

3. APPROVED FISHERIES POLICY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This policy emerges from Barbados' need to exploit the fisheries resources in a sustainable and responsible manner; obligation to pursue food and nutrition security; and a commitment to provide sustainable livelihoods opportunities.

This policy will guide the preparation of the Individual Fishery Management Plans (IFMP) which will detail the activities for the management and development of each fishery.

3.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set standards and guidelines for the acceptable conduct (behaviour) in the exploitation, management and handling of the fisheries resources, in addition, to the development of the fishing sector in an effort to generate sustainable nutritional and food security, and economic benefits for those involved in the fisheries both now and in the future.

3.3 APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This policy shall apply to the fisheries sector including, *inter alia*, the living resource and those persons who are directly or indirectly affected (positively or negatively) by events in the fishing industry.

3.4 RESPONSIBILITY

The Minister responsible for fisheries, on the advice of the Chief Fisheries Officer after consultation with stakeholders, shall be responsible for the approval of this policy document.

The Chief Fisheries Officer shall be responsible for the implementation and reviewing the provisions of this policy document in consultation with stakeholders.

3.5 POLICY STATEMENT

The Government of Barbados is committed to collaborating with stakeholders to optimize the social and economic benefits from the exploitation of its fisheries resources, for present and future stakeholders, without compromising or adversely affecting the capacity of the resources to replenish themselves and be sustainable, now and in the future

3.6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Context. The Fisheries Act (Cap 391 and the Fisheries Management Regulations) are the legal authority for the management and development of fisheries in the waters of Barbados. The right to fish carries with it the obligation to do so in a responsible manner (*doing the right thing* and *doing things right*) so as to ensure effective conservation and management of the living aquatic resources (1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing). In an effort to ensure that fishery stakeholders behave in a responsible manner the following principles, largely based on the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, are identified as the overarching principles to guide the management, development, intervention and decision-making in the fisheries sector.

Several regional and international conventions and agreements, relevant to fisheries management, were considered in developing this policy. These include *inter alia*:

- The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982;
- FAO Compliance Agreement, 1993;
- The UN Fish Stocks Agreement, 1995;
- FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, 1995;
- Ecosystem Approach to Management;
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), 1992;
- Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 of UNCED, 1992;
- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1993;
- The Cartagena Convention, 1984;
- Castries Declaration on IUU fishing; and
- The draft Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy.

3.6.1 Apply the Principles of Good Governance¹

Institutions, structures and processes setup for the management and development of the fisheries sector shall be transparent with clear vision, accountable, equitable and responsive to stakeholders' needs; efficient and effective in the use of the resources; ensure stakeholder participation in decision-making; guarantee human rights of stakeholders and; practice the non-discriminatory enforcement of laws.

¹ *Good Governance*

- **Vision:** *vivid idealized description of desired future outcomes, that inspires, motivates and energizes.*
- **Participation:** *involvement of stakeholder and building of trust and consensus among stakeholders.*
- **Transparency:** *clearly defined policies, processes and institutions with well-defined functions (responsibilities) and easily accessible information.*
- **Accountability:** *fisheries authorities give account of their actions and being held to account.*
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness:** *operation in an efficient (doing things right) and effective (doing the right things) manner while making the best use of resources to meet needs*
- **Fairness:** *all stakeholders have equal opportunities; impartial enforcement of regulatory measures and protection of human rights; swift Justice without any fear or favour.*
- **Responsiveness:** *serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe.*

3.6.2 Protect and Rehabilitate Fisheries and Habitats

Take appropriate action to protect and where necessary rehabilitate habitats to provide fish with healthy places to live, feed and reproduce.

