

# FisherFolk Net

Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations

## 10 YEARS OF CNFO - 2016 TO 2026

The establishment of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) is a story of vision. Its journey began in 2003–2004 with a regional assessment conducted by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM). This study examined the strengths and weaknesses of fisherfolk organisations across the Caribbean and laid the foundation for a unified regional network.

Building on these findings, a regional workshop held in Belize in 2004–2005 recommended forming such a network. A Working Group was subsequently established to guide the process. In June 2005, the group convened in Guyana, where it developed a Strategy and Medium-Term Action Plan (2006–2010).

Momentum continued to build in September 2007, when a three-day regional fisheries stakeholders' workshop in Grenada brought together key actors and resulted in the formation of the CNFO coordinating committee to advance the establishment of NFOs.

These cumulative efforts culminated in the launch of CNFO in 2009. In the years that followed, from 2009 to 2015, CNFO expanded its reach and impact. The network strengthened member organisations, enhanced information sharing, and secured observer status within CRFM fisheries forums, solidifying its role as a key regional stakeholder.

A major milestone was achieved in 2016 when CNFO was legally registered in Belize, transitioning to a recognised not-for-profit organisation. This progress continued in 2017 with further regional formalisation through registration in Antigua and Barbuda.

### CNFO Milestones

- 2003–2004: CTA, CARDI & CRFM study assessed fisherfolk groups; groundwork for regional network.
- 2004–2005: Belize workshop recommended a network; Working Group formed.
- June 2005: Strategy & Action Plan (2006–2010) developed in Guyana.
- 2006–2008: CNFO project developed with CTA support, led by CRFM.
- Sept 2007: Grenada workshop set up coordinating committee.
- 2009: CNFO officially launched.
- 2016: CNFO registered in Belize.
- 2017: Registered in Antigua & Barbuda.



# STORIES FROM CARIBBEAN FISHING SECTOR



ROCKY POINT FISHING BEACH, JAMAICA

## ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and partners successfully convened a four-day Regional Fisherfolk Peer Learning Exchange focused on the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines from March 2–5, 2026.

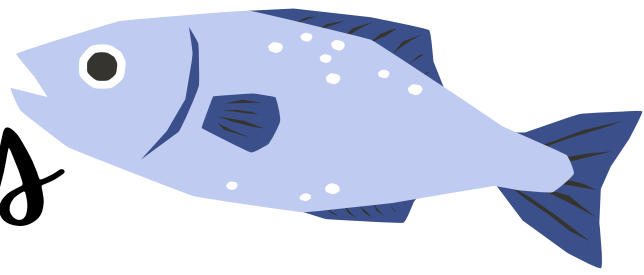


*Group Picture*

## BARBADOS

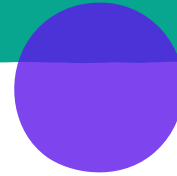
A five-member delegation of fisheries officials from Saint Lucia visited Barbados in April 2026 as part of a peer-learning exchange organised by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The FAO, in collaboration with national partners in Barbados, has been supporting the development of a viable fish silage, livestock feed, and bio-fertiliser value chain, turning fish processing waste into valuable agricultural inputs.

# 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

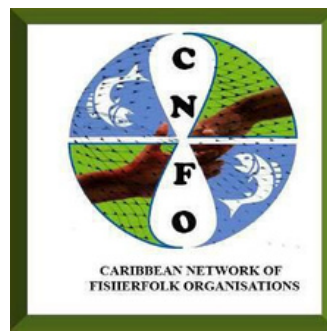
Promoting the ecosystem approach to fisheries in Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The next ALG is scheduled for 7th May 2026 and will be facilitated by Dr. Legena Henry, PhD, CEO- Founder of Rum and Sargassum Inc., Barbados.

## CSFUND

This project, funded by the CSFUND Co-Govern to Co-Liberate Fund (USD 7,750) from January to December 2026, will be piloted in Antigua and Barbuda to promote market-driven value addition of underutilized fish species in the Caribbean, including Diamondback squid (*Thysanoteuthis rhombus*), Neon flying squid (*Ommastrephes bartramii*), and Triggerfish (*Balistidae*).





# Fostering Climate-Resilient Fisheries in the Caribbean

*To develop learning modules and country-specific action plans that promote science-based, climate-resilient fisheries practices across the Caribbean region.*

Target groups:  
Small-scale fishers, National Fisherfolk Organizations, Fisheries Divisions, and regional fisheries stakeholders.

