

BLUE BIO TRADE REGIONAL WORKSHOP

QUEEN CONCH

MAY 26TH-27TH 2022

ST.VINCENT

GRENADA



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Chief Fisheries Officers

THE PRODUCT

- The queen conch (*strombus gigas*) is a sea mollusk and can also by definition called a " shell fish)



SHELL

- The queen conch shell can grow up to 30 cm in length.
(11.811 inches)



WEIGHT

- The queen conch cam present a **WEIGHT** of (3) kilos...(6.614 pounds)



AREA OF DISTRIBUTION

- The queen conch are distributed or can be found throughout the Caribbean region.



INTERNATIONAL INCLUSION

- The queen conch was included on CITES list among other species in 1992.



CONSUMPTION

- About 70% of internationally queen conch meat via trade are consumed in the United States



DEMAND

- There is a great demand for queen conch locally, regionally as well as internationally.
- In the Grenada context, queen conch is predominantly sold to Super markets, Restaurants and Hotels.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Several marketing reviews as well as Biological and Scientific information was conducted by CITES in the nineties and again during the 2003- 2005 period.



LEGALITY



- International trade in queen conch became the central priority for CITES so as to ascertain a proper management and sustainable structure, as well as the legality of the queen conch trade.

SUPPORT

- Over 36 countries in the Caribbean region extend full support to CITES management strategy as well as other fisheries organizations.



TRAINING

- CITES in a collaborated effort with Regional partners also promoted better management of the queen conch, initiated technical support, training, seminars, research effort, as well as having an increase in knowledge, and understanding of the distribution, Ecology, and density of the queen conch.

IMPORTANCE

- Queen conch remains one of the most important fishery research in the wider Caribbean region. A huge cross section of fishers depends on this resource as a means of livelihood, and understands the need for better cohesion, so as to utilize this shell fish specie in a sustainable manner

MEASURES

- CITES implemented measures in the queen conch fishery...which included....
 - a) EFFICIENT TRADE CONTROLS.
 - b) HARMONISED FISHERIES RULES.
 - c) TRADE SUSPENSIONS
 - d) EXPORT QUOTAS

HARVEST

- In the past artisanal fishermen in small wooden canoes used oars to reach the fishing ground. Presently conch fishers used motor propelled vessel from shore to the fishing ground.



DIVING

- Free diving was the main technique used in the past for the purpose to extract conch from the fishing bed. Nowadays trained fishers are using scuba tanks in depths of 30 feet so as to harvest the queen conch.



GRENADA

- The queen conch fishery in Grenada dates back since 1957



SANCTIONS

- Grenada at present is on Appendix II which was imposed by CITES. This imposition have prohibited Grenada from exporting queen conch to many countries. Due to the sanctions imposed by CITES, the percentage of fishers in this fishery reduced tremendously. Thus no robust harvesting of conch are reported for the past ten years or more.

PERSONEL

- Over 90 to 105 young fishers are now engaged in the harvesting of conch on mainland Grenada as well as Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

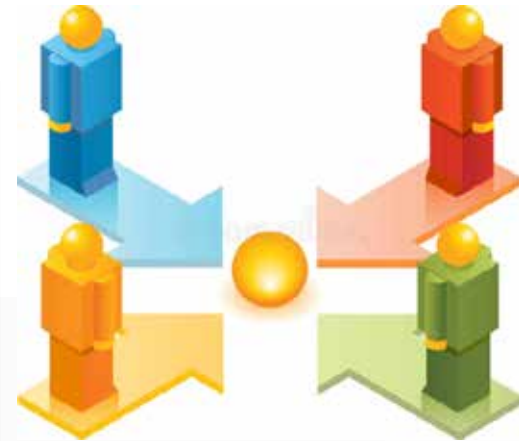


LEGISLATION

- There are no present LEGISLATION as it relates to a closed season for conch. Conch can be harvested predominantly from September to April. (Grenada ministry of Fisheries is now engaged in talks with the policy makers with the intent of recommending a close season period as it relates to queen conch (strombus gigas)

FOCAL POINT

- The forestry department in the Ministry of Agriculture et al is the sole focal department that deals with this particular fishery.



EXPORTERS


- There are two main EXPORTERS on the island of Grenada. Vineyard limited and Spice Isle Fish House.
- However Vineyard limited remains the predominant exporter of conch, but was also affected in the trade due to the CITES sanctions.



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- (1) CITES review of Significant Trade, which has prohibited the export of conch to countries since 2006.
 - (2) A suspension of trade in all CITES ..listed species from Grenada (Which includes the queen conch) due to the failure to submit annual trade reports since 2013.

