Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism

PRESS RELEASE

CRFM and Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre Join Forces to Build a Stronger, Climate-Ready Caribbean

(Left to right) Mr. Mansfield Blackwood – 5Cs Assistant Executive Director; Dr. Marc Williams - CRFM Executive Director; Ms. Sanya Compton – CRFM Programme Manager, Climate Change and Blue Economy Development, Policy, Planning and Management; Mr. Peter A. Murray - Regional Project Coordinator for the GEF/CAF/FAO/CRFM BE-CLME+ Project; and Mr. Keith Nichols – 5Cs Head, Special Projects

Belize City, Belize, 17 July 2026 (CRFM)— The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC or 5Cs) have taken an important step toward working more closely together to help protect the Caribbean's oceans, fisheries, and coastal communities from the growing impacts of climate change.

Leaders from both organizations met on July 16, 2026, to discuss how to combine their knowledge, resources, and experience to tackle some of the region's most pressing environmental challenges.

During the meeting, the CRFM shared updates on several major projects that are helping Caribbean countries build stronger, more sustainable fisheries. These initiatives improve marine planning, support renewable energy, strengthen local fishing communities, and promote gender equality in the fisheries sector.

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One of the biggest topics of discussion was sargassum, the large amounts of brown seaweed that continue to wash up on Caribbean beaches. While sargassum can harm tourism, fishing, and marine ecosystems, both organizations agreed that it could also become an opportunity if safely transformed into useful products through a circular economy approach. They also emphasized the need for more research, better coordination, and shared information to solve the problem effectively.

The meeting also highlighted the growing importance of Blue Carbon; the carbon stored in coastal ecosystems such as mangroves and seagrasses, which plays a key role in combating climate change. It was noted that there has been a conversation in the region about the need to develop a Blue Carbon Policy to help Caribbean countries protect these valuable natural resources.

Another major priority discussed was improving access to climate and marine data. Both organizations recognized that better information is essential for making smarter decisions, creating stronger policies, and helping Caribbean countries prepare for future climate challenges. They agreed that sharing data more openly will benefit governments, researchers, fishers, and coastal communities across the region.

Both the CRFM and 5cs emphasized that stronger partnerships are essential for protecting the Caribbean's marine resources and ensuring that future generations can continue to benefit from healthy oceans.

The partnership reflects a shared vision: a Caribbean where healthy oceans, thriving fisheries, resilient coastal communities, and climate-smart development go hand in hand.

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ABOUT THE CRFM:

The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) was officially inaugurated on 27 March 2003 in Belize City, Belize, where it is headquartered, following the signing of the Agreement Establishing the CRFM on 4 February 2002. It is an inter-governmental organization whose mission is to promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of the region's fisheries and other aquatic resources for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region.

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