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<b>WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION (WECAFC)</b> Thirteenth Session
<b>WECAFC LESSER ANTILLES FISHERIES COMMITTEE</b> Tenth Session
<b>Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 9–12 October 2007</b>
<b>SUMMARY REPORT OF THE INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FAO PROJECTS IN THE WECAFC REGION</b>

## I. WECAFC ad hoc Working Groups

### Working Group on Queen conch, *Strombus gigas*

Regional Workshop on the Monitoring and Management of Queen conch, *Strombus gigas*, Jamaica, 1–5 May 2006

1. The objective of the workshop was to assist Wider Caribbean countries in the development of effective management plans for Queen conch fisheries and, consequently, to improve their capacity to implement CITES regulations concerning exploitation and international trade of Queen conch, as well as the obligations under the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) of the regional Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention).
2. The workshop, was jointly organised by FAO/WECAFC and UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP) and sponsored by the FAO Project “CITES and Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species, including the Evaluation of Listing Proposals – GCP/INT/987/JPN”, UNEP-CEP, the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC) and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM).
3. The workshop covered the main topics of a fisheries management cycle through presentations and practical work. A considerable part of the workshop was devoted to assisting countries in developing/improving elements of their management plan for their Queen conch fisheries through group and individual work. Each participant prepared a draft of the key operational elements of a management plan for the Queen conch fishery in his/her country. These draft management plans will be published by FAO.
4. The workshop recognised the need: for greater regional cooperation in standardizing of regulations and definitions to improve reporting obligations for management and trade purposes; to establish indicators and reference points to monitor the performance of management strategies; and to employ a combination of management tools given the uncertainties in data and ecological processes and the need to maintain cost effectiveness in the Queen conch fishery.

## Working Group on Caribbean Spiny Lobster, *Panulirus argus*

### Regional Workshop on the Assessment and Management of Caribbean Spiny Lobster (*Panulirus argus*), 19–29 September 2006, Merida, Mexico.

5. The Workshop was organised with the assistance of the Centro Marista de Estudios Superiores A.C., Mérida, México. It was sponsored by the FAO FishCode Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme – Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP), the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC), and the Government of the United States. The main objective of the workshop was to review and update the status of Caribbean spiny lobster resource at national and regional levels and to seek regional agreement on strategies to address management problems.

6. This workshop was the fifth in a series organized by FAO/WECAFC in cooperation with various regional agencies and institutions, following on from those held in Belize City, Belize in 1997, in Merida, Mexico in 1998 and 2000, and in Havana, Cuba in 2002 (see FAO Fisheries Reports 619, 643 and 715). The goal of each workshop was to build on the information base of the previous workshop. It was divided into two parts: the first part, 18–27 September, was the scientific workshop which was attended by the senior scientists only, while the second part, 28–29 September, addressed management aspects and involved the scientists who attended the first part, fisheries managers/ministers and representatives of the lobster fishing and processing industry of the participating countries.

7. It was attended by fisheries scientists, managers and industry representatives from The Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, France (Martinique and Guadeloupe) Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, the Turks and Caicos Islands, USA (Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands) and Venezuela, and from the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC) and Caribbean Regional Fishery Mechanism (CRFM).

8. The estimated status of the national populations of spiny lobster, based on the best available information, in the participating countries is as follows<sup>1</sup>:

<b>Status of Stock</b>	<b>Countries</b>
<b>Under-exploited</b>	Venezuela (some areas)
<b>Fully-exploited or stable</b>	Puerto Rico & U.S Virgin Islands; Turks & Caicos; United States of America (Florida), Belize; Mexico, Costa Rica; Cuba; Antigua & Barbuda; Venezuela (some areas)
<b>Over-exploited</b>	Nicaragua; Jamaica; Dominican Republic; Brazil; Colombia; Honduras
<b>Unknown</b>	Martinique; Guadeloupe; Haiti; Bahamas; other Lesser Antilles countries

9. The results indicate that there is cause for substantial concern at the regional level and that the sustainability of this socially and economically very important resource is currently at risk. The Scientific Workshop concluded that, the management of fishing mortality, through control of fishing effort was necessary for sustainable utilisation of the spiny lobster resource. Nevertheless, it was recognised that a number of factors outside the fishing sector were also negatively impacting the stock in some countries. These include: an increased frequency of hurricanes and tropical storms over the last decade; lobster mortality as a result of red tides; and human induced deterioration in lobster habitat.

