



# Caribbean Fishery Management Council's Report



Volume 7

May 2015

## THE 152<sup>nd</sup> REGULAR MEETING

April 21-22, 2015 - Divi Carina Hotel, St Croix, USVI.

### Progress in Island Based Management Plans (IBMP)

The District Advisory Panels (DAP) for Puerto Rico, St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix as well as the Scientific and Statistics Committee (SSC) have been discussing the criteria for species selection to be included in the new Fishery Management Plans. Dr. Richard Appeldoorn, SSC Chairperson, discussed the guiding principles for the criteria:

- (1) Ecosystem Based Management,
- (2) The Precautionary Principle, and (3)
- Simplification of Management.

The Island Based FMPs are being developed for the following reasons:

- 1) Constituent: the fishermen within each area felt their fisheries differed significantly with respect to species, gears, habitats, etc.
- 2) Management: the differences above warrant separate management programs.
- 3) Science: there are aspects of stock structure that may be different among islands (e.g., St. Croix fish will not share juvenile/adult distribution with any of the other two islands).

As to the criteria to be applied for the species that will be included in the IBMPs the following were presented:

a. Biology, b. Habitat specificity, c. Range, d. Economic importance, e. Target species vs bycatch, f. Landings, g. Ecological value, h. Protected/management status.

A Motion was approved by the Council to appoint of group of experts to advise the Council on the selection of the species to be included in the Island Based Management Units (IBMU) composed by a representative from SERO, Dr. Graciela García-Moliner, Dr. Bill Arnold, and the chairs of the SSC and the three DAPs (7 total).

District Advisory Panels for IBMU

St. Thomas	St. Croix	Puerto Rico
Gregory Ledee	Thomas Daley	Gary Wayne Rogers
Julian Magras	Virdin Brown	Jesse Rivera
Daryl Bryan	Edward Schuster	Greg Engstrom
Dean Greaux	Patricia Skov	Roberto Reyes
Claude Berry	Mike Fuller	Carlos Velázquez
Raymond J. Campell	Daniel Santiago Colón	Miguel Ortiz
Jimmie Estraca	David Gubser	Roberto Silva
Elizabeth Kadison	Larry Angus	Hector Padró
Elton George	William J. Tobias	Carmen Rivera
Stewart Loveland	Chad Sheraw	Cedric Taquin
Lance Maanum	Michelle Pugh	Israel Umpierre
Winston Ledee	Luis Viera	Luis Román
Pew Charitable Trust	Pew Charitable Trust	Leda Dunmire
TNC	TNC/Kenit-Amon Lewis	Raimundo Espinoza
DPNR	DPNR	DNER



## SERO Strategic Plan 2016-2020

The Southeast Regional Office (SERO) presented the DRAFT Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 with emphasis on six Strategic Goals: (1) Improve SERO's organizational effectiveness, (2) Promote economically vibrant fisheries and communities, (3) Improve scientific basis for managing NOAA trust resources, (4) Leverage limited resources in support of organizational, (5) Priorities, (6) Maximize benefits of Endangered Species Act and Essential Fish Habitat consultation resources. The open period for public comment period ends July 11, 2015. How to comment: use online comment form at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>; or Email Heather Blough at [heather.blough@noaa.gov](mailto:heather.blough@noaa.gov). All comments will be considered in finalizing draft plan for implementation in Fiscal Year 2016.



### Abrir La Sierra/Bajo de Sico/Tourmaline Consistency of Regulations

To enhance the discussion on the issues related to the fishing regulations in Abrir La Sierra, Bajo de Sico and Tourmaline, Dr. Michelle Schärer, presented the results of research conducted simultaneously at Bajo de Sico, Puerto Rico and the Grammanik Bank, St. Thomas. Results of underwater visual surveys, passive acoustic data and acoustic tagging in-situ of Nassau grouper evidence that Bajo de Sico is a multiple species spawning area with important groupers such as Red hind, Nassau, Tiger, Black and Yellowfin. Divers documented reproductive behaviors of other species of coral reef fishes such as Rainbow Parrotfish, Ocean

Triggerfish and Dog Snapper. The abundance of species in spawning aggregations and acoustic signals of reproductive behaviors was detected from December to May at Bajo de Sico, and from January to June at the Grammanik Bank. This would support a closed season spanning six months in order to effectively protect the duration of the grouper spawning aggregations. The Council will continue discussion on this issue in the August meeting that will be held in Puerto Rico.

After discussing the results of all previous meeting, including meetings with fishers on the west coast, the CFMC decided to select preferred alternatives to be taken to public hearings, prior to taking final action.

- (1) The seasonal closure for Abrir la Sierra and Tourmaline would include the months of December, January and February.
- (2) Bajo de Sico would be seasonally closed during the months of December through May.
- (3) The fishing and possession of Council-managed reef fish would be prohibited during these seasonal closures. Spearfishing for Council-managed reef fish would be prohibited during the seasonal closures.
- (4) Fishing for spiny lobster would be allowed year-round in all three areas. Anchoring would be prohibited in all three areas. The ban on bottom tending gear (traps, pots, etc.) will remain in place.
- (5) Upon consent to the request of the Council, prohibit bottom longline fishing for HMS year-round in Bajo de Sico.
- (6) Upon consent to the request of the Council, prohibit fishing for, and possession of, HMS in some or all of the three areas during the seasonal closure established in Action 1, with an exception that would allow surface trolling for all HMS, as defined at §635.21(a)(4)(iv), and speargun fishing gear to fish for bigeye, albacore, yellowfin and skipjack (BAYS) tunas.



## Results and Plan Actions from the SEFSC's Stock Assessment Programmatic Review

As part of this action, Dr. Shanon Cass-Calay, informed that SERO will conduct a pilot project with port samplers in September 2015 in PR and in the USVI to gather field data on landings to improve ACLs. They will need interns, outreach for fishers, field contacts and local regional managers. The SSC recommends that an assessment of the performance of the new reporting forms be conducted to ensure that they are providing the necessary information for future stock assessment.



## Outreach and Education Activities

### CFMC Outreach & Education at the EcoExploratorio-Oceanica Museum in Puerto Rico

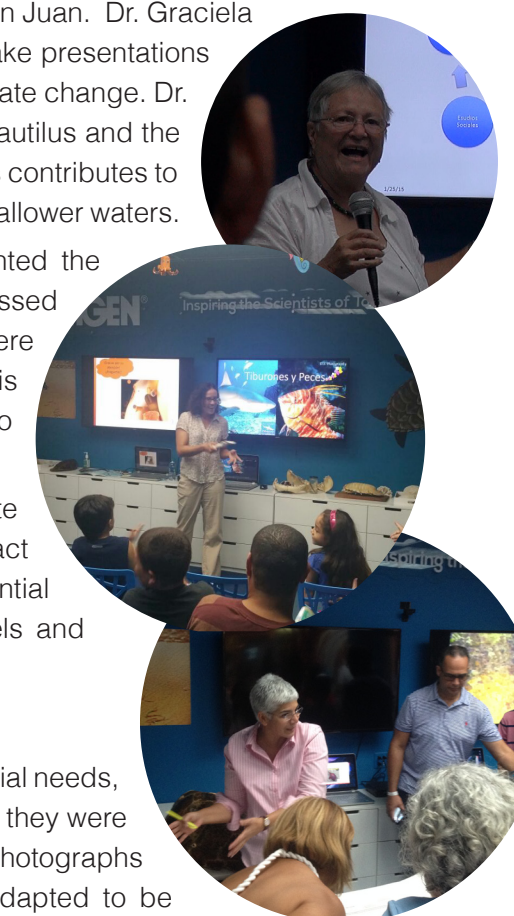
This Exhibition is located on the second floor of Plaza Las Americas in San Juan. Dr. Graciela García-Moliner, Ms. Helena Antoun and Dr. Alida Ortiz were invited to make presentations on issues related to use of marine resources, marine biodiversity and climate change. Dr. García-Moliner presented research done in deep water habitats by EV Nautilus and the NOAA Okeanos Explorer in Puerto Rico. The findings in these explorations contributes to a better understanding of the deep water habitats related to fisheries in shallower waters.

