

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To assess the status of fisheries and aquaculture traceability systems in the Caribbean

Title: Consultancy to assess the status of fisheries and aquaculture traceability system in selected Caribbean countries

Location: Belize

Duration: 60 days over a period of 5 months

1. Introduction

Reduction of the levels of IUU fishing, and ensuring the traceability of seafood exports, will be critical to the sustainability of the fishery sector, and for continued market access: anecdotal evidence from a 2020 poll conducted by the global leader in market research Ipsos (USA) revealed that 83% of Americans agree that all seafood should be traceable. For European consumers, the traceability of seafood products has acquired increasing importance.

To ensure greater transparency and regulations for traceability, international standards, industry guidelines and legislation were developed. The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) was formed to develop international standards for food safety. The main purpose of the CAC is to protect the health of the consumer and ensure fair trade practices by developing standards based on sound scientific evidence. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has designated CAC the organisation with the responsibility for settling trade disputes relating to food, specifically as they relate to the Codex standards of Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS) and the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT). Current EU Legislation refers directly and indirectly to traceability both for general food and specifically fishery products. The most significant E.U. legislation relating to traceability is the Council and European Parliament Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, and procedures in matters of food safety. Article 18 on Traceability makes it compulsory for all substances intended or expected to be incorporated into food to be traced back to the supplier and customers. Directive 2001/95/EC on general product safety which requires companies to: have traceability back to point of production; have systems to recall unsafe products; and to notify competent authorities of unsafe products.

Additionally, the EU Regulation to end Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing requires that ‘third countries’ (those not in the EU) which export seafood products to the EU or lend their flags to vessels that import into the EU meet strict standards for fisheries management. Under the IUU Regulation, non-EU countries identified as having inadequate measures in place to prevent and deter this activity may be issued with a formal warning (yellow card) to improve. If they fail to do so, they face having their seafood products banned from the EU market (red card), among other measures. Several countries from the region have been issued a card under the EU Regulation (Belize delisted 2014, Trinidad and Tobago yellow 2016, St. Vincent and the Grenadines red 2017, St. Kitts and Nevis yellow 2014).

The OIRSA/OSPESCA Regional Traceability Standard for Fishery and Aquaculture Products, developed with the support of the CLME+ Project, establishes that a country’s National Traceability Systems for seafood and aquaculture products, regulatory reference frameworks, has a nation-wide application, including all elements of the value chain beginning with the process of capture/production and up to and including the point of commercialization. As such, it provides an important tool in the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and against crime along the fisheries and aquaculture value chain. Its implementation, combined with that of the existing fisheries regulations and management and conservation plans, will be key for achieving the sustainability of the fisheries, and for protecting the access to the region’s export markets for the OSPESCA region. No such system exists within the Caribbean, as

such, consideration will be given to creating such a system to the Caribbean or adapting systems currently being used in the Caribbean to strengthen traceability in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

This work is being done as part of the UNDP Project “Protecting and Restoring the Ocean’s natural Capital, building Resilience and supporting region-wide Investments for sustainable Blue Socio-Economic development” (PROCARIBE+) being executed by the CRFM Secretariat. The project, through actions for the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of marine and coastal natural capital, aims to minimize the effects of unsustainable fishing on marine resources and habitats in the CLME+ region by implementing traceability systems for spiny lobster, queen conch and shrimp throughout the wider Caribbean/WECAFC region.

The CRFM is a key regional fisheries body for the Caribbean and has an extensive record of fisheries and marine resource conservation and management in the region; and is committed to promoting and driving sustainable development solutions in fisheries that benefit from and contribute to gender equality, youth empowerment, and decent work in the Caribbean. The CRFM was formally designated as the Competent Agency for implementing the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP). The aim of the Policy is to ensure effective cooperation and collaboration among Participating Parties in the conservation, management and sustainable utilisation of the fisheries resources and related ecosystems in the Caribbean region to secure the maximum benefits from those resources for the Caribbean peoples and for the region.

2. Purpose

The overall purpose of the consultancy is to review fisheries and aquaculture traceability system in the Bahamas, Guyana, Suriname, and two other CRFM Member States and make recommendations for a Caribbean region traceability standard consistent with other regions and support the adoption of a Policy for the implementation of a regional traceability system.

4. Scope of Work

Under the general direction of the CRFM Executive Director, the Consultant will be contracted to undertake the assignment. The Consultant will work in close collaboration with the Deputy Executive Director, the Programme Manager, Fisheries Management and Development, the Advisor, Fisheries Management and Development, and any other such person that may be designated, in the delivery of the assignment.

Although the Consultant will work in close collaboration with the above-mentioned personnel, it is understood that the Consultant is responsible for producing the deliverable of this assignment and contribute to its outputs through direct information exchange with the beneficiary countries (specific fisheries organization/company).

The Consultant, working with the CRFM Deputy Executive Director, CRFM Programme Manager, Fisheries Management and Development, Advisor, Fisheries Management and Development, designated other person and the beneficiary/selected countries will:

1. Participate in a briefing session with the CRFM Secretariat, the PROCARIBE+ project, and the beneficiary countries to review the Terms of Reference and obtain clarifications and additional directions, if required.
2. Prepare and submit an inception report to the CRFM Secretariat outlining the detailed work plan and description of the methodology to be used to assess traceability system in the region. The report should also identify strategy to collect the necessary data and engage with stakeholders.