<sup>1</sup> The following explanation of categories was provided at the request of the Manager’s Meeting. The categories used in the table are based on the best available estimates of the population biomass as a proportion of unexploited biomass and/or fishing mortality rate. The category of greatest concern is that of “Unknown”. The category of next highest concern is that of ‘Over-exploited’ in which case it is recommended that the country concerned urgently implements a recovery programme. It was noted by the Scientific Workshop that some countries in this category have already taken this step (see National Reports). The category “Fully-exploited” implies caution is needed and countries in this category should have comprehensive and effective monitoring and management systems in place in order to ensure that over-exploitation is not occurring.

10. Although there were signs of some progress in management, there were a substantial number of management problems across the region. These include: open access fisheries, growth of fishing effort, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, increasing use of artificial habitats, weak enforcement and compliance, conflicts between trap fishers and dive fishers, and the reported practice in some Central American countries of leaving lobster traps in the water during the closed season.

11. The workshop agreed on strategies to ensure sustainable use of the spiny lobster resources. It was also agreed that countries that do not have a minimum size in their regulations that is equal to or above 74 millimetres, carapace length, as minimum harvest-size should make efforts to establish this size.

### **Working Group on sustainable use of Moored FAD Fishing in the Lesser Antilles**

12. The Third Meeting of WECAFC ad hoc Working Group on the Development of Sustainable Development of Moored Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) Fishing in the Lesser Antilles was convened during the period 4–8 December 2006, at Hotel Kanoa on Les Saintes, off Guadeloupe. The meeting was funded by the Government of France/Regional Council of Guadeloupe and FAO-RP. The main objective of the meeting was the finalization of a project proposal to establish and strengthen regional cooperation in “Moored fish Aggregating Devices in the Lesser Antilles” (MAGDELESA). The working group recommended that the Regional cooperation plan should include the following common components so that exchanges and analyses can be done regionally:

- The deployment of 2-3 FADs of similar design and construction, with similar maintenance strategies;
- A common biological data collection form to record catches around FADs;
- A common social and economic data form to collect information related to fishing on FADs; and
- Concerted national strategies to promote improvements in safer working conditions at-sea for fishers (around FADs) and also in the at-sea preservation of fish quality.

13. Finalization of the project document is on-going. Potential funding sources for the project are expected to include the European Regional Development Fund, French Antilles Regional Councils and matching funds from the other participating countries.

## **II. ACTIVITIES and PROJECTS**

14. The main FAO fisheries activities and projects implemented (or are in progress) in the WECAFC region during the last biennium were as follows:

### Study on the effects of pollution and coastal development on fisheries in the Gulf of Paria and Columbus Channel

15. In April 2005, a bilateral assessment workshop was held between Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela under the auspices of the WECAFC ad hoc Working Group on the Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries of the Guianas-Brazil Continental Shelf. The results of the bilateral assessments conducted for the shrimp and groundfish fisheries in the Gulf of Paria – Orinoco Delta region were presented to, and discussed with, fishing industry stakeholders on the last day of the workshop. Based on the scientific evidence provided, as well as their own field observations, the fishing industry agreed that stocks of shrimp and fish have been declining and that fishing effort should be controlled. However, the stakeholders also believed that industrial and coastal pollution, in addition to destruction of habitats and nursery areas, were among the major causes for the decline of fish stocks in the Gulf of Paria. The meeting agreed that studies should be conducted on the impacts of pollution on fish stocks in the Gulf of Paria, and that critical nursery areas should be identified and monitored.

