



<b>WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION</b> Eleventh Session
<b>WECAFC LESSER ANTILLES FISHERY COMMISSION</b> Eighth Session
St. George's, Grenada, 21-24 October 2003
<b>INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS<sup>1</sup></b>

## I. PROJECTS

The following are the main FAO projects in the region that were implemented during the last biennium:

1. [TCP/RLA/0069](#) – “Development of Standards for the Construction and Survey of Small Fishing Vessels” (October 2000 – September 2001)

The FAO Project TCP/RLA/0069 facilitated the implementation of pertinent provisions of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries by the governments with regard to making fishing a safer activity. In particular, the project developed common standards for the design, construction, measurement of fishing vessels and their equipment, as well as identified designs suitable for the prosecution of deep slope and offshore fisheries. The adoption of such standards and their incorporation in fisheries regulations, enabled the respective Fisheries Administrations to set conditions for new entrants to the fisheries as well as for existing license holders, which addressed matters of safety and enhanced fishing effort diversification programmes. These standards should be enforced through improved inspection services within the respective Fisheries Administrations and by greater cooperation between these administrations and other relevant authorities such as the Maritime Offices/Port Authorities and Coast Guard services.

### Major Outputs

- (a) A *set of standards* for the safety construction of small fishing vessels, equipment for small fishing vessels and safety requirements in a format suitable for adoption, and to be published as a booklet.
- (b) A *report* that identified the needs of the private sector (boat building) for practical and theoretical training in the long and short term.
- (c) An analysis of the financial and economic feasibility of fishermen to invest in the improved vessels, either individually or collectively through their associations, as applicable, including an analysis of the availability and conditions of credit.

<sup>1</sup> Does not include the activities of the WECAFC ad hoc Working Groups; see Document WECAFC/XI/03/5 for summary report on working groups.

- (d) Proposals for the institutional strengthening of the respective Fisheries Administrations in relation to fishing vessel inspection.
  - (e) Proposed procedures for the procurement and/or modification of fishing vessels.
  - (f) The outlining of specification of fishing vessels capable of fishing offshore for pelagic species and for fishing on the deep slopes.
  - (g) The drafting of provisions to be inserted in the relevant fisheries regulations setting the requirements for minimum standards regarding the design and construction of small fishing vessels and the use of safety equipments.
2. TCP/RLA/0070 – “Preparation for an Expansion of the Domestic Fisheries for Large Pelagic Species” January 2001 – March 2002)

The overall objective of the project was to enable the CARICOM States to plan the development of their fisheries for large pelagic species on a sustainable basis.

#### Major Outputs

- (a) Large Pelagic Fisheries in CARICOM Countries: Assessment of the Fisheries and Options for Management – Field Document 1;
  - (b) Report of the First Workshop – Field Document 2, Barbados, 24-26 June 2002;
  - (c) Report of the Second Workshop – Field Document 3, Barbados, 18 February 2003 (draft);
  - (d) Fisheries for Large Pelagics in CARICOM Countries – CD-ROM.
  - (e) Fisheries for Large Pelagics in CARICOM Countries – Videocassette.
3. TCP/RLA/0071 (A) - “Assistance to Health Management in Shrimp Aquaculture in Latin America” (January 2001 – May 2003)

Participating countries in this project were Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El-Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Venezuela.

The objective was to secure and increase income of the shrimp farmers in Latin America, to improve national income, food security status, and rural livelihoods by minimising outbreaks of disease in shrimp aquaculture.

The major expected outputs were the following:

- (a) Improved quality of shrimp post-larvae produced in hatcheries in Latin America;
  - (b) Regional Technical Standards for good shrimp hatchery health management;
  - (c) Improved farmer capacity and national expertise in health management in shrimp aquaculture; and
  - (d) Training, extension and educational material for shrimp farmers in Latin America.
4. TCP/JAM/2901 (A) – “Development of a Policy Framework and Strategic Plan for Sustainable Fisheries Management” (October 2002 – December 2003)

The main objectives are to provide advice to strengthen the institutional and administrative capabilities of the fisheries division and to assist the Government of Jamaica in planning for the sustainable management of its fisheries resources.

### Major Output

A final report that details a “National Policy Framework and Strategic Plan for Sustainable Fisheries Development in Jamaica”.

5. TCP/GUY/2802 (A) – “Support for the Integration of Aquaculture into Farming Systems [in Guyana]” (July 2002 – September 2002)

FAO sent to Guyana a mission whose main objective was to assess the scope for a project proposal for technical assistance and, if necessary, formulate a project document. The mission produced a report on “Introducing Aquaculture into Farming Systems in Guyana – A Preliminary Assessment” and a draft project proposal on “Introducing Aquaculture to Farmers in Guyana”, which were submitted to the Guyanese Government.

6. GEF/UNEP/FAO Project – “Reduction of environmental impact from tropical shrimp trawling through the introduction of by-catch reduction technologies and change of management” (February 2002 – January 2007)

The overall objective of the project is to reduce discards of fish captured by shrimp-trawlers, primarily by introducing in a selected number of developing countries, technologies that reduce the catch of juvenile food-fish and other by-catch. The participating countries have identified the capture of juvenile food-fish and other by-catch as priority for national action.

The project is designed to firstly carry out a demonstration activity in at least one developing country in each GEF development region. The objective of this strategy is that a consolidated effort undertaken in these initial few countries will generate lessons that can be rapidly transferred to other shrimp-fishing countries in the same region.

