



TORs of WECAFC-CRFM-OSPESCA Fisheries Data and Statistics Working Group (FDS WG)

Preamble:

CRFM, OSPESCA and WECAFC, in January 2016, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate, support and strengthen the coordination of actions among the three RFBs to increase the sustainability of fisheries. WECAFC in its 16th session held in Guadeloupe, France, 20-24 June 2016 agreed to establish a working group for fisheries data and statistics matters (FDS WG), based on the ongoing work of the WECAFC-FIRMS partnership and in support of the development of a regional database in collaboration with the Members and partners in the region.

The aim of the envisioned FDS working group was to strengthen collaboration on fisheries data and statistics matters among the three regional fisheries bodies. The European Commission General Directorate for Fisheries (DG MARE) agreed to support financially the organization of the first meeting of the FDS WG in the context of the WECAFC-FIRMS project phase II.

The FDS WG will report to the WECAFC Commission

- Formulate recommendations and guidelines for data collection and statistics.
- Develop standardized data collection formats and templates to be collectively considered for coordinated national and regional implementation.
- Conduct work under direction from the WECAFC Commission, and in close interaction with the WECAFC Secretariat.
- Develop annual work plans prioritizing activities and identify actions to be taken, and annually provide a report of activities, outputs, and prioritized future work plans (1-2 years) to the Secretariat.

The FDS WG will interact/liaise with:

- All working groups under the WECAFC.
- Regional fishery management bodies (CRFM), OSPESCA, CFMC and their working groups with the aim to strengthen the coordination of actions among the three RFBs to increase the sustainability of fisheries.
- Intergovernmental institutions, including those that constitute the Interim Coordination Mechanism of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems

The Membership of the FDS WG:

- National Officers responsible of Fishery Statistics and Data in WECAFC Member Countries (e.g., statisticians, data managers, directors of fisheries statistics, or fisheries offices) with activities related to the following domains: statistical analyses of fisheries data, data collection, designing data collection systems, analyzing statistics for statistical bulletins, report preparation, organizing and managing data collection, storage and dissemination according to a variety of needs (e.g., RFMO reporting, departmental, scientific meetings, etc..)
- Regional Officers from the three Regional Fisheries Bodies (CRFM, OSPESCA and WECAFC) involved in the same domains related to fisheries data and statistics as listed above;
- The WECAFC Secretariat.

Sessions of the FDS WG:

- The FDS WG shall meet face-to-face at least once every two years.
- The FDS WG elects a chairperson (and vice chairperson) among its members at the end of its Meetings; the outgoing chairperson can be re-conducted once.
- Meeting of the FDS WG will be notified by the FDS WG Chairperson.
- The WECAFC Secretariat will organize the FDS WG meetings, share the agenda and meeting documents at least 3 months before the meeting.
- The FDS WG may include experts appointed as resource persons by the WECAFC Secretariat, on the basis of their knowledge in FDS matters and their expertise in FDS regional issues.
- The WECAFC Secretariat will facilitate sessions with the support of CRFM and OSPESCA resource persons and will organize the drafting, translation, review, validation and distribution of the FDS WG meeting report and its recommendations when relevant

Intersessions of the FDS WG:

- The WECAFC Secretariat supervises in close consultation with the FDS chairperson the intersession activities recommended by the FDS WG, with the support of resource persons
- The WECAFC Secretariat ensure coordination among regional projects related to fisheries data and statistics with the support of the WECAFC-FIRMS task force.

The FDS WG will assist with:

Data collection at national level - Provide recommendations and guidelines to address national data collection and sharing challenges in the WECAFC region:

- Identify issues (gaps, deficiencies), challenges and best practices in data collection at national level in the region, and provide recommendations on how to address issues and challenges.
- Identify and recommend best practices for the region including how to involve private interests in data collection (of fisheries operational and socio-economic data from industry, intergovernmental groups, etc.).

- Develop standard data collection formats for use at national level and related minimum guidelines for collection.
- Review and make recommendations on coordination opportunities for new data and statistics projects coming into the region.

Data sharing and harmonization at regional level - Provide recommendations to address open data sharing challenges at international level for the benefit of fisheries communities, research and management communities and to improve the ability to manage fisheries resources:

- Identify and recommend a list of data to be shared among WECAFC countries in a regional data base (RDB), defining regional standards, classifications and data policies.
- Define formats, metadata, policies (including confidentiality matters) and best practices to exchange data.
- Provide recommendations on data harmonization to allow data collation at regional level including the mapping between national and regional classifications

Countries data reporting to international bodies and global monitoring systems (i.e., CRFM, FAO, ICCAT, OSPESCA, FIRMS) - Provide recommendations to streamline reporting from national, through to regional and international levels, including through collaborative arrangements promoting harmonization:

- Address issues of multiple reporting standards and formats among the various international organizations, including through review of documents, sharing experiences and lessons learned and formulate recommendations and guidelines in support to enhanced reporting on shared fisheries resources in the WECAFC area.
- Formulate mechanisms to coordinate / streamline exchanges among regional fishery bodies and other intergovernmental institutions operating at regional and global level, including methods, tools and procedures for the harmonization of national/sub-regional/regional data collection, storage formats and reporting approaches
- Participate in the development and implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme and in the regular reporting of the State of the Marine Environment and Associated Economies (SOMEE), making recommendations to ensure that data sets, information and assessment approaches follow statistically sound and regionally harmonized methods.

IT management and maintenance of the Regional DataBase (RDB) - Provide recommendations for cost efficient and sustainable management and maintenance of the Regional DataBase

- Provide high level recommendations on technology and policy issues related to development, hosting and maintenance for the RDB.
- Provide RDB specifications, priorities, governance, policy mechanisms.
- Formulate project development phases and participation mechanisms.

Administration of the FDS WG

- The FDS WG will be supported through the financial resources of the Commission.

Performance review of the RDB

- Conduct periodic review against a set of metrics of the data collection reference framework (DCRF) and best practices data collection guidelines.
- Recommend changes and adjustments to the RDB after review.