3.6.3 Make Effective Management Decisions

When making fisheries management decisions: involve stakeholders; use the best available information and take into consideration *inter alia*:

- biological, economic, social and environmental aspects;
- status of the resources and their habitat;
- long term sustainability of the resources;
- views and needs of stakeholders;
- traditional fishing practices and local knowledge;
- Barbados' regional and international obligations;
- impact of management measures on the resource, stakeholders and ecosystem; and
- fishing capacity: *ability of a fleet to catch fish.*

3.6.4 Apply the Precautionary Approach

Fisheries management should be based on the best available scientific data. This means that in cases where scientific data are inadequate or lacking and there is reasonable suspicion that harm is occurring or likely to occur, precautionary action shall be taken immediately using the best information available, at the time, to avoid severe harm an irreversible damage to fisheries.



3.6.5 Collaborate and Cooperate with Others

Share responsibility for the management and development of fisheries, through *inter alia*: collaboration, cooperation, networking, strengthening existing linkages and establishing new linkages, as necessary, with other individuals, groups, institutions, sectors, international organizations and countries.



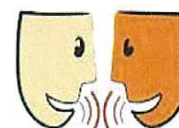
3.6.6 Comply with Quality Assurance Standards

All fish and fishery products for human consumption shall be handled under agreed sanitary and phyto-sanitary conditions and comply with minimum fish safety and quality assurance standards to prevent the fish from becoming contaminated or adulterated.



3.6.7 Communicate Effectively

Practice effective communication by sharing and exchanging data, information and ideas and giving constructive feedback, without betraying national security or the confidentiality of person(s) from or about whom the information and/or data were collected.



3.6.8 Monitor Fishing Activities

Register and license all fishers and local fishing vessels; monitor², control, conduct surveillance and track fishing activities, fishing capacity and compliance with agreed vessel and seafood safety standards, and operational procedures.



3.6.9. Use the Ecosystem Approach to Management

The “Ecosystem Approach to Management” is a holistic approach which recognises that commercial fisheries operate in a complex ecological and socioeconomic environment, where the targets species interact with and are impacted by non-living and other living components of the ecosystem, climate change and socioeconomic activities (including fishing). Consequently, the management and development of fisheries and the conservation of fisheries resources necessitate a holistic approach that takes into account all components (living, non-living and human activities) ecosystems and the interactions of these components.

² **Monitor:** collect and compile data for decision-making

Control: set regulatory conditions for operating in the fisheries

Conduct surveillance: observe and check to ensure compliance with regulatory measures

Track: use vessel monitoring systems to track fishing activities

3.7 RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY



Context. Fishery resources are renewable, since they have the ability to reproduce, grow and rebuild population numbers after adverse events. However, fish need healthy places to live, feed and reproduce. If fish do not have a healthy habitat, fish numbers will decline and the entire population may eventually die out. This can have a devastating economic impact on those persons who depend on fisheries resources for a livelihood.

This ability to reproduce and recover from changes and remain productive overtime can be damaged by taking too many fish from the population (*overfishing*), or through degradation of the fish habitats. The latter may be caused by fishing (*e.g. physical damage by gear*), other anthropogenic (human) activities (*e.g. pollution*), storms and or other negative impacts of climate change (*e.g. increased sea surface temperature, ocean acidification, greater storm intensity*).

One of the most insidious impacts of fishing that threatens resource sustainability is that of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. IUU fishing includes a wide range of illegal activities such as unauthorized fishing in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), taking juvenile and protected species, using prohibited gear and failing to report catches. IUU fishing is not limited to the illegal harvesting of fish but may also involve illegal shipment, processing, landing, sale and distribution of fish and fishery products. IUU fishing is motivated by economic gain, exploits weak management regimes and enforcement systems (*ineffective monitoring, control and surveillance*), and takes advantage of corrupt vessel registration systems (*flag of convenience*).

Persons involved in fishing and fisheries activities are obligated to act in a responsible manner to ensure that the use of the fisheries resources today does not compromise the use by future generations. Consequently, they are required to comply with management measures and quality assurance standards, be involved in fisheries management and participate in decision-making. Resource sustainability shall involve the following:

3.7.1 Sustainable Utilization

Introduction: The sustainability of a fishery resource can be negatively affected by natural (e.g. environmental changes) and man-made (over-fishing, habitat degradation) factors. Action must therefore be taken to manage and mitigate the impact of these factors to enable sustainable utilization of fisheries resources and economic viability of fisheries.

