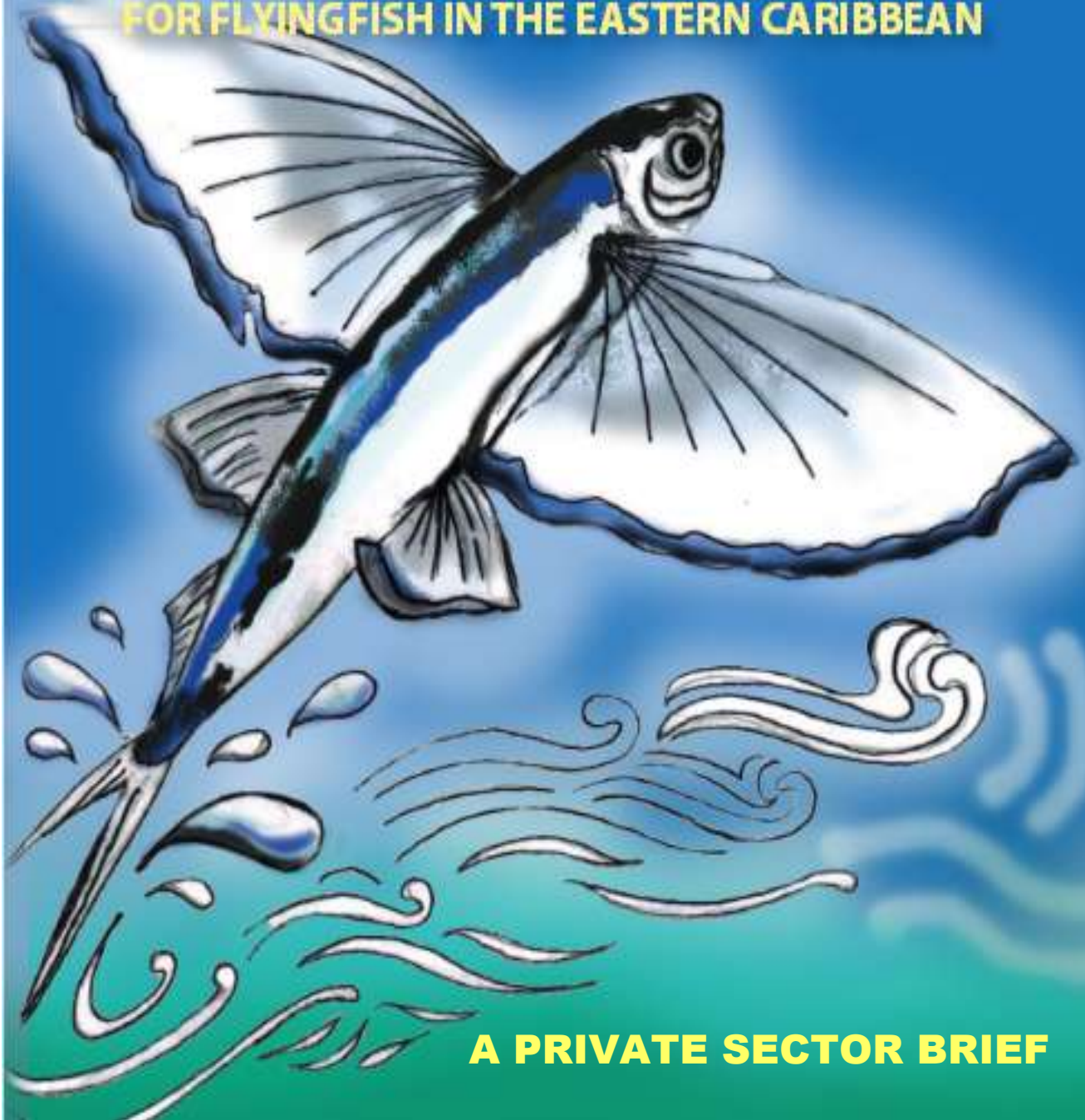


**SUB-REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR FLYINGFISH IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN**



A PRIVATE SECTOR BRIEF

CRFM
May, 2014

Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Management Plan: A Private Sector Brief

The CRFM Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Management Plan (FFMP) is a voluntary document for regional implementation by CRFM Member States, consistent with the Agreement on the Establishment of the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy approved by the CRFM Ministerial Council in 2011. Prior to the FFMP, most national fisheries management plans were generic with no formalised plan of action for managing shared resources such as flyingfish. The need for a plan that ensured regional cooperation, collaboration and consultation was recognised. In 2014 the Sub-regional plan became the Eastern Caribbean region's first management plan for shared resources facilitating the harmonisation of fisheries management and conservation of flyingfish. This FFMP has obtained all necessary approvals and clearance for its implementation as of May 2014.

The FFMP was prepared through a consultative process that involved stakeholders at national and regional levels including public hearings, national and regional workshops and reviews by national Fisheries Advisory Committees (FACs). The consultative process will continue in order to permit the involvement of stakeholders in all stages of the implementation phase. The plan considers the range of stakeholders involved in the industry, from fishers, vendors, processors, traders to scientists, decision-makers, environmentalists and others. It aims to change the management approach so that issues concerning human well-being (e.g. food security, livelihoods) as well as the environment (e.g. climate change, overfishing, pollution, habitat destruction) are considered in making management decisions.

Issues Addressed by the Management Plan

The FFMP seeks to address many issues that have plagued the fishery industry throughout its areas of operation such as:

Ecological Issues

- Negative impacts of sea and land-based human activities on the marine ecosystem
- Unsustainable fishing practices
- Evaluation of risks of global environmental change.