3. Conduct a situational analysis of the fisheries and aquaculture traceability systems in the Caribbean and make recommendations for a Caribbean traceability standard and approach for national fisheries and aquaculture traceability system.
 - a. Conduct desktop review of the relevant literature/documents, organize/facilitate consultations with relevant stakeholders on the objective of the Consultancy and the scope of work to be done. Also, review previous work done by the CLME Project¹ and CLME+ Project², and other ongoing work in the region³ ⁴ and internationally⁵.
 - b. Identity and select an additional two CRFM Member States to include in the assessment. The selection will be based on a development of agreed criteria and willingness to participate in this activity.
 - c. Consult with the Bahamas, Guyana, Suriname, and two other CRFM Member States on national traceability measures at sea and on land, fish product tracking system, review verification tools, systems and processes, and assess national level legal systems to support traceability.
 - d. Explore best practice traceability methodology and identify the most suitable for small-scale fisheries in the Caribbean.
 - e. Explore seafood procurement standards for businesses purchasing seafood for e.g. hotels; restaurants; cruise ships etc., as it relates to traceability from onboard handling and storage at sea, landing and shore-based infrastructure, transportation, certification and compliance.
 - f. Prepare and submit status report including recommendations.
4. Make qualifying explanatory statements or recommendations on policy commitments for a regional traceability standard and draft Protocol for submission to the CRFM governing body.
5. Organize and facilitate a virtual regional workshop with CRFM Member States to discuss findings of the report and prepare a workshop report. The outcome of the workshop should be used to finalize the status report.
6. Prepare and submit Final Consultancy Report to the CRFM Secretariat. A suggested format include – objective, methodology, achievements, problems encountered, conclusion, recommendations, Annexes (all technical reports, consultations/workshops, and photographs).

5. Target

The target audience for the assignment will be the Bahamas, Guyana, Suriname, and two other Fisheries Departments, Fish processing plants, fisherfolks, and other key stakeholders including the regulatory agencies.

6. Expected Outputs/Deliverables:

In collaboration with the CRFM Secretariat, the Consultant will deliver the following:

- i. Inception Report and Workplan
- ii. Situation analysis/Status report

¹ Nexus Coastal Resource Management Ltd. 2019. Catch documentation scheme report. CLME+/SP3:EAF for the Eastern Caribbean Flying Fish Technical support to enhance data and information management for decision support.

² OIRSA/OSPESCA Regional Traceability Standard for fishery and aquaculture products.

³ FAO. 2022. Understanding and implementing catch documentation schemes – A guide for national authorities. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries No. 14. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb8243en>

⁴ Goulding, I.C, 2016. Manual on Traceability Systems for Fish and Fishery Products. CRFM Special Publication. No.13. 15pp.

⁵ Blaha, F., Vincent, A. & Piedrahita, Y. 2023. Guidance document: Advancing end-to-end traceability – Critical tracking events and key data elements along capture fisheries and aquaculture value chains. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5484en>

- iii. Protocol document
- iv. Final Technical Report

7. Reporting

The consulting firm or consortium will produce the reports/deliverables as indicated above. Upon submission of each draft report the CRFM Secretariat will provide comments and inputs within 10 working days. The consulting firm or consortium is required to make the changes and re-submit the report in 5 working days.

All reports must be written in English and submitted as an electronic Microsoft Word document for review and final presentation. Final reports should be presented to the CRFM Secretariat, Belize City, secretariat@crfm.int for distribution to the key stakeholders and other parties of interest. The approved final reports will be presented to the national government and the CRFM governing bodies (Caribbean Fisheries Forum and CRFM Ministerial Council).

8. Key Experts

The consulting firm or consortium / Individual consultant identifies the Key Expert(s). The profiles of the key expert for this contract are as follows:

Key Expert 1: Traceability Specialist

Qualifications and skills

- A master's degree in environmental or natural science, Economics, Environmental Engineering, or a related field.

General professional experience

- At least three (3) years of experience; or an equivalent combination of training and experience in traceability assessment.
- Demonstrated experience in fisheries traceability system is a requirement.

Specific professional experience

- Experience collecting, manipulating, analysing, and interpreting scientific data.
- Experience preparing reports, presentations, and other communications.
- Experience working in the Caribbean.
- Excellent organization and coordination skills and attention to detail.
- Ability to manage project deliverables and meet deadlines.
- Excellent communication skills via written, spoken, and graphical means, including the ability to communicate scientific results and practices to technical and non-technical audiences.

Other Experts

CVs of other Experts will not be evaluated during the evaluation of this proposal but should be included in the tender.

9. Investment and Duration of Assignment

The total amount of the professional fees for this consultancy is USD 15,000 (fifteen thousand dollars). and will include all the specified activities.

Task	Reports	Deadline for completion
1. Briefing session with the CRFM Secretariat and Beneficiary countries	1 minutes of briefing session report delivered	No later than 14 days after the start of the assignment
2. Output 1. Approved Inception report and work plan	1 report of at least 10 pages in English on workplan, timelines and fitness of the TOR delivered.	20 days after the start of the assignment
3. Data gathering and assessment (desktop review, consultations, survey, etc.)		
4. Draft situational analysis discussion at a regional validation workshop	1 presentation of the status report in English delivered; and 1 report of at least 10 pages on the outcome of the validation workshop delivered. Present the draft report, findings, and recommendations to national and regional stakeholders in a workshop.	40 days after the start of the assignment
5. Output 2: Submission of final Situational Analysis/Status report	1 report of at least 20 pages in English on the status of fisheries and aquaculture traceability in the Caribbean delivered Present the final report with recommendations for a regional traceability standard	50 days after the start of the assignment
6. Output 3. Protocol document	1 Protocol of at least 10 pages in English on a regional fisheries and aquaculture traceability standards delivered	55 days after the start of the assignment
7. Output 4: Final Technical Report	1 final technical report of at least 50 pages in English on fisheries and aquaculture traceability in the Caribbean delivered Compile all the previous analysis and information gathered in a final report, annex all the technical reports, consultations/workshop, all the above reports.	60 days after start of the assignment