Policy

Sustainable Utilization

For each fishery develop and implement an Individual Fishery Management Plan (IFMP) which provides for the sustainable utilization of the fishery resource: the (IFMP) shall include:

- *definition of the fishery and identification of the stakeholders;*
- *clearly identified goals and management objectives, with associated indicators, reference points for monitoring outcomes and evaluating the their impact on the resource;*
- *fishing strategies and methods of exploiting the resources with neither destroy their habitat nor decrease the abundance below the levels needed for sustained stock replenishment; and*
- *Implementation strategy and resources required for management.*

3.7.2 Accurate and Reliable Fishery Data and Information

Introduction: Local fisheries data collection is suffering from insufficient human and financial resources and is limited by the narrow focus on collecting fisheries data to compute market tolls. This is compounded by the use of untrained data collectors who do not appreciate the importance of data to the management and development of the fisheries. These data collection systems do not generate the quality data and reliable information required by fisheries managers and decision-makers to make effective policy choices and management decisions (*including mitigation action*).

Policy

Accurate and Reliable Fishery Data and Information

Adopt cost-effective data collection procedures that will provide the data and information required for decision-making in a timely manner.

3.7.3 Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing

Introduction: Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing occurs in small-scale and industrial fisheries, in marine and inland water fisheries, as well as in zones under national jurisdiction and on the high seas.

IUU fishing seriously undermines legal fishing operations, distribution and trade of fish and fishery management efforts. It significantly reduces the economic benefits and negatively impacts food and livelihood security, particularly in developing countries that depend on fisheries for food, livelihoods and revenues.

Policy

Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing

Adopt, implement and enforce measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing in Barbados' waters or on the high seas by local and foreign vessels. These measures may include, inter alia:

- *registering, licensing and keeping detailed records of all fishers and fishing vessels authorized to conduct fisheries related activities in Barbados or its waters;*
- *monitoring, control, conduct surveillance and evaluating fisheries activities; and*
- *use of vessel monitoring systems.*

3.8 LIVELIHOOD SUSTAINABILITY



Context. Many persons took to the activities in the fisheries sector to earn income to facilitate the necessities of life (*livelihoods*) for themselves and their families. It is, therefore, imperative that the use of resources today does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Persons use various combinations of their livelihood assets³ (*human, social, natural, physical and financial*) to fashion a wide range of strategies to generate positive livelihood outcomes from the fisheries sector. They use these assets to develop their capacity to cope with the challenges they encounter and to meet their needs on a sustained basis. These assets, strategies and resulting outcomes are influenced (enabled or hindered) by prevailing policies, institutions, economic, social, political and environmental conditions, processes and the governance system in which the fishers live and operate. Livelihood assets are vulnerable (created or destroyed by) to factors that are not controllable by the stakeholders. The factors are:

- **Shocks:** sudden events that have a significant negative effect on livelihoods (*eg. natural disasters, accidents, illness, death,*);
- **Seasonality:** seasonal changes that affect livelihood assets and outcomes (e.g. low fish prices, availability of fish);
- **Trends:** long-term forces that effect livelihood assets (*economic changes, new technology*).

A livelihood is sustainable when it has the capacity to provide benefits and livelihood opportunities for fishers both now and in the future. This means that the livelihood is able to cope with and recover from adverse events to maintain or enhance the short and long-term benefits and livelihood opportunities without undermining their natural resources.

³ livelihood assets

human assets: *skills, knowledge, ability to work, health*

natural assets: *land, waters, fishery resources, bio-diversity*

financial assets: *savings, credit, debt and income*

physical assets: *boat, equipment, gear, infrastructure, sanitation*

social assets: *formal or informal support groups and relationships, networks, rules*

3.8.1 Sustainable Livelihoods

Introduction: The capacity of the fisheries sector to be a sustainable livelihood provider depends on the fish resources' availability and accessibility, which in turn is a function of the ability of the resource to cope with and recover from stress (*resilience*) to meet the needs of fishers over time.

