

Engaging stakeholders in generating advice – the case of fishers

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**Expert Consultation on Operationalisation of the Caribbean Sea
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***Building a science-policy interface for ocean governance in the Wider
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Engaging fishers in generating advice: the case of fishers

Outline

- Importance of the fisheries sector in CARICOM/CARIFORUM region
- Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)
- Development of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO)
- CNFO policy influencing
- Lessons learned

Fisheries sector - in the CARICOM/CARIFORUM region

- **Employs over 182,000 persons, directly or indirectly**
 - **mainly from small scale fisheries in rural communities**
 - **lack or limited alternative income earning opportunities**
- **Produced approximately 195,000 MT with an estimated value of over US\$500 million (2000).**
- **Earns over US\$150 million per year from export.**
- **Major source of nutrition, especially in rural areas.**

Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)

Inaugurated: 26 March 2003 in Belize (HQ), Eastern Caribbean Office – St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Mission: to promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of the region's fisheries and other aquatic resources for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region.

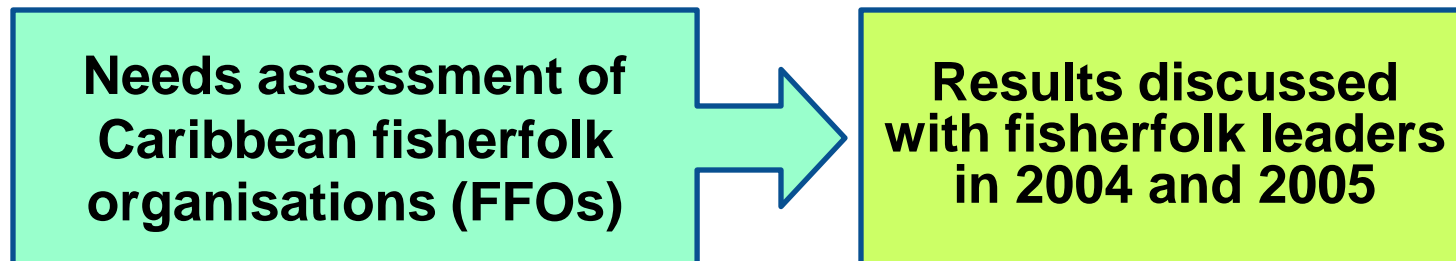
❖ **Programme areas include:**

➤ **Strengthening of fishers' organizations and improved community participation**

➤ **Development and promotion of risk reduction programmes for fishers**

- **Members:**
Anguilla,
Antigua and Barbuda,
The Bahamas,
Barbados,
Belize,
Dominica,
Grenada,
Guyana,
Haiti,
Jamaica,
Montserrat,
St. Kitts / Nevis,
St. Lucia,
St. Vincent and the Grenadines,
Suriname,
Trinidad and Tobago
Turks and Caicos Islands.

Needs assessment of Caribbean fisherfolk organisations (FFOs)



Recommendation:

Formation of a regional network of NFOs, recognising the need for strengthening fisherfolk organisations' capacities through a strategy for addressing the issues revealed

Issues revealed by the needs assessment:

- Lack of critical mass of NFOs for launching the network
- Fisherfolk organisations' weak management skills
- Insufficient access to relevant information by fisherfolk
- Fisherfolk's limited communication and advocacy skills

Project: Creation of a regional network of fisherfolk organisations

CTA, CRFM, UWI-CERMES, DOFs partnership with FFOs to create Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations

