-convener will assist the convener in his/her roles and shall fulfil the duty of the convener if the convener is not able to carry-out the duty of the position;
- Meeting of the FDS-WG will be notified by the FDS-WG convener.
- The WECAFC Secretariat will organize the FDS-WG meetings.
- The WECAFC Secretariat will inform the FDS Members at least 3 months in advance and share the agenda and meeting documents at least 2 months before the meeting.
- The FDS-WG may include experts appointed as resource persons by the WECAFC Secretariat, on the basis of their knowledge in FDS matters and their expertise in FDS regional issues.
- The WECAFC Secretariat will organize with the support of CRFM and OSPESCA resource persons the drafting, translation, review, validation and distribution of the FDS-WG meeting report and its recommendations when relevant.

**Intersessions of the FDS-WG:**

- The WECAFC Secretariat supervises in close consultation with the FDS convener the intersession activities recommended by the FDS-WG, with the support of resource persons.
- The WECAFC Secretariat ensures coordination among regional projects related to fisheries data and statistics with the support of the WECAFC-FIRMS task force.

**The FDS-WG will assist with:**

**Data collection at national level** - Provide recommendations and guidelines to address national data collection and sharing challenges in the WECAFC region:

- Identify issues (gaps, deficiencies), challenges and best practices in data collection at national level in the region, and provide recommendations on how to address issues and challenges, and implementing best practices.
- Identify and recommend best practices for the region including how to involve private interests in data collection (of fisheries operational and socio-economic data from industry's stakeholders, intergovernmental groups, etc.).
- Review and make recommendations on standard data collection formats for use at national level and related minimum guidelines for collection.
- Review and make recommendations on coordination opportunities for new data and statistics projects coming into the region.

**Data sharing and harmonization at regional level** - Provide recommendations to address open data sharing challenges at international level for the benefit of fisheries, research and management communities and to improve the ability to manage fisheries resources:

- Identify and recommend a list of data to be shared among WECAFC countries in a regional data base (RDB), defining regional standards, classifications and data policies.
- Define formats, metadata, policies (including confidentiality matters) and best practices to exchange data.
- Provide recommendations on data harmonization to allow data collation at regional level including the mapping between national and regional classifications

**Countries data reporting to international bodies and global monitoring systems** (i.e., CRFM, FAO, ICCAT, OSPESCA, FIRMS) - Provide recommendations to streamline reporting from national

to regional and international levels, including through collaborative arrangements promoting harmonization:

- Address issues of multiple reporting standards and formats among the various international organizations, including through review of documents, sharing experiences and lessons learned and formulate recommendations and guidelines in support to enhanced reporting on shared fisheries resources in the WECAFC area.
- Formulate mechanisms to coordinate / streamline exchanges among regional fishery bodies and other intergovernmental institutions operating at regional and global level, including methods, tools and procedures for the harmonization of national/sub-regional/regional data collection, storage formats and reporting approaches
- Participate in the development and implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme and in the regular reporting of the State of the Marine Environment and Associated Economies (SOME), making recommendations to ensure that data sets, information and assessment approaches follow statistically sound and regionally harmonized methods.

**IT management and maintenance of the Regional DataBase (RDB)** - Provide recommendations for cost efficient and sustainable management and maintenance of the Regional DataBase

- Provide high level recommendations on technology and policy issues related to development, hosting and maintenance for the RDB.
- Provide RDB specifications, priorities, governance, policy mechanisms.
- Formulate project development phases and participation mechanisms.

#### **Administration of the FDS-WG**

The FDS-WG will be supported through the financial resources of the Commission.

#### **Performance review of the RDB**

- Conduct periodic review against a set of metrics of the data collection reference framework (DCRF) and best practices data collection guidelines.
- Recommend changes and adjustments to the RDB after review.



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM/CITES WORKING GROUP ON QUEEN CONCH (Period 2019-2021)**

**Convener:** Maren Headley (CRFM)

### **1. Scope**

The purpose of the Working Group is to support the sustainable management and conservation of Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*) resources and its fisheries in the WECAFC Region. In undertaking its work, the working group will pay due attention to FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries' Article 6.4 of the general principles.<sup>1</sup>

### **2. The goal of the Working Group**

Using a multidisciplinary approach, the working group will contribute to the sustainable conservation and management of the Queen Conch fisheries and trade. In pursuing this goal, the working group will contribute to the fulfillment of national, regional and international responsibilities and commitments for the management and conservation of and trade in Queen conch and related or interacting species or fisheries in the WECAFC Region under the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and in accordance with agreed, documented management goals including ensuring the livelihoods of the people depending on these resources.

