



**NOAA
FISHERIES**



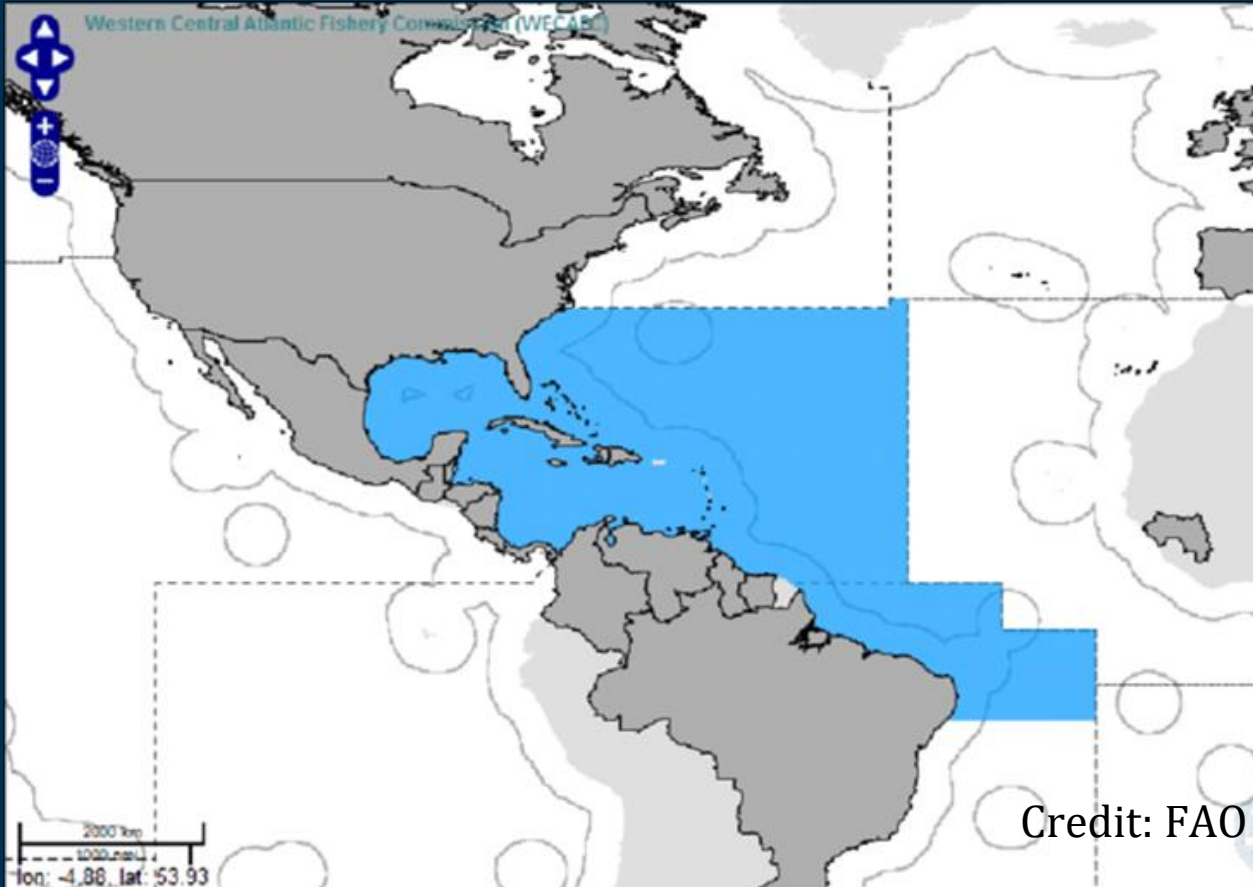
Updates on the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC): 19th Session

**Caribbean Fishery Management Council Meeting
December 5-6, 2023**

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Overview - WECAFC



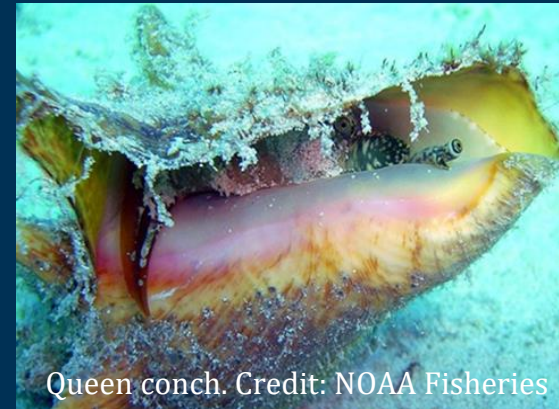
- Regional fisheries body
- Acts in advisory capacity for conservation and management of all living marine resources in the Wider Caribbean
- Comprised of 34 Members, including USA

Overview - WECAFC



Working Groups:

- Caribbean Spiny Lobster
- Queen Conch*
- Fish Spawning Aggregations*
- IUU Fishing
- Shark Conservation and Management
- Recreational Fisheries
- Anchored Fish Aggregating Device (aFAD) Fisheries*
- Deep-Sea Fisheries
- Regional Fisheries Data and Statistics
- Shrimp and Ground Fish (Brazil-Guianas Shelf)
- Flying fish-Dolphinfish*



Key Outcomes - WECAFC 19



- **Held September 6 - 8, 2023 in Bridgetown, Barbados**
- **Strategic reorientation of WECAFC into a strengthened regional fisheries body/entity advanced with agreement upon the following next steps:**
 - **Revitalization of a drafting group with broad membership**
 - **Task the group with refining options for Commission's consideration**
 - **Convene a second preparatory meeting before WECAFC's next session**
 - **Explore possibilities to provide financial support for this work**
- **Endorsement of several documents supported by the aFAD Working Group:**
 - **Caribbean Regional Management Plan for the aFAD Fishery**
 - **Guide for Improved Monitoring of aFAD Catches**



Key Outcomes - WECAFC 19



- **Revisions to several WECAFC recommendations were endorsed**
- **Queen Conch Recommendation (WECAFC/XVIII/2022/3):**
 - **Encourages participation in queen conch genetic project**
- **Fish Spawning Aggregations (FSA) Recommendation (WECAFC/XVIII/2022/4):**
 - **Encourages actions to improve data collection, assessment, and outreach for conservation of FSAs**
 - **Establishes a coordination committee for FSA management plan (endorsed by the Commission in 2022)**
 - **Prioritizes data collection and reporting of Nassau grouper/mutton snapper by WECAFC members**



Key Outcomes - WECAFC 19



- **Comprehensive Program of Work for 2023 - 2025 adopted**
 - Includes first meeting of the Flyingfish-Dolphinfish Working Group in summer 2024
 - NOAA Fisheries welcome Council member input on issues and priority areas to be addressed by the Working Group
- **New Leadership**
 - Jamaica (Mr. Floyd Green) named Chair of WECAFC
- **Next Commission meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place in summer 2025 in Jamaica**

Thank you for your attention!



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