

## THE CARICOM FISHERIES RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (CFRAMP)

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### SUMMARY

The CARICOM Fishery Resource Assessment and Management Program (CFRAMP), which began in 1991, is an eight-year, \$20 million Canadian dollar program, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International Center for Ocean Development (ICOD) of Canada, and CARICOM. Its goal is to promote the management and conservation of fishery resources in CARICOM, to permit their exploitation on a sustainable basis. The Program will be coordinated by the CARICOM Fishery Management Unit, which has been established in Belize City, Belize, for this purpose. There will be two major thrusts: institutional strengthening and resource assessment. Institutional strengthening activities will involve training for CARICOM nationals as well as enhancement of basic fishery management systems at the national and regional levels. The latter will include assistance at the national level with: Fishery management planning; Fishery data collection and management systems; Licensing/registration systems; Community participation in fishery management; and Advisory/decision making mechanisms. A specific activity will aim to define the best mechanisms for fishery research and management at the regional level.

Resource assessments will be carried out by three Resource Assessment Units located in Belize (lobster and conch), Trinidad (shrimp and groundfish) and St. Vincent (oceanic and coastal pelagics, and deep and shallow reef related demersal fishes). The resource assessment projects to be undertaken will be designed by the RAU staff in collaboration with the participating countries. CFRAMP fully recognizes the migratory and shared nature of most of the pelagic species which are exploited by CARICOM Member States. Participation in the activities of ICCAT is seen as one of the most effective ways to acquire data and information on, and to contribute to overall knowledge and management of these resources.

### RESUME

Le Programme d'évaluation et de gestion des ressources halieutiques de la CARICOM, qui a débuté en 1991, est un programme qui doit se dérouler sur huit années, d'un montant de 20 millions de dollars canadiens, financé par l'Agence canadienne de Développement international (CIDA), le Centre international pour le Développement des océans (ICOD) du Canada et la CARICOM. Il a pour objectif la gestion et la conservation des ressources halieutiques dans la CARICOM, de façon à assurer leur exploitation continue à un niveau soutenable. Le programme sera coordonné par la "Fishery Management Unit" de la CARICOM, qui a été fondée à Belize City, à Belize, dans ce but. Il y aura deux orientations principales: le renforcement des institutions et l'évaluation des ressources. Les activités de renforcement des institutions comprendront une formation pour les ressortissants de la CARICOM, ainsi qu'une intensification des systèmes de base de gestion halieutique à l'échelle nationale et régionale. Ce dernier point comprendra un appui au niveau national: planification de la gestion halieutique, recueil et gestion des données sur les pêcheries, système de licences/matricules, participation de la Communauté dans la gestion des pêcheries, et mécanismes conseil/prise de décision. Une activité précise portera sur la définition de la meilleure structure pour la recherche et la gestion des pêcheries à l'échelle régionale.

L'évaluation des ressources sera effectuée par trois "Resource Assessment Units" situées à Belize (homard et mollusques), Trinidad (crevettes et poisson de fond) et St. Vincent (pélagiques océaniques et côtiers, et démersaux associés aux récifs en profondeur et proches de la surface). Les projets d'évaluation des ressources à entreprendre seront planifiés par le personnel de la RAU en collaboration avec les pays participants. Le CFRAMP est pleinement conscient de la nature migratoire et mixte de la plupart des espèces pélagiques exploitées par les Etats membres de la CARICOM. La participation aux activités de l'ICCAT est envisagée comme une façon particulièrement effective d'acquérir des données et des informations, et de contribuer aux connaissances globales et à la gestion de ces ressources.

