

WECAFC-FIRMS Collaboration

FIRMS Steering Committee

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Novel Use of FIRMS for Regional Fisheries Needs

WECAFC-FIRMS Collaboration

Background and Need

- * Inadequacy and gaps in fisheries data and statistics central issue to lack of fisheries management authority in WECAFC region (WECAFC 14 & 15)
- * WECAF 15 endorsed the WECAFC – Fisheries and Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS) “Partnership” (<http://wecafc.org/en/statistics-info/firms.html>)
- * WECAFC-FIRMS “Partnership” established by the FAO with direct involvement with the FIRMS Secretariat
 - Facilitating a variety of significant improvements in the region focusing on fisheries

Collaboration Goals

Overarching Aim:

“Supporting regional needs in strengthening data collection to support priority regional fishery management plans in the WECAFC area”

Goals:

- * Develop & advance Fisheries Inventories and Marine Resources Summaries through FIRMS
 - Providing minimum data for monitoring and management
 - Providing a dissemination mechanism for high quality information in absence of a database
 - Using shared concepts and standards (promoting harmonization)
 - Providing enhanced authoritative value & quality of the information shared
- * Promotion of a functional pilot regional database (RDB) targeting five shared regional stocks (Spiny lobster, Queen conch, Flying fish, Billfish, Shrimp and Groundfish) for monitoring and management
- * Support of regional governance through a collaborative task force bringing a set of complementary skills and knowledgeable of all Caribbean Fisheries issues I removed ‘knowledge’
 - Leveraging resources across multiple groups and initiatives
 - Enabling oversight and transparency for agreed regional goals
- * Establishment of partnerships with other important regional initiatives (e.g., CLME+ project Strategic Action Plan - SAP)
 - * Catalyzing on initiatives, skills and resources regionally

Collaboration Progress

WECAFC-FIRMS Data Workshop

(January 2016, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5789e.pdf>)

- * Consensus of minimum data requirements for regional data base for monitoring and management
Developed work plan for Phase I enabling: capacity building, task prioritizations, develop WG TORs
- Attended by 13 member countries and 2 EU territories
- **EU DG Mare sponsored**

Main FIRMS Phase I activities

- * Developed new inventories for several countries
- * Endorsement of WECAFC Fisheries Data and Statistics Working Group (FDS WG) by the WECAFC Commission (June 2016, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6031t.pdf>)
- * Draft WECAFC Data Collection Framework (DCF) and logbook
- * Secured Phase II funding for advancing the RDB towards a fully functional RDB and funded
- * Engaged in activities to identify potential for WECAFC regional Virtual Research Environment capacity building in stock assessment and database needs using the Horizon 2020 Blue BRIDGE functionalities

Collaboration Progress (cont.)

Developed Draft “*Communication and Visibility Plan*” for the Partnership

Convened Coordination Workshop (March 2017)

- * Extended the RDB to OSPESCA region
- * Extended the RDB to include:
 - * North Brazil Shelf shrimp and ground fish resources of North Brazil Shelf and recreational Billfish fisheries
 - * Enabling transversal synergies with the UN, UNEP CLME+ SAP and the GEF Global Environmental Fund project activity (GEF)
- * Developed inventory of fisheries products providing the initial minimum data for the region for informing status, monitoring and management
- * Analytical Matrix developed to guide further implementation and planning of the FIRMS Phase II

Translation of the FIRMS website to Spanish

- * Increasing potential for reaching OSPESCA countries for developing new inventories
- * Continued BlueBRIDGE activities- stock assessment and the RDB

WECAFC-FIRMS Poster



Strengthening data collection and research in support of fisheries management in the Wider Caribbean The WECAFC – FIRMS Partnership



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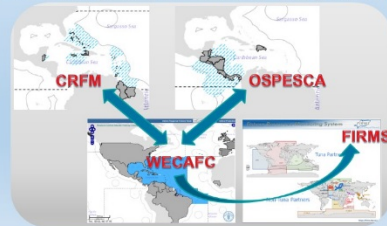
FIRMS - Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System is a partnership of intergovernmental fisheries organizations with competence for resource assessment and conservation aiming at collating worldwide information on stocks and fisheries.

WECAFC - Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission is a FAO regional fishery body promoting the effective conservation, management and development of the living marine resources in its area of competence.

