

BE-CLME+ Project: Promoting National Blue Economy Priorities Through Marine Spatial Planning in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Plus (GEF Project ID 10211)

Terms of Reference for a Regional Consultancy to Identify Value Chain Capacity Needs and Gaps

1.0 Background & Justification.

1.1 The BE-CLME+ Project is a regional initiative aimed at promoting blue economy development in the Caribbean region through Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), development of climate-smart sustainable fisheries value chains, and knowledge management in Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Panama. The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) is the Executing Agency for the project, while the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations are the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Co-Implementing Agencies.

1.2 The 2025 BE: CLME+ Project Workplan & Budget was approved by the Regional Steering Committee in February, 2025 and calls for a regional consultancy to identify value chain capacity needs and gaps under Component 2 of the project.

1.3 Training and other forms of enhancing human resources of regional and national authorities, private sector stakeholders, and fisherfolk organizations are essential for effectively analysing and designing seafood value chains as part of a successful Blue Economy strategy. A two-pronged approach will be used to address these needs. First, a general educational/training program targeting a broad range of stakeholders and secondly, a specialized training tailored to the diverse needs of different groups, including small-scale fishers, fisherfolk organizations (FFO), processors, vendors, exporters, industry groups, government institutions, and supporting entities.

1.4 The training programmes will be designed at multiple levels. At the general level, training will focus on foundational knowledge that will be applicable across the entire value chain. At a regional level, the training will address unique challenges and opportunities in Caribbean value chains, considering regional issues such as trade dynamics, sustainability issues, and best practices. On a national level and local level, the training will be tailored to the specific needs of each country, ensuring that fishers, vendors, processors, and FFOs receive practical and relevant capacity building. This will be done via a structured process to map the existing capacity needs and gaps, considering technical skills, business skills, financial skills, and institutional capacity. The results will be analysed to guide the further development of targeted training programmes to support all stakeholders throughout the value chain effectively.

2.0 Objective of the Consultancy.

The objective of this consultancy is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the skills, knowledge, resources, infrastructure, and institutional capacity of all stakeholders involved in the seafood value chain. These include small-scale fishers, vendors, processors, exporters, industry groups, government institutions, regulatory agencies, and supporting entities such as Cooperatives and NGOs. The

assessment will identify key capacity gaps at the regional, national, and local levels, ensuring there is a clear understanding of the specific needs of each actor, entity, institution, or group. The assessment will also evaluate the operational and institutional challenges faced by policy makers, industry groups, and other value chain actors.

Based on the assessment, recommendations will be developed aimed at strengthening stakeholder capacities, promoting inclusivity, improving operational efficiencies, and promoting sustainable practices. The findings will also be used to guide the development of the roadmap for targeted training programmes, ensuring stakeholders have the necessary knowledge and skills to efficiently utilize resources, participate in and benefit from Blue Economy opportunities along the seafood value chain.

3.0 Key Activities will include, but not be limited to those listed below.

Inception Meeting and Report

3.1 The CRFM/PMU shall convene a meeting with the consultant and project countries focal points to provide any clarification and additional information on project objectives, scope, and expected outcomes.

3.2 The consultant shall prepare an Inception Report which should include a detailed work plan, including timelines, methodologies, and deliverables to ensure alignment for the execution of the expected outputs.

Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement Strategy

3.3 Conduct a stakeholder mapping and profiling to identify and map key stakeholders across the entire seafood value chain, and profile each stakeholder group in terms of their roles and their level of influence to the value chain, ensuring that it is in alignment with the stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) of the project.

3.4 Provide graphic illustrations of stakeholder mapping and profiling of stakeholder groups in terms of their roles and their level of importance to the value chain.

3.5 Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement strategy to ensure participation and buy-in from all key stakeholders.

3.6 Identify the appropriate entities, groups, organizations, authorities and agencies which would benefit from educational and/or training programs.

Situational Analysis and Gap Analysis

3.7 Conduct a baseline assessment to assess the current capacities of stakeholders and identify capacities, performance, and gaps that may limit their ability to participate effectively and add value in the value chain.

3.8 Evaluate the status of the existing processes, resources, skills, and infrastructure available to stakeholders and identify gaps in these resources that are critical in enhancing the value chain.