## RESUMEN

El "Fishery Resource Assessment and Management Program" (CFRAMP) de CARICOM, iniciado en 1991, es un programa con un presupuesto de 20 millones de dólares canadienses y de una duración de ocho años, con capital del "Canadian International Development Agency" (CIDA), "International Center for Ocean Development" (ICOD) y "Caribbean Community" (CARICOM). Su meta es promover la gestión y conservación de los recursos de pesca en el área de CARICOM, para permitir una explotación continua. El Programa será coordinado por "Fishery Management Unit" (Unidad de gestión de Pesquería) de CARICOM, que ha establecido su sede en la ciudad de Belize (Belize) a estos efectos. Tendrá dos funciones principales: fortalecimiento institucional y evaluación del recurso. Las actividades de fortalecimiento institucional incluirán la capacitación de los ciudadanos del CARICOM, y la intensificación de los sistemas básicos de gestión de pesquerías a nivel nacional y regional. Estos últimos incluirán la colaboración a nivel nacional en la planificación de gestión de pesquerías, recopilación de datos de pesquerías y sistemas de gestión, sistemas de Licencias/registros, participación de la Comunidad en la gestión de pesquerías y el establecimiento de mecanismos de asesoría y decisión. Una actividad específica se dirigirá a identificar los mejores mecanismos de investigación de pesquerías y su gestión a nivel regional.

De la evaluación de los recursos se encargarán tres Unidades de Evaluación de Recursos (Resource Assessment Units) con base en Belize (langostas y botutos, *Strombus* spp.; Trinidad (camarones y peces demersales), y St. Vincent (pelágicos costeros y oceánicos, y peces afines a demersales de arrecife profundo y de superficie). Los proyectos de evaluación del recurso que deberán llevarse a cabo serán establecidos por el personal de RAU en colaboración con los países participantes. CFRAMP reconoce plenamente la naturaleza migratoria y mixta de la mayor parte de las especies pelágicas explotadas por los Estados Miembros del CARICOM. Se considera que la participación en las actividades de ICCAT es una de las vías más efectivas para obtener datos e información y para contribuir al conocimiento general y gestión de estos recursos.

## Introduction

The pelagic fishery resources of the western tropical Atlantic are of considerable interest to Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Member States. The fisheries for these species are of greatest importance to the eastern Caribbean Member States. However, recreational fishing is also economically important in other states, most notably Jamaica and Belize. The fisheries are primarily small-scale, from vessels in the 5-10 m size range, but in the past decade there has been a trend of increasing numbers of small commercial longliners (15-20 m) operating in these countries, and of increasing sophistication in fishing methods of existing vessels.

In many countries, pelagics are perceived as a resource into which there can be successful expansion by further introduction of small commercial vessels. This strategy is being actively pursued by several states. For most of the species which are harvested, there is considerable seasonal and interannual variability in availability to these small-scale fisheries. Furthermore, there is little information on migration, stock structure and potential yield on which to base a development or management strategy.

These problems are common to most of the fisheries of the CARICOM Member States, and are compounded by lack of adequate data on catch and effort, fleet size and composition, as well as inadequately developed fishery assessment and management mechanisms within government fisheries units. Consequently, CARICOM sought funding for a program to enhance the capability of its Member States to assess and manage their fisheries, as well as with establishing the capability to undertake fisheries management initiatives within the CARICOM region. The result is the CARICOM Fishery Resource Assessment and Management Program.

### Program goal and objective

The goal of the CFRAMP is the promotion of management and conservation of fishery resources in CARICOM, to permit their exploitation on a sustainable basis

The objective is to enhance the basic institutional capacity and information base to manage and develop fisheries in CARICOM Member States. Throughout the Program there will an emphasis on increasing the involvement of women in fisheries management, at professional and fishing community levels.

### Program structure

#### Participation

Twelve CARICOM Member States (Antigua & Barbuda\*, Barbados, Belize, Dominica\*, Grenada\*, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat\*, St. Kitts & Nevis\*, St. Lucia\*, St. Vincent & the Grenadines\*, Trinidad & Tobago), of which seven\* belong to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

### Funding and management

Funds (Can. \$) are provided by: the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), \$14.9 M; International Center for Ocean Development (ICOD), \$2.7 M; Caribbean Community (CARICOM), \$3.1 M. The Program which began in April, 1991, will extend over eight years, and will be executed by ICOD.

