



For Immediate Release

Fisherfolk organisations in Anguilla and Montserrat receive small grants to build climate resilience

Port of Spain, October 7, 2019 – The Anguilla Fisherfolk Association (AFFA) and the Montserrat Fishing and Boaters Association (MFBA) were both recently awarded small grants by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) totalling US\$24,000 to support practical action projects that demonstrate ecosystem stewardship to improve climate resilience and livelihoods in Anguilla and Montserrat. The small grants, which are targeted at fisherfolk organisations, are a key component of the project “Climate Change Adaptation in the Fisheries of Anguilla and Montserrat” funded by the Darwin Initiative through the United Kingdom Government.

Assessments conducted under the project reveal that the fisheries sectors of both islands are in fact vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and climate variability. Consequently, given their importance to livelihoods and national food security, building resilience of the small-scale fisheries sectors in Anguilla and Montserrat is critical.

Fishers in both islands have reported impacts to their livelihoods triggered by climate-related effects,



Fishing boat damaged by the passage of Hurricane Irma in Anguilla in 2017 (Photo credit: AFFA)

such as higher sea surface temperatures and more intense storms, on coastal and marine ecosystems. For example, fishers have noticed that the productivity and quality of nearshore marine ecosystems, such as coral reefs, have declined over the years. This is in part due to the warming of coastal waters, but also to human-based sources of pollution. This decline in productivity has resulted in increased fuel costs and safety risks for fishers who now have to travel farther out to sea to cooler, more productive waters where catches may be more favourable. In the case of Montserrat, it has also meant an increased reliance on Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) and pelagic fisheries.

Sheldon Carty, president of the MFBA, stated that *“Climate change has impacted our nearshore shallow waters most significantly, reducing our fish stocks and our fish landing volumes. We are excited and very thankful for the small grant. It is the first grant the association has ever received.”*

To help support the resilience of these nearshore ecosystems, the AFFA and MFBA will use their small grants to promote ecosystem stewardship actions by fisherfolk to protect and restore critical coastal habitats that support fisheries in both Anguilla and Montserrat. In Montserrat, fisherfolk will engage with media, schools and other civil society stakeholders to create a “fishers against marine pollution” campaign including a clean-up activity for ghauts, shallow water reefs and beaches to help raise awareness about reducing marine litter. In Anguilla, fisherfolk will work with the Anguilla National Trust

to help restore marine habitats in the Prickly Pear Marine Park. It is expected that these restoration actions will lead to the creation of new habitats and sanctuary spaces for commercially and ecologically important marine species as well as other nearshore and coral reef fish species. The small grant projects will also seek to address other key climate-related issues impacting fishers' lives and livelihoods in both islands.

Mr. Carty noted *"One of the things we want to do under our project is to pilot the climate-smarting of two existing deep fish FADs. By climate-smarting these FADs, we can use satellite technology to help with locating these important devices when they get lost during bad weather and storm surges."* The MFBA will also seek to reduce incidents of "ghost fishing", resulting from fish being unintentionally caught in traps lost during storms and rough seas, by climate-smarting fish traps.

The AFFA's project will address safety at sea for fishers, an issue which has been an ongoing concern in the Anguillan fishing community. In regard to this issue, Aristo Richardson, President of the AFFA, noted that *"the safety of Anguillan fishers at sea remains a major concern for us, especially with the more extreme weather and rougher seas that we have been experiencing. We want to raise awareness about this issue and ensure that fishers know exactly what to do to respond to safety challenges at sea and how we can support each other."*

The AFFA and MFBA will collaborate with the Anguilla Fishing Cooperative and Montserrat Fishing Cooperative to implement the small grant projects. The groups will receive technical support from CANARI and the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources (DFMR) – Anguilla and the Fisheries and Ocean Governance Unit in the Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Housing, Land and Environment (MATHLE) - Montserrat. Both projects are expected to be completed by February 2020.

About the project: The *Climate Change Adaptation in the Fisheries of Anguilla and Montserrat* project aims to mainstream climate change adaptation into fisheries governance using an ecosystem approach to fisheries. It is being jointly implemented by CANARI, the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources - Anguilla, the Fisheries and Ocean Governance Unit in the Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Housing, Land and Environment (MATHLE) - Montserrat and the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), University of the West Indies from 2017-2020. The project is being funded by the Darwin Plus: Overseas Territories Climate and Environment Fund. See here for more information: <http://www.canari.org/climate-change-adaptation-in-the-fisheries-of-anguilla-and-montserrat>.

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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