16. The study will inform fisheries managers and stakeholders on the possible impacts of pollution and habitat destruction on fisheries in the study area and will make recommendations for future research/data collection and fisheries management by the relevant government authorities, including the industry. The study will therefore be used in association with stock assessment studies to guide fisheries management activities.

Regional Workshop of factors contributing to Over-exploitation and Unsustainability in fisheries in CARICOM Countries, Barbados, 6–8 December 2006

17. This was the fourth workshop organised by the FAO Project GCP/INT/788/JPN: *Review of factors contributing to over-exploitation and unsustainability in fisheries*, whose main objective is to improve the management and conservation of the world's fisheries. The first workshop was held in Bangkok in 2002, the second in Mauritius in 2003, and the third workshop in Cambodia, in 2004. The second workshop discussed factors of unsustainability on the basis of case studies prepared for four types of “idealised” fisheries: large volume demersal fisheries, large volume small pelagics fisheries, tuna fisheries and artisanal fisheries and the third workshop worked from discussion papers prepared on the basis of the first two workshops.

18. The Barbados Workshop 2006 reviewed the results of the three previous international workshops and applied the “approach” developed at these workshops to the fisheries of the CARICOM countries and their management. The workshop concluded that the types of factors of unsustainability identified in the first three international workshops (lack of good governance, inappropriate incentives, high demand for limited resources, poverty and lack of alternatives, complexity and lack of knowledge, interaction of the fishery sector with other sectors and the environment) were highly relevant to the CARICOM countries. The lack of good governance was identified as a major factor at the centre of over-exploitation and unsustainability. The current practice of ‘open access’ to fisheries in the region could lead to unsustainability. It was recommended that efforts to progressively regulate access through community-based co-management approaches and limited entry schemes should be implemented. Refer to background document WECAFC/SAG/07/IV/5.

Increasing the Profile of Artisanal Fisheries in the National Policies of Nicaragua (FAO FishCode STF OSPESCA NIC1)

19. The project aims at improving the information of the role of artisanal fisheries in food security and poverty alleviation and to mainstream artisanal fisheries into national policies related to development, food security and poverty reduction. The anticipated outputs are:

- An updated information system on the importance of artisanal fisheries and its role in food security and poverty alleviation.
- Trained staff and increased capacity of GO and NGO in the assessment of artisanal fisheries.
- Awareness raising material and documents providing updated information on the importance of artisanal fisheries and its role in development food security and poverty alleviation.
- A national strategy on the development of artisanal fisheries.
- Artisanal fisheries included in national policies.

Improvement of information on status and trends of Queen conch capture fishery in the Caribbean region (FAO FishCode STF OSPESCA ACT1)

20. The objective of the project is to improve routine data collection of Queen conch fisheries in Central America. The anticipated outputs are:

- Establishment of a sub-working group on Queen conch statistics consisting of one Queen conch expert from Belize, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Panama, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, one expert of OSPESCA and two experts of FAO.
- Establishment of statistically valid conversion factors for the different levels of Queen conch meat.
- a review and updating of the national historical data series of Queen conch catches presently included in the FAO database, applying conversion factors from processed meat weight to live weight when needed, and, where possible, including also estimates of unreported catches.

Support to the improvement of routine fisheries monitoring in Central America (FAO FishCode STF OSPESCA ACT2)

21. This project aims at improving of routine fisheries monitoring in Central America. The anticipated outputs are:

- Establishment of the Working group on Fisheries Statistics of OSPESCA.
- Defined regional minimum requirements and standards for routine monitoring of fisheries.

**Trust Fund Projects**

Reduction of environmental impact from tropical shrimp trawling through the introduction of By-catch Reduction Technologies (BRTs) and Change of Management, February 2002 – January 2007, GEF/UNEP/FAO

22. 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. Costa Rica, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela from the WECAFC Region are participating in the project. The major outcome of the project should be the adoption by several of the participating countries of fishing technologies (including By-catch Reduction Devices [BRDs] and others). Another direct outcome of the project should be a reduction in the number of juvenile commercial species caught by shrimp-trawlers.

