

Workshop on the implementation of priority actions on sustainable trade of swordfish and other longline fisheries under Barbados Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies

Overview of the Implementation of the OETS Project in Barbados



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The international management environment

- ▶ The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is an inter-governmental organization responsible for the conservation of tuna and tuna-like fish stocks in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas (ICCAT Convention Area)
- ▶ Barbados became a member in December 2000 and is bound to comply with regulations mandated by ICCAT
- ▶ Of particular interest to the project being discussed here is the setting of annual catch limits or quotas for some species including blue and white marlins (10 t each) and swordfish (45t)



The international management environment

- ▶ Currently, Barbados' only export market for large pelagics (tunas and swordfish) is the USA.
- ▶ For the USA, the Magnuson–Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (1976) is the primary law that governs marine fisheries management in U.S. federal waters.
- ▶ In the 2021 Biennial Report to Congress on Improving International Fisheries Management, Barbados was identified for having vessels (in the longline fishery) that engaged in fishing activities or practices that result in bycatch of sea turtles, a protected living marine resource (PLMR), without a regulatory program comparable in effectiveness to that of the United States.



The international management environment

- ▶ Because of this identification, NOAA Fisheries must make certification determinations based on any actions taken by us to adopt a regulatory program comparable to that of the USA.
- ▶ Barbados is now involved in consultations with NOAA Fisheries as part of this certification process.
- ▶ Without a positive certification Barbados may among other things be subjected to restrictions on exporting certain fish or fish products to the USA.

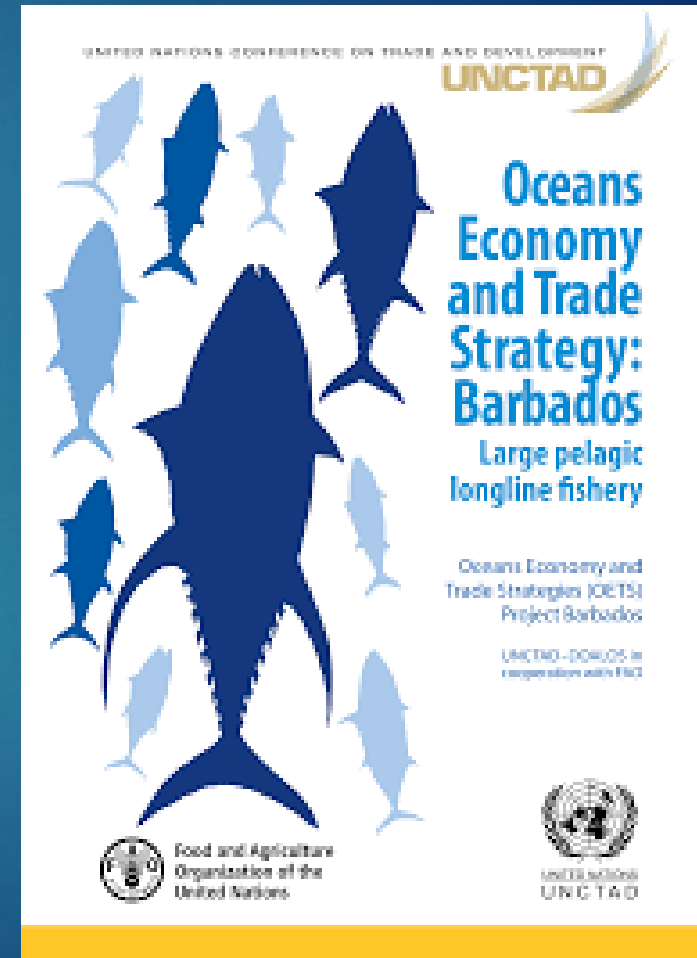


The OETS project – Origins of the sub-projects

- ▶ The 2018-2022 “Evidence Based and Policy coherent Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS Project)” is funded by the United Nations Development Account and implemented by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in cooperation with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations.
- ▶ The OETS project was designed to support coastal developing countries, including small island developing states (SIDS), such as Barbados and was aimed at assisting states in deriving improved economic benefit from sustainable trade of products in the case of Barbados the focus was on the pelagic longline (LL) fishery in particular the topic of moving from exporting tuna in the fresh headed and gutted form to exporting fresh tuna loins.

Origin of the projects

- ▶ A report under this project was completed in 2021 entitled “Oceans Economy and Trade Strategy: Barbados Pelagic Longline Fishery UNCTAD, DOALOS and FAO (2021).
- ▶ It was considered that the proposal to move to exporting tuna loins was not practicable at present. However other recommendations were in keeping with the management policies and strategies of the Fisheries Division for the longline fishery.



Recommendations from the report

- ▶ The report noted Barbados' problem with overharvest (over quota) catches of marlins (blue and white) and need to reduce landings of these species.
- ▶ To this end the use of circle hooks instead of J hooks was noted as one method to achieve this by increasing the occurrence of live fish at haulback thus allowing their live release (and thus reduced landings).



Recommendations from the report

- ▶ The increased numbers of live fish at haulback taken on circle hooks also applies to target species such as tunas and swordfish and this allows the catch to be iced before the postmortem deterioration processes occur and thus increases the market grades of the tuna.
- ▶ Finally circle hooks reduce mortality of other bycatch species such as turtles and this is keeping with the conservation management goals for these endangered species.
- ▶ For all these reasons, Action 19 in the report suggested that conducting trials to test the impacts on reducing by-catch and product quality.



Sub-projects for Barbados

Following consultations important additional activities were later included under the OETS project including:

- ▶ An update and expansion of the 2008-2010 study "Economic Valuation of the Barbados Longline Fishery-Landings, Costs, Net Profit and Return on Investment" by Peter W. Schuhmann, Hazel A. Oxenford, Tanya Staskiewicz and Julian Walcott .
- ▶ The rationale being to provide current information on the economics of the fishery.
- ▶ Ms. Carol-Anne Blenman is the consultant for this project

ECONOMIC VALUATION OF THE FISHERIES OF BARBADOS

Landings, Costs, Net Profit and Return on
Investment in two Contrasting Fisheries

Part 1: The Longline Fishery



Sub-projects for Barbados

- ▶ A study to explore the market potential for both local and export of Swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and to conduct experimental fishing exercises to identify best fishing techniques and costs for Swordfish harvesting. This is keeping with the fact that Barbados has a lot of unused quota (ICCAT) for this potentially valuable species from which fishers could benefit and possibly even mitigate any impacts from reduced marlin catches.
- ▶ An assessment of the impact of circle hooks on catch composition and the rates of live vs. dead capture of all species at haul-back taken by local longline gear.
- ▶ Dr. Shelley-Ann Cox is the consultant for these projects



Thank You!

