



WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION Eleventh Session
WECAFC LESSER ANTILLES FISHERIES COMMITTEE Eighth Session
St. George's, Grenada, 21-24 October 2003
SUMMARY REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WECAFC AD HOC WORKING GROUPS

I. Introduction

1. The Tenth Session of the Commission, October 2001, expressed satisfaction with the work and achievements of the following Ad hoc working groups:
 - Ad hoc Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf;
 - Ad hoc Working Group on Caribbean Spiny Lobster, (*Panulirus argus*);
 - Ad hoc Flyingfish Working Group of the Eastern Caribbean;
 - Ad hoc Working Group on Queen conch (*Strombus gigas*); and
2. The Tenth Session of the Commission endorsed the establishment of the Lesser Antilles Ad hoc Working Group on the Sustainable Development of Moored FAD Fishing and approved its terms of reference.

II. Activities and Results

WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf

3. The Ad hoc Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf held the following meetings during the biennium:
 - WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf – Workshop on the Assessment of Demersal Stocks shared by Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela, 18-22 November 2002. The main objective of the workshop was to evaluate the biological impacts of, and make management recommendations for the existing shrimp trawl fisheries in Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela. The outputs of the bilateral workshop should be very useful and valuable to Trinidad and Tobago/Venezuela fisheries relations under the existing bilateral fishing agreement or to any future negotiation between the two countries concerning these resources.
 - First Regional Conference on the Sustainability of Fisheries Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf, 5-7 March 2002 (a meeting of the fishing industry, fishery managers and scientists of the countries of the Brazil-Guianas Shelf). The objective of the meeting was to discuss the status of

shrimp and groundfish resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf and other matters of interest to the industry.

4. In addition to agreeing to adopt certain fisheries management measures, the group agreed that the exercise of bringing together all interested parties to discuss issues of common concern was well in line with the recommendations contained in the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and with the national objectives of the six countries concerned. The common goal was the sustainability of the fisheries of the subregion. The group agreed that it would be a good contribution to the above-mentioned purpose if this type of meeting was organized on a periodic basis. These regular sessions could greatly contribute, in the longer term, to the establishment of a subregional fisheries management body.
5. The Second Session of the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) of WECAFC, 28-30 April 2003, Le Robert, Martinique, noted the activities of the group and expressed satisfaction with its achievements, despite the severe funding constraints that had substantially limited the activities of the group in recent years.

WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on the Caribbean Spiny Lobster, *Panulirus argus*

6. During the biennium the Group held a Workshop on the Management of the Caribbean Spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*) Fisheries in the Area of the Western Central Atlantic, Havana, Cuba, 30 September – 4 October 2002, which built on the achievements of the Workshop on the Management of the Caribbean Spiny Lobster Fisheries in the WECAFC Area, held in September 2000, in Mérida, Mexico.
7. At the end of the Workshop, the Ministers' meeting issued a joint statement reaffirming their commitment to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and supported the role played by WECAFC in providing an effective mechanism, through the Ad hoc Working Group, for responsible management of the valuable Caribbean Spiny lobster resource. The ministers noted the status of the Caribbean Spiny lobster resource, expressed their concern at the indications of overexploitation and undertook to seriously consider the recommendation of the Working Group in formulating their national strategies for the management of the Spiny lobster.
8. The Second Session of SAG noted the conclusions and recommendations outlined in the report of the Second Workshop on the Management of Caribbean Spiny Lobster Fisheries in the WECAFC Area, Havana, Cuba, 30 September-4 October 2002. The SAG observed that even though progress was made in assessing the status of the stocks and promoting regional cooperation in the management of the spiny lobster resource, most members of the group were not effectively implementing management measures for various reasons, such as inadequate control and enforcement, lack of agreed and transparent policies and management plans, inadequate funding for research, monitoring and control, and failings in wider communication with the general public, fishing groups, decision-makers and other stakeholders on the status of the resource and their social and economic importance and the responsibilities of managers and stakeholders. The SAG recommended that members of the Group should take steps to address these deficiencies.

Ad hoc Working Group on Queen Conch, *Strombus gigas*

10. This group is coordinated by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC). The Second International Queen Conch Conference was held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 17-20 July 2001. The purpose of the Second Conference was to examine the current status of the resource and the progress made by the participating countries since 1996.
11. The CFMC organized and sponsored the International Queen Conch Initiative (ICQI) Workshop on CITES Review of Trade in Queen Conch, *Strombus gigas*, 11-12 June 2003, Montego Bay, Jamaica. The principal objective was to review and comment on the draft CITES trade report prepared by

Traffic Europe. The main recommendations of the workshop pertain to improvements in scientific research, status and trends reporting, management, enforcement, stakeholder participation in Queen Conch fisheries (www.strombusgigas.com).

