



Fisher Folk Net

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A newsletter to share information among fisher folk organisations and people in fisheries on matters relating to sustainable fisheries management and other issues of interest to fisher folk organisations throughout the region

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Changing Seasons

As the 2009 Atlantic Hurricane Season winds down and the fishing season across the Caribbean ramps up, fishers are urged to take all the necessary safety-at-sea precautions while out fishing. This issue of Fisher Folk Net will touch on upcoming events of importance to fishers while recapping highlights from some islands' Fisherman's Day celebrations.

This year, amid the usual festivities, fishing industries also found ways through various public discussion forums to address this year's theme of "Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security". This theme from the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation was set to coincide with World Food Day 2009's theme: "Achieving Food Security in times of crises".



CNFO-CU attends its first Fisheries Forum

The 7th CRFM Caribbean Fisheries Forum held in St Lucia at the end of July marked the first time that the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations - Coordinating Unit (CNFO-CU) was seated as an observer at the Forum.



Mr. MacMillan Medard, executive member of the St Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Limited, making the CNFO-CU report to the Forum.

Mr. MacMillan Medard delivered a report on behalf of the CNFO-CU in which he outlined the progress made by the CU in reaching out to primary fisherfolk and national fisherfolk organisations to bring them into the

collective. However, he admitted that the network could only be as strong as its national and local membership and he urged the gathered fisheries management representatives to continue to support the formation of the CNFO and ongoing developmental efforts of the fisheries organisations in their respective countries.

First summit of fishers and scientists slated for November



Coordinator of the CNFO-CU Mr. Mitchell Lay (left), Barbadian fisher Mr. Anderson “Rogee” Kinch (right) and Mr. James Franks of GCFI at a Miami meeting on the GMA Summit earlier this year.

Coordinator of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations Coordinating Unit (CNFO-CU) Mr. Mitchell Lay has been working with the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) in support of the first ever Gladding Memorial Award Regional Fishers Summit. This first gathering of its kind will mark a historic moment as fishers from throughout the English, Spanish and French-

speaking Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico join for the first time with scientists and researchers to find common solutions for some of the most vexing issues facing the fisheries of the Wider Caribbean.

“Fisheries management without our input has failed. The Fishers’ Summit is an initiative that will ultimately lead to more sustainable fishery resources and livelihoods, and more success stories in the Caribbean,” said Lay.

The Summit will occur when the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) hosts the first Gladding Memorial Award Regional Fishers Summit as a major component of the 62nd GCFI conference slated for Cumaná, Venezuela from November 2 to 6, 2009. The Gladding Memorial Award (GMA) is one of the highest honors in marine conservation for fishers.

Barbados pushing for more responsible fisheries

The Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations (BARNUFO) is joining with the Barbados Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC), the Barbados Fisheries Division, and the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill to host a sensitisation workshop on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries developed by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation. The one-day workshop being held on October 12 under the theme: “In crisis and in calm – meeting food security needs through responsible fisheries” will coincide with celebrations for this year’s World Food Day on October 16.

BARNUFO in rebuilding mode

Since June, BARNUFO has organized a series of meetings with long liner and ice-boat fishers; boat owners; and user groups from across the island for the purpose of looking at their challenges and how BARNUFO could assist. These meetings, said BARNUFO President Ms. Vernel Nicholls, are part of the national fisherfolk organisation's re-building efforts.



BARNUFO President Ms. Vernel Nicholls (second from left) addressing a meeting with fishers. Seated from left to right are BARNUFO Treasurer Mr. Alvin Cummins, Vice President Mr. Shirley Young, and Secretary Ms. Eulene Haynes.

Ms. Nicholls said she was working to address the issues identified through the FAC, of which she is a member. Among the challenges identified were the allocation of stalls for the fishers, which she said BARNUFO was looking to address through working with the Markets Division in the development and restructuring of the Bridgetown Fishing Complex. She added that BARNUFO was also pursuing outreach programmes with community groups within the fish landing sites

area to create linkages between the community groups together with the primary fisherfolk organizations in the area. She said Weston Power Builders Council was working with the Weston Fisherfolk Organisation in St James to help revive that PFO and BARNUFO was in the process of identifying other community groups that could function the same way.