LAPE Project – GCP/RLA/140/JPN

23. The FAO/Government of Japan project entitled, “Scientific Basis For Ecosystem-based Management in the Lesser Antilles including Interactions with Marine Mammals and Other Top Predators”, is also referred to as the Lesser Antilles Pelagic Ecosystem (LAPE) project (2002–07). It has been operational for over a year now and involves the OECS countries, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. The project was designed to provide the scientific information base for introducing an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, and included three major phases. The first, the data collection and generation phase is nearing completion. Activities in this area included three complementary themes: fisheries data (detailed catch and effort), predator-prey relations (diet studies), and stock distribution and abundance (cetacean and fish surveys). Some of the activities in each theme area have started and the rest will be started during this year. The second phase is data synthesis and modelling. This has also been started with preliminary ecosystem models and the compilation of GIS base data. The models will be updated as additional results from the data collection and generation phase are provided. The final phase, which has been initiated, is the interpretation of the scientific results to address ecosystem-issues in fisheries management. These results of the project will be provided as draft ecosystem-based fisheries management plans.

CITES and Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species Including the Evaluation of Listing Proposals, November 2005–October 2010, GCP/INT/987/JPN

24. The objective of the FAO-Government of Japan project entitled, CITES and Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species including the Evaluation of Listing Proposals (November 2005 – October 2010), is to minimize the negative economic and social impacts of CITES regulations for listed, commercially-exploited aquatic species by building the capacity of scientific and management staff in national fisheries institutions to continue to harvest listed resources sustainably while complying with CITES regulations for those listed species. WECAFC member countries are eligible for technical assistance under this project.

## **TCP Projects**

### Introduction of Aquaculture and Other Integrated Production Management Practices to Rice Farmers in Suriname and Guyana, April 2004 – March 2006, TCP/RLA/3003(D)

25. The objective of the project was to enhance food security, income and nutrition through improved and diversified farming practices using the Farmer Field-School (FFS) and South-south cooperation approaches. The project outputs included a significant reduction in the expenditure and use of pesticides, and an almost doubling of rice yields per acre – from 24 to as much as 47 bags. There was also increased interest among rice farmers in participating in an upscale version of the project.

### Apoyo a la ordenación de las pesquerías de camarones y fortalecimiento institucional de la autoridad Pesquera, Fase II, February 2006 – July 2006, TCP/GUA/3101

26. The objective of this Phase II is to conclude the activities previously started in TCP/GUA/2901. The main objective was to assist the government in improving and strengthening the management of the shrimp fishery to ensure sustainable social and economic benefits.

27. The main outputs of the project were the assessment of shrimp fisheries in Guatemala, outlines for the formulation of fishery management plans, fishery research plans, capacity building and fishery institutional strengthening.

### Improvement of the Domestic markets for seafood in the Latin American and Caribbean region, February 2007 to May 2008, TCP/RLA/3111 (D)

28. The overall objective of the project is to increase food supply in Latin America and the Caribbean through more and higher quality fish products for domestic markets. The expected outputs will include: personnel trained at the national level in domestic marketing of seafood, production of a handbook on domestic seafood marketing, improvement in the public's awareness of the issues domestic seafood distribution and marketing structures, better informed fish operators to apply modern marketing techniques and a web-based data bank with up-to-date marketing information for domestic and intra-regional fish trade in Latin America and the Caribbean. The recipient countries are: Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Venezuela.

## **FAOR TCP Facility**

### Formulación de Proyectos Alternativos Específicos en el Marco de la Implantación del Programa de Erradicación del Buceo en la Pesquería de Langosta Espinosa del Caribe de Nicaragua, September 2006 – December 2007, TCP/NIC/3103

29. The general objective is to compile and do research background information for the formulation of integrated projects which will contribute to providing employment arising from the elimination of diving.

30. The output of the project was the identification and formulation of a series of project proposals for the fishery and the agriculture sectors, with the potential for stimulating economic development and employment alternatives for the fishers that dive for lobsters.

## **Emergency Projects**

### Emergency assistance to farmers and fisherfolks affected by Hurricane Ivan in Grenada - OSRO/GRN/401/CAN, November 2004 – June 2005 and OSRO/GRN/402/US - November 2004 – October 2005

31. The main objective was to assist the Government of Grenada in providing inputs to facilitate the recovery of productive activities in agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Assistance to the fisheries sector included the repair/replacement of damaged fishing vessels and repair and replacement of lost fishing

gear, the rehabilitation of the fisheries communication network, and the restoration of market facilities. All activities were not completed by the NTE so the projects were extended to June 2006. Project activities were completed and the projects are now closed.

Emergency assistance to farmers and fisherfolk affected by hurricanes Ivan and Francis in the Bahamas and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Nov. 2004–Oct. 2005 TCP/RLA/3015 (E)

32. The main objective was to assist the Governments in providing inputs to facilitate the recovery of productive activities in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors. All activities were not completed by the NTE so they were extended to December 2006. The activities in these projects were completed and the project was closed.

**OTHER PROJECTS, INCLUDING INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE, IMPLEMENTED OR IN OPERATION IN THE COPESCAL REGION**

33. WECAFC member countries were involved in the following projects:

Coastal community development. August 2005 – August 2010. UTF/BRA/066/BRA

34. The main objectives of the project are to reduce poverty in coastal communities and to ensure a more sustainable utilization of marine resources through the introduction and expansion of economically viable and simple mariculture techniques and involvement of the communities in the co-management of the resources. The expected outputs include the following:

- Consolidation of the Gracilaria culture farming communities in Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba into producer associations and cooperatives;
- Diversification of mariculture production by introducing simple farming of other organisms in the project area;
- Development of pilot projects on co-management of marine resources involving communities with experience in cooperative work and mariculture; and
- Establishment and organization of inter-institutional committees, both at the Federal level and in each of the participating states so that experiences can be shared throughout the regions and as a model for future expansion throughout the country.

Baptist fish re-stocking of the PAO la Balsa reservoir - State de Cojedes January 2005, Telefood 21 211 TFD-03/VEN/001

35. The general objective of the project is to re-stock the Pao La Balsa reservoir in the town of Pao de San Juan Bautista.

**COORDINATION and LIAISON**

36. The WECAFC Secretariat participated in the following:

Third Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA), in the Wider Caribbean, Venezuela, 4–8 October 2005

37. The main objectives of the STAC meeting were to: review the current status and activities of the SPAW Protocol and the 2004–05 Work Plan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme; the draft of the guidelines and criteria for the evaluation of protected areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol; and the proposed draft 2006–07 Work Plan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme. The Secretary of WECAFC attended the meeting.

38. The STAC noted the importance of fisheries management and the need to continue coordination with the FAO/WECAFC Programme to help meet the objectives of the SPAW Protocol. With respect to fisheries management, the STAC supported priority actions being coordinated by FAO/WECAFC,

especially those related to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Specific activities included capacity building for the responsible management of Queen conch and in activities of the WECAFC ad hoc working group on Caribbean Spiny Lobster.

39. The STAC requested the UNEP-CEP Secretariat to explore possible cooperative arrangements with FAO/WECAFC to collaborate on marine protected areas and fisheries and on sea turtle conservation, two areas of interest to SPAW.

Technical Workshop on Queen conch and Spiny lobster Information Needs, San Andres Island, Colombia 14–18 November 2005

40. The technical workshop on Queen conch and Spiny lobster information needs was organised jointly the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) and the International Queen conch Initiative. The main objective of the meeting was to harmonize Queen conch and Spiny lobster regulations. The Secretary of WECAFC participated in the workshop.

41. The workshop was of relevance to WECAFC because of its existing working groups on Caribbean Spiny lobster in the WECAFC area and on Queen conch. The Caribbean Fishery Management Council takes the lead, in collaboration with the WECAFC secretariat, in coordinating the working group on Queen conch.