### Program Units

CARICOM Fishery Management Unit (CFMU) -- 1991 - ongoing, 28 Regent St., Belize City, Belize CA. Tel. 5012 74755; Fax. 5012 74809 (Staff: Program Director, Dr. Ward Falkner; Program Administrator, Mr. Chris Milley; Data Manager/Analyst, Mr. Paul Fanning; Three CARICOM Deputies, to be recruited; Five support staff).

St. Vincent Resource Assessment Unit -- 1992-1997 (Staff: Senior RAU Leader, Dr. Robin Mahon; Fishery Biologist, to be recruited; Two CARICOM Deputies, to be recruited; Four support staff).

Trinidad Resource Assessment Unit -- 1992-1995 (Staff: RAU Leader, to be recruited; CARICOM Deputy, to be recruited; Two support staff).

Belize Resource Assessment Unit -- 1993-1996 (Staff: RAU Leader, to be recruited; CARICOM Deputy, to be recruited; Two support staff).

### Program activities

There are two major thrusts in CFRAMP activities: institutional strengthening and resource assessment. These activities will be implemented by government fisheries departments, Program Units and research/training institutions in the region. In those Member States which belong to the OECS, the OECS Fishery Unit will coordinate CFRAMP activities and collaborate in their implementation. This Unit has already begun several of the institutional strengthening activities in OECS Member States.

### Institutional strengthening

Institutional strengthening will be initiated and coordinated by the CFMU in Belize, and will include training for CARICOM nationals as well as enhancement of basic fishery management systems at the national and regional levels. Training will include fellowships for formal institutional training, as well as attachments and short courses. The last two of these will be organised into a fishery officer training program which will be institutionalised.

Enhancement of national fishery management systems will include assistance with:

- **National Fishery Management Plans** which will address management objectives for the various fisheries, and which will identify fishery assessment requirements;
- **National Fishery Data Collection and Management Systems**, as well as the capability to compile information at the regional level;

- **National Licensing/Registration Systems** to acquire information on fleet size and structure;
- **Community Participation in Fishery Management** through provision of information regarding management requirements, and through mechanisms for improving feedback from fishing communities;
- **National Fishery Advisory and Decision Making Mechanisms**, including formal mechanisms for inputs from all components of the fishery sector.

There will be a specific activity aimed at defining the most appropriate mechanism for conducting fishery research and management at the regional levels. The program will leave this mechanism in place.

### Resource assessment

Resource assessment subprojects will be carried out by the three Resource Assessment Units (RAUs) for all the major fishery resources of CARICOM Member States. The Belize RAU will be responsible for lobster and conch. The Trinidad RAU will be responsible for shrimp and groundfish. The St. Vincent RAU will be responsible for pelagics and deep and shallow reef demersal fishes, and is therefore, the RAU whose activities will be relevant to those of ICCAT. In each case of each resource assessment subproject the activities to be undertaken will be designed by the RAU staff in collaboration with the government fisheries department staff and scientists from research institutions in participating countries.

### Interaction with ICCAT

CFRAMP recognises the migratory and shared nature of most of the pelagic species which are exploited by CARICOM Member States. It is therefore aware of the need to take into account the fishing, resource assessment and research activities of other countries which are active in the western Atlantic.

Participation in the activities of ICCAT is considered to be the most effective way for CFRAMP to acquire data and information relating to these activities, and to benefit from the expertise and experience of ICCAT scientists. In particular, the activities of the Working Groups on Western Atlantic Tropical Tunas and Small Tunas, and those of the Subcommittee on Environment will be of interest to CFRAMP. Conversely, CFRAMP data collection and research activities will generate information which will contribute to the overall assessment and management of these resources.