

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **CRFM and IOI sign 5-year MoU to build the Caribbean's capacity in Ocean Governance**

*Belize City, Belize, 29 December 2015 (CRFM)*—The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and the International Ocean Institute (IOI) this month signed a new 5-year memorandum of understanding (MoU) to extend their longstanding cooperation towards building the capacity of Caribbean fisheries and marine resource management professionals in ocean governance. The partnership between the CRFM and IOI started in 2004 and it has provided nearly 40 Caribbean nationals access to high-level, specialized training and capacity-building support at IOI-Dalhousie University every year since then.

The renewed cooperation agreement, signed for the CRFM by Executive Director Milton Haughton and for IOI by Managing Director of its Malta headquarters, Antonella Vassallo, ensures that Caribbean nationals will continue to receive expert training on Ocean Governance: Policy, Law and Management at the Canada-based institute.

Commenting on the agreement, the CRFM's Executive Director, said: "We are very pleased to have concluded this new MoU with IOI, one of our key international development partners. The specialized training provided by IOI in marine policy, law and marine management is very important for the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean that depend heavily on the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean for economic development. The need for this type of training in the region is great. Through our partnership with IOI, we have been able to gradually build up our capacity to utilize, protect and manage our coastal and marine resources."

Nominations have just closed for the 36<sup>th</sup> annual training at IOI-Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, which is set to convene next year, from 18 May 2016 to 15 July 2016. Each year, there are spaces for two to five candidates from CRFM [Member States](#) to participate in the course, which emphasizes the importance of viewing the ocean as a system with varied users and multiple, often competing and conflicting, uses.



**Nakita Dookie,  
Fisheries Officer,  
Fisheries Department,  
Georgetown**



**Mauro Gongora,  
Fisheries Officer  
Fisheries Department,  
Belize**



**Mitchell Lay, Coordinator  
Caribbean Network  
of Fisher Folk  
Organizations (CNFO)**

According to the IOI, the course "...aims to increase awareness of the fact that ocean management requires broad interdisciplinary skills, new institutional and legal infrastructures, and new forms of intergovernmental and non-governmental organization and cooperation at the local, national and international levels."

Earlier this year, two fisheries professionals, Frederick Arnett II, Assistant Fisheries Officer of the Bahamas and Nakita Dookie, Fisheries Officer of Guyana, attended the training, which consists of over 200 hours in the classroom and includes lectures, interactive discussions, field trips, simulations and exercises, individual participant presentations, and an international round table.

In the spirit of the recently signed MoU between the CRFM and IOI, successful nominees are awarded a scholarship from IOI for the accommodation, meals and tuition in Canada during the training, while the CRFM covers the cost of return airfare and other travel expenses.

Under the MoU, the parties will also continue to assess the region's capacity-building needs, both on the national and regional levels, and work together to offer further relevant training and capacity-building opportunities.

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**CRFM social media links:**

You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheCRFM>  
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CarFisheries> and  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CaribFisheries>

**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 February 4, 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."