



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



For Immediate Release

Understanding vulnerability to climate change in coastal and fishing communities in Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Port of Spain, May 18, 2018 – To enhance resilience to climate change, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), and Fisheries Authorities of Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines have been working with coastal and fishing communities in the two countries to better understand local vulnerability and capacity to adapt to climate change in the fisheries sector.

A wide range of community stakeholders, including fisherfolk and their organisations, farmers, women's and youth groups and the private sector were engaged in vulnerability and capacity assessments in Canaries and Dennery in Saint Lucia, and in Barrouallie and Calliaqua in St. Vincent and the Grenadines from April 23 to May 5, 2018. The assessments, including targeted interviews, focus groups and community workshops, captured local knowledge and perspectives on current and potential impacts of climate change, vulnerable areas and groups in the community, and priorities for adaptation. They focused on areas critical to the fisheries sector, such as landing sites, markets and coastal and marine ecosystems that support fisheries, as the four target communities are heavily dependent on fishing-related activities for food security, livelihoods and household income.

Stakeholders identified increased coastal erosion, more extreme weather including rough seas, storms and storm surge, major influxes of sargassum seaweed and warmer ocean temperatures leading to coral bleaching, and shifts in fish distribution as climate change impacts that are affecting their communities and livelihoods. Linked to these impacts, they were concerned about loss and damage to coastal infrastructure like fish landing sites and boats, reduced ability to fish and declines in catch. They also highlighted challenges with marketing and development of fish products, and limited options in terms of insurance, safe equipment storage and alternatives for income generation that contribute to local vulnerability. Notably, women were identified as particularly vulnerable within these coastal communities due to limited livelihood opportunities, including fishing. Priorities for adaptation in the fisheries sector included use of climate smart fish aggregating devices (FADs), improving access to safe equipment storage and insurance for extreme events, strengthening local fisherfolk cooperatives and developing alternative livelihoods and small businesses especially targeting women.



Fishing and VCA activities in Canaries and Dennery, Saint Lucia



Fishing and VCA activities in Calliaqua and Barrouallie, St Vincent and the Grenadines

These assessments are being conducted under the [Regional implementation of the vulnerability and capacity assessment \(VCA\) of coastal and fishing communities for the Climate Change Adaptation in the Fisheries of the Eastern Caribbean Project \(CC4FISH\)](#). This work aims to improve understanding of climate change impacts and vulnerabilities at the community level to inform adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean fisheries sector. VCAs are being undertaken in five countries - Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, from 2017-2018. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is implementing these activities in collaboration with the FAO/Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC), the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of the West Indies and national fisheries authorities of the five countries mentioned. The CC4FISH project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

About CC4FISH: The Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector Project (CC4FISH) aims to increase resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts through introduction of adaptation measures in fisheries management and capacity building of fisherfolk and aquaculture farmers in the Eastern Caribbean. It is being implemented by FAO/ Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) and national fisheries authorities in the seven project countries, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago from 2016-2020. CANARI has been contracted by FAO to undertake the regional implementation of a vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) in coastal and fishing communities under Component 1 of CC4FISH to inform adaptation in the fisheries sector. The CC4FISH project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). For more information on CC4FISH, see: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/climage-change-adaptation-eastern-caribbean-fisheries/en/>

About CANARI: The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for more than 25 years. Our mission is to promote equitable participation and effective collaboration in managing natural resources critical to development. Our programmes focus on capacity building, policy planning and development, research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, and fostering regional partnerships. For more information on CANARI and the VCA work, see: <http://www.canari.org/vca-for-cc4fish>.

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