



# PRESS RELEASE

PR#011-2023

*Towards Sustainable Development of Fisheries for the People of the Caribbean!*

## 4-day Regional Scientific Conference of the CRFM opens



Belize City, Monday, 28 August 2023 (CRFM)—The 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Scientific Conference of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) opened on Monday to over 200 attendees from across the Caribbean and internationally. The need for innovation and data-driven management decisions for the fisheries and aquaculture sector, as well as the vital importance of building resilience in the face of climate change and other adversities were the common threads of both the official remarks delivered by speakers as well as the 17 presentations delivered during this first day of the conference.

CRFM Executive Director, Milton Haughton, said: “We are very proud to host this Conference which will highlight the importance of science, knowledge, innovation and international best practices as the basis of our actions and policies to ensure responsible development, management and conservation of our marine living resources and aquaculture, as well as sustainable future economic growth based on our ocean resources.”

Dr. Carla Barnett, Secretary-General, CARICOM Secretariat, who delivered opening remarks, noted that, “Engagements at this week’s conference will provide a space for information exchange and dialogue on a range of topics of strategic importance to CARICOM. These include food security; legislation and policy; sustainable use and conservation; data, science and research; capacity building; technology transfer; and blue economic growth... We need to stay on the cutting edge of innovation, better understand the complexity of our marine ecosystems, and enhance their economic and social contribution to our communities and countries that depend on them. The health of the coastal and marine ecosystems and the wellbeing of our people are integrally connected.”

"The call of our leaders is for transformation—transformation that is urgent and ambitious. So while there is plenty for which CRFM should be congratulated, this is not the moment for resting on one's laurels but to recommit with unwavering determination to forge a path that positions our region as a true leader globally in sustainable fisheries

 Princess Margaret Drive,  
P.O. Box 642  
Belize City, Belize, C.A.

 501-223-4443  
 501-223-4446

 [secretariat@crfm.int](mailto:secretariat@crfm.int)  
 <https://www.crfm.int/>

 @CarFisheries  
 @CaribFisheries  
 TheCRFM

development," said Dr. Renata Clarke, Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in her Feature Address.

She pointed to estimates that climate change could precipitate a yearly fish value (annual) loss of between US\$1.2 to US\$2.7 billion across the Caribbean and Latin America, underscoring the need for building resilience in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

"Fishing communities are most often vulnerable to hurricanes and floods. To save lives and enable fisherfolk to quickly restart their livelihoods, resilience needs to be built. We can do so through insurance schemes, social protection schemes, but also through making fisheries infrastructure climate-proof. Early warning systems, safety at sea training, adaptation of fishing vessels to the new reality are also investments that we need to make," she added.

Sen. Hon. Avinash Singh, Chair of the Ministerial Council of the CRFM and Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Trinidad and Tobago, said: "As we commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CRFM, let us reflect on how far we have come and recommit ourselves to the journey ahead. Our collective vision for a sustainable, prosperous Caribbean region is within our reach. Let this conference be a beacon of hope, a platform for meaningful dialogue, and a catalyst for positive change."

The Conference ends on Thursday, 31 August, with the presentation of national reports from CRFM Member States on the Status of their Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector.

For more information on the conference, please access the Conference webpage [here](#).

## PRESS CONTACT

NAME: Milton Haughton, Executive Director

PHONE: 501-223-4443

E-mail: [milton.haughton@crfm.int](mailto:milton.haughton@crfm.int)

## ABOUT THE CRFM:

The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) was officially inaugurated on 27 March 2003 in Belize City, Belize, where it is headquartered, following the signing of the Agreement Establishing the CRFM on 4 February 2002. It is an inter-governmental organization whose mission is to promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of the region's fisheries and other aquatic resources for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region.



Princess Margaret Drive,  
P.O. Box 642  
Belize City, Belize, C.A.



501-223-4443



501-223-4446



[secretariat@crfm.int](mailto:secretariat@crfm.int)



<https://www.crfm.int/>



@CarFisheries



@CaribFisheries



TheCRFM