



Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism

Towards a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime **for CARICOM**

Background

The current effort to establish a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime at the CARICOM level was initiated at the Fourteenth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in Trinidad and Tobago, 14-15 February 2003. At this Meeting, the Heads of Government agreed to:

- the elaboration of a proposal for the establishment of Common Fisheries Regime
- address the need to develop international standards for the export of fishery products.

Progress to Date

In keeping with the Mandate given to the CARICOM Secretariat by **the Heads of Government**, the CRFM Secretariat, as implementing agency, convened a series of consultations with the aim of elaborating on proposals for the establishment of the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime for CARICOM (CFP&R). Three meetings of the Working Group on the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime were held.

Key issues to be addressed in the formation of the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime were identified, including:

- Delimitation of national maritime boundaries.
- International agreements such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- Socio-economic issues such as contribution to food security, poverty alleviation, national output and employment, including self-employment.
- The multi-functional role of the fisheries industry and the roles of the various institutions involved.



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Benefits of a Common Fisheries Policy and Regime Include

- ❖ Better management and development of the living resources and ecosystems of the region to ensure social and economic benefits to present and future generations of the people of the region.
- ❖ Sustainable fisheries resource use through harmonised regional management of shared resources.
- ❖ Strengthened cooperation and collaboration and development of harmonised positions on fisheries management issues for presentation and discussions at international fora.
- ❖ Increased protection of biodiversity in the marine environment of the region.
- ❖ Increased levels of food security in the region.
- ❖ Advancement of social and economic development of the fisheries sector in the region resulting in the improvement of income of fishers, and consequently alleviating poverty.
- ❖ Promotion and facilitation of the region's market and economic competitiveness.
- ❖ Enhanced opportunities for CARICOM entrepreneurs to invest in the Fisheries Sector.
- ❖ Minimisation of intra and inter sectoral conflicts of in the region.
- ❖ Increased Institutional and human resources capacity building in the fisheries sector in Member States.
- ❖ Harmonised regional and national data and information systems including data sharing and access by all stakeholders.
- ❖ Better research in support of fisheries development and management.
- ❖ Improved and harmonised standards for quality assurance and seafood safety.
- ❖ Improved regional fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, and reduction in illegal fishing.



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Proposed Vision, Goal and Objectives for the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime

Vision: Sustainable use and management of the living marine resources and ecosystems of the Caribbean through increased cooperation and collaboration among CARICOM Member States and Third States for the improved welfare of their peoples.

Goal: Sustainable use of the living marine resources and ecosystems of the Caribbean Community, through the implementation of efficient and effective management, within the context of the revised treaty of Chaguaramas, and in accordance with international obligations, with a view to maximizing the present and future social and economic benefits of the people of the Community.

Objectives:

- The management and development of the living marine resources and ecosystems of the region to ensure social and economic benefits to present and future generations of the people of the region.
- Sustainable fisheries resource use through harmonised regional management of shared resources.
- Strengthened cooperation and collaboration and development of harmonised positions on fisheries management issues for presentation and discussions at international fora.
- The promotion of a viable fishing industry with particular attention to subsistence and artisanal fishers.
- To strengthen the shared fisheries information base and promote research in support of fisheries resource assessment and management.