

FisherFolk Net

Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations

Small-Scale Fishers Spotlighted at GCFI78 Fishers' Forum – November 17-21, 2025, Cartagena, Colombia

On the opening day of the 78th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI78) meeting in Cartagena, Colombia, the Fishers' Forum featured Mitch Lay, who highlighted the vital role of small-scale fishers in promoting responsible and sustainable fisheries across the Caribbean. He emphasized the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) Guidelines as key tools for protecting marine ecosystems while supporting livelihoods.

Mitch linked the SSF Guidelines to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), showing how local actions contribute to global objectives such as food security, poverty reduction, and marine stewardship. He also showcased real-life examples of SSF fishers actively practicing sustainable fisheries and highlighted GMA award winners as leaders inspiring others in the region.



picture credit: CNFO

Mitch stressed in the Fishers Forum the importance of collaboration among SSF organizations, knowledge-sharing, and recognition of incremental improvements. Mitch concluded that even small gains in sustainable practices, partnerships, and innovation can collectively drive significant progress toward regional and global fisheries goals.

CNFO members in attendance included Mr. Junior Quashie from Trinidad and Tobago, accompanied by Ms. Ayaana Cooper-Winchester of the CNFO Women's Group, Mr. Adrian LaRoda of the Bahamas, and CNFO Women's Group member Ms. Sharease Cephas.

Additionally, the Voices from the Shore Theatre Collective from Barbados, represented by Ms. Sylvia White and Ms. Michelle V. Barrow, were present, building capacity in Popular Theatre.

STORIES FROM CARIBBEAN FISHING SECTOR



GRENADA

Grenada will be banned from exporting fish to the United States starting 1 January 2026 because the country did not meet the requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), including proper reporting, monitoring, and preventing harm to marine mammals. The main issue is that Grenada has no legal protections, no bycatch monitoring system, and no proper data collection, which the US requires before approving fish imports. This ban will hit the longline sector hardest—especially tuna exporters.



Picture credit: Mavis George

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

On October 22, 2025, the Antigua Fisheries Division, together with local fishing organisations hosted a national fisherfolk meeting in Antigua and Barbuda. The meeting helped raise awareness of fisheries policies that affect fishers. It also explored new opportunities for collaboration to support sustainable small-scale fisheries.

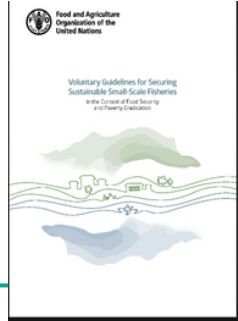


Picture Credit: Nadine Earle

JAMAICA

When Category 5 Hurricane Melissa hit Jamaica on October 28, 2025, Nadine, a boatowner and secretary of the Alloa Fisherman's Cooperative in Discovery Bay, faced severe damage to her home and boat. She reported that in the picture is Sandra Archer, one of the active women fishers who lost her fishing traps.

Small-Scale Fisheries GUIDELINES CORNOR



About SSF Guidelines

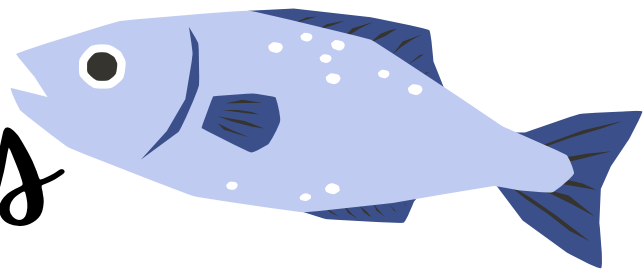
Many unrecognized and marginalized

Ninety percent of capture fishers and fish workers in the world work in small-scale fisheries, and small-scale fisheries contribute to over 50% of fish catch in developing countries. Yet small-scale fishing communities are often the poorest and most politically and socially marginalized. This marginalization often means communities lack access to basic services such as drinking water and housing, but also to education and health services.