In particular, the Working Group will aim to support with technical and scientific advice the implementation of Decisions adopted at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES on "Regional cooperation and management of and trade in queen conch (*Strombus gigas*)" (South Africa, 2016), and WECAFC 16 Recommendation (WECAFC/16/2016/1) "on the Regional Plan for the management and conservation of Queen Conch in the WECAFC area" (Guadeloupe, 2016) and any relevant decisions that are adopted at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES and WECAFC 17.

### **3. Terms of Reference (TORs)**

Queen Conch is a transboundary resource with commercial and economic, as well as ecological, importance for most countries in the Wider Caribbean region. Therefore, these TORs apply at regional and/or national levels as appropriate. The working group, with the support of FAO, WECAFC, CFMC, CITES, CRFM and OSPESCA, will act in an advisory capacity to guide and facilitate the sustainable management and conservation of queen conch.

#### **The Working Group will carry out the following general tasks:**

1. Share and disseminate available data and information on queen conch biology, ecology, management, fisheries, trade, climate change, environmental factors, and relevant areas.
2. Develop common and modern methodologies for data and information collection for monitoring of queen conch stocks and promote the involvement of the private sector in data collection.

Conservation and management decisions for fisheries should be based on the best scientific evidence available, also taking into account traditional knowledge of the resources and their habitat, relevant regional and international agreements, as well as relevant environmental, economic and social factors. States should assign priority to undertake research and data collection in order to improve scientific and technical knowledge of fisheries including their interaction with the ecosystem. In recognizing the transboundary nature of many aquatic ecosystems, States should encourage bilateral and multilateral cooperation in research, as appropriate.

3. Monitor changes in abundance/density of queen conch stocks and populations in the Caribbean region.

4. Review data from the countries and other sources on queen conch catch and effort and aquaculture production in the range states and monitor changes as appropriate.
5. Compile information about the social and economic importance of queen conch fisheries and trade, and provide advice for policy and decision making accordingly.
6. Provide advice on the implementation of national and regional management measures and regulations for queen conch to countries and regional organizations.
7. Establish communication between the members of the working group and interested parties and stakeholders, including the private sector.
8. Develop and implement a work plan that will be monitored and evaluated by the WECAFC SAG and Commission.
9. Report to CFMC, OSPESCA, WECAFC and CRFM at each of their sessions (on the outcome of each Working Group meeting).
10. Invite selected experts to participate in the Working Group, ensuring that they have the necessary expertise, know-how and experience in areas relevant to the operation of the Working Group and the implementation of these Terms of Reference.

### **Mode of Operation**

#### **1. Role of WECAFC Member Countries**

The members of the Working Group are to play a leading role in the Working Group activities through the following activities and commitments: • Participate in agreed activities of the working group, and ensure the participation of appropriate experts; • Ensure involvement of both CITES and Fisheries Authorities in the work of the Group; • Implement, at the National level, the work identified in the agreed work plan of the Group; • Host working group meetings on a rotational basis.

#### **2. Role of the FAO/WECAFC Secretariat**

The FAO Subregional Office for the Caribbean and the WECAFC Secretariat will facilitate and support the activities of the working group by collaborating actively with the partner agencies CFMC, OSPESCA, CRFM and CITES in: • Co-coordinating the activities of the working group (including securing funding for its operation); • Providing a technical secretary; • Providing technical assistance and support to research; • Facilitating training (as appropriate); • Communicate outcomes to WECAFC, CITES, UNEP-SPAW and countries (as appropriate); • Ensure the participation of appropriate experts and other stakeholders in Working Group Activities.

#### **3. Roles of other Subregional organizations (e.g. CFMC, OSPESCA, CRFM)**

Subregional organizations have an important role to play in assisting their member countries to participate fully in the activities of the working group by: 1. Providing technical assistance and support; 2. Facilitating procurement of funding for working group activities; 3. Coordination of the activities of the working group; 4. Facilitating the decision-making process at the Subregional level.

#### **Role of the Convener**

The Convener, in consultation with the Working Group, will: • formally convene the meetings of the group, • technically guide the group work and determine subjects to be discussed, • represent the group in regional and international meetings (as appropriate), • invite new members and ad hoc experts to participate in working group meeting, • review and approve publications and messages produced by the working group, and • take a leading role in securing funding for working group meetings.

**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 of WECAFC and organization/ agency identify a national focal point/expert through which communications will be directed. The outputs of the Working Group will be communicated through Working Group reports to WECAFC, OSPESCA, CFMC, CRFM, CITES, UNEP-SPAW and national fishery and CITES administrations and other relevant entities via the WECAFC Secretariat.

**Working Group Meetings**

The Working Group should meet physically at least once every two years or as needed. The meetings should be of two to five days duration. Meetings should use cost effective accommodations and institutional facilities and where possible take advantage of other meetings in the region.