

INTERNATIONAL QUEEN CONCH CONFERENCE
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO
JULY 29-31, 1996

DECLARATION OF SAN JUAN

CONSIDERING

The importance of the conservation of queen conch (*Strombus gigas*) throughout the Wider Caribbean (see Appendix I of this Declaration);

The importance of the queen conch (*Strombus gigas*) fishery as a source of income and nutrition for the nations in the Caribbean Sea region;

The importance of conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment, including regionally-shared species such as *Strombus gigas*;

The serious problem of overfishing in many of the areas where *Strombus gigas* was once abundant, and the pressures on this important fishery resource from international trade;

The need to improve fishing practices and management of this fishery resource through national action and regional cooperation;

The listing of *Strombus gigas* in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and in Annex III of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife to the Cartagena Convention;

That the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, done at Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 10 December 1982, provides the relevant legal principles for fishing in areas under national jurisdiction and on the high seas;

The relevance of the deliberations of this Conference to the goal of sustainable development as expressed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and the conservation of biological diversity as called for by the Convention on Biological Diversity;

The adoption, in August 1995, of the United Nations Agreement for the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and the adoption in November 1995, of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; and

efforts under the International Coral Reef Initiative, which includes promotion of sound management strategies for the sustainable yield of fisheries linked to coral reef ecosystems, such as the *Strombus gigas* fishery; and

The report of the November 1995 meeting of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, which recognized that the status of *Strombus gigas* would be enhanced through the development of a common international management strategy for the *Strombus gigas* fishery.

DECLARES

1. Caribbean States continue to implement management practices, taking into account the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, so as to effectively conserve and to produce sustainable *Strombus gigas* fisheries throughout the region;
2. Caribbean States continue to implement appropriate mechanisms to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of *Strombus gigas* in waters under their national jurisdiction;
3. Caribbean States continue to take measures to protect critical habitats for *Strombus gigas*, including wetlands, seagrass beds, coral reefs, coastal areas and oceanic banks from degradation;
4. Caribbean States continue to promote and enhance the collection and exchange of *Strombus gigas* biological, socio-economic and other relevant data necessary to evaluate the conservation and utilization of the fishery resource;
5. Caribbean States continue to develop and establish mechanisms for international cooperation to prevent poaching and other illicit fishing of *Strombus gigas* without affecting the sovereignty of the State;
6. Caribbean States continue to effectively regulate international trade in *Strombus gigas* through strict adherence to existing conventions/agreements and through recognition of maritime jurisdictions; and
7. Caribbean States whenever possible and applicable continue to promote and strengthen mechanisms for regional and sub-regional cooperation that will enhance *Strombus gigas* fishery management.

AGREE

The participants (see Appendix I) at the International Queen Conch Conference Agreed:

- I. To establish a working group, to be convened by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, to develop a regional management strategy, in accordance with the best available scientific evidence, and subject to the national management strategies to be presented to all Caribbean States for their consideration and adoption;
- II. To begin efforts to consider a consultative mechanism to promote the conservation and sustainable use of *Strombus gigas* and other marine living resources of the Caribbean Sea region;
- III. To call upon all States of the Caribbean Sea region to cooperate in efforts to ensure the long-term sustainable use of *Strombus gigas*; and
- IV. To meet as needed to discuss management of *Strombus gigas* and review progress toward sustainable use.