Ms. Nicholls added that BARNUFO would also be taking on board the suggestion by fishers that there was a need for an education programme in the schools, summer camps and nurseries because of the feeling that young people would be interested in the fishing industry if you could capture their interests from early.

She said that this was important because when you look at sustainability of the fishing industry there were not many young people, especially young men to take up the mantle, and now was the time to target the younger minds. She said this could be done through fishers going into schools and giving demonstrations, and find ways to expand the interest among school-aged children for working on fishing boats during the summer.

Antigua fishing industry highlighted at symposium

Antigua's fishing industry has approximately 1 400 fishers, most of whom are male, only 29% of whom have attained post-primary education. There are currently 32 landing sites (four with ice-making facilities) and five of these meet the standards required for trade with the European Union; and the 2006 Fisheries Act will be implemented in 2010.

This was highlighted when the Fisheries Division of Antigua and Barbuda marked Fisherman's Day with a Symposium held on the day at its Point Wharf headquarters. Organized by the Fisheries Division and hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Marine Environment, the symposium was held with the objective of looking for ways forward for the fishing industry.

Antiguan fisherman and co-ordinator of the CNFO-CU. Mr. Mitchell Lay, chaired the day's proceedings. Deliberations on the way forward included discussion on whether to move the fisheries from "open access" to limited/controlled access; the creation of closed seasons for lobster and conch; limitations on net mesh size; and increasing the number of marine reserves while zoning some of the ones already in existence.

SVG's Fisherman's Month of celebrations

St Vincent and the Grenadines avoided clashing with its national carnival activities by celebrating its Fisherman's Day (and surrounding month of activities) in May. Activities included several "fish nites", an investment forum, church service, beach clean-up, and fishing competitions for men, women and children.

It all came together on their June 1 Fisherman's Day with the annual prize giving ceremony. Reports from the SVG Fisheries Division were that despite consistent rains that Whit Monday, hundreds turned out in the afternoon to support their fishers at the ceremony in the Chamber of Commerce car park in Kingstown.



SVG Prime Minister Hon. Ralph Gonsalves (right) congratulates Cosmos "Joe" Harry (centre) and crew member Gregory Doyle (photo and information compliments of the SVG Fisheries Division).

Cosmos "Joe" Harry of Rose Place was awarded the Fisherman of the Year title and walked away with the coveted 75 horse power (hp) four stroke Yamaha engine valued at over EC\$21,000, plus other gifts, for landing 548.4 lbs of fish on his vessel *Delight*.

Jamaica fisheries symposium and expo nets large audience

About 100 fishers attended the Fisheries Symposium & Expo held on July 1 to celebrate International Fisherman's Day in Jamaica, according to Ms. Ingrid Parchment, Executive Director of the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation.

Ms. Parchment said the fishers used the symposium and expo as an opportunity to mount a vocal appeal to Government to enact the new fisheries act and sign the order for the creation of sanctuaries. They also called on Government to outline what financial

support they were offering to fishers, as well as outline how it was going to reduce dynamiting and catching of juvenile fish and lobster during the closed seasons.



Jamaica's Fisherman's Day symposium and expo attracted many young men involved or interested in becoming involved in that fishing industry.

Several agencies attended the symposium and expo and mounted displays, including the National Environment & Planning Agency, Fisheries Division and Nature Conservancy (which also showed the video "*Massa God Fish Can' Done*"). Presentations by fish scientists were also well received and winners of an essay competition organised by the Rocky Point Citizens Association focusing on the lives of fishers were also in attendance.

There was also a discussion on the Lion Fish, which has been spreading its way down the Caribbean chain from Florida and causing a potential threat to other native species. The event was held with financial support from the Fisheries Division, the private sector and the Portland Bight Fisheries Management Council.



Ms. Ingrid Parchment (centre), Executive Director, C-CAM, addressing the scores of participants who turned out for the fisheries symposium and expo in celebration of

Jamaican fisher's group calling for stronger penalties

The Portland Bight Fisheries Management Council, which is made up of representatives from beaches in the Portland Bight Protected Area and other interested parties in and outside of government, has asked for the banning of mesh to be used for pots that are smaller than 1 1/2 inch and for persons dynamiting to receive stiffer penalties.

They have also recommended that nearshore areas be designated as fish sanctuaries and are eager for the management of these areas to commence, according to Ms. Ingrid Parchment, Executive Director of the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation.

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