



TEKA Building, Ground floor
Arnos Vale
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Tel.: 784-494-8232
Email: ubecsvg@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stakeholder Consultations Advance Fisheries, Seafood Safety and Aquaculture Development in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, June 2026 – The successful conclusion of a series of stakeholder consultations across mainland St. Vincent, and the Grenadine islands of Bequia, Canouan and Union Island marks a significant milestone in strengthening the fisheries, seafood safety and aquaculture sectors under the Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC) Project.

Over a two-week period, international consultants, government officials, fishers, seafood processors, traders, mariculture operators and other key stakeholders participated in extensive discussions aimed at informing the development of two critical strategic frameworks that will support the sustainable growth and competitiveness of the sector.

The consultations were led by international seafood safety expert, Helder Silva of Portugal and fisheries and aquaculture policy consultant, Roy Bealey. Their work forms part of the World Bank-funded UBEC Project, which seeks to unlock the economic potential of marine resources while promoting sustainable and climate-resilient development throughout the Caribbean.

UBEC Fisheries Specialist, Risha Alleyne, described the consultations as highly productive and emphasized the importance of stakeholder contributions to the process.

“We just completed two very productive weeks with two fisheries and seafood sanitary consultants. The information gathered from government agencies, private sector operators, fishers and those involved in the sea moss industry has been extremely valuable in helping to shape the plans and policies being developed,” Alleyne stated.

One consultancy focuses on the preparation of a **Five-Year Seafood Sanitary and Quality Inspection Service Development Plan**, while the second centres on the development of a **Strategic Action Plan for Fisheries and Aquaculture**. Together, these initiatives are expected to strengthen the regulatory framework for the sector, improve seafood quality and safety standards, and support long-term industry growth.

A key objective of the seafood sanitary development plan is to assist St. Vincent and the Grenadines in regaining access to lucrative European Union seafood markets.

“There are several areas within the seafood industry that require strengthening, and these consultancies will help move us closer to meeting international standards. Ultimately, this is about ensuring top-quality seafood products for export while also enhancing the quality of products available right here at home,” Alleyne added.

Chief Fisheries Officer, Jennifer Cruickshank-Howard, highlighted the strategic importance of the initiative, noting that it comes at an opportune time as the Ministry of Fisheries, Marine and Land Conservation and Climate Resilience seeks to advance the country’s Blue Economy agenda.

“The Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy was implemented in 2018, and over the years we have identified gaps that need to be addressed. Developing a strategic action plan now provides an opportunity to prioritize activities, strengthen implementation and position the sector for future growth,” she explained.

Cruickshank-Howard also underscored the potential for aquaculture development to create jobs, diversify food production and attract new investment.

“This plan will create opportunities for greater investment in aquaculture, an area that continues to attract interest and has tremendous potential for employment creation and food security,” she said.

The seafood sanitary development plan will also guide efforts to improve compliance with international standards required for seafood exports.

“We want to establish standards that benefit everyone, not only for export to the European Union but also for products consumed locally and shipped regionally. Capacity building and improvements throughout the seafood value chain will be essential to achieving this goal,” she added.

During the mission, consultants conducted site visits and engaged directly with stakeholders across several fishing and mariculture communities. Their assessments examined fisheries infrastructure, seafood handling practices, seafood processing systems and opportunities for industry diversification.

Seafood safety expert Helder Silva noted that St. Vincent and the Grenadines possesses significant potential to strengthen its seafood export industry.

“We came here with the challenge of helping St. Vincent and the Grenadines move towards inclusion on the European Union approved list for seafood exports. We visited fishing communities, processing facilities, vessels and seafood businesses across the country and found a strong commitment among stakeholders to improve systems and address existing challenges,” Silva said.

He added that the recommendations arising from the consultancy are expected to support improvements throughout the fishing and fish processing industries while helping the country achieve international certification requirements.

Meanwhile, Fisheries and aquaculture Policy Consultant, Roy Bealey emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement in developing practical actions that can transform policy into results.

“Our objective is to take the 2018 Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and translate it into actionable, prioritized activities that government and stakeholders can pursue together. This will improve the performance of both sectors while creating responsible Blue Economy opportunities for the country,” Bealey explained.

The consultations identified significant opportunities for growth in mariculture, including sea moss production and the diversification of cultured marine species. Discussions also highlighted the need to maximize the use of existing fisheries infrastructure, strengthen supply chains and ensure the sustainable management of marine resources.

Bealey noted that St. Vincent and the Grenadines possesses impressive shore-based fisheries infrastructure and significant untapped potential.

“There are exciting opportunities to improve how existing facilities are utilized, increase efficiency and create additional value throughout the fisheries sector. The challenge will be balancing industry growth with responsible resource management to ensure long-term sustainability,” he said.

The UBEC Project extends its gratitude to Fisheries Services, fishers, seafood processors, mariculture operators, private sector representatives and all stakeholders who contributed their time and expertise during the consultations.

The findings and recommendations from both consultancies are expected to inform future investments, policy implementation and capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening fisheries, seafood safety and aquaculture development in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

END

Media Contact:

Communications Unit

Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC) Project

Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture

Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines