



GOVERNMENT OF ST. CHRISTOPHER ST. KITTS AND NEVIS



Department of Marine Resources

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Re: CLME+ additional study to the cost-benefit assessment of an RFMO in the WECAFC area

We are pleased to refer to your letter dated 20 May 2016 referring to the " CLME+ additional study to the cost-benefit assessment of an RFMO in the WECAFC area", in which members of WECAFC are requested to submit their preliminary opinion on the next steps in the process of strategic reorientation of WECAFC.

The Department of Marine Resources & the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources of Saint Kitts and Nevis presents its opinion on the matters raised in the letter:

1. Whether the member considers the establishment of an RFMO necessary (yes/no, and why).

Yes, Saint Kitts and Nevis recognizes the contribution of a RFMO to the existing framework for fisheries management at the national and sub-regional level. A RFMO can add to the stability of fisheries stocks and sustainability of fisheries resources in the region. Saint Kitts and Nevis is an active member of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC), and regards them as important to further increase collaboration in fisheries management with all relevant countries in the region. The independent cost-benefit assessment of the options for strategic reorientation of WECAFC, as prepared by Dr Kjartan Hoydal, is clear on the potential benefits in terms of stocks, fisheries production, value generation and conservation of the high seas areas. Saint Kitts and Nevis is of

the opinion that a RFMO can also carry out important tasks for the countries in the region with respect to capacity building and fisheries sector development and investments.

2. If yes, what are the areas and stocks that should be covered by the RFMO.

Saint Kitts and Nevis considers it important that the RFMO covers the high seas in Area 31 and the northern part of area 41. Straddling stocks, deep sea fish stocks and highly migratory species that are not covered by ICCAT require regional management under an RFMO.

In terms of shared stocks with our neighboring countries that occur within our EEZ, such as spiny lobster, queen conch, dolphin fish, wahoo, sharks and rays, the RFMO can provide opportunities to harmonize management of these fisheries. Saint Kitts and Nevis also regards it important that a RFMO can facilitate discussions between members on fishing activities by its fishers in the waters of other members.

Saint Kitts and Nevis thinks that the RFMO should be able to make recommendations concerning fisheries of shared stocks, straddling stocks and highly migratory species conducted within the EEZs of members, provided that the members involved in these fisheries request and agree on these recommendations.

3. Whether the member has a preference for one of the options presented in the cost-benefit assessment study

Saint Kitts and Nevis would prefer to have additional time to make a decision on the RFMO and the entity that will be supported as the RFMO.

Best regards



Marc Williams
Director

June 14, 2016