



## Call for Expression of Interest (EOI)

### EUROPEAN UNION FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME FOR THE CARIBBEAN: **SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) MEASURES PROJECT** *Addressing SPS Barriers to Agricultural and Fishery Trade in the Caribbean*

TITLE OF THE EOI: <b>DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL FOOD SAFETY GUIDELINES TO FACILITATE INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE IN FISHERIES COMMODITIES</b>	
<b>Date of this EOI:</b> May 14, 2025	<b>Closing Date for Receipt of EOI:</b> June 16, 2025
<b>EOI Reference:</b> CaRC/BB/FSSPS-EOI/C4-01/25	
<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION</b>	
<p>The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has been the specialized international agency for agriculture of the Inter-American System for more than 80 years, and its mission is to “<i>encourage, promote and support our Member States in their efforts to achieve agricultural development and rural well-being through international technical cooperation of excellence</i>”.</p> <p>The Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) seeks to enhance regional development in agricultural health and food safety through the application of SPS Measures that meets the expectation of all stakeholders and contribute to the welfare of Caribbean citizens. CAHFSA is mandated to perform a coordinating and organizing role for the establishment of an effective and efficient regional sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) regime and to execute on behalf of Member States such SPS actions and activities that can be more effectively and efficiently executed through a regional mechanism.</p> <p>The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) provides regional cooperation in managing marine fisheries and aquaculture resources in CARIFORUM countries. The CRFM promotes and facilitates 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.</p> <p>The European Union’s (EU) Food Security Programme seeks to enhance the (environmental and social-economic) resilience and the sustainability of food systems in the Caribbean, in order to promote food and nutrition security, particularly for groups in vulnerable situations. The Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures Project “<i>Addressing SPS Barriers to Agricultural and Fishery Trade in the Caribbean</i>”, is one component of the EU’s Food Security Programme and is being implemented by the IICA along with regional partners, CAHFSA and the CRFM. The Project aims to improve food-processing capabilities, so as to increase regional distribution through the removal of SPS bottlenecks. The areas of focus include: (i) enhancing the regulatory environment to improve</p>	

enforcement and implementation of SPS controls; (ii) improving efficiencies of competent authorities in the application of SPS controls, (iii) increasing food safety compliance capability and capacity of competent authorities and industry stakeholders and (iv) increasing fisheries SPS compliance in the public and private sectors.

*Standardisation of agricultural trade practices and harmonised SPS measures for improved intra-regional trade of fish and fishery products*

The absence of standardised agricultural trade practices and harmonised SPS measures within CARICOM poses many challenges and risks to the regional agri-food system, agri-enterprises, consumers, and the environment, including for fish and fishery products. These challenges include uncertainty, market access difficulties, increased business costs, safety concerns, and hindrances to growth and enhancement of the regional agri- food system/value chain.

Investment in the appropriate regulatory environment is key to improving the performance of the regional agri- food industry. In this regard, considering the existing challenges, establishing and adhering to uniform standards within the CARICOM community is crucial. Standardisation can support streamlined trade processes, reduce compliance costs, enhance consumer confidence, and facilitate the smooth functioning of regional supply chains. Such standardised practices can strengthen CARICOM's collective bargaining power, enabling the Region to negotiate more favourable trade agreements on the international stage. By addressing these issues, CARICOM can foster a secure, competitive, and sustainable regional agri-food system and trading environment.

This necessitates the development of SPS, and food safety guidelines and protocols related operational procedures and the commitment by Member States to adhere to the same. Within the above context, IICA is seeking to hire a suitable professional/firm to develop food safety guidelines (which span the value chain) for two fish species which are important for intra-regional trade in the Caribbean Region. The funds to support this consultancy is from the European Union.

***The main tasks/activities are as follows:***

- i. Hold an initial briefing meeting (virtual) with the SPS Measures Project Management Team as well as representatives from IICA and the CRFM to clarify the consultancy's objectives, activities, approach, expected outputs and operational arrangements.
- ii. Within **five (5) working days** of the briefing meeting, submit an Inception Report detailing the proposed methodology, key activities, timeline, and anticipated challenges/mitigation strategies.
- iii. Conduct a comprehensive review of all relevant regional and international documentation, including but not limited to:
  - Guidelines and protocols developed by the CRFM for fish and fishery products
  - The CARICOM Model Aquatic Animal Health Bill
  - Aquatic Food Safety Regulations
  - National, regional and international documentation on conditions for importing and exporting the fish and fishery products.
- iv. Engage in structured consultations (primarily virtual) with key national and regional stakeholders, including technical experts from public sector agencies, private sector operators in the fisheries value

chain, and regional bodies, to gather insights on existing trade practices, SPS compliance gaps, and priorities for regulatory guidance.

