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# Update on FAO Common Oceans Program Caribbean Billfish Project

Atlantic HMS Advisory Panel Meeting

March 29-31, 2016

# A glimpse back...

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission (WECAFC) has spearheaded this international initiative with multiple partners:

- WECAFC joint working group on recreational fisheries created in Colombia in Feb. 2012.
- The Billfish Foundation funded economic assessment manual for Caribbean nations.
- Socio-econ impacts of recreational fishing workshop in Nov. 2012.

# A glimpse back...

- Global Environment Facility (GEF) project and Caribbean fisheries stakeholder meeting - The World Bank in Feb. 2013.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Workshop on the Preparation of a Billfish Management and Conservation Plan for the Western Central Atlantic in Ft. Lauderdale in March 2013.
- Assessments of the economic impacts of recreational fisheries in the Bahamas and Martinique.

This work has been conducted independently of the United States government and virtually independently from ICCAT.

# FAO WECAFC Caribbean Billfish Project

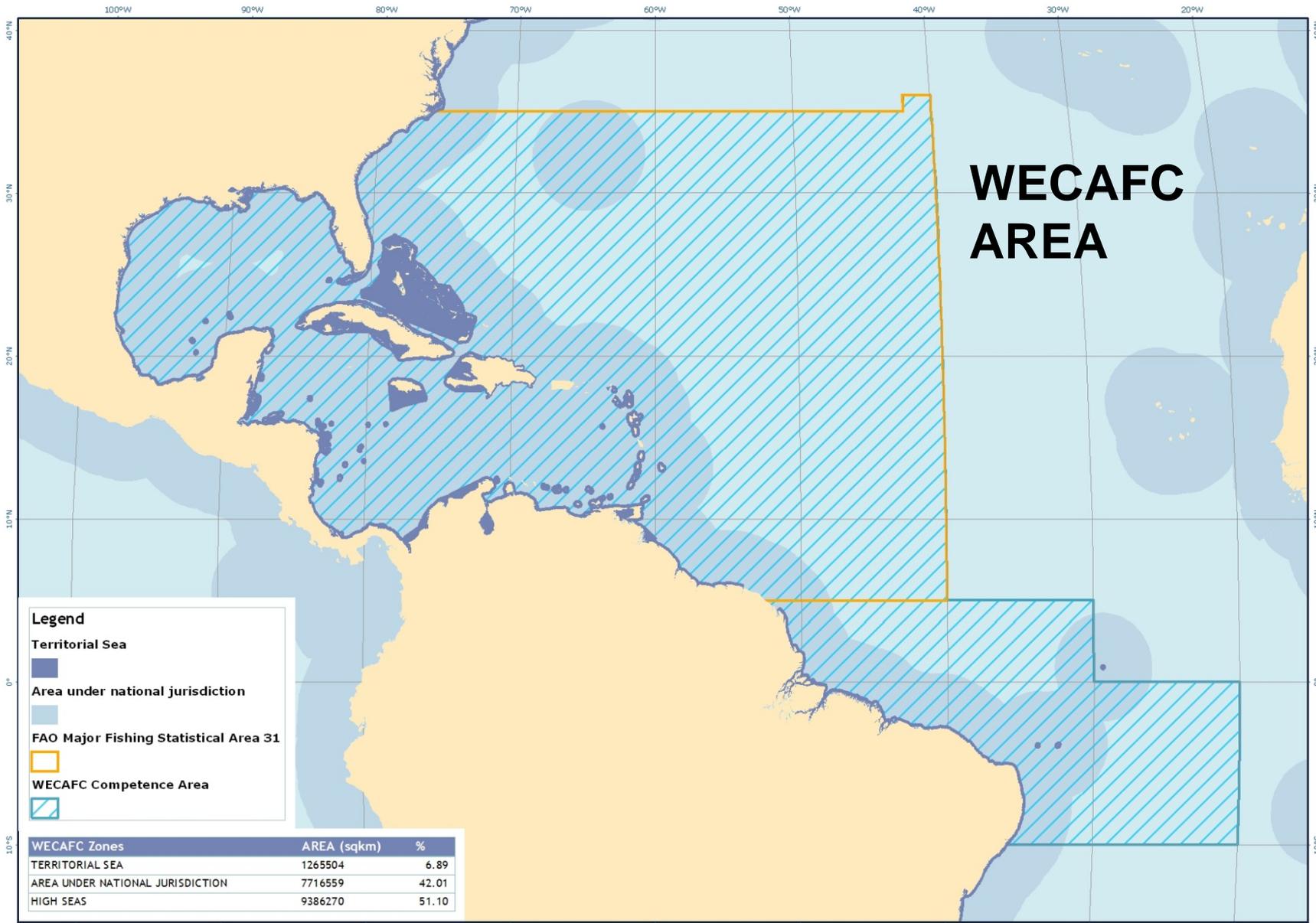
- Funded by a United Nations FAO Trust Fund project (\$1.95 million) as part of the Ocean Partnerships for Sustainable Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation led by the World Bank.
- Launched by FAO WECAFC in March 2015; 3-yr project lifespan.
- FAO WECAFC office in Barbados provides project management.
- Involves WECAFC, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA), and the Caribbean Fishery Management Council.
- International Game Fish Association (IGFA) provides the Consortium on Billfish Management and Conservation in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.



