Joint Statement of the CLME+ ICM Membership and Secretariat

What is it?

The [CLME+ Project](http://www.clmeproject.org/objectives/) is a 5-year project (2015-2020) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP](http://www.undp.org/)) and co-financed by the Global Environment Facility ([GEF](http://www.thegef.org/)).

It assists participating countries from two large marine ecosystems (LMEs) in improving the management of their shared Living Marine Resources through an Ecosystem-Based Management  approach:

the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem

the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem

The combination of those two LMEs is referred to as the CLME+ region, bordered by over 35 States and Territories: the Caribbean & North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems. This vast marine area (4.4 million km2) is a major contributor to regional economic development and is key to many globally relevant ecological processes.

StewardFish is focused on empowering fisherfolk throughout fisheries value chains to engage in resource management, decision-making processes and sustainable livelihoods, with strengthened institutional support at all levels in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) region.

The project is guided by the principles of an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF), and seeks to promote women’s empowerment through leadership and the importance of social protection for sustainable livelihoods. StewardFish is contributing to the implementation of the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and involves seven Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Member States.

Small-scale fisheries sector is an important driver of economies in the Caribbean region, and healthy fish stocks are vitally important for the sustainability of coastal communities and rural livelihoods. In 2013, countries bordering and/or located within the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ region) adopted a 10-year Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of the Shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ SAP). The CLME+ SAP consists of 6 Strategies and 4 Sub-strategies. SAP strategies 1-3, with a focus on governance, are cross-cutting, while strategies 4-6 tackle the three main marine ecosystems (reef, pelagic and continental shelf) in the CLME+ region. The CLME+ SAP aims to contribute to the achievement of the regionally adopted long-term vision of “a healthy marine environment in the CLME+ that provides benefits and livelihoods for the well-being of the people of the region.” However, there are several challenges that hinder the engagement of fisherfolk and their organisations in the sustainable management of fisheries in the region, including: • Limited capacity of regional, national and local fisherfolk organisations to participate effectively in fisheries governance • Fisherfolk have insufficient capacity and knowledge of ecosystem stewardship practices for fisheries sustainability • Inadequate public awareness of ecosystem approaches to support best practices and ensure compliance • Poor documentation of successful experiences and practices for sustainable fisheries livelihood strategies • Inadequate management and collaboration mechanisms to support fisherfolk leaders in monitoring and evaluating projects. In an effort to address these challenges, StewardFish will aim to implement the CLME+ SAP within seven Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Member States (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines) by empowering fisherfolk throughout fisheries value-chains to engage in resource management, decision -making processes and sustainable livelihoods with strengthened institutional support at all levels. This will be achieved through implementation of the four core project components: 1. Developing organisational capacity for fisheries governance; 2. Enhancing ecosystem stewardship for fisheries sustainability; 3. Securing sustainable livelihoods for food and nutrition security; and 4. Project management, monitoring and evaluation, and communication.