Socioeconomic Issues

- Access rights
- Marked seasonality
- Inadequate post-harvest technology which decreases the quality of fish and waste due to poor storage
- Inability to be cost-competitive
- Access to credit and insurance in the fisheries sector.

Governance Issues

- No regional mechanism for managing this shared resource
- Little statistics
- Inadequate human capacity in fishery department
- Participation from stakeholders
- Monitoring and surveillance
- Limited landing sites and facilities for disposal of offal
- Landing site and competition for use of coastal zone.

Significance of the Management Plan



The flyingfish fishery of the Eastern Caribbean, like other small scale fisheries, involves fishers often from the lower socio-economic strata of society. It is a shared resource which is exploited by seven countries including Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, St. Lucia, Dominica and France (Martinique). This fishery is the single more important small pelagic fishery in the southern Lesser Antilles in terms of employment generation, food

security and supply of bait for fisheries targeting large pelagic fish species. The countries involved have a high social and economic dependence on the fishery. This plan therefore is intended to ensure the conservation of their common or shared fisheries resources and related ecosystems for the long-term sustainability of the resources and socio-economic benefit of the people of the region through:

- Its collaboration in the sustainable use, conservation and management of a shared fisheries resource
- Utilising international best practices of promoting the ecosystem, participatory and precautionary approaches to a sustainable resource
- Facilitating best international practice in fisheries governance to address issues of accountability, transparency, equity and obligations
- Introducing harmonized approaches/systems to fisheries management and conservation (e.g. harmonisation of approaches) such as reporting on performance of management measures, data collection and licensing of fishing vessels
- Identifying specific research to accurately and adequately inform the management decision-making process as it relates to a sustainable ecosystem-based approach to fisheries
- Allowing CRFM Member States to meet objectives of international and regional instruments such as FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Small Scale Fisheries (SSF) Guidelines, Castries Declaration on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, the Council-approved Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy and the WECAFC Resolutions as they relate to the flyingfish fisheries.
- Implementing a monitoring and evaluation system to assess the performance of management by clear, specific goals, objectives and key performance indicators. In addition to providing for adaptation of management measures due to changing circumstances

The plan is the product of the substantial scientific work conducted on the regional fishery industry. It takes into consideration the cultural, environmental, economic and social factors of the flyingfish resource as it relates to each participating state. Although it may not be legally-binding, national authorities are encouraged to conform to the plan.

Arrangements to ensure successful implementation of the management plan

CRFM has provided the pathway for successful implementation of the FFMP through participatory approaches, institutional strengthening and financing. The establishment of CRFM/WECAFC Working Group on Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean will facilitate achievement of management objectives-in cooperation with national authorities. Other key arrangements include:

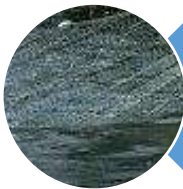
- Creating and developing a regional database on the flyingfish fishery
- Coordinating data collection, statistics and analysis in the region
- Involving stakeholders at all stages in the management process and better representation on FAC.
- Harmonising of legislation and enforcement systems
- Enabling access to financial resources e.g. CRFM to secure financial support from multi- and bi-lateral donor agencies.
- Developing a harmonised control and inspection scheme to ensure compliance with management and conservation measures
- Instituting a monitoring and control system to aid the National Fisheries Authorities in achieving the objectives of the plan
- Seeking support of non-CRFM countries (e.g. French Overseas Territories) that target the resource in management and conservation initiatives

Best practices in the Eastern Caribbean

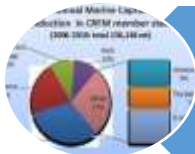
The primary aim of management is to optimize benefits from the resources. Consideration needs to be given to safety margins which may be required to ensure sustainability, while minimising economic uncertainty for the harvesters, and variability in supply to consumers by adopting measures which will stabilise catches between years. In order to achieve this aim best fishing practices in accordance with the FAO CCRF, and SSF guidelines should be implemented. Some of the fishing and management best practices observed in the Eastern Caribbean are:



Encouraging the non-retrieval of Fisheries Aggregation Devices (FADs). Flyingfish eggs are non-buoyant and highly adhesive, they can be found adhere, among other things, to FADS or screeles (as they are known in Barbados) located within flying fish areas; this can assist with increasing the population of flying fish. Fisherfolks are therefore, encouraged not to retrieve their FADs when eggs are attached.



Mesh size regulations for gill nets. The usual size of the nets are 1 ½"; this is a traditional/voluntary compliance by the fisherfolks in the islands.



Catch and effort data collection system in place in the islands which permits the authorities to monitor the state of this resource in order to make informed decisions.

Stakeholders Involvement

The success of the Eastern Caribbean Flyingfish Management Plan requires effective cooperation and collaboration among all involved stakeholders for the conservation, management and sustainable utilization of the flyingfish resource and related ecosystem in order to secure optimal benefits. Stakeholders can be a part of the following mechanisms that allows for meaningful participation:

- CRFM/WECAFC Working Group on Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean. This working group provides a platform for Fisherfolk Organizations (FFOs) to work with the Flyingfish Working Group to provide technical advice on the implementation, review and evaluation of the plan.
- Communication, which is critical to the efficient implementation and dissemination of the Plan. FFOs should use all available ICT tools, popular communication tools, etc.in order to disseminate information and educate or inform stakeholders.
- Contributing to a sub-regional flying fish catch and effort as well as vessel registry database by ensuring timely and accurate information.
- Flyingfish stakeholders can be better represented through national FACs, and influence sub-regional policy through the CRFM Ministerial Sub-committee.
- National Inter-sectoral committees should be established to encourage stakeholders from other sectors to collaborate in Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF). Successful stakeholder participation and formation of such committees entail proactive assistance from the private sector.