3.9 Assess the institutions, organizations, and agencies that support the fisheries sector, such as small-scale fishers, vendors, processors, exporters, industry groups, government institutions, regulatory agencies, and supporting entities such as Cooperatives and NGOs and identify the gaps in the organizations structure, governance, technical capacity, and services.

3.10 Evaluate the needs and gaps using quantitative and qualitative methods, such as surveys, focus groups, and interviews to highlight areas for improvements and innovation.

3.11 Identify the specific training and development needs of these stakeholders to address the value chain capacity needs and gaps and make recommendations based on priority, resources required and impact for capacity building programmes, including training workshops, mentoring, and technology transfer initiatives.

Prepare a Results-based Action Plan and Roadmap

3.12 Based on the findings prepare a comprehensive results-based action plan with SMART objectives, detailing recommended interventions for addressing capacity needs and gaps across the entire value chain and propose strategies for capacity building, infrastructure development, and policy support to enhance the sector's value chains including key topics and thematic areas based on country level priorities.

3.13 Identify the most principal elements of each training program at the general, national, and regional level and how they can enforce the design and implementation of Blue Economy plans and strategies.

3.14 Develop an implementation roadmap or a phased approach specifying short-term, medium-term, and long-term actions.

3.15 Estimate resource requirements (financial, technical, human) for implementation of the plan, prepare a draft budget and identify possible sources of funding and / or sustainable financing options to ensure that recommended actions are financially feasible and attainable.

3.16 Design a monitoring and evaluation plan to track the process and measure the impact of the implemented capacity building actions specifying key indicators, data collections methods, and reporting frequencies to facilitate ongoing assessment.

3.17 In coordination with the CRFM/PMU, organize and convene virtual national workshops in each project country and regional validation workshop to present the draft action plan to stakeholders and gather feedback to incorporate revisions to ensure consensus and commitment to the proposed actions.

Final Report and Communication Materials

3.18 Deliver a final report for addressing capacity needs and gaps across the entire value chain that includes the situational analysis, gap assessment, action and implementation plan, key findings, recommendations, sources of funding/sustainable financing options and next steps for implementation.

3.19 Ensure the recommendations are structured, data-driven and focused on actionable outcomes, accountability, and sustainability for the improvement of the capacity of stakeholders in the value chain.

3.20 Ensure recommendations better embrace Marine Spatial Planning and Blue Economy principles, including clear and visible representation of the role of women in fisheries value chains and blue justice.

3.21 This consultancy must consult with partners of the BE: CLME+ Project, including but not limited to Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA), PROCARIBE+ Project (both of

whom are involved with traceability work in the fisheries sector), and the National Fisheries Authorities who have made varying degrees of progress in value chain analyses at the national level.

3.22 Consult with the CRFM/PMU and be informed of the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) triggered by the BE: CLME+ Project and identify where value chain optimization may be in violation of ESS and make specific recommendations to ensure value chain compliance with ESS. In the optimization of fisheries value chains ensure these comply with the ESS triggered by the BE: CLME+ Project.

3.23 Develop at least one (1) communication and visibility material for each country plus one which integrates the results in all countries for regional dissemination. These materials will be submitted to the CRFM/PMU for review, vetting of content, and onward communication via the CRFM's Knowledge Management and Information System and broader regional network.

Final Technical Report

3.24 Prepare a final technical report that highlights the under-mentioned, inter-alia:

- a) The nature of the assignment undertaken, noting the level of success and constraints;
- b) The quality of participation in consultations;
- c) Lessons learned during the assignment;
- d) Any limitations to the outputs and their intended use; and
- e) Recommendations for continued monitoring of project outcomes and sustainability.

4.0 Expected Outcomes and Deliverables.

4.1 The consultant(s) are expected to deliver the following products:

Product 1: Inception Report – A Report detailing activities, milestones, timeline, and a robust methodology to carry out the assignment (consistent with Sections 3.1 to 3.3 of these Terms of Reference).

Product 2: Draft Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement Strategy (consistent with Sections 3.3 to 3.6 of these Terms of Reference).

Product 3: Final Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement Strategy and Draft Situational Analysis and Gap Analysis report (consistent with Sections 3.7 to 3.11 of these Terms of Reference).

Product 4: Draft Results-based Action Plan and Roadmap (consistent with Sections 3.12 to 3.17 of these Terms of Reference).

Product 5: Final Report and Communication Materials (consistent with Sections 3.18 to 3.23 of these Terms of Reference).

