

Queen conch push

0 Comments • [Make a comment](#)

February 8, 2022



Shanna-Lee Thomas (right) shows C B Facey Foundation Executive Director Anna Ward the anatomical differences between a male and female conch.

AMERICANS are making their mark in the Compete Caribbean Project with a conch cluster designed to ensure the sustainable economic growth of the country's queen

J conch business.

Compete Caribbean is a private sector development programme that provides technical assistance to support productive development policies, business climate reforms, clustering initiatives and technology and innovation in small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) in the Caribbean.

The programme, jointly funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Government of Canada, supports projects in 13 Caribbean countries.

Jamaica has entered the programme with its project dubbed 'Jamaican Conch Cluster'.

The Jamaica Conch Cluster is a blue economy-based group that employs 699 workers (67 per cent women). It includes four of 12 Jamaican, private, queen conch producing companies.

Current cluster members are B&D Trawling Ltd, Ton-Rick Enterprises Ltd, Newport Fish & Meats Ltd, and Seafood Incorporated Ltd.

A Cluster Development Plan (CDP) has been developed which details the strategic direction for the Jamaica Conch Cluster to address the challenges and opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economic development in the sector.

This CDP has been submitted as a funding proposal for technical assistance grants from the Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility (CCPF).

The queen conch is an edible marine gastropod harvested mainly for the foot muscle (conch meat). Often the meat is eaten raw in salads but also in value-added products such as chowders and soups.

Queen conch has culinary and cultural significance for the wider Caribbean and residents in the Florida Keys in the United States. The consumption and use of queen conch food and non-food products is dominated by the people from these regions and their Diaspora communities across the world.

The Jamaica Conch Cluster is also far advanced in achieving Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification.

MSC certification will validate the sustainability of Jamaican conch and appeal to environmentally aware customers.

An independent MSC pre-assessment exercise, funded by CCPF, was conducted in June to July 2021. The study concluded that the cluster can proceed to full assessment for certification. This certification will distinguish the Jamaica queen conch fishery as the only MSC certified queen conch fishery in the world.

Research has shown that North American customers have indicated a willingness to pay premium price for sustainable products with 48 per cent saying they are willing to pay more for seafood from a certified fishery.

Among North American seafood consumers, sustainably sourced/environmentally friendly seafood is ranked as the 6th most important driver for purchase and 58 per cent agree that consumption of sustainable seafood is necessary to protect the ocean.

The members of the Jamaica Conch Cluster recognise that the long-term sustainability of their businesses also hinges on the policy, legislative and governance regime impacting the sector as well as innovative strategies to enhance their competitive advantage.

To this end the members have decided that clustering is the most effective and efficient means to achieve these goals.

The Inter-American Development Bank, the United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Canada have contributed US\$27.5 million to the CCPF, of which US\$4.5 million is earmarked to technical assistance to Caribbean public and private stakeholders to support development of the blue economy.

The Jamaican cluster is seeking a technical assistance grant from the CCPF to accomplish an increased value of their queen conch products and by-products through MSC certification allowing for access to new and higher end markets and the reduction of waste and utilisation of the full range of queen conch food and non-food products through value-addition and other means.

The members of the cluster are also trying to enhance competitive advantages by expanding the membership and augmenting its capacity and capability plus establishing formal mechanisms to ensure their increased involvement in the governance of the

queen conch industry to facilitate and influence policy and legislative interventions to safeguard profitability and the livelihoods of queen conch industry

NEWS

HOUSE RULES ▼

ALSO ON JAMAICA OBSERVER