42. Most of the items discussed on Queen conch were directly linked to the FAO Manual for the Monitoring and Management of Queen conch, FAO Fish. Circ. No. 1012.

43. With respect to Spiny lobster, despite lengthy discussions the workshop was not able to decide on a minimum tail weight and length for adult Spiny lobster tails to be imported/exported to the USA. The meeting recognized that the morphometric relationship of size and weight of the adult Spiny lobster could vary in the different areas of the Western Central Atlantic. The matter was referred to the WECAFC Working Group on Caribbean Spiny lobster in the WECAFC area for discussion and decision in September 2006.

Workshop on the implementation by 16 range states of recommendations formulated in the context of the CITES Review of Significant Trade in *Strombus gigas* (Queen conch), Dominican Republic, 13 –15 December 2005

44. The main objectives of the workshop, which was organised by the CITES Secretariat, were to present summaries of the information that the 16 range states have provided to the Secretariat about their implementation of the CITES recommendations, inform the range States about the provisional evaluations by the Secretariat of compliance with the recommendations and offer a final opportunity for range states to add or update information, clarify actions they have undertaken, submit further data, etc., and allow range states to comment on the provisional evaluations. The FAO Fisheries Department provided comments and suggestions to the CITES Secretariat on the reports submitted by the range states to CITES. Most of these were incorporated into the CITES Secretariat's presentations at the workshop.

45. The Secretary of WECAFC was designated to represent FAO at the workshop by the Conference, Council and Protocol Affairs Division. Thirty-two participants from 14 range states and four observers from the CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC), the Caribbean Regional Fishery Mechanism (CRFM) and FAO attended the workshop. Participants from range states included representatives from the CITES parties and the fisheries administrations. The Chairperson of the CITES Animals Committee (AC) also attended.

46. No report was issued at the end of the workshop. The Chairperson of the AC and the CITES Secretariat requested one-on-one meetings with five countries to further discuss and clarify their reports. The Chairperson of the AC will officially inform the countries directly whether they have complied with the requirements to ensure that export of Queen conch is non-detrimental.

Second Scientific Meeting of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), 19–23 March 2006

47. The FAO/SLAC was represented at the Second Scientific Meeting of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), 19-23 March 2006, Trinidad and Tobago. This was a joint meeting of five (5) CRFM fisheries resource working groups: Reef and slope fish resources, Small coastal pelagic fish resources, Large pelagic fish resources, Conch and lobster resources and Shrimp and groundfish resources. The objective was to continue the sharing of knowledge and expertise among the working groups, as well as to facilitate wider review and consultation concerning the interpretation of assessment results and suitable fisheries management recommendations.

48. The plenary succeeded in achieving some of its goals and also in flagging issues that impeded the work of the groups. In light of those constraining issues, the plenary deliberations were focussed mainly on individual species from the attending countries whose data-sets were made available for analysis and assessment.

49. The working groups' members and the consultants reported general tardiness or reluctance of countries in sharing of data and that this issue adversely affected their work between meetings and during the analysis sessions. The plenary recommended that a formal position on data quality and data sharing should be sought from the CRFM Council through the forum. In addition to general recommendations for data quality improvements, the application of the Precautionary Principle was the most recurrent advice given.

Fourth Meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), 11–12 April 2006.

50. The Secretary of WECAFC participated, as an observer, in the Fourth Meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum (Forum) of the CRFM, 11–12 April 2006, Trinidad and Tobago.

51. The main items on the Agenda that were of direct interest to FAO/WECAFC were: a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime – update on Queen conch; CRFM Second Annual Scientific Meeting; draft Annual Work Plan and Budget; and CRFM/JICA Fisheries Master Plan on sustainable use of fisheries resources for coastal community development in the Caribbean. Representatives of 15 CRFM Member states and observers from FAO and the University of the West Indies (UWI) attended the meeting.

52. The Meeting noted that the Annual Work Plan and Budget 2006/07 addressed many of the concerns of national fisheries administrations. It suggested that disaster mitigation, IUU fishing, public awareness and advocacy should also be included in the Work Plan.