Policy

Sustainable Livelihoods

Develop and implement strategies that will provide for the following without undermining or compromising the livelihood assets of present and future generations:

- *viable and sustainable livelihood;*
- *safe working conditions for workers in fisheries; and*
- *good governance of institutions, structures and processes that influence the sustainability of livelihoods.*

3.8.2 Human Resource Development

Introduction: The fisheries sector provides a wide array of employment opportunities for Barbadians. The opportunities are available in areas such as fishing, boat building, vending, services, processing, food and gear technologies, management, administration, fisheries research, economic, law and engineering. Well trained workers in the fisheries sector are assets to the sector and pivotal to resource and economic sustainability, since success in the sector will depend on the skills, knowledge and abilities of the stakeholders. It is, therefore, imperative that the workers be provided with opportunities to learn, grow and improve themselves.

Policy

Human Resource Development

Enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of persons engaged in the fisheries sector through training, education and certification/ accreditation in areas critical to their participation in the sector and development of the fishing industry.

3.8.3 Marketing and Distribution

Introduction: Fishers rely heavily on consumers to visit landing sites to purchase fresh fish, instead of taking the fish to the consumers inland away from the landing sites. This reluctance to move fish inland often results in localized gluts and low fish prices at the landing sites during times when fish are plentiful. In addition, fish exports are limited since Barbados has been unable to comply with the stringent standards for trading in fish, imposed by some countries.

Policy

Marketing and Distribution

Assist and support initiatives to:

- *Improve marketing and distribution of fish;*
- *identify and access new local and overseas markets;*
- *promote the health benefits of fish; and*
- *promote the production, processing, preparation and consumption of fish as a safe, affordable, nutritious, high quality food.*

3.8.4 Access to credit resources

Introduction: Access to credit and insurance are problematic in the fisheries sector because of the negative financial image of the industry resulting in disadvantageous terms and conditions attached to credit and insurance for the fishing sector.

Credit and insurance institutions need to recognize and understand the unique characteristics of the fisheries sector. They must be mindful of the seasonal and unpredictable nature of income generation in the fishing industry and therefore design credit packages specifically tailored to the fishing sector. These packages should be simple, flexible and financially viable without contributing to the overcapitalization of the sector, creating hardship for fishers or overexploitation of the fisheries resources.

Policy

Access to credit resources

- *Create an enabling environment that supports micro-financing programmes for the fisheries sector at reasonable interest rates under terms and conditions that take the uniqueness of the fishing industry into consideration.*
- *Encourage fishers to participate in national social security programmes and compensation schemes.*

3.8.5 Value-added product development

Introduction: Value-added as it relates to fish means changing the nature of a product to raise the value at the time of sale. Local value adding focuses primarily on the production of filleted chilled, frozen and vacuum packed products, but there are also opportunities for developing other products such as breaded fillets, nuggets and smoked products. Local fish processing generates quite a lot of waste which is dumped at the land fill. Rough estimates indicate that the waste generated from the fish landed could be as high as 39%. This waste includes scales, skins, bones and flesh which can be converted into value-added products such as jewelry, fish leather, fish cake batter, fishmeal and gelatin. Consequently, there is significant potential for increasing economic yield from the fish being landed.

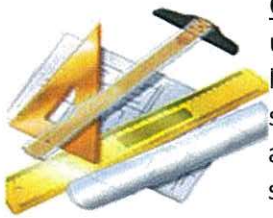
Policy

Value-added product development

Encourage and support efforts to:

- *generate value-added fish products;*
- *utilize fish waste to produce value-added products; and*
- *market these products;*

3.9 INFRA-STRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT



Context. The fisheries sector is plagued by inadequate infrastructure for: unloading, handling, processing and vending of fish and mooring, lifting, hauling and repair of fishing boats. Existing facilities are overcrowded since the numbers of persons seeking space to conduct fisheries related activities at the fish landing sites, markets and boatyards have increased significantly in recent years.

