

Capacity Needs Assessment of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat and its Member States



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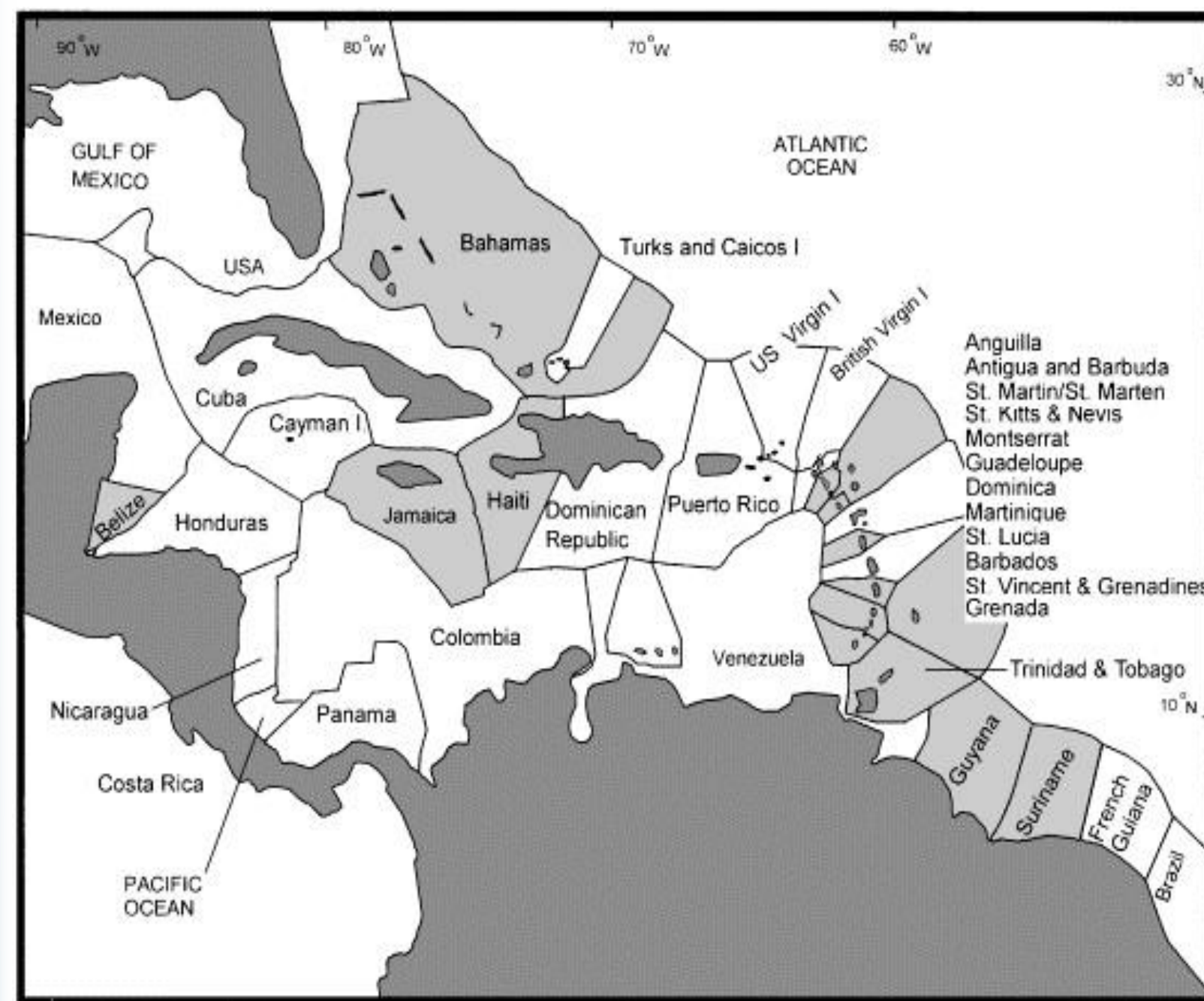


INTRODUCTION

The **Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)** is a CARICOM autonomous body, established in 2002 to promote the sustainable management and development of fisheries and aquaculture resources across 17 Member States.