Caribbean Regional Workshop on Agricultural Trade, Trade Policy and Development in the Caribbean, St Vincent and the Grenadines, 13–15 June 2006.

53. FAO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture of St Vincent and the Grenadines and the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) organized the workshop which was designed to serve the needs of middle to senior-ranking agricultural professionals (economists) responsible for liaison with national and regional trade negotiators and policy makers on agricultural issues and for the dissemination of information on the status and implications of trade agreements and trade policies to their national agriculture sectors. Participants were from the Ministry of Agriculture of the CARIFORUM countries, the CARICOM Secretariat, and the CRNM. The majority of the participants were not familiar with fisheries.

54. The focus of the workshop was on three broad themes: (a) trade, trade policy and development; (b) WTO and EPA (Economic Partnership Agreements) agricultural negotiations; and (c) regional economic integration and regional trade agreements as they relate to trade and trade policy. The Secretary of WECAFC attended the last day of the workshop and made a Power-Point presentation on “Fisheries Issues in the WTO Negotiations”.

### GEF CLME Project

55. The WECAFC Secretariat is involved in the preparation of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project, entitled “Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) and Adjacent Regions”. The project’s Steering Committee agreed that regional fisheries organizations (RFOs), such as WECAFC should play a decisive role in the development and implementation of the full project, and their role and contributions should be defined during the PDF-B stage. The Secretary of WECAFC is also a member of the Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Group. He participated in the Steering Committee meetings (April 2006, August 2006) of the project and in the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) Workshop and Kick-off Meeting, 23 October–1 November 2006.

56. The Secretary of WECAFC participated in the Second Meeting of the Steering Committee, 6–8 June 2007, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia. FAO/WECAFC is the lead agency for the Shrimp and Groundfish resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf LME. The components of the full-sized CLME project are component 3: Implementing the Governance framework, which includes the Flyingfish pilot project and the Shrimp and Groundfish resources in the Brazil-Guianas Shelf LME; Component 4: Spiny Lobster pilot project; and Component 4: Fisheries and Biodiversity Pilot Project.

### GEF IAS Project

57. CAB International, in collaboration with national, regional and international partners and stakeholders developed a proposal, ‘Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Species in the Insular Caribbean’ for funding by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The proposal addresses alien invasive species (IAS) in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems. The five project components are: the development of national IAS strategies; the establishment of a Caribbean-wide cooperation strategy; the improvement on information management; the prevention of IAS introductions; and the early detection and management of IAS.

58. As part of the PDF-A stage, an international workshop was held in Trinidad and Tobago, 22–26 January 2007, to collate the outputs of national consultations and to discuss the activities for the next funding cycle, PDF-B stage, and the design of the full-size project. The PDF-B stage of the project is expected to last for one year and the full-size project for five years starting in 2008. The funds allocated by GEF for the PDF-B stage is US\$450 000 and the full-size project US\$5 million, with 1:1 co-financing in cash and in-kind. The Secretary of WECAFC participated in the workshop and served as resource person for the group/country discussions.

59. The majority of potential activities identified by the workshop for the PDF-B stage and the full project were terrestrial, mainly plant pests and diseases. A desk study conducted by V. Lopez and U. Krauss of CAB International, 2006, “National and Regional Capacities and Experiences on Marine Invasive Species, including Ballast Waters, Management programmes in the Wider Caribbean Region – a Compilation of Information”, found 118 marine IAS recorded, which included 39 fishes and 31 arthropods.

### Caribbean Derelict Fishing Gear Workshop, Key West, Florida, 16–20 July 2007

60. The Secretary participated in the abovementioned workshop which was organized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the United States Department of State of the US and the Regional Seas Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The purpose of the Workshop was to provide a forum for participants to share information on the impact(s) of derelict fishing gear in the Wider Caribbean, discuss the national and regional priorities to address derelict fishing gear and to foster collection and exchange of data and information pertaining to the management of derelict fishing gear and its implications the Wider Caribbean region.