WECAFC Ad hoc Flyingfish Working Group of the Eastern Caribbean

12. The Second Meeting of the WECAFC Ad hoc Flyingfish Working Group took place in Bridgetown, Barbados, 8-12 January 2001. The objectives of this meeting were to:
 - attempt to standardize the various fields that are common to participating country data sets;
 - perform explanatory analyses of those adjusted national data sets;
 - attempt a standardization of time series of the catch and effort fields of the subregional flyingfish data sets;
 - examine and compare the social and economic status of the flyingfish fishery in the participating countries;
 - use the results of the foregoing activities to inform a subregional strategy for the sustainable management of the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish resource.
13. This Ad hoc Working Group focuses its attention on a small oceanic pelagic species with limited, sub-regional distribution and is primarily funded from the Regular Programme of FAO. In noting the social and political importance of this Working Group in promoting cooperation in fisheries among the small-island states of region, the Second Session of SAG expressed its concern that no meeting of this group has been held since the second workshop in January 2001. The SAG noted however, that a draft Subregional Fisheries Management Plan for Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean was prepared in 2002 and would be discussed at the next meeting of the Group.
14. Some members of SAG, at its Second Session, were of the opinion that the Working Group's scientific work and findings were not significantly influencing bilateral fisheries discussions between two members of the Working Group. The SAG suggested that an extra effort be made by the Group to inform resource users, including fisher organisations and in-country, grassroots NGOs, managers and decision-makers of the scientific work and findings of the Group. SAG was of the view that the use of the scientific findings of the WECAFC Working Groups to inform decision-making could be an indicator of success.

WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on the Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device Fishing in the Lesser Antilles

15. The main objectives were to: exchange information on national experiences with FAD fisheries; examine the technical and scientific issues involved in FAD construction and deployment; and promote regional cooperation in the sustainable development of moored FAD fisheries in the Lesser Antilles. This Working Group met for the first time at IFREMER, Martinique, 8-11 October 2001.
16. The results of the first meeting of this group were published in FAO Fisheries Reports No. 683 and R683 Suppl. The work programme of the Group, which included the research project on fixed FADs being conducted by IFREMER and the preliminary programme is tentatively scheduled to be discussed at the next meeting of the Group in Guadeloupe in September 2003.
17. The Second Session of SAG proposed that:
 - Technical assistance should be requested from ICCAT for the assessment of the large pelagic fish stocks that are the target of this emerging anchored FAD fishery. To this end, an ICCAT expert should be invited to the next meeting of the working group in Guadeloupe.
 - The Working Group's work programme on moored FAD fishing for large pelagics and their ecosystem should be treated as a component of the large pelagic fishery in the region.

18. The Second Session of SAG commended the Working Group for its programme and recommended that a benefit/cost analysis be done on the Working Group strategy adopted by WECAFC for the delivery of technical assistance. It was also suggested that this Group, given that it was only recently established, should start collecting the data and information to do such an analysis, if it was not already doing so.

III. Reports

19. The following reports have been published or are in the process of being published:

WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf:

- Report of the First Regional Conference on the Sustainability of Fisheries Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf, Paramaribo, Suriname, 5-7 March 2002. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 676. Rome, FAO, 2002. 27pp.
- Report of the Meeting of Fisheries Managers and Ministers of the WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group of the Brazil-Guianas Shelf, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 26-29 March 2001. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 650. Rome, FAO, 2001. 381pp.
- Fourth Workshop on Assessment and Management of Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries on the Brazil-Guianas Shelf, 2-13 October 2000, Cumana, Venezuela. **Regional reviews and National Management reports**. *FAO Fisheries Report* No. 651. Rome. FAO, 2001. 152pp.
- Report of National Workshop on Fisheries Management in Suriname and a Follow-up Meeting, Paramaribo, Suriname, 21-22 June 2000 and 11 July 2000. FAO/FISHCODE Project, GCP/INT/648/NOR. Field Report F-12 (Ni and En). Rome, FAO, 2000, 23pp.
- Rapport de la Réunion Nationale sur les Pêcheries de Crevettes et de Poissons de Fond du Plateau Guyano-Brésilien, Cayenne, 16 juin 2000. Programme de Coopération FAO/Norvège, GCP/INT/648/NOR. Rapport de terrain F-11 (Fr). Rome, FAO, 2000, 6pp.
- Seminário Nacional sobre Pesca de Camarão e Peixes Demersais na Costa Norte do Brasil (Report of National Workshop on Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries of the Brazil-Guianas Shelf), Belém, Brazil, 14 June 2000. FAO/FISHCODE Project, GCP/INT/648/NOR., Field Report F-10 (Por). Rome, FAO, 2000, 22pp.
- Informe del Taller sobre Pesquerías de Camarón y Peces de Fondo en la Región Atlántica de Venezuela, Cumaná, Venezuela, 5 de mayo de 2000. Programa de Cooperación Gubernamental FAO/Noruega, GCP/INT/648/NOR. Informe de Campo F-9 (Es). Roma, FAO, 2000, 9pp.
- Report of National Workshop on Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries of the Brazil-Guianas Shelf, Couva, Trinidad and Tobago, 2-3 May 2000. FAO/FISHCODE Project, GCP/INT/648/NOR. Field Report F-8 (En). Rome, FAO, 2000, 22pp.
- Report of National Workshop on Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries of the Brazil-Guianas Shelf, Mon Repos, Guyana, 27-28 April 2000. FAO/FISHCODE Project, GCP/INT/648/NOR. Field Report F-7 (En). Rome, FAO, 2000, 16pp.
- Report of the Third Workshop on the Assessment of Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries on the Brazil-Guianas Shelf, Belém, Brazil, 24 May-10 June 1999. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 628. Rome, FAO. 2000, 206pp.
- National reports presented and stock assessment reports prepared at the CFRAMP/FAO/DANIDA Stock Assessment Workshop on the Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries

on the Guiana-Brazil Shelf, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 7-18 April 1997. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 600. Rome, FAO. 1999, 200pp.

- Report of the Fourth Meeting of the WECAFC Ad hoc Shrimp and Groundfish Working Group of the Guianas-Brazil Continental Shelf and CFRAMP Shrimp and Groundfish Subproject Specification Workshop, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 8-12 January 1996. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 544. FAO, Rome, 1996, 43pp.
- National Report and selected papers presented at the Fourth Meeting of the WECAFC Ad hoc Shrimp and Groundfish Working Group of the Guianas-Brazil Continental Shelf and CFRAMP Shrimp and Groundfish Subproject Specification Workshop, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 8-12 January 1996. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 544, Supplement. Port-of-Spain FAO, 1997, 248pp.
- Report of the Third Workshop on the Biological and Economic Modelling of the Shrimp Resources of the Guyana-Brazil Shelf, Paramaribo, Suriname, 22-25 June 1992. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 526. FAO, Rome, 1992, 24pp.
- National Reports and selected papers presented at the Third Workshop on the Biological and Economic Modelling of the Shrimp Resources of the Guyana-Brazil Shelf, Paramaribo, Suriname, 22-25 June 1992. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 526 Supplement, Rome, FAO, 1995, 200pp.

WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on the Caribbean Spiny Lobster, *Panulirus argus*:

- Report of the Second Workshop on Management of the Caribbean Spiny Lobster Fisheries in the WECAFC Area, Havana, Cuba, 30 September-4 October 2002. *FAO Fisheries Report* No. ? Rome, FAO, 2003. ? pp. (in press)
- Report of the Workshop on Management of the Caribbean Spiny Lobster (*Panulirus argus*) Fisheries in the Area of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission, Mérida, Mexico, 4-8 September 2000. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 643. Rome, FAO, 2001. 66pp.
- Report on the FAO/DANIDA/CFRAMP/WECAFC Regional Workshops on the Assessment of the Caribbean Spiny Lobster (*Panulirus argus*), Belize City, Belize, 21 April-2 May 1997 and Mérida, Mexico, 1-12 June 1998. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 619. Rome, FAO, 2001. 381pp.

WECAFC Ad hoc Flyingfish Working Group of the Eastern Caribbean

- Report of the Second Meeting of the WECAFC Ad hoc Flyingfish Working Group of the Eastern Caribbean, Bridgetown, Barbados, 8-12 January 2001. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 670. Rome, FAO. 2002, 156pp.
- Report of the First Meeting of the WECAFC Ad hoc Flyingfish Working Group of the Eastern Caribbean, Bridgetown, Barbados, 22-24 September 1999. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 613. Rome, FAO. 1999, 45pp.

WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on the Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device Fishing in the Lesser Antilles

- Report of the First Meeting of the WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on the Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device Fishing in the Lesser Antilles, Le Robert, Martinique, 8-11 October 2001. *FAO Fisheries Report* No. 683. Rome, FAO. 2002. 23pp.

- National reports and technical papers presented at the First Meeting of the WECAFC Ad hoc Working Group on the Development of Sustainable Moored Fish Aggregating Device Fishing in the Lesser Antilles, Le Robert, Martinique, 8-11 October 2001. *FAO Fisheries Report* No. 683, Suppl. Rome, FAO. 2002. 295pp.

IV. Suggested Action by the Commission

20. The Commission is invited to review and comment on the Ad hoc working groups' activities.