

## **A Participatory Process for Formulating a Protocol on the Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines**

### **Un Proceso Participativo para la Formulación de un Protocolo sobre las Directrices de la Pesca en Pequeña Escala**

### **Un Processus Participatif pour la Formulation d'un Protocole sur les Lignes Directrices pour les Pêches à Petite Échelle**

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#### **EXTENDED ABSTRACT**

##### **Introduction**

The University of the West Indies - Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies in partnership with the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat, is collaborating on a participatory process to incorporate the international Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) into the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP). The aim is to craft a policy protocol that not only incorporates the global instrument into the regional instruments, but also highlights what fisheries stakeholders consider to be priorities for attention. The SSF Guidelines support responsible fisheries and sustainable social and economic development for current and future generations, while the CCCFP promotes the sustainable utilisation of the fisheries resources for the well-being of all Caribbean people. Having a protocol should move these Guidelines from global policy into regional practice. Since the acceptance of the recommendation to develop the protocol, using a participatory approach, by the March 2017 CRFM 15th Caribbean Fisheries Forum, and its subsequent endorsement by the May 2017 Ministerial Council, the project partnership created awareness by engaging fisherfolk, fisheries officers and other key stakeholders in identifying and prioritizing fisheries issues for inclusion in the protocol.

##### **Methods**

A few different methods were used and guided by a conceptual framework for policy influence to which was added a participatory approach, capacity development and leadership. At the inception of the project, the partnership was formalized and efforts were made to build the capacity of the CNFO by providing the executive with a series of policy documents. These documents covered policy influence design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The partnership then sought endorsement of the partnership and the protocol process at the 2017 March meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and subsequently the May meeting of the Ministerial Council.

To increase awareness of, engagement in, and further build capacity for policy influence while promoting the SSF Guidelines a set of communication products were produced. The CNFO, with some assistance from the remainder of the project partnership identified fisherfolk leaders and fisheries officers to whom these products would be sent. These materials included: a press release, project announcement, information flyer, five 2-page policy briefs were produced explaining the key content of a protocol for incorporating the SSF Guidelines into the CCCFP, and a short article was prepared for the CRFM newsletter. A short survey instrument was also used to help prioritize SSF topics for the development of the draft protocol. The surveyed population was taken mainly from lists of fisherfolk leaders and fisheries officers available from previous events or from organizational memberships.

The SSF Guidelines protocol to the CCCFP was drafted by reviewing existing protocols from the CARICOM website and by liaising with legal personnel from the CARICOM and CRFM Secretariats who had experience in protocol drafting and the preparation of other legal documents.

### Results and Discussion

At the 29 March preparatory meeting of the project partners, the inception work plan for policy influence received strong support from the CNFO executive. There was consensus and enthusiasm on the need for the partnership to formally pursue the SSF Guidelines protocol to the

CCCFP. Fisherfolk awareness of the SSF Guidelines was improved across CNFO member states. However, the extent of this awareness is unclear, and generally low engagement by fisherfolk, who focus their attention on the practical and most immediate livelihood challenges rather than longer term and abstract policy influence, has left much still to be done.

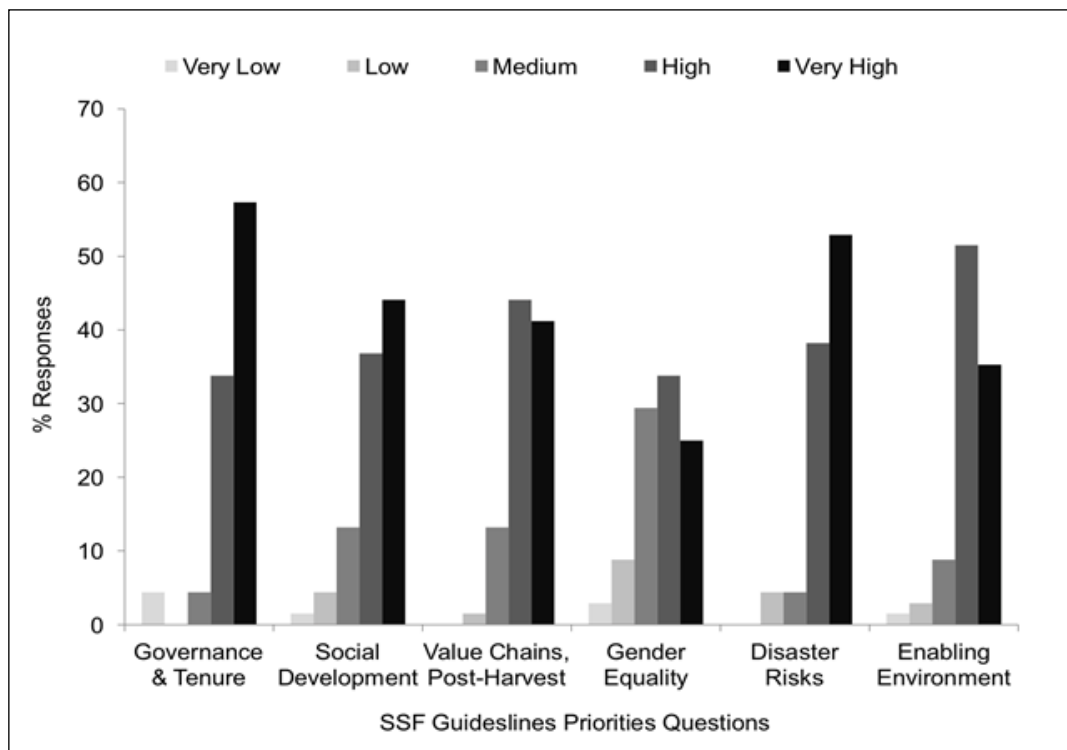
A total of 68 prioritization surveys were completed by respondents from 13 countries and territories in the Caribbean that comprise just over 75% of the 17 CRFM members (Table 1). Although the majority of CRFM members were represented, the response rate per country was low. Suriname, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Belize were among the countries with the most respondents.

The majority of respondents rated governance of tenure and resource management and disaster risks and climate change as very high priorities of great concern. Responses social development, employment and decent work and value chains, post-harvest and trade were rated by most respondents as either being a very high or high priority. The majority of respondents rated ensuring an enabling environment and supporting implementation as a high priority. However, most respondents rated gender equality as either medium or high priority (Figure 1).

Each of the topics in the SSF Guidelines was cumulatively rated as high or very high priority. Therefore, all chapters could be considered for inclusion in the CCCFP. Because gender was ranked lowest of the priorities, and is missing from the CCCFP, it is the topic that requires most attention in the protocol to the CCCFP in order to bring it in line with current global perspectives.

**Table 1.** Summary of survey respondents by country.

Country	Respondents
Anguilla	3
Barbados	13
Belize	6
Dominica	1
Grenada	2
Guyana	2
Jamaica	3
Montserrat	4
Puerto Rico	1
Saint Lucia	5
St. Kitts and Nevis	1
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	8
Suriname	15
Trinidad and Tobago	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>



**Figure 1.** Percentage of responses for SSF Guidelines priority ratings questions.

**Conclusions**

Mobilizing the partnership, endorsing the protocol process and building capacity for policy influence were instrumental in getting the project up and running. Activities such as planning the pre-Forum meeting, encouraging members within the partnership to distribute communication products and creating continued engagement opportunities were critical to the project. These actions assisted with increasing fisherfolk support for actively implementing the SSF Guidelines. It is believed that the collaborative planning and participatory process for drafting the protocol, despite its flaws, is a very promising practice.

**KEYWORDS:** Small-scale, fisheries, guidelines, process, protocol

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