

**Second National Stakeholder Workshop:  
Discussion and validation of an Oceans Economy and  
Trade Strategy for the Sustainable  
Tuna Value Chain in Barbados**

**3-4 March 2020  
Bridgetown, Barbados**

Welcome remarks by  
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- *Non edited version – check against delivery.*

Good morning,

Hon. Kirk Humphrey, Minister of Maritime Affairs & Blue Economy,  
Barbados,

UN DOALOS, FAO, Barbados Fisheries Division colleagues,

Dear Participants,

On behalf of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), I would like to welcome you all to the Second National OETS Stakeholders Workshop in Barbados. This workshop is a milestone of the project titled “[Evidence-based and policy coherent oceans economy and trade strategies](#)”, which is implemented the country in a joint effort by UNCTAD, UNDOALOS, FAO, the Barbados Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Blue Economy and the Barbados Fisheries Division.

The OETS project started its implementation in Barbados in 2018. So far it has delivered two field missions, two national stakeholders’ workshops (including this one), one [compilation of economic fact sheets on key](#)

[oceans based sectors](#), including fisheries, aquaculture and coastal and marine environmental services and one [legal, regulatory and governance study on the mentioned sectors](#).

[At the Second OETS stakeholder workshop](#) we will present the **first-ever draft Oceans Economy and Trade Strategy for Barbados and a plan of action** for sustainable marine fisheries and seafood processing, and specifically **the pelagic longline (LL) fishery** (e.g. tuna and sword fish) and related processing. Therefore, the objective of this workshop is to discuss, improve and hopefully validate the proposed strategy.

Across all species, fishing in Barbados contributes 0.15% to its GDP according to official statistics (UNCTAD and DOALOS, 2019). **In 2016 the total value of all Barbadian marine capture fisheries was \$7.9 million from 3,200 tons of total fishery production** (UNCTAD and DOALOS, 2019).

Tuna and other large pelagic represent one of most important fisheries exports of Barbados. **These exports are estimated \$300'000 per year.** They take the form of high-quality head and gutted (H&G) fish, mostly directed toward the United States market (CRFM, 2016). It has been argued that this data may be a low estimate to due under reporting and that current exports could be closer to \$ half a million per year.

**Barbados's fisheries sector supports over 6000-8000 people directly participating** in the fishing industry, with over 3'000 of these people being active fishers (Barbados Fisheries Division, 2004) showing a clear relation to the sustainability of coastal communities' livelihoods.

Barbados' large pelagic fisheries offer a unique opportunity for scale up in supply side capacity and value addition. There is great potential here for transitioning the fishery into a **fresh loin product** that uses

sustainability criteria and traceability to improve market access, tuna sales prices and income for fishers.

There are also opportunities to improve the current regulatory framework in order to improve compliance and further implement the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the FAO Port State Measures Agreement and the Plan of Action to combat and deter Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Furthermore, precise efforts will be needed to adapt the current legislation and implementing regulations with more demanding requirements by the European Union on “equivalent” or “commensurate efforts” in the fight against IUU fishing, in improving safety at sea and labour standards for fishers if we want to secure market opportunities under the EU-CARIFORUM Agreement.

Additionally, Barbados can sign and accede to the [UNCTAD’s General System of Trade Preferences \(GSTP\)](#) to reduce tariff barriers in growing and less non-tariff measures stringent southern markets. In all these regulatory aspects the FAO, DOALOS and UNCTAD are taking an important advisory role in Barbados.

However, to succeed, **we must seize these opportunities. We cannot just expect to catch good fish without casting the net wide.** That’s why we are here today to support Barbados in identifying and seeking to realise trade and investment opportunities.

The overall goal of the proposed Barbados OETS strategy and derived action plan will be to promote the competitiveness and sustainability of the LL pelagic sector while improving the quality of life of people engaged in fishing and ensuring the sustainability of resources in the long term.

The contents of the draft strategy and plan of action were developed based on inputs obtained during the [First National Stakeholder Workshop in 2018](#), the economic overview and legal study already undertaken by UNCTAD and DOALOS and FAO field missions with international experts. An executive summary of the draft OETS report has been made available to you in order to facilitate understanding.

The proposed strategy and the plan of action has already been peer reviewed by UNCTAD, DOALOS and FAO. The draft action plan contains a set of strategic actions seeking to implement the strategy, list of relevant actors and partners, the timeframe for implementation as well as a very broad estimation of the resources needed and potential gains for the country under a blended investment scheme.

After the discussion, review and validation of the OETS report and plan of action, UNCTAD, DOALOS and the FAO will seek to support Barbados in the implementation of selected priority actions within their areas of competence, and within their limited resources we have, as well through targeted training.

All the lessons learned in Barbados and in the other beneficiary countries (Belize and Costa Rica), will be presented in a **regional event tentatively on 15–16 October 2020, in Barbados as a pre-event at UNCTAD 15 Ministerial Conference.**

Many thanks for your kind participation and support.

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