61. In discussing DFG in the Caribbean, there appears to be little information on whether it is viewed as a significant issue in the region. The general opinion was that fish traps and gill nets have the highest potential of contributing to ghost fishing. WECAFC and the CRFM agreed to assist in coordinating efforts to describe and quantify the issue of derelict fishing gear within the context of fisheries management and the prevention of loss of fishing gear in the region.

Third Scientific Meeting of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), 17–27 July 2007

62. The FAO/WECAFC was represented at the plenary session of the Third Scientific Meeting of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), 23–27 July 2007, St Vincent and the Grenadines. This meeting reviewed the assessments, by four CRFM fisheries resource working groups: Reef and slope fish resources; Large pelagic fish resources; Conch and lobster resources; and Shrimp and Ground-fish resources. The objective was to continue the sharing of knowledge and expertise among the working groups, as well as to facilitate wider review and consultation concerning the interpretation of assessment results and suitable fisheries management recommendations.

63. The often repeated general deficiencies such as: weaknesses and gaps in country data-sets and/or the reluctance of some countries to share data in a timely manner were highlighted. These issues adversely affected the work of the working groups and hampered analytical analyses. In making some management recommendations for some species the suggestion that previous work by other regional counterparts on the same species groups should be valued more and used as reference points, was accepted.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

64. In addition to the FAO Technical Assistance Programme (TCP), there are two additional funding modalities available to FAO-WECAFC member countries which respond to urgent national/localized requests for technical assistance in small-scale farming and or fishing activities. The facilities are the Telefood (TF) initiative, since 1997 and the TCP Facility (TCPF), since 2005.

### Telefood projects

65. The Telefood funding (TF) initiative was designed to provide direct assistance to small-scale farmers and or fishers' groups/organizations. Funds for projects range from US\$5 000 to \$10 000 and can be accessed to pay for initial materials to start up a project which must be designed with a strategy to facilitate financial self-sufficiency. For example the strategy of the recipient group/organization should provide for the creation of a fund into which members/participants would contribute a portion of their earnings to pay for the inputs required to sustain the project. The TF facility can be accessed through a locally accredited FAO representative or UNDP office and a project using its funds must be executed within one year. For more information, please check the following web addresses: [spfs@fao.org](mailto:spfs@fao.org) or [telefood@fao.org](mailto:telefood@fao.org).

### FAOR TCP Facility

66. The TCPF was created to enable FAO to respond to government requests for urgent local programme support activities and to strengthen field programme development processes. FAORs can authorize commitments of up to a maximum of US\$200 000 per country per biennium. The objectives of the technical assistance under the TCPF are to:

- Rapidly solve a specific technical problem for which the expertise may not be immediately available within government services.
- Formulate project proposals or documents in the area of FAO's mandate, required for submission to potential funding sources, including TCP.
- Prepare background documents required by the government.

- Carry out small sector or sub-sector studies or assessments as required by the government including, facilitate field programme development and participate in related UN processes.

67. FAO Representatives have full responsibility for operating the TCPF and projects using its funds must be completed within the biennium in which it was approved. For more information, please refer to <https://extranet.fao.org/fpmis/>

#### FAO TCP Programme

68. The TCP is part of FAO's Regular Programme financed from the assessed contributions of its Members. It was launched in 1976 as a means to make FAO's technical competence rapidly available to member countries at their request, to contribute to solving their most pressing development problems in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors and related to rural development and socio-economic issues. It has a funding ceiling of US\$500 000 and a duration limit of two years. The TCP is aimed at providing short-term, quick impact technical support to address well-defined problems that constrain the ability of FAO's member countries, either individually or collectively, to reach the targets of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals.

69. Requests for technical cooperation under TCP may be submitted by governments of member countries through the FAO Office accredited to the country. TCP projects are intended to support the entities (institutions, organizations, farmers associations, women's groups, etc.) identified as the target beneficiaries by the requesting national government. For more details, please visit the following web address: [http://www.fao.org/tc/tcp/index\\_en.asp](http://www.fao.org/tc/tcp/index_en.asp)