



BELIZE DECLARATION

ON CARIBBEAN REGIONAL FISHERIES MECHANISM (CRFM) AND THE CENTRAL AMERICA FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ORGANIZATION (OSPESCA) COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE RESOURCES

Belize City, Belize, 3-4 September 2012

BELIZE DECLARATION ON CRFM-OSPESCA COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE RESOURCES

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The Ministers responsible for Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organisation (OSPESCA) of the Central American Integration System (SICA);

CONSIDERING

That the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 provides the overall legal framework for sustainable development, conservation and management of living marine resources and protection and preservation of the marine environment;

That the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Rio+20 Declaration, and United Nations General Assembly Resolution 65/155 of 20 December 2010, lay down the principles and commitments necessary for sustainable use and responsible management of living marine resources and ecosystems of the region;

That the Caribbean Sea is the common heritage of the Caribbean countries, many of which are members of CARICOM and SICA, and is important to food and nutrition security, employment, income, wealth, poverty alleviation and stability of coastal communities for present and future generations;

That at the Third CARICOM-SICA Summit of Heads of State and Government held in San Salvador, El Salvador on 19 August 2011, the SICA and CARICOM Secretariats were instructed, through the CRFM and OSPESCA, to formulate and develop, as soon as possible, a joint action plan for the responsible management of migratory fish stocks of the Caribbean Sea that consider, among others, the progressive incorporation of CRFM countries into the regulatory framework for the lobster fishery in the SICA countries;

That at that Summit, it was also agreed to promote, “within the CRFM, the monitoring, control and surveillance to prevent and eradicate illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and explore new options of production like aquaculture”; and participation in the first high level ministerial meeting between the CRFM and OSPESCA “aimed at strengthening collaboration between both regional fisheries organizations to improve conservation, management and sustainable development of the living marine resources of the Caribbean Sea”.

DECLARE

1. Reaffirm our commitment to the principles of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.
2. Express the shared desire to build and consolidate the foundations for integrated management and sustainable use of the living marine resources of the Caribbean Sea.
3. Urge States to give prompt consideration to ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to relevant international fisheries agreements, such as, the 1995 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, and the Food and Agriculture Organisation Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.
4. Agree to develop and implement the joint Action Plan requested by the Heads of State and Government, and to formalize a relationship of understanding and cooperation between CRFM and OSPESCA for the execution of this joint Action Plan.
5. Agree also that the joint Action Plan will give priority to addressing: improved conservation and management of transboundary species such as migratory pelagic fish stocks and spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*) in the first instance; the eradication of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing through cooperation and strengthening of monitoring, control and surveillance systems; development of sustainable aquaculture; and a mechanism for communication and information exchange. The joint Action Plan will also address, inter alia: improved management of other shared fishery resources such as the queen conch (*Strombus gigas*); controlling invasive species with emphasis on the Pacific lionfish (*Pterois volitans* and *P. miles*) invasion; the development potential of unutilized and underutilized resources; proactive

policies to manage risk associated with disaster and climate change adaptation in the fisheries and aquaculture sector; strengthening of intra-regional trade in fish and fishery products; the mobilization of resources for training and capacity development; and small-scale fisheries development including livelihood security.

6. Support improved governance and management of the Caribbean large marine ecosystem through, *inter alia*, the development, endorsement and implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the region developed by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF)-funded Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project.
7. Promote and work towards the joint development and implementation of a Common Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy., involving a governance model that ensures the sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture resources.
8. Call upon donor partners and cooperating organizations to provide technical and financial support for the implementation of the joint CRFM/OSPESCA Action Plan.
9. Thank the government and people of Belize for promoting and collaborating in the realization of this first joint meeting, extended to friendly countries and organisations to advance their cooperation.

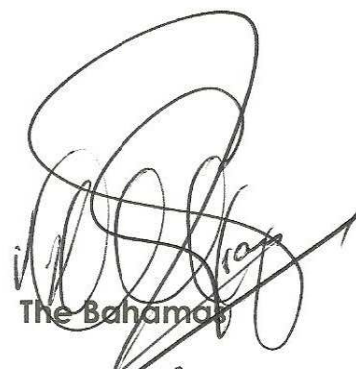
Sign: by Ministers or Chief of Delegations.



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Barbados



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St. Kitts & Nevis


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Turks and Caicos

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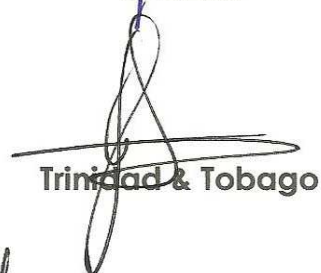

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Honduras


Montserrat


Panama


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