3.9.1 Landing Facilities

Introduction: The facilities at the landing sites need to be upgraded to: ensure fish quality assurance; provide for proper handling, storage of fish and treatment of fish waste and alleviate overcrowded conditions.

Policy

Landing Facilities

Provide and maintain infrastructure that facilitates proper:

- *fish handling, display and storage practices;*
- *waste disposal procedures;*
- *working conditions; and*
- *sanitary and phyto-sanitary conditions.*

3.9.2 Boatyard

Introduction: Many of the boat repair areas along the coast are no longer available for boat repair since they are now used for tourism activities and infrastructure. The few remaining boatyards are under pressure to accommodate the increasing numbers of boats.

Policy

Boatyard

Upgrade, equip (as necessary), maintain and manage boatyard facilities to facilitate safe lifting, moving and timely repair of boats.

3.9.3 Operation Procedures

Introduction: The infra-structure is as functional as the processes in place for its management. To be effective in its functioning the infra-structure has to be governed by processes that are: efficient in the use of allocated resources and delivery of benefits to stakeholders and provide for sound management.

Policy

Operation Procedures

- *Adopt good governance practices and procedures for operating government facilities and delivering quality service to the stakeholders.*
- *Charge fees that are more inline with the cost of delivery of the service.*

3.10 LEGISLATIVE REFORM



Context. Local Fishing industry is governed by the Fisheries Act (CAP 391), the Fisheries (Management) Regulations (1998), fisheries and fisheries related institutions and their policies, rules and processes. In addition, Barbados is signatory to several regional and international fisheries management and fisheries related agreements and conventions. As a signatory to these agreements and conventions, Barbados is obligated to comply with their provisions. However, these provisions tend not to be reflected in the local legislation.

To operate in the existing and future international fisheries environment, Barbados will need to embark on significant legislative reform to develop a regulatory framework that provides for the management of fisheries, fish quality assurance, safety of vessels at sea and compliance with Barbados' regional and international obligations.

3.10.1 legislative and Policy Reforms

Introduction: The local fisheries legislation is weak and in many cases silent on matters related to the resource sustainability, operation of vessels at sea, monitor control and surveillance (MCS) of vessels, data collection, sanitary and phyto-sanitary conditions, fisheries management fishing capacity and obligations resulting from being a signatory of various regional and international instruments .

Policy

Legislative and Policy Reforms

- *Formulate and implement legislation, guidelines and standards for the in keeping with agreed policies for:*
 - *conservation, management and sustainable utilization of the fisheries resources;*
 - *protection of associated habitats and biodiversity;*
 - *appropriate development of the fisheries sector;*
 - *preventing, deterring and eliminating IUU fishing;*
 - *fish quality assurance; and*
 - *safety of vessels and crew at sea.*
- *Keep fisheries policies, legislation, guidelines and standards under constant review and provide for timely update as necessary.*

3.11 GREENING FISHERIES



Context. According to the UNEP “greening” is about the long-term production, distribution and consumption of food and services. Consequently, “greening of fisheries”, within this context of the UNEP definition is about biologically sustainable and economically viable fisheries that do not cause habitat destruction, environmental degradation or adversely affect the social well-being of the users of the resources, both now and in the future.

3.11.1 Greening the Fisheries Sector

Introduction: “Greening fisheries” is more than recycling “old engine oil”, using “photovoltaic” power onboard fishing vessels or utilizing fishery waste. “Greening fisheries” requires a holistic rather than the piecemeal approach.

Policy

Greening the Fisheries Sector

Adopt strategies and introduce technologies that are economically viable and which do not degrade the habitat, adversely affect the environment, or prevent the resource from providing food, employment and social well-being for the users of the resources, both now and in the future.