## Participating Countries:

- Anguilla
- Belize
- Grenada
- St. Kitts and Nevis
- The Bahamas

## Activities:

**National Fisher Surveys**

**Five (5) Hybrid Country Workshops**

**Development of Country Action Plans**

**Creation of 3+ Micro-Learning Modules**

**Regional In-Person Validation Workshop**

**Participation in Regional Fisheries Forums (CRFM, COFI SSF Summit, GCFI)**

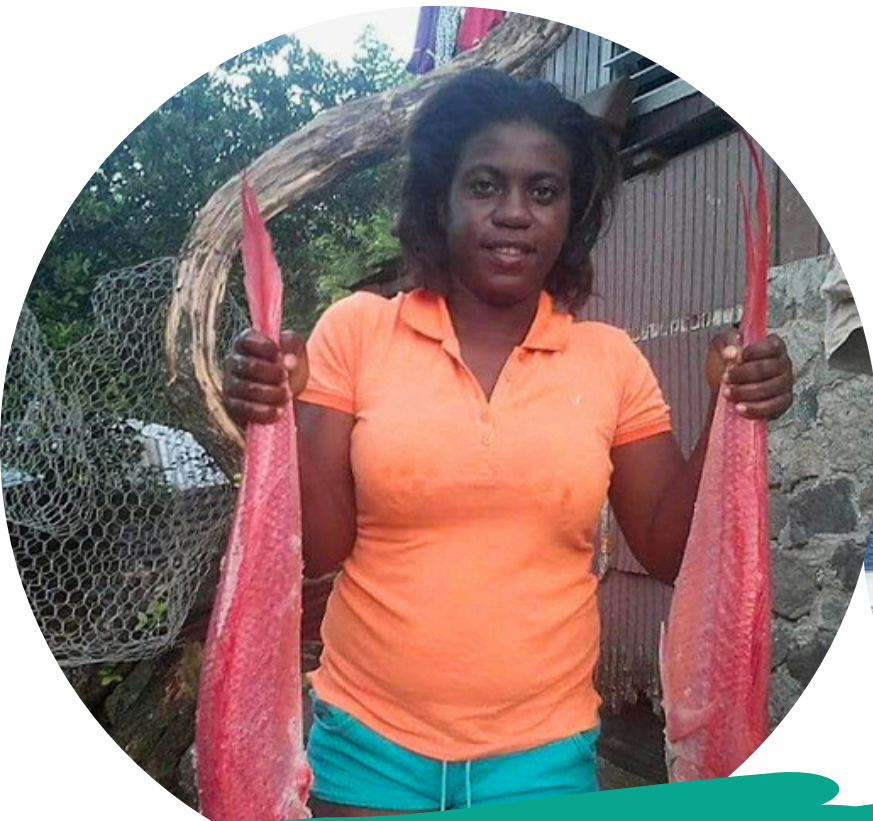
Project Implemented by:  
Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO)  
Co-partner: Pan American Development Bank (PADF)  
Funded by: Blue Convergence Fund

Project Duration  
Start Date: February 1, 2026  
End Date: July 31, 2027

Grant Amount: USD \$148,560



# CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING THE 25% + 5 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

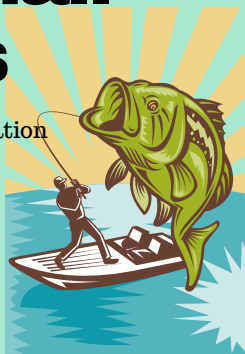
### CNFO's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



We are excited to announce a special CNFO gathering in Belize (SELF FUNDED) to celebrate our 10th Anniversary! Some CNFO members will be in Belize between 3rd July and 7th July 2026.

# Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries

in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication



## 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.

## 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.

## 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.



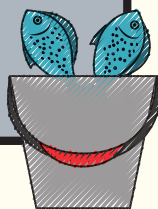
# Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries

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## 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

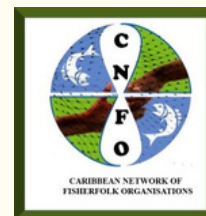
Establishment of a transparent monitoring system and strengthened partnerships and collaboration.



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/>



# PETRONILA POLIUS

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The fisheries sector in Saint Lucia has historically been male-dominated; the contributions of women have been significant. Among these, the work of Miss Petronila Polius stands as a long-term service example.

Miss Polius joined the Department of Fisheries in June 1993, initially serving in an administrative capacity. She later transitioned into the Fisheries Extension Unit, where she became the first woman Fisheries Extension Officer in Saint Lucia, within the sector.

Over the years, she became the first woman Head of the Fisheries Extension Unit, strengthening the interface between the Department of Fisheries and fishing communities, contributing to improved communication and stakeholder engagement.

Miss Polius has represented Saint Lucia at local, regional, and international meetings and has contributed to initiatives aimed at improving the livelihoods of fisherfolk and sustainable fisheries practices. She has been involved in fisher exchange programmes, facilitating knowledge transfer and regional cooperation.


*Petronila Polius  
Fisheries Officer*

*Department of Fisheries  
Ministry of Agriculture,  
Fisheries, Food Security and  
Sustainable Development*

*Saint Lucia*

*The first woman Fisheries  
Extension Officer in Saint  
Lucia*

*The first woman Head of  
the Fisheries Extension Unit*

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