Helena Antoun, Fisheries Liaison for the CFMC and the DNER presented the importance of fisheries in Puerto Rico: Biology and Regulations. She discussed different aspects of biological cycles of fishes in our fisheries, such as: where do they grow and feed, when and where do they reproduce and how is this cycle impacted by fishing activities. This knowledge is necessary to establish laws and regulations to promote a sustainable fishery.

Dr. Alida Ortiz, CFMC OEAP Chairperson, presented the need to integrate climate change concepts in the school curriculum. She emphasized the fact that climate change affects all citizens and their activities, thus it is essential that the basic concepts about climate change be included at all levels and disciplines in the school to prepare climate literate citizens.

### The Sea, its animals and garbage

Natalia Perdomo is an assistant at CODERI, a school for children with special needs, and invited the Council to give a talk to her classroom based on the topic they were discussing, recycling. The presentation included showing the students photographs of habitats and how these are impacted by garbage. The talk was adapted to be interactive so that the students could understand more easily the importance of recycling the garbage. We brought coloring books and crayons as well as other educational material for the classroom. The teacher's names were Mrs. Rodríguez and Mrs. Centeno.





## Request by Puerto Rico West Coast Fishers on Trammel Net Phase Out

These fishers have developed a conscience of the bycatch impact that the traditional three walls trammel net (mallorquín) used by lobster fishers in Puerto Rico's West coast cause on fisheries. They have designed a single wall trammel net with a larger mesh that will catch lobster on the bottom, leaving the fish out of the net, thus avoiding incidental bycatch of other fishes. They request Council's support to conduct a pilot project in their region.



## Acronyms

**ABT** - Abrir la Sierra, Bajo de Sico and Tourmaline

**ACL** - Annual Catch Limit

**AM** - Accountability Measure

**CFMC** - Caribbean Fishery Management Council

**DAP** - District Advisory Panel

**DNER** - Department of Natural and Environmental Resources

**EEZ** - Exclusive Economic Zone

**FMP** - Fishery Management Plans

**FMU** - Fishery Management Unit

**IBMU** - Island Based Management Unit

**IBMP** - Island Based Management Plans

**MSA** - Magnuson Steven Act

**NMFS** - National Marine Fisheries Service

**NOAA** - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**OEAP** - Outreach and Education Advisory Panel

**PR** - Puerto Rico

**SEFSC** - Southeast Fishery Science Center

**SERO** - NMFS / Southeast Regional Office

**SSC** - Scientific and Statistical Committee

**USVI** - United States Virgin Islands

## Upcoming Events & Announcements

- CFMC 153th Regular Meeting, August 19-20, 2015 in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico at the Holiday Inn Mayagüez.
- OEAP, August 25, 2015 in San Juan at CFMC's Headquarters.

## Credits

Alida Ortiz - Editor

Miguel Rolón - Editor

Natalia Perdomo - Designer

Special thanks to the Council staff members who helped with the review of the newsletter.

### Editor's Note

The Caribbean Newsletter is published by The Caribbean Fishery Management Council. Its purpose is to report developments in fisheries management that would be of interest to its readers. Please credit the council when reprinting articles used in this newsletter. Anyone wishing to submit information or articles pertaining to fishing or fisheries management, or letters to the editor on a pertinent issue, is invited and encouraged to do so. These may be mailed to Natalia Perdomo, Caribbean Newsletter, 270 Muñoz Rivera Avenue Suite 401 San Juan Puerto Rico, 00918, or may be sent via internet to this email address [nataliaperdomo\\_cfmc@yahoo.com](mailto:nataliaperdomo_cfmc@yahoo.com).