



FisherFolk Net

Woman Leads in Saint Lucia National Fisherfolk

President of Goodwill Fishermen's Cooperative and newly elected President of Saint Lucia Fisherfolk Cooperative Society Ltd, Ms. Dannie James was featured by the CNFO in celebration of Women's Day 2019

After suffering the loss of her husband, Dannie James, 43, fought to provide for six of her children all on her own and then "adopted" over 40 children from the surrounding areas who in some way or another needed either a Mother's touch or just a safe place to rest their head. Dannie has continued to open her household to any and all young persons who need help.



She worked alongside her husband but when he died unexpectedly, she was left with no partner and six young children to tend to. From there she realized quickly that the opportunities were sparse particularly for a Rastafarian woman and she would have to find a way to support herself and her children.



Always believing in being her own boss, Danni decided to start farming and noticing their mother's situation her older children chipped in. From farming, she purchased a boat and started selling fish with her second son, in that way her

family of seven was able to gain income from both farming and fishing.



One of Dannie's objective as the leader of the fishing communities is to encourage women to get more involved in fishing as a career. For her fishing is very diverse and interesting. Also, her greatest wish is that the government would acknowledge fisherfolks meaningful contribution to the economy and would endeavour to help form markets for the sale of fish and other seafood products. Dannie asserts that the fishing industry does not need privatization to foreign entities who do not have fishers' interest at heart.



Picture of Ms. Dannie at the at her fisherfolk Organisation's Annual General Meeting

Proposed Port Development in Montserrat Displaces Fishers

By Sheldon Carty

On February 4, 2019 fishers participated in a stakeholder meeting on the proposed Port Development for Montserrat. Their fishing boats are currently moored in the direct path of the proposed development. The discussion centered around relocation and arrangements for the construction period and the long term. No final decision on the faith of fishers and their boats have been made.



Montserrat Fishers at Stakeholders Meeting

Independence Village, Belize Fishers, Reject the Ban on Gill Net Fishing

- Sydney Fuller



L-R Mr. Armando Ramirez, Mr. Sydney Fuller and Mr. David Leslie

The Fishing boats mooring area in Montserrat



The Belize Fishermen Cooperative Association, led by Mr. Sydney Fuller and Mr. Armando Ramirez met with Mr. David Leslie and commercial fishers from the village of Independence on 24th February 2019. The main topic of discussion was the use of Gill Net fishing in the water of Belize.



The fisherfolks in attendance insisted to continue the use of Gill Net fishing. They claimed that adequate legislations are in place for Gill Net use. What they believe is needed is to enforce these legislations. They further stated that if there is a ban on Gill Net fishery, many commercial fishers will be left without a job. The fishermen decided that this is a fight they will take to the bitter end.



Mr. Fuller making a presentation to fishers

USER RIGHTS 2019



Fisherfolk Leaders at Userrights

FAO organised the second User Rights meeting (FoUR19), from 11-14 February 2019 in Italy, to plan its work on fisheries tenure and user rights over the coming four years.

Mitchell Lay was there representing SSF. He and the other fisherfolks commented that the SSF guidelines and the tenure guidelines (VGGT) have sufficient provisions to address tenure and user rights in fisheries. It is therefore, completely unnecessary to engage in any other process to develop additional guidelines. The issue is promoting the implementation of the SSF Guideline and the VGGT. They suggested that the outcome of the meeting be used as input for developing a tool kit and a score card to help in securing appropriate tenure in fisheries. Regional workshops could be used to assess the ongoing implementation of SSF and VGGT, to further develop the toolkit and score card.

SAINT LUCIA FISH MARKET CLOSES DOWN



Saint Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation

All the staff, which is about forty-seven (47) to fifty (50), of the Saint Lucia Fish Market received “Staff Redundancies” letters. The Saint Lucia Fish Marketing Corporation (SLFM) informed of the decision to discontinue operations due to economic conditions which has rendered the said entity unviable.

One staff member said that the staff layoff was disrespectful. In the letter dated February 1, 2019 stated that this will take effect March 1, 2019. It also advised that all termination benefits will be paid as prescribed by law.