CARIBBEAN FISHERIES CONTEXT

The Caribbean Sea is home to 17 CRFM Member States that share identities, economics and food systems. Fisheries are central to the region's social cohesion, sustaining livelihoods, nutrition and cultural heritage of hundreds of coastal communities.



Nation states sharing the Caribbean Sea and their exclusive economic zones. CRFM member states are in greyscale

540K People employed in fisheries across the region <i>6% of CARICOM labour force</i>	150K Tonnes of seafood landed in 2023 <i>Valued at US\$527 million</i>
300K Total marine capture production <i>tonnes, live weight</i>	10-35kg Per capita fish consumption <i>above global average of 20kg</i>

OBJECTIVES

At the request of the **CRFM Ministerial Council (Resolutions SMC 14(1) and 14(2) 2024)**, this Capacity Needs Assessment was conducted to:

- Assess the CRFM Secretariat's capacity to spearhead the envisioned blue transformation, aquaculture revolution, and harnessing the resources to support these activities.
- Recommend strategies for strengthening human and institutional capacities to support aquaculture development at the level of the CRFM Secretariat and the National Fisheries Authorities of Member States.
- Prepare findings for submission & presentation to the Ministerial Committee in September 2026.
- Facilitate the development of national and regional implementation plans to address identified gaps.

METHODOLOGY

A **qualitative thematic approach** was applied, combining three (3) data collection methods:

Document Analysis National legislation, policies and CCCFP instruments across all Member States	Structured Surveys <i>Two-part questionnaire:</i> • Institutional/human capacity • CCCFP alignment	Validation Sessions Preliminary findings presented to ensure accuracy
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PARTICIPATION
Minimum threshold: 10 Member States (60%)

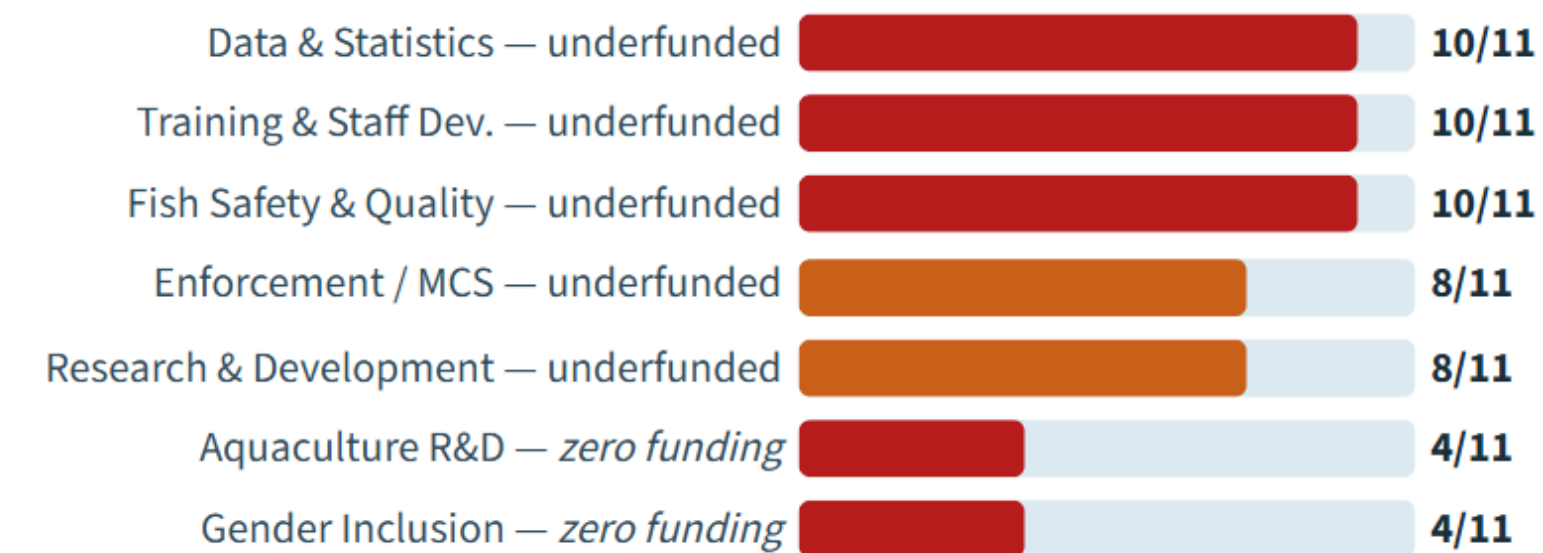
11/17 NATIONAL CAPACITY COMPONENT	12/17 CCCFP ALIGNMENT COMPONENT
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RESULTS – MEMBER STATES

