

Policy Perspectives

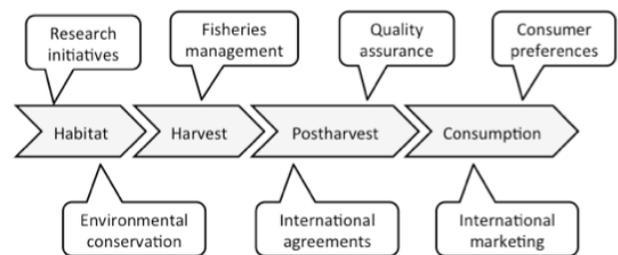
Perspectives on resource management and environmental policy from the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), Faculty of Science and Technology, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados.

The Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) initiated this occasional outreach publication, **Policy Perspectives**, to share lessons learnt from ongoing research. The interdisciplinary applied research at CERMES emphasizes learning-by-doing through collaboration. The information in **Policy Perspectives** may be used by policy-makers and advisers to strengthen linkages between interdisciplinary research and integrated policy-making in the Caribbean.

Incorporating climate and disasters into an ecosystem approach to fisheries management planning in CARICOM

The Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP) has the potential to become one of the most influential instruments of fisheries policy in the CARICOM region and the Wider Caribbean. It sets out a comprehensive framework for fisheries policy based on regional and international fisheries instruments. Implementation will be mainly through protocols still to be developed. Policy advisers and makers should seize the opportunity to ensure that adaptation to climate change and variability (CCA) and disaster risk management (DRM) are both well incorporated into implementation of the CCCFP via national and regional fisheries management plans (FMP) formulated using an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF). This will contribute greatly to the sustainability of fisheries resources and livelihoods.

Community Climate Change Centre (CCCC), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and University of the West Indies (UWI). The demand for the workshop arose from discussions on climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk management (DRM) at the 14th Session of WECAFC, held in Panama in February 2012. Delegates indicated the importance of CCA and DRM to fisheries and aquaculture in the Wider Caribbean Region, and the need for broader stakeholder engagement.



The fish chain (or net) into which CCA and DRM need to be weaved

The Regional Workshop on Formulation of a Strategy, Action Plan and Programme Proposal on Disaster Risk Management, Climate Change Adaptation in Fisheries and Aquaculture in the CARICOM and Wider Caribbean Region was held from 10 - 12 December 2012 in Kingston, Jamaica. The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organized the workshop in collaboration with the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC), Caribbean

Delegates said that not only should CCA and DRM be incorporated into fisheries and aquaculture plans, but fisheries and aquaculture must also be included in CCA and DRM plans. However, the **assessment study** done as background to the workshop found that the latter was much more prevalent than the former.

A critical policy issue was that there were few fisheries and aquaculture management plans being implemented, and almost none of these incorporated CCA and DRM because they were not based on ecosystem approaches.

Fishery management planning

Based upon documents and consultations with a range of stakeholders in CARICOM countries the assessment report concluded that:

If CCA and DRM initiatives continue to set the tone and pace for fisheries and aquaculture it is likely that the decision-making locus and power on climate and disaster issues related to these sectors will shift from the fisheries and aquaculture authorities to the climate and disaster offices. It may not be that the latter offices seek this responsibility and authority, but the institutional arrangements may so dictate unless there is a turnaround in current trends (see page 51).

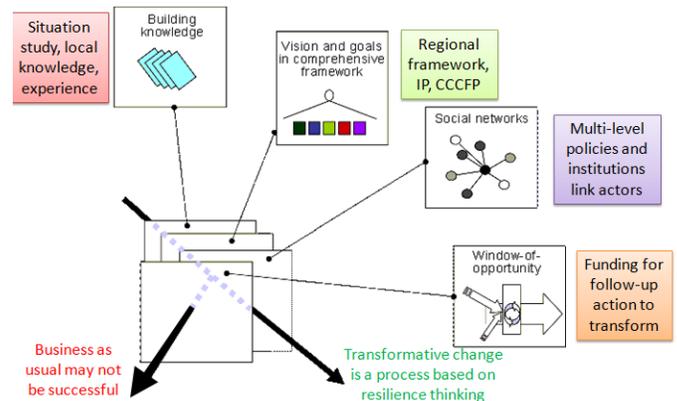
So, what could produce this turnaround in current trends?

The clear answer is for EAF to be adopted in practice and for CCA and DRM to be incorporated into fisheries management plans. The policy framework for this exists. It is the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP) already endorsed by the CARICOM ministers responsible for fisheries. Despite not yet being a legally binding instrument, the CCCFP is ready to be advanced by voluntary compliance and strong leadership. These would be more persuasive indicators of success than the number of countries formally signed on to the CCCFP. In the case of CCA and DRM there would be advantages to scaling up from local through to regional level for some types of interventions. Recommendations are made in the companion volume of **programme proposals** reviewed at the regional workshop. Pieces can easily fall into place.

Starting the process of change

Change typically requires management to be successful.

Guidance on how to manage the transformative change needed to introduce CCA and DRM can be found in the **strategy and action plan** volume of the three supplementary regional workshop documents, as below.



The linked parts and process of transformative change
(Adapted from Olsson et al 2004)

Transformation requires the following iterative elements:

- ✚ Building knowledge amongst the stakeholders
- ✚ Creating a shared vision and goals in an integrated comprehensive framework
- ✚ Managing social networks for the above elements and to then take collective action
- ✚ Taking advantage of a window of opportunity to effect the transformative change with least effort

Luckily, the above elements closely resemble the steps often recommended to introduce EAF. Furthermore, FAO now provides substantial online supporting resources (visit EAFnet at <http://www.fao.org/fishery/eaf-net/en>). It includes a toolbox for implementing each stage of the preferred process for fisheries management planning.

In conclusion, there is good guidance on policy, planning, process and products. So let us start the transformation!

This policy brief is based mainly on the following publication: CRFM, 2013. Regional Workshop Report - Formulation of a Strategy, Action Plan and Programme Proposal on Disaster Risk Management, Climate Change Adaptation in Fisheries and Aquaculture in the CARICOM and Wider Caribbean Region, 10 - 12 December 2012, Kingston, Jamaica. CRFM Technical & Advisory Document, No. 2013/8. 28p. The material in this brief may be freely reproduced for non-commercial use provided suitable credit is given to CRFM.