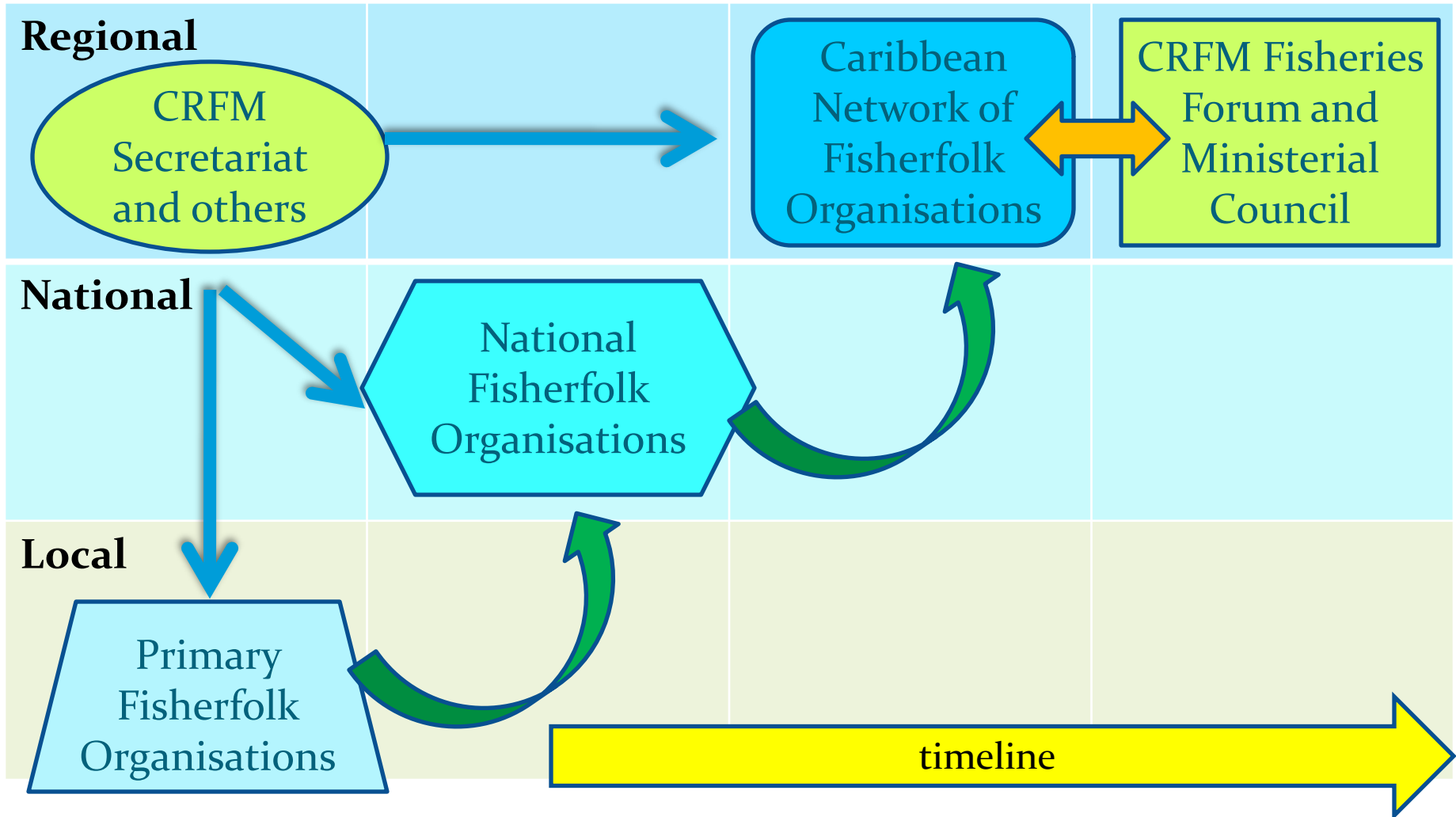
Objective: to contribute to improved income earnings, higher standards of living of fisherfolk and the sustainable management of fisheries resources in the Caribbean.

Purpose: to develop institutional capacities of fisherfolk organizations at the regional, national and community levels.

Approach included :

- Identifying potential for a regional network among FFOs
- Establishing, formalizing national fisherfolk organisations (NFOs) as the backbone of the regional network
- Training fisherfolk leaders in network management, communication

Multilevel strengthening and networking



Creation of a regional network of fisher folk organisations (cont'd)

2006 to 2009 achieved:

- **National consultations to launch NFOs**
- **NFOs or steering committees formed or strengthened**
- **September 2007, Grenada: Regional Fishers Stakeholder Workshop; Establishment of the CNFO-Coordinating Unit**
- **October 2008, St. Lucia: Training Workshop on Management, Communication and Advocacy for Fisher Folk Organizations**
- **Publication of the Fisher Folk Net newsletter**
- **Publication of 2008 Fisheries Stakeholders Directory (updated 2009)**

CNFO-CU policy influencing

CNFO-CU and partners convened two workshops in January and April 2009 on regional fisherfolk organisation policy influence and planning:

- **Embarked on the preparation of a strategy and work plan**
- **Presentation to the January 2009 CRFM's Ministerial Council Meeting [Issues: trade in fish and fish products; CFP; IUU fishing]**
- **Participation in the April 2009 CRFM Special Forum to develop a common fisheries policy for the CARICOM Member States**
- **Participation in the November 2009 Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) Meeting in Venezuela.**

Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO)

Vision: Primary, national and regional fisherfolk organizations with knowledgeable members collaborating to sustain fishing industries that are mainly owned and governed by fisherfolk who enjoy a good quality of life achieved through the ecosystem based management of fisheries resources.

Mission: To improve the quality of life for fisherfolk and develop a sustainable and profitable industry through networking, representation and capacity building.

The CNFO-CU is now participating as an observer at the Caribbean Fisheries Forum as the regional fisherfolk representative.

Lessons learned

Among the lessons learned:

- **effective participatory natural resource management requires an organisational culture that genuinely embraces shared policy and decision-making and collaborative management; appropriate institutional and organisational structures; material resources; adaptive strategies and linkages**
- **a significant investment in capacity building is needed over a period of several years in order to facilitate the development of a sustainable organisation or network**
- **partnerships between technical agencies, applied research institutes and resource users can contribute to the enhanced capacity and understanding of all parties and facilitates the development of consensual positions**
- **effective policy influence requires the use of multiple communication products and channels.**