A fisher is concerned about there being no consultations with fishers. Due to the market close down, the fish is now being sold at a cheap price because there is no competition for fish vendors, fishers are being offered low prices. After being without ice for almost three weeks, today, March 13, 2019 fishers met a private company running the production of ice at the Vieux Fort fisheries complex. The fishers in Saint Lucia and the staff members of the market continue to feel

disrespected and marginalised by these actions.



Choiseul Fish Market an example of other fish markets in Saint Lucia

Conch Fisher Exchange between Saint Lucia and Antigua and Barbuda Fishers

During the days 4th to 9th February five conch fishers and one Fisheries Extension Officer from Saint Lucia visited Antigua and Barbuda for an exchange termed “Conch Fishery Management Study”. The exchange was under the “Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector “CC4FISH” project, implemented by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) with funding from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).



The outcome of the study is that fishers will implement good practices when SCUBA diving, gain knowledge on conch fishery management, share their experiences with their colleagues and identify areas for co-management.



Picture from the Learning Exchange

BAN ON CONCH FISHING IN JAMAICA UNTIL 31st JANUARY 2020

Analysis of data of the conch population off Jamaica’s coast indicates that the ban on the fishing, sale and export of queen conch (*Genus strombus*) will be extended well beyond the near one-year timeline announced by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries. It could take years before the conch stock is replenished to commercially viable levels.

“It is an inescapable biological fact that conch take between four to five years to mature. This means that the conch closure may extend for considerably longer than one year,” marine biologist Dr Karl Aiken told **The Gleaner** yesterday. “It is not quite bust yet, but bad enough that it had to be closed for a while.”

*For more information go to online Gleaner:
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AM Christopher
Serju/Gleaner Writer*



We Can and We Need to Harvest More Conchs in the Bahamas

- Fritz Thompson

I have been Fishing the whole of the Northern Bahamas for over 39 years. I have personally studied the fish, conchs and lobster's migration patterns here in our waters. I have used this information to make decisions on best fishing areas and best times of year for different species.

Our export quota started at 100,000 and has been raised over the years to 600,000. WE ARE MEETING THAT DEMAND because the conchs are there. In the report that was produced to me, that was done by the Scientist from Chicago, "Repeated surveys were conducted at four locations with between 5 and 22 years of temporal separation." The Berry Islands, Chub Cay (2009 and 2016), Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park (1994, 2011 and 2016), Grassy Cays (2010 and 2016). It was reported that in one area, the densities of flared-lip conch had DECLINED 76%. This scientific study has FEW sites, in my view, does NOT warrant an alarm for the Bahamas. I would support a better study as to the DECLINE IN THE EXUMA CAYS LAND AND SEA PARK. We should learn from their experience. While the rest of the Bahamas are bragging, studies show different for the Park.

I had raised another question as to whether the Bahamas has more Conchs or more Lobsters? Is it easier to find Conchs or Lobsters? Me, I say conchs. A conch is said to produce over a million eggs annually, Lobster, half a million. We export over 4 million pounds of Lobster and ONLY 600,000 pounds of Conchs. Conch export is ONLY 15% of the Lobster amount. From these 600,000 pounds of skinned conch, all of the skin and guts are dumped into the sea, providing food for the nearby fish. Any cut back or stopping of this supply, gives them no other choice than to eat smaller fish, which will surely have a major effect on the decline of the fish population, serious decline.

Being an experienced fisherman, and knowing of our 180,000 square miles of waters, I would say that it would take about 10 years to cover all of the conch aggregation sites and get a proper assessment. I appreciate the detailed report from the scientist, however, I feel that three site studies cannot justify the whole Bahamas. No more protected areas until we find out why is my recommendations, along with dealing stronger with poachers.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Caribbean Fisheries Forum, St. Kitts and Nevis 20-21 March 2019
- Caribbean Fisherfolk Day 29 June
- UN Oceans Conference 2020
- International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022

CNFO MEMBERS JOIN US ON WHATSAPP

Send a whatsapp message to +501-624-5364 and make the request. Currently 79 fishers from CNFO member countries are in the news group and share real time news updates, weather conditions and more.



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