Product 6: Final Technical Report and Materials consistent with Section 6.0 of these Terms of Reference.

Product 7: Final Technical Report.

5.0 Project Schedule and Milestones.

Deliverable	Date	Payments
Product 1: Inception Report detailing activities, milestones, timeline, and a robust methodology to carry out the assignment.	0.5 month after contract signature	10% of contract value
Product 2: Draft stakeholder mapping and engagement strategy	2.0 months after contract signature	30% of contract value
Product 3: Final Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement Strategy and Draft Situational Analysis and Gap Analysis report	4.0 months after contract signature	20% of contract value
Product 4: Final Situational Analysis and Gap Analysis report & Draft Results-based Action Plan and Roadmap	6.0 months after contract signature	20% of contract value
Product 5: Final Reports and Results-based Action Plan and Roadmap	7.0 months after contract signature	10% of contract value
Product 6: Communication Materials consistent with Section 6.0 of Terms of Reference		
Product 7: Final Technical Report	8.0 months after contract signature	10% of contract value

6.0 Reporting Requirements.

6.1 The consultant will present the deliverables following the schedule established in section 5 of these terms of reference. The deliverables must include reports in Word, PowerPoint presentation of major findings and recommendations, and other documents used as the basis of the analysis (including other formats such as Excel spreadsheets, etc. as applicable) and a folder with the list of bibliographic references used to develop the analysis. All reports should follow the CRFM Guidelines for Publications and Reports. All materials must be delivered in **English. The following final deliverables must be submitted in both English and Spanish:** Final reports (Product 4) and Visibility Material (Product 5) must be delivered. All reports, studies, plans, drawings, source code, technical data, specifications, and any other material prepared by or worked upon by the consultant exclusively for the CRFM under this Agreement are the sole and exclusive property of the CRFM and as such the CRFM has exclusive title, rights, and interest in all such material including the right of dissemination, reproduction, and publication. The consultant will also work closely with the Regional Project Coordinator and the Marine Spatial Planning Specialist of the BE-CLME+ Project on the assignment.

7.0 Acceptance Criteria.

7.1 Payments will be authorized once the CRFM accepts the products specified by the TOR. The CRFM will have up to three weeks to provide written comments/recommendations to the consultant(s) reports. Unless previously determined, the CRFM will generally accept the deliverables once the consultant or consulting firm confirms the following: (i) receipt and additional inclusion of comments/recommendations in a revised version and (ii) provision of date for presentation of the revised versions of the submitted deliverables. The consultant(s) are expected to include these comments two weeks after receipt.

8.0 Consultant's Efforts and Required Skills

8.1 Applicants should meet the following requirements:

- At least a master's degree in Value Chain Management, Fisheries Economics, Agricultural Economics, Agri-business Management, Natural Resource Economics, Fisheries Resources Management, or other relevant and related fields.
- Training in value chains, investment analysis, finance, marketing, business planning, management, or economics, or trade will be an asset.
- Minimum of 5 years' experience in fisheries value chain analysis, agricultural economics, or business and marketing analysis of food products.
- Experience in consultancy work related to value chains, market analysis and feasibility, fisheries management plans, and public private partnerships, in relation to food products.
- Experience in facilitating regional stakeholder meetings or discussions.
- Experience working with resource users across marine-related sectors, especially in the fisheries, protected areas, tourism, recreational fisheries, and maritime transport.
- Ability to work with senior government officials, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local communities.
- A good understanding of dynamics of the fishery sector, markets, trade, fisheries management, eco-systems-approach to fisheries, and blue economy.
- Work experience in any of the project countries or within the region.

9.0 Application and Selection Procedure.

9.1 Interested Consulting Teams/ Firms are invited to submit their Technical and Financial Proposal outlining observations on these Terms of Reference, understanding of the objectives of the assignment, details of methodology to be applied, proposed work plan and timeline, personnel to be involved, skills and Curriculum Vitae of all proposed team members, declaration of availability, declaration of no conflict of interest, and tax-inclusive price proposal with details of professional fees for team members, logistics, travel, printing, and all other associated costs.

9.2 Technical and Financial Proposals will be evaluated using a Quality and Cost-Based Selection procedure, in which the Technical Proposal can be awarded a maximum of 70% of the evaluation score and price a maximum of 30% of the evaluation score.

9.3 Please submit your application in PDF format by August 29, 2025 to jobs@crfm.int and secretariat@crfm.int.