Caribbean fellows off for prestigious ANCORS training

– FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –

BELIZE CITY, BELIZE, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2012

Executive Director of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Milton Haughton, Belize Fisheries Administrator Beverly Wade, and Senior Fisheries Officer George Myvett leave Belize for Australia on Friday, September 7, to join 12 other Caribbean colleagues who will participate in a comprehensive training being provided in line with the Australian Government Overseas Aid Program’s (AusAID’s) Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Fellowships.

The training programme immediately advances one of the aims of a cross-regional declaration signed in Belize earlier this week which, among other things, has highlighted the need for donor partners and cooperating organizations to provide technical and financial support for the implementation of a new collaborative effort between Central America and the Caribbean.

The Fisheries Law and Management Training Workshop, developed jointly by CRFM and ANCORS, will be facilitated by the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources & Security (ANCORS). The Centre, based at the University of Wollongong, is a prestigious provider of research, education and training, and authoritative policy-related advice on ocean law and governance, maritime security, and marine resources management.

The training is one mechanism within a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2009 for development cooperation between the Government of Australia and CARICOM valued at AUD 60 million (USD 62 million) over four years (2010 – mid-2014). The MOU focuses on three main areas: climate change and disaster risk reduction; economic resilience; and people-to-people and institutional links. The people-to-people and institutional component of the MOU offers a scholarship and fellowship program aimed at actively working to strengthen ties between Australia and the Caribbean by providing opportunities for sharing experience and building capacity, particularly on issues that small island states face, including marine resource management and maritime security.

The upcoming workshop, which flows out of the 2009 MOU, will span 5 weeks in September and October. It is geared at enhancing the capacity of the heads and senior fisheries officers in the Caribbean. The ANCORS program, which costs AUD459,996 or roughly USD470,000, will cater to 15 fellows from Suriname, Belize, Guyana, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Haiti, and Saint Lucia.

Workshop sessions will cover the settlement of international fisheries disputes; the status of global fisheries; the impacts of globalization and climate change; international and national fisheries and marine environmental law; negotiating regional fisheries instruments; fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance; aquaculture management; international responses to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; and vessel monitoring systems, including ANCORS’ Vessel Tracking Initiative.
Case studies of Pacific fisheries access agreements and presentations by officials from the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) and the Border Protection Command (BPC) are also included on the agenda.

The Caribbean fellows will also visit the Sydney Fish Market and Harbour—said to be the largest market of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere and the seafood market to have the second highest level of variety globally, outside of Japan. They will also visit the Jervis Bay Marine Park, home to a unique mix of tropical and temperate species: the weedy sea-dragon, eastern blue devil fish, bottlenose dolphin, little penguin, fur seal and the endangered grey nurse shark.

The 15 Caribbean participants will also liaise, interact and develop networks with Australian officials and sit in individual mentoring sessions with senior ANCORS staff.

It is expected that the connections made during the training workshop and follow-up activities will lead to a closer partnership between ANCORS and CARICOM states to further improve regional fisheries governance and management capacities.

ANCORS—a research centre established in 1994—has a long and successful history in professional training and capacity building in the marine/maritime sector, especially in Australasia, the Pacific and East Asia. ANCORS is also extending its operations to the Caribbean. Towards this end, ANCORS and CRFM have developed another Memorandum of Understanding, which will be signed by Haughton, the CRFM’s Executive Director, while he is in Australia for the workshop.

An information dissemination and action plan will be developed by CRFM to ensure that the knowledge, skills and values imparted on the fellows attending the Australia workshop are distributed more widely within the Caribbean and that they are used as the foundation for the development of sustainable fishing practices, particularly measures to combat IUU fishing.

ANCORS has furthermore committed to 30 hours of follow-up mentoring. A senior ANCORS staff member will travel to the CRFM Secretariat in Belize for a one day follow-up workshop and visit 1-3 other priority CARICOM states, facilitated by CRFM, to provide further post-workshop support for fellows.

For more information, please contact: Milton Haughton
Executive Director
CRFM Secretariat
Princess Margaret Drive
Belize City, P.O. Box 642
Belize
Tel: 501-223-4443
Fax: 501-223-4446
Email: haughton@caricom-fisheries.com
miltonhaughton@hotmail.com
crfm@btl.net

Towards Sustainable Development of Fisheries for the People of the Caribbean