

Report of the Evaluation Team on Scientific Assistance to Caribbean Fisheries

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The evaluation team on "Scientific Assistance to Caribbean Fisheries" set itself the following broad terms of reference: (a) The term "scientific assistance" would include, in addition to scientific research, the area of education and training in scientific and technical fields; and (b) The "Caribbean" would be extended to include the Bahamas and Bermuda.

In its discussion of scientific (and technical) assistance, the evaluation team expresses appreciation to the authors of papers given at the "Scientific Assistance" session, because these papers formed a basis for considerable discussion. It therefore follows that many of our comments will be repetitious but we feel these are points that require emphasis.

In the area of scientific assistance generally, the panel notes that there *is* a real need for assistance to fisheries in the Caribbean relating to resources and their handling and relating to all levels of scientific and educational training. It is noted that:

- I. There should be an inventory of specific needs for assistance within the whole region to avoid continuation of *ad hoc* assistance schemes that often have as a project priority the proverbial re-invention of the wheel.
- II. Such an inventory could lead to co-ordination of assistance programs by agencies to avoid the duplication of effort that is now prevalent in certain areas.
- III. Before this co-ordination is possible there must be an index of assistance of granting agencies that presently exist. This index should include information on what type of aid is available from each organization and, most importantly, information on how Caribbean countries can obtain the aid. To be of use such an index must be available and comprehensible to all Caribbean countries.
- IV. There is a need for the identification of critical problems in the Caribbean and a treatment of these problems on a regional basis. This means regional collaboration on scientific research on specific resources. Such collaboration will not happen without an apolitical regional coordinating body.
- V. Such regional research needs to be followed by regional management of the resource and this must be made clear to participating countries at the outset.
- VI. Training programs must be related to regional needs and should be carried out within the Caribbean in situations approximating the conditions of the trainee's home country.
- VII. A control data bank should be established for the region and made available to all countries within the Caribbean. Information on such a

facility should be brought to the attention of Caribbean countries on a regular basis.

With regard to specific assistance programs within the Caribbean, the team recommends that:

1. The target country must be included as a partner in all aspects of this assistance. The country must be treated as a partner in identifying needs, in planning research, in conducting research and in training. Without this involvement, a follow-up of continuing research or management will not take place.
2. Support of research and teaching facilities within the Caribbean is sorely needed and assistance programs should, where possible, use existing facilities and expertise instead of developing new enterprises or temporarily moving people and materials in from outside.
3. Support for research in the Caribbean should put equal emphasis on training and the building of infrastructure as a joint effort to eventually make the region self-sustaining in this area of development.
4. Financial support agencies giving assistance should have a strong technical background to properly evaluate needs for assistance and to evaluate on-going projects.
5. The follow-up of any assistance program should be an integral part of the program and it is the responsibility of both the agency rendering assistance and the recipient country to understand this before the project starts.

The team recommends that GCFI give consideration to holding two types of workshops on Caribbean fisheries at its 32nd annual meeting. One type would include a treatment of selected species of importance in the region, namely conch, spiny lobster, turtles, and reef fishes. The workshop should have the following format:

- (1) A call for papers on conch, spiny lobster, turtles and reef fishes.
- (2) A ruthless selection of only a few papers on each species group to act as stimulators for discussion.
- (3) Discussions by a panel and meeting participants with summary and recommendations given by the panel.
- (4) Each species group should occupy a one-half-day session.
- (5) Participation by persons from the region presently working on the various groups should be encouraged and if necessary supported financially.

The second idea for a workshop is the highly ambitious scheme for a Caribbean Fisheries Symposium. The object being to create an awareness of all aspects of fisheries. Through a three pronged attack to reach policy makers (Government Ministers and Permanent Secretaries), the administrators (Fisheries Officers), and the industry (the fishermen). In order to obtain proper participation considerable financial aid will be necessary to ensure participation of at least three individuals from each Caribbean country.

The panel suggests that this program would be a one-time event and therefore the program must be very carefully prepared so that the symposium results in a meaningful learning experience for the three groups. People from the Caribbean should be involved in planning and presentation of the program. It is also suggested that one or two people should actually visit the var-

ious countries to deliver invitations to ensure that the “right” people are present at this session.

The panel suggests that GCFI might also consider producing a monthly newsletter for dissemination of information throughout the Caribbean. Such a newsletter probably could be sponsored by one or more foundations and would be invaluable for maintaining liason in the region.

The panel has expressed an interest in further discussing these ideas with the executive committee of GCFI should the executive consider they have merit.

I give especial thanks to all those taking part in discussions on this aspect of fisheries development who were largely instrumental in putting these recommendations forward.