The major outcome of the project should be the adoption by several of the participating countries of fishing technologies (including BRDs and others) and practices that are environmentally friendly, so that their shrimp-trawling fisheries will be more sustainable in the future. Another direct outcome of the project should be a reduction in the number of juvenile commercial species caught by shrimp-trawlers. Other outcomes expected are increased co-operation among countries at the regional and global levels regarding shrimp fisheries, and improvement in national capacities for sound management of the shrimp-trawler fisheries.

Costa Rica, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela from the WECAFC Region are participating in the project.

7. GCP/RLA/140/JPN – “Scientific Basis for Ecosystem-based Management in the Lesser Antilles Including Interactions with Marine Mammals and Other Top Predators” (June 2002 – June 2007)

The longer-term development objective is the maintenance of ecosystem functioning, marine resources and fish production, through sustainable and responsible fisheries conduct.

The medium-term objective is to enable the fisheries institutions of the participating countries, by 2006, to carry out improved assessment and monitoring of the status within the sub-region of the

pelagic resources and fisheries and the ecosystem of which they form a part, for continuous adaptation and improvement, as appropriate, of optimum management strategies.

The proposed outputs of the project are:

- (a) A *technical report*, forming the basis for the subsequent scientific works of the project, summarising the existing knowledge of the abundance, distribution and dynamics of the key species and species groups occurring in the Lesser Antilles Pelagic Sub-Ecosystem.
- (b) *Cruise report(s) and an overall Technical Report* on results of the biomass surveys for the selected species in the pelagic environment of the Lesser Antilles EEZs.
- (c) *Technical Report* on the diet composition of selected finfish species collected on the biomass surveys and cetaceans caught during normal, traditional fishing operations.
- (d) Functioning sub-regional ecosystem and spatial models of the pelagic zone within the combined EEZs of the participating countries which can be used to investigate the implications of management actions on the ecosystem and which, modified and improved as knowledge increases, will serve as a basis for further studies on ecosystem dynamics in this ecosystem.
- (e) Improving the skills and ability in ecosystem functioning and modelling as well as in GIS of the staff in the Fisheries Administrations of the participating countries, and increasing their level of awareness of the importance of and approaches to implementation of ecosystem-based fisheries management.
- (f) Drafting proposals for management strategies and plans.

8. TCP/ANT/2902 (A) – “Assistance in Fisheries Legislation” (July 2003 – January 2004)

The object is to assist the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in the review of its fisheries legislation. It is intended to provide the country with an updated legal framework to meet the new challenges in fisheries management and development.

## II. ACTIVITIES

The following are some of the main activities carried out in the region during the last biennium:

1. First Regional Conference on the Sustainability of Fisheries Resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf. Paramaribo, Suriname, 5-7 March 2002

The main objectives of the Conference were to share information and the best scientific evidence available on the status of the main commercial species of shrimp and groundfish in the region, discuss and evaluate management recommendations and their applicability and discuss a way forward for improving cooperation in fisheries research and management in the subregion. This was the first time fisheries scientists, managers, and the fishing industry met to collectively evaluate scientific information generated by the countries and the management measures proposed, and to decide on follow-up actions.

The Conference agreed that meetings of this nature were essential for achieving sustainable use of the fisheries resources of the Brazil-Guianas Shelf and should be held regularly. Regular meetings should contribute to the formation of a subregional fisheries management body for the Brazil-Guianas Large Marine Ecosystem in the longer term. Brazil offered to host the next meeting in 2003. With respect to the state of exploitation of the fisheries resources, the Conference confirmed the

trends identified by the WECAFC ad hoc Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf. The Conference further expressed strong appreciation for the Group's work and recommended that it be continued.

2. Institutional Strengthening of the Fisheries Administration, Guyana

A FAO Mission was sent to Guyana (27 April – 3 May 2002) in response to the request made by the Guyanese Government for technical assistance with respect to the institutional strengthening of the Fisheries Administration. The Mission presented its report to the Guyanese Government, including a draft Programme for the Organisational and Operational Strengthening of the Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock.

3. Workshop on Fisheries Statistics and Data Management, 10-22 March 2003

The main objectives were to train participants to utilize improved approaches and techniques for conducting sample-based fishery surveys, and analyzing the data collected; and in the use of the CARIFIS database as a tool for data storage, querying/analysis and reporting developed by the CARICOM Fisheries Unit (CFU). The workshop was jointly sponsored by FAO and CFU and held at the University of the West Indies, Barbados.

4. Inventory of Fisheries Resources in the WECAFC Area

The FAO Fisheries Department is conducting an inventory of fisheries resources in the WECAFC region. The inventory would reflect stock, fishing technique, production and management systems. When completed, the information generated will be placed in FIGIS (The FAO Fisheries Global Information System), a web-based, global network of integrated fisheries information being developed by FAO ([www.fao.org/figis](http://www.fao.org/figis)).

5. Cost and Earnings Survey of Marine Capture Fisheries

The FAO Fisheries Department is updating the studies on the economic performance of marine capture fisheries in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. The findings of these studies, which were first conducted in 1999/2000, were published in the FAO Fisheries Technical Paper No. 421 and as a chapter in SOFIA 2000.

A new study on the economic performance and technological features of the yellowfin tuna and Scombrids fisheries in Grenada is also being conducted.