CNFO & SSF Guidelines:

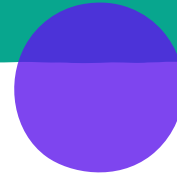
- **Turks and Caicos SSF Guidelines Workshop April 10-11, 2025. (Collaboration CSFUND/TIDES, Fisherfolk Organisations and national partners)**
- **St. Vincent and Grenadines SSF Guidelines Workshop May 12-13, 2025. (Collaboration PADF, CRFM, CSFUND, National Fisherfolk Organisations, National partners, and **Sandals Resorts International**).**
- **Mitchell Lay's** presentation on SSF Guidelines and Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy at GCFI78 – Cartagena, Colombia, October 27, 2025 (Travel support FAO)

Project Updates



CSFUND/TIDES FOUNDATION

January 9, 2024 Tides Foundation, on the recommendation of CSFund, gave the CNFO a grant of USD\$60,000.00. This grant is for the CNFO's Just Transitions. The grant period is from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2026



RAG-LAC

Regional Advisory Groups (RAG) were created in 2020 to ensure a coherent implementation of policies, strategies and actions in support of the SSF Guidelines implementation at the regional level. The CNFO is a member of the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region.



CANARI PROJECT

Promoting the ecosystem approach to fisheries in Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The next ALG is scheduled for 6th November 2025 and will be facilitated by Mr. Tylon Joseph of Grenada.

Learning Exchange in Saint Lucia, 17th to 20th November 2025.

Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, co-financed by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection through KfW.
January 2024 and July 2026

WHYHUNGER/CNFO

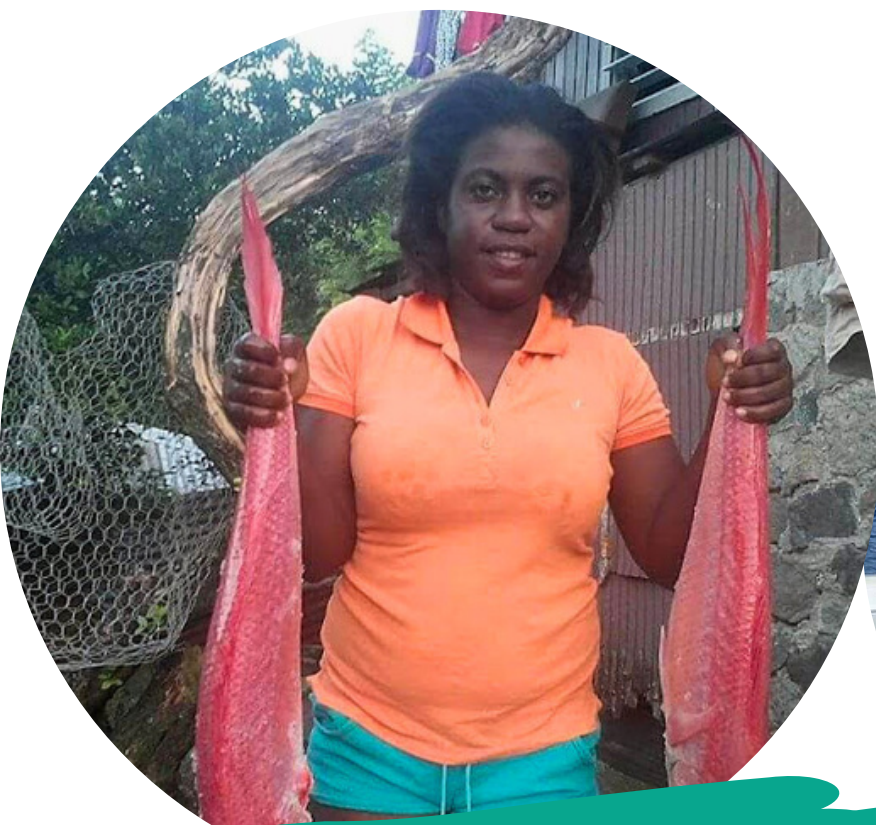
WHYHUNGER is supporting the CNFO with twelve (12) communication products to share in Fisherfolk Net which are to:

Build Awareness of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines).





CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING THE 25% BY 2030 REDUCTION IN THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY FOOD BILL



CNFO/CRFM SSF ACTION PLAN LINK:

[HTTPS://CNFO.FISH/CNFO-CRFM-SMALL-SCALE-FISHERIES-ACTION-PLAN-2023-2025/](https://cnfo.fish/cnfo-crfm-small-scale-fisheries-action-plan-2023-2025/)

CNFO's Executive Committee

2024-2027

CNFO Executive Committee

Mr. Devon Stephen, Saint Lucia (Chair)

Mr. Earl George, Dominica (Deputy Chair)

Mr. Aristo Richardson, Anguilla (General Secretary)

Mr. Armando Ramirez, Belize (Treasurer)

Ms. Vernel Nicholls, Barbados (Public Relations Officer)

Mr. Oscar Talbot, Turks and Caicos (Organizational Liaison Officer)

Mr. Mark Lall, Suriname (Fisheries Liaison Officer)

Staff

Nadine Nembhard, Belize (Administrative Officer)

Mitchell Lay, Antigua and Barbuda (Program Coordinator)

EXECUTIVE UPDATES

International
Fisherwomen Day
November 5th

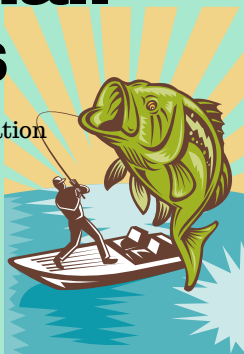


International Fisher Women Day 2025

On 5th November CNFO will join with the World Forum of Fisher People's to celebrate International Fisher Women Day

Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries

in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication



GOVERNANCE OF TENURE

Secure equitable tenure rights to fishery resources and coastal land. Sustainable resource management including co-management.

Social development, employment and decent work

Address issues such as education, health services, financial services, social protection, public infrastructure, and other public services.

Health and safety; measures to improve safety at sea.

Value chains, post-harvest and trade

Involve post-harvest actors in the decision-making process. Stress the role of women. Infrastructure and technology investments, value-added activities, and post-harvest loss and waste reduction.

Gender equality

Improve gender equality in the entire value chain. Equal participation of women in decision-making, mainstreaming gender issues.



DISASTER RISK AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Develop policies, strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and emergency response and disaster preparedness.



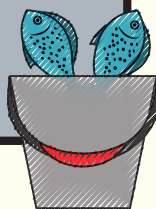
Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small- Scale Fisheries

in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication



RAISING AWARENESS: KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS AND OUTREACH

Communication materials on SSF Guidelines, implementation guides, translation into local languages, promotion and awareness-raising



**Empowering stakeholders:
capacity development and
institutional strengthening**

Effective participation and fair representation in governance and development. Capacity development (technical skills, organizations skills, business development)

**Supporting implementation:
program management,
collaboration and management**

Establishment of a transparent monitoring system and strengthened partnerships and collaboration.



**Strengthening the science-policy
interface: sharing of knowledge
and supporting policy reform**

A strengthened knowledge base that informs a policy reform within a human rights context.

Good practices need to be identified and shared. Case Studies, technical support, and assistance for review and revisions of policy and legal framework.



CNFO CONTACT:

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<https://cnfo.fish/>

MAVIS GEORGE



Mavis George

Affiliations

- Member, Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO)
- Member, World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFFP)

Personal Commitment

Ms. George is passionate about improving the quality, sustainability, and competitiveness of the fishing sector. Her lifelong dedication reflects her belief in empowering fisherfolk and enhancing the overall development of the industry.

Ms. Mavis George of Antigua and Barbuda has over 35 years of experience in the fishing industry, serving at various levels including management, marketing, processing, and finance. She also has 13 years of experience as a Director of a Commercial Bank, bringing a strong blend of industry and financial expertise.

Academic Qualifications

- Master's Degree in Business Administration
- Bachelor's Degree in Management
- Bachelor's Degree in Accounting

Professional Certifications

- Certificate in Seafood Technology
- Certificate in Management, Marketing, and Processing of Seafood – Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan
- Certificate in HACCP
- ServSafe Food Safety Certificate
- Certified Accredited Director

Professional Experience

- Over 30 years managing a Seafood Corporation
- Currently owner and operator of her own business in the fisheries sector
- Provides financial advisory services, business plan development, and seafood and gear marketing



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