



For Immediate Release

Caribbean Fisherfolk Leaders committed to keeping Fisherfolk Action Learning Group going

Port of Spain. October 27, 2016 - Eighteen fisherfolk leaders from sixteen Caribbean countries and the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) met in Barbados for the Fourth Caribbean Fisherfolk Action Learning Group (FFALG) workshop, from October 19 – 21. Also, in attendance, were partners from the Fisheries Authorities of Barbados, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies of the University of the West Indies (UWI-CERMES), Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and The Nature Conservancy.

With this being the final workshop of the FFALG under the Strengthening Caribbean Fisherfolk to Participate in Governance (SCFPG) project, the opportunity was taken to share experiences of the CNFO and its membership on policy influencing, and identify lessons learnt and best practices on participation in policy and decision-making processes at the national, regional and global levels. The FFALG also carried out an evaluation of the SCFPG project and their own capacity development.



Participants from the Fourth Fisherfolk Action Learning Group Workshop, October 19-21, 2016, Barbados

Participants also addressed gender in fisheries, recognising that there was very little information on gender issues in fisheries in the Caribbean and no attention to gender in the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP). The work of the UWI-CERMES led Gender in Fisheries Team (GIFT) was acknowledged by all participants, and support given for their initiative to draft a protocol aimed at recognising gender within the context of the Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines for consideration under CCCFP.

In terms of the way forward, the fisherfolk leaders agreed that the Action Learning Group was playing a significant role in developing their leadership skills and capacity to influence policy and committed to take ownership and maintain the Group beyond the life of the project.

Ms. Vernel Nicholls, President of the Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations (BARNUFO), shared her own experience of the Group, stating “...the Action Learning Group has been a really good experience for us as fisherfolk. It has really done a lot for me in terms of my development. I remember my first meeting with fisherfolk leaders in Grenada representing BARNUFO, I did not have any confidence, in fact, I wanted to crawl under the table. The Fisherfolk Action Learning Group has helped to build my confidence.”



Ms. Vernel Nicholls, President of BARNUFO and newly elected Chair of the CNFO, makes a point during the panel discussions on fisherfolk's experience in influencing policy.

During this Workshop, the recently registered CNFO, held its first General Assembly, at which it elected a seven person executive, with Ms. Vernel Nicholls as Chair.

The European Union funded *Strengthening Caribbean Fisherfolk to Participate in Governance* project is targeting fisherfolk organisations in the countries of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks and Caicos. The project is aimed at improving the contribution of the small-scale fisheries sector to food security in these countries through building the capacity of regional and national fisherfolk organisation networks to participate in fisheries governance and management. The project comes to an end in December 2016.

About CANARI: The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute is a regional, technical, non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for more than 20 years. Our mission is to promote equitable participation and effective collaboration in managing natural resources critical to development. Our programmes focus on research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, capacity building and fostering regional partnerships.

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