

Report of the tenth session of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission and of the seventh session of the Committee for the Development and Management of Fisheries in the Lesser Antilles. Bridgetown, Barbados, 24-27 October 2001.

Lesser Antilles Ad Hoc Working Group on Sustainable Development of Sustainable Moored FAD Fishing

33. A summary of the report of the first meeting of the Lesser Antilles Ad Hoc Working Group on the Sustainable Development of Moored Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) Fishing was presented to the Commission, including the proposed terms of reference for the group and its inter-sessional work programme.

34. The countries that participated in the meeting included: Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Dominica, French overseas departments of Guadeloupe and Martinique, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.

35. The Commission agreed that the work of the group as defined in the terms of reference would not conflict but complement the work of ICCAT. It was suggested that a suitable mechanism to inform other relevant regional fishery bodies, such as ICCAT on the activities and work of the group be identified. The Commission expressed its support for the inter-sessional work programme of the group.

36. Some Lesser Antilles delegations cited benefits that can accrue from sub-regional exchanges, associated with moored FADs fishing and also the benefits that their fishers can receive from practicing sustainable fishing on moored FADs. They also spoke of the positive responses from their fishers to the introduction of FADs in their jurisdictions. It provided them with the opportunity to promote diversification from harvesting near shore reef resources.

37. The French delegate thanked the countries that participated in the first meeting for their cooperation and efforts to coordinate the formation of the working group. The delegate also reaffirmed its willingness to continue supporting the future work of the group.

38. The US delegate informed the Commission of the experimental FADs that have been deployed in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands and offered to share their results with the group. Both Cuba and the US also expressed their interest in establishing closer cooperation with the group. The Commission was in agreement that although the focus of the working group was in the Lesser Antilles, participation by any other WECAFC member country would be welcomed.

39. The Commission endorsed the formation of the Lesser Antilles Ad Hoc Working Group on the Sustainable Development of Moored FAD Fishing and approved its terms of reference which is included as Appendix D.

APPENDIX D

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE LESSER ANTILLES AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MOORED FAD FISHING

1. ROLE OF THE WORKING GROUP

1.1 Scope

The scope of the ad hoc working group is the sustainable development of moored FAD fishing in the Lesser Antilles. In undertaking its work, the working group will pay due attention to the conservation and management of large pelagic fisheries in the WECAFC Region and related or interacting species or fisheries.

The working group will take a multidisciplinary approach to the sustainable development of moored FAD fishing for large pelagics.

1.2 The goal of the Working Group

The goal of the working group will be to contribute to the sustainable development and management of large pelagic fisheries associated with moored FADs.

In pursuing this goal the working group will contribute to the fulfilment of national and regional responsibilities for shared pelagic fish stock management under the code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Particular attention will be paid to Article 8.11: "Artificial reef and fish aggregation devices".

1.3 Terms of Reference (TORs)

Large pelagic fish is a shared resource and therefore the TORs may apply at regional and/or national levels as appropriate.

The working group with the support of FAO, WECAFC Secretariat and IFREMER, will act in an advisory capacity to guide and facilitate the sustainable development of moored FAD fishing in the Lesser Antilles.

Specifically, the working group would:

- (a) Use the best available scientific information, review periodically and report on the magnitude and state of moored FAD fishing in the Lesser Antilles.
- (b) Promote and facilitate national and regional monitoring and research programmes on FAD fishing, including the harmonization of methodologies.
- (c) Collect data and information on moored FAD fishing which can be used for the large pelagic fisheries assessment and management in the WECAFC Region (e.g. biological, environmental, socio-economic);
- (d) Review periodically the economic and social situation of the moored FAD fishing at national and regional levels;
- (e) Evaluate when necessary the impact of national and regional management measures on the economic and social aspects of these fisheries;
- (f) Integrate moored FAD fishing in national fisheries management plans;
- (g) Formulate projects and programmes as necessary;
- (h) Promote the sharing of information and expertise;
- (i) Promote and co-ordinate acquisition of international aid in support of its activities;
- (j) Promote an extensive exchange of ideas and experiences regarding moored FAD fishing, including appropriate technologies;
- (k) Submit reports on its inter-sessional activities for consideration by the WECAFC;
- (l) Organize any other relevant studies requested by the Commission; and
- (m) Inform other relevant regional fishery bodies, such as ICCAT of their activities and work.

Initially the group will focus its attention on the following species associated with FADs due to their importance: yellowfin tuna, wahoo, dolphinfish, bigeye tuna, albacore, bluefin tuna, marlins, swordfish, sharks, kingfish, blackfin tuna, skipjack, barracuda, triggerfish.

1.4 Mode of Operation

1.4.1 Role of Countries

The members of the working group will play a leading role in its activities through the following activities and commitments:

- _ Participating in agreed activities of the working group, and ensuring the participation of appropriate experts;
- _ Implementing, at the National level, the work identified in the agreed work plan of the Group;
- _ Playing the role of host country for working group meetings on a rotational (periodic) basis.