# FAO WECAFC Caribbean Billfish Project

Project components (from FAO “Common Oceans News”):

1. Generating value and conservation outcomes through innovative management.
2. Strengthening regional billfish management and conservation planning.
3. A functional and responsive Consortium on Billfish Management and Conservation.
4. Business plans developed for pilot investments in sustainable management and conservation of billfish.



# WECAFC AREA

**Legend**

- Territorial Sea**  
[Dark Blue Box]
- Area under national jurisdiction**  
[Light Blue Box]
- FAO Major Fishing Statistical Area 31**  
[Orange Outline Box]
- WECAFC Competence Area**  
[Hatched Box]

WECAFC Zones	AREA (sqkm)	%
TERRITORIAL SEA	1265504	6.89
AREA UNDER NATIONAL JURISDICTION	7716559	42.01
HIGH SEAS	9386270	51.10



Projection: Robinson  
Central Meridian: 60 W

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Workshop on Billfish Management and Conservation of the WECAFC/OSPESCA/CRFM/CFMC Working Group on Recreational Fisheries Panama City, Panama Nov. 9-11, 2015

- 53 experts/representatives from 19 Caribbean countries and territories.
- Presentations on Caribbean fisheries characterization and economics, billfish stocks, rights-based approaches to fisheries management, and legislative frameworks for Caribbean fisheries.
- Draft of Caribbean Regional Billfish Management and Conservation Plan outline and draft management measures.
- Selection of two pilot countries (Grenada and Dominican Republic) for demonstration of rights-based management based on access to fish aggregating devices (FADs).

# Caribbean Regional Billfish Management and Conservation Plan - Draft Mgmt. Measures

- Use of non-offset circle hooks in longline and hook and line commercial fisheries.
- A ban on exports of billfish.
- Use of vessel monitoring systems for HMS fishery vessels.
- Commercial and recreational HMS vessels should be officially registered to combat IUU fishing.
- Catch/ landings and effort data of billfish commercial and recreational fisheries are required to be collected and reported.
- Improved management and governance on the use of FADs.
- Rigging of recreational gear should follow international protocols provided by the IGFA.



# Next steps for FAO WECAFC:

- Billfish FMP first draft released March 17, 2016; comment period ends May 31, 2016.
  - Send comments to: Manuel Perez Moreno, FAO  
Christ Church, Barbados  
[Manuel.PerezMoreno@fao.org](mailto:Manuel.PerezMoreno@fao.org)  
246-426-7110/11 ext. 224
- Pilot projects in Grenada and Dominican Republic – develop projects in 2016 for one year of testing/operation.
- Billfish project report – present to ICCAT/OSPESCA/CRFM in 2017; present to WECAFC in 2018.



# WECAFC as an RFMO?

- Currently WECAFC acts as a Regional Fisheries Advisory Commission, as an FAO Article VI body.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> WECAFC Strategic Reorientation Workshop – Dec. 1-2, 2015 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago – news release at: <http://www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/en/c/357681/>
- WECAFC members are considering costs/benefits and governance structure.
- June 2016 at the 16<sup>th</sup> session of WECAFC, RFMO reorientation will be discussed.



For more information about FAO WECAFC  
and the Caribbean Billfish Project, go to:

[http://www.commonoceans.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/common\\_oceans/docs/1\\_CaribbeanBillfishRegionalManagement.pdf](http://www.commonoceans.org/fileadmin/user_upload/common_oceans/docs/1_CaribbeanBillfishRegionalManagement.pdf)

<http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/wecafc/en>

# WECAFC Members

Antigua and Barbuda

Bahamas

Barbados

Belize

Brazil

Colombia

Costa Rica

Cuba

Dominica

Dominican Republic

European Union

France

Grenada

Guatemala

Guinea

Guyana

Haiti

Honduras

Jamaica

Japan

Mexico

Netherlands

Nicaragua

Panama

Korea

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Saint Lucia

Saint Vincent/Grenadines

Spain

Suriname

Trinidad and Tobago

United Kingdom

United States

Venezuela