CRFM (Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism) and **OSPESCA** (Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization) – Sub regional organizations associated to the Partnership in the context of WECAFC-CRFM-OSPESCA Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

➤ **Funding** - EU funded project (2015-16) improving data collection and research in support of fisheries management in the Wider Caribbean

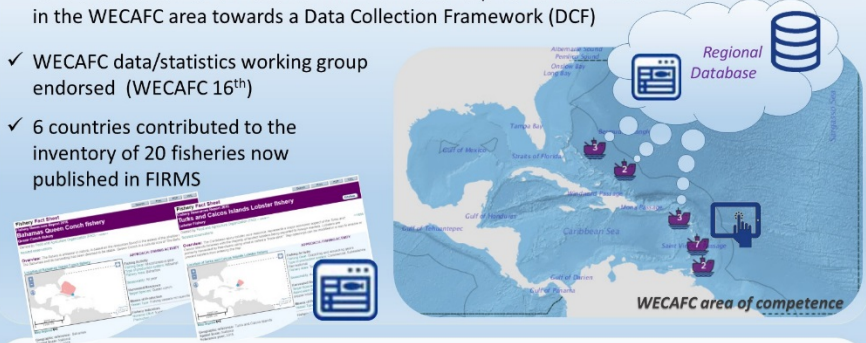
➤ **Technical Support** - iMarine Data e-Infrastructure www.i-marine.eu



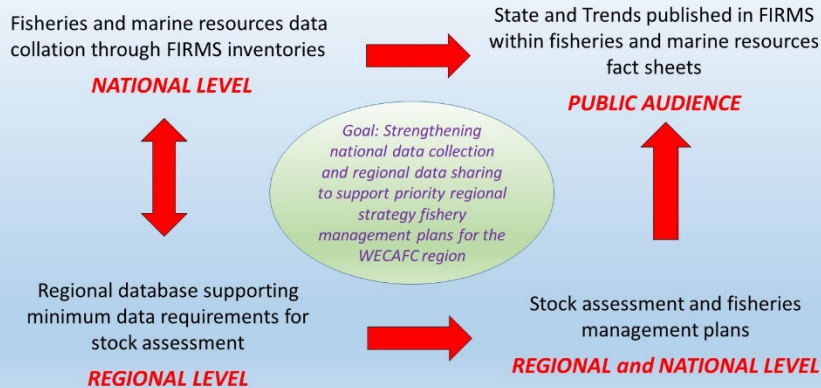
Achievements - 2016

As follow-up to FIRMS - WECAFC data workshop (14 countries, 1 EU overseas territory, 4 regional organizations)

- ✓ Foundation of the Regional Database laid with draft data sharing guidelines
- ✓ Consensus obtained on need for minimum data requirements for stock assessment in the WECAFC area towards a Data Collection Framework (DCF)
- ✓ WECAFC data/statistics working group endorsed (WECAFC 16th)
- ✓ 6 countries contributed to the inventory of 20 fisheries now published in FIRMS



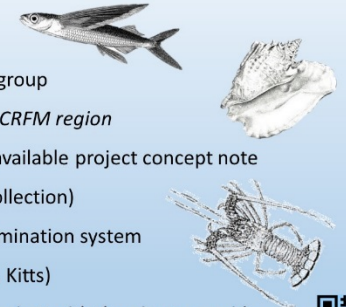
WECAFC-FIRMS Collaboration Scheme



Focus species: Queen conch, lobster and flying fish

Future plans

- ➔ Finalization of the pilot Regional Data Base (RDB) for the three focus species in the CRFM region
- ➔ Extension of the RDB to the OSPESCA region
- ➔ First meetings of the WECAFC data/statistics working group
- ➔ Extension of FIRMS inventories and fact sheets in the CRFM region
- ➔ Strengthening countries' statistical capacities – from available project concept note
 - New technologies (e-logbook, tablets for data collection)
 - Database management for processing and dissemination system
 - Survey implementations (Belize, St. Lucia and St. Kitts)
- ➔ Identification of external linkages for advancing the project with the aim to provide sound data for use in stock assessment and monitoring of marine resources in the wider Caribbean (CLME+)



Novel Use of FIRMS for Regional Fisheries Needs

- * FIRMS Partnership instrumental to improving basic data on fisheries
 - * Inventories / fact sheets providing minimum data for monitoring and management
 - * Utilizing FIRMS standards and concepts to add informative value to data
 - * Providing mechanism for basic dissemination on status and trends
- * WECAFC-FIRMS Partnership key example of extension of FIRMS benefits beyond traditional uses
 - * Supporting need to have access to high quality information for management
 - * Building on foundation information layers (inventories, fact sheets) to develop regional data base
 - * Enabling the sharing of quality information to support fishery management plans and assessment
 - * Developing multi layered cooperative initiatives
 - * Strategic and cost effective

WECAFC-FIRMS Collaboration Summary

Collaboration Provided:

- * **Improvements in basic fishery information and capacity to share Inventories, fact sheets**
- * **Strategic opportunity to extend basic fishery information improvements beyond FIRMS traditional partnership**
 - * **Developing pilot regional database informed by agreed standards**
 - * **Incorporating shared agreements and harmonization across region**
 - * **Capitalizing coordination across multiple organizations optimizing resources and knowledge across diverse skillsets**
- * **Potential ability for managers to provide information on regional resource status informed through high quality fisheries data**

Thank you

Questions and Comments Welcome