



For Immediate Release

Caribbean fisherfolk organisations to receive direct mentorship for enhanced fisheries sustainability

Port of Spain, November 8, 2019 – Fisherfolk leaders, mentors and representatives of the Department of Fisheries from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines participated in the Caribbean Fisherfolk Mentors Training workshop in St. Vincent and the Grenadines from October 29th to November 1st. The workshop was a key activity under the “Developing Organisational Capacity for Ecosystem Stewardship and Livelihoods in Caribbean Small-Scale Fisheries (StewardFish)” project which is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

During the opening ceremony for the workshop Terrence Phillips, Regional Project Coordinator for StewardFish, FAO noted that *“the countries participating in StewardFish face difficult problems associated with the sustainable development of fisheries, including insufficient financial resources and human capacity in state institutions; and lack of organisational, human, financial and technical capacity among non-state actors such as fisherfolk”*. The StewardFish project is aimed at addressing these issues by empowering fisherfolk throughout fisheries value-chains to engage in resource management, decision-making processes and sustainable livelihoods, with strengthened institutional support at all levels.

Phillips also noted that the StewardFish project was building on other regional projects such as the GEF funded Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector (CC4FISH) project and CLME+ Shrimp and Ground sub-project, and European Union funded Powering Innovations in Civil Society and Enterprises for Sustainability in the Caribbean (PISCES) project, which are contributing in some way to improving governance, management and building the capacities of fisherfolk and their organisations. He highlighted *“With the on-the-ground activities for StewardFish coming on stream, we need to see them as building on or complementing the work of the other projects, and pay attention to creating synergies as we work towards achieving the vision of the Strategic Action Programme for the sustainable management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems”*.

As one of the co-executing partners of the StewardFish project, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is applying an innovative organisational capacity strengthening method to help build the capacity of the national fisherfolk organisations/lead primary fisherfolk organisations that are members of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) in the seven project countries. The method will use trained mentors to deliver a tailored programme of training, mentoring, coaching, action learning and facilitating peer exchanges for organisational strengthening.

At the four-day workshop, mentors as well as fisherfolk leaders and fisheries agency representatives built their capacity to support fisherfolk organisations in three priority areas – financial sustainability, good governance and participatory monitoring, evaluation and learning. Mitchell Lay, Coordinator of the CNFO, encouraged mentors to be sensitive to the issues facing small-scale fisherfolk, noting that small-scale fisherfolk were often looked down upon. He stated, *“What we [small-scale fisherfolk] do is a dignified employment, and it contributes meaningfully to society”*.

Speaking on the relationships between mentors and fisherfolk organisations, Lay highlighted, “relationship building is important – respect will engender success”.



Workshop participants, including fisherfolk, representatives from the Fisheries divisions and mentors from 7 StewardFish project countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. PHOTO BY CANARI

About the StewardFish project: The *StewardFish* project is aimed at implementing the 10-year Strategic Action Programme for the sustainable management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ SAP) within the seven countries by empowering fisherfolk throughout fisheries value chains to engage in resource management, decision-making processes and sustainable livelihoods, with strengthened institutional support at all levels. The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), implemented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and executed by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO), Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies of the University of the West (UWI-CERMES), Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission (WECAFC) and Fisheries Division(s) of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Learn more about Steward Fish here: <https://canari.org/stewardfish-project/>

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. See here for more information on CANARI: <http://www.canari.org/>.

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