INSTITUTIONAL & FINANCIAL CAPACITY

Not one functional unit across all responding Member States was reported as adequately funded. Every fisheries administration operates under financial constraints.

FUNDING STATUS BY KEY FUNCTIONAL AREAS



LEGAL AND OPERATION FRAMEWORKS LEFT BEHIND

- Most Fisheries Administrations operate under laws enacted in the 1980s or earlier
- Gender, aquaculture and Blue Economy absent from legislation
- Incomplete or absent National Fisheries Policies and Management Plans

HUMAN CAPACITY

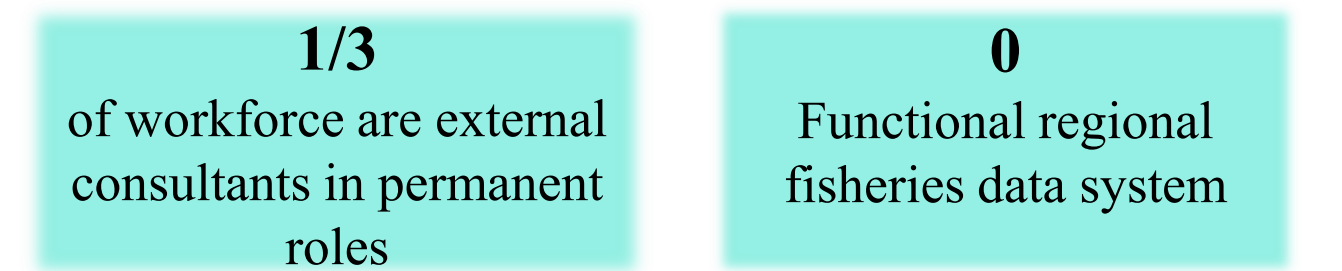


CCCFP ALIGNMENT

MEMBER STATES	ALIGNMENT
Belize, Barbados, Bahamas, St. Kitts and Nevis	High
Jamaica, T&T, Saint Lucia, Antigua & Barbuda, Anguilla, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname	Moderate
Haiti, Dominica, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands	Low

RESULTS – CRFM SECRETARIAT

The CRFM Secretariat delivers its core mandate effectively, but **human capacity is the weakest dimension**



KEY STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS

Limited Staff	Financial Stability
ICT & Data Base	Legal Expertise

CONCLUSION

Operating under constraints has become normalized in the region; these constraints are systemic and interrelated. Capacity is assessed against existing conditions, rather than against what is required for effective mandate delivery.

Without coordinated action, implementation of national mandates and the CCCFP will remain constrained and fisheries governance across the region will continue to be affected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Member States	CRFM Secretariat	Regional / CARICOM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modernize fisheries legislation to match expanded mandates Create national fisheries and aquaculture management plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen core technical and coordination capacities to better support Member States. Develop the regional fisheries data platform to improve data governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish sustainable core financing for the Secretariat Support coordinated approaches to training, financing, and legislative alignment under the CCCFP framework. Mainstream gender and aquaculture governance

Acknowledgements