DIRECT BLUE BIO TRADE PROJECT

- Grenada has been under the radar of the local, regional as well as international market system where the export of queen conch is concerned, and is presently subjected to two recommendations for the purpose to suspend trade in the queen conch fishery.

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- The project proposes to initiate funds to conduct a biological assessment of the status of the queen conch...Grenada also tried sourcing funding for such an initiative. Once the project is implemented Grenada will be pleased to forward all marine scientific research data to CITES as well as other reports for analysis and consideration.

DIRECT BLUE BIO TRADE SUPPORT

- The UNCTDA, OECS, CITES, with support of the European Union collaborated for the purpose to design and institute a PILOT PROJECT to test the principles and criteria (2020) to the marine environment which focus mainly on the BIO Trade Principles, as well the conch value chain in the countries of Grenada, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and St. Lucia.

STOCK HEALTH

- The health of the queen conch stocks in Grenada presently are determined based upon several reports obtain from fishers.
- It is ok to say but not definite or conclusive. That the Grenada conch fishery is dynamic and healthy. It is of concern however, that though these reports came from conch fishers themselves, there is no scientific analysis or findings to verify these reports.

SOCIAL FINDINGS

- The health of the divers that are presently engaged in the harvesting of queen conch is robust. Divers undertake medical checks every six months.
- Young divers between the ages of 16 to 32 years are trained and certified in scuba diving.



SOCIAL FINDINGS continues...

- The high risk of obtaining Parkinson disease (the bens) have reduced tremendously due to the certification of these young diverse.
- As it relates to gender composition only about 0.5 percent of women are directly engaged in the harvesting of conch. But for purchasing and selling most women are engaged in this activity. So the health of the females are not compromised in anyways.

VALUE CHAIN

- Grenada has detailed at each level process of production regarding queen conch. The chain begins with inputs to harvest, then landings, marketing, wholesale and retail, transportation and consumption.



MAIN GOVERNANCE:

Government Institutions:

- Ministry of health(competent Authority)
- Ministry of Trade
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Sports (Fisheries Division)
- Ministry of Agriculture (forestry division focal point)



MAIN GOVERNANCE:

Other:

- Grenada Bureau of Standards.
- Produce Chemist Laboratory



ACTIVITIES

- 1. To exploit the resource at a higher level.
- 2. To create job opportunities.
- 3. To minimize all aspects of IUU fishing.
- 4. To maximize a more harmonious relationship between buyers and consumers.

ACTIVITIES

- 5. To promote and enhance training and development in the fishery.
- 6. To monitor and identify potential threats in the fishery.
- 7. To analyze the marketing component and trends in the value chain.
- 8. To provide for proper governance and institutional as well as legislative arrangements.

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- **9. To employ all aspects of MCS activities for the prevention, conservation and sustainability of the queen conch fishery in the value chain.**

IN MOVING FORWARD

Plan of the division:

- 1. To review and make recommendations as it relates to the strengths and weaknesses of the focal point.**
- 2. To correlate and submitted necessary reporting apparatuses CITES on a timely basis.**
- 3. To provide training for Staff members, fishers, vendors, consumers as it relates to the queen conch fishery.**
- 4. To ensure that there is a close season for the queen conch fishery.**

MAIN NEEDS

- The stakeholders are acutely aware of the CITES prohibition and NEED for this sanction to be lifted.
- The Fisheries Division needs Biological as well as research data as to confirm the biomass, population density, and distribution of the queen conch.
- The vision relative to the queen conch industry in Grenada first and foremost is to institute legislative controls..(eg. Institute a close season for queen conch...to use more adequate fishing technology for the harvesting of the queen conch, as well as to maintain periodic training for young people, thus encouraging them to engage and invest more in the queen conch industry.

VISION



- Grenada envisioned that with this necessary assistance that will be initiated in the not to distant future, that this pilot project especially where the queen conch industry is concern, that the Fisheries Division will be in a better position to report, so that the sanctions which is imposed upon Grenada, by CITES will eventually be lifted in due course.

CONCLUSION

- On behalf of the Government of Grenada and by extension the Ministry with direct responsibilities for Fisheries, the Fisheries Division wishes to express sincere thanks and is very grateful for involving us in this pilot project.
- Further we express direct thanks to the organizers of this pilot project citing, UNCTDA, CITES, OECS, EU. under the Blud Bio Trade initiative.

THANK YOU