It was suggested that countries should commit to the activities of the working group for a period of five years in the first instance.

1.4.2 Role of FAO

The FAO/WECAFC Secretariat will play a supporting role in the activities of the working group by assisting in:

- _ Co-ordinating the activities of the working group (including facilitate procurement of funding);
- _ Providing a technical secretary and technical backstopping;
- _ Providing technical assistance and support to research;
- _ Facilitating training and seek the collaboration of sub-regional training institutions, such as IRPM, UWI, UAG and CFTDI, in this regard.

1.4.3 Role of sub-regional organisations (e.g. CARICOM, OECS)

Sub-regional organisations have an important role to play in assisting their member countries to participate fully in the activities of the working group by:

- _ Providing expertise,
- _ Facilitating funding,
- _ Collaborating with the WECAFC Secretariat and IFREMER in co-ordinating the working group,
- _ Facilitating the decision-making process at the sub-regional level.

1.5 Communication

A mechanism for ongoing communication among working group members (e.g. internet), is essential to ensure that the work of the group is sustained between meetings. It must include all working group members.

The successful functioning of the working group also requires that each member country identify a national node or focal point through which communications will be directed.

The outputs of the working group will be communicated through working group reports to WECAFC and national fishery administrations via the Secretariat.

1.6 Working Group meetings

The working group should meet once a year or every two years. The meetings should be of 3-5 days duration. Meetings should use cost effective accommodations and institutional facilities.

Report of the twelfth session of the Commission and of the ninth session of the Committee for the Development and Management of Fisheries in the Lesser Antilles.
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 25–28 October 2005.

Working Group on the Sustainable Development of Moored FAD Fishing in the Lesser Antilles

58. The representative of IFREMER Martinique, Mr Lionel Reynal, presented an overview of the Lesser Antilles working group on FAD fishing sustainable development. This working group has met twice since its establishment in 2001 during the Tenth WECAFC plenary meeting. The first meeting of the working group was held in Martinique and the second in Guadeloupe in July 2004. The main activities of this multidisciplinary group were on FAD technology and the impacts of fishing on the resources.

59. An IFREMER project in support to this working group provided a description of fish aggregations around FADs and evaluated their biomass. Software to help FAD design was also written by IFREMER. The working group discussed other aspects so that it could better formulate questions for research and information gathering to ensure the sustainable development of FAD fishing. A project would be developed to:

- improve the design and define a maintenance schedule for the improved mooring of FADs and their marker buoys;
- evaluate the impact of fishing on fishery resources (according to FAD mooring site);
- better describe species migrations and try to identify their spawning and nursery areas by comparing the structure of catches between the islands of the Lesser Antilles and by making biological observations of landings;
- evaluate the uses of fishery resources and characterize the fishing structures and socio-economic status of users;
- analyse the evolution of fishing fleets in terms of investment, transfer of fishing effort, etc. and identify key factors, whether biological, economic, social or institutional;
- evaluate the management conditions of FAD access for the sustainable development of fishing in the Lesser Antilles; and
- mitigate the main risks that fishers are exposed to and formulate recommendations for enhanced safety and working conditions.

60. Mr Reynal presented a summary of this proposed project on promoting subregional cooperation for the development of sustainable fishing using FADs in the Lesser Antilles, which he plans to submit to donors on behalf of the working group. The project aims to promote regional cooperation in developing fisheries with FADs and regulating associated fishing activities. It was anticipated that the project will be implemented jointly by the member countries of the working group, WECAFC, IFREMER and IRPM.

61. Two socio-economists, an ergonomic expert and a food technologist have agreed to contribute to the design and implementation of the scientific and technical project. The name of the project is MAGDELESA (Moored Fish Aggregating Device in the Lesser Antilles). The design of the project will be finalized during a workshop with all the stakeholders, which is planned for the beginning of 2006, in Guadeloupe. It would include six themes: FAD

technology; resource biology and fishery impact; socio-economic features of the exploitation; institutional analysis of FADs in the Lesser Antilles; safety and working conditions at sea; and food quality. This project will be conducted during the coming year.

62. In commending the presenter for the report, one delegate enquired about the costs of establishing a FAD in order to determine if they can be implemented in other parts of the WECAFC region. Another country enquired about the bycatch from moored FAD fishing and whether the baits used presented risks to protected species, such as sea turtles. The presenter explained that the average cost of a FAD was between 1000 to 3000 Euros and that no bycatch of turtles or marine mammals were taken from moored FAD fishing.

63. The delegate of St Lucia expressed his appreciation of the ongoing cooperation and technical assistance they were receiving from The Regional Council of Martinique and IFREMER and reported on their ongoing efforts to regulate and monitor FAD fishing activities.

64. The Commission endorsed the proposed project and commended IFREMER for its contributions and leadership of the Working Group.