- v. Draft the fisheries guidelines, informed by the findings of the literature review and stakeholder consultations. The guidelines should be consistent with the CARICOM model Aquatic Animal Health Bill and Aquatic Food Safety Regulations and provide encompassing guidance to support intra-regional trade. The guidelines should address, at minimum, the following focal areas for fresh, chilled or frozen fish and fishery products for the intended purpose of consumption as food or for processing:
- Hygiene of fish and fishery products along the value chain (harvesting/production, processing, grading, packaging, labelling (to include traceability considerations), storage, transportation, loading procedures)
  - Contaminants (pathogens) generally associated with the species and the requisite testing protocols.
  - Sanitary (Food Safety) Measures applicable to intra-regional trade.
  - Management of consignments in transit, including cold-chain maintenance.
  - Audit and compliance procedures for the export pathway.
  - Required documentation, including certificates and declarations.

The consultant is expected to closely collaborate with the consultant undertaking complementary work under the CDB-CAHFSA Project “Development of Regional Standards to Facilitate Intra-Regional Trade in Agricultural Commodities”.

- vi. Organize and facilitate virtual consultations with CARICOM Member States to present the draft Fisheries SPS Guidelines for two selected fish species. Gather detailed feedback and revise the draft documents accordingly.
- vii. Collaborate with IICA and CRFM to convene a regional virtual workshop for CARICOM Member States aimed at validating the revised Guidelines.
- viii. Incorporate feedback from the regional workshop and finalize the Fisheries SPS Guidelines for submission.
- ix. Submit periodic progress reports and a comprehensive Final Report outlining the activities undertaken, challenges encountered, stakeholder feedback, and key recommendations for implementation and sustainability of the Guidelines.

**The main deliverables are:**

- x. Inception Report
- xi. Draft Outline of Guidelines for the two fish species
- xii. First draft for Fisheries Guidelines for two fish species
- xiii. Second draft for Fisheries Guidelines for two fish species
- xiv. Progress Reports (2)
- xv. Finalised Fisheries Guidelines for two fish species
- xvi. Validation Workshop Report
- xvii. Final Technical Report

The action should be conducted over seven months: July 2025- January 2026.

### SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS/INFORMATION

1. Proposals must be written in **Standard English** and consist of a technical proposal, a financial proposal and Legal and Tax documents.
2. The Technical Proposal should provide the following information:
  - a. A description of the individual's/firm's/company's/consortium experience on comparable assignments.
  - b. At least three client references, with information regarding the provision of similar services along with contact information (name, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses).
  - c. A detailed description of work plan/schedule for performing the assignment.
  - d. Recent CVs of principal/key staff members.
  - e. A detailed description of the proposed methodology.
3. The Financial Proposal should list all costs associated with the assignment in United States Dollars. Costs should be broken down by activity.
4. Legal and Tax Documents.
  - a. Record of incorporation of the natural or artificial person, or corporation.
  - b. Certification of legal status as a natural or artificial person or corporation, or the equivalent document in the country concerned, valid under national law.
  - c. Photocopy of identity documents of the representatives (natural or artificial person), according to the legal status presented in the bid.
  - d. Compliance documents required under the country's laws, such as certifications of social security payments, workers' insurance policy, certificate indicating up-to-date tax returns, etc.
  - e. A copy of the most recent audited financial statements, covering a fiscal year within the last three (3) years.
  - f. Tax documents required under the laws of the country that demonstrate that the person or corporation is legally entitled to operate.
  - g. A sworn statement authenticated by a notary public that indicates that no lawsuits have been filed against the company; otherwise, it should indicate and describe the nature of those legal proceedings.
  - h. A Sworn statement indicating that no lawsuits have been filed against the professionals designated for the development of activities and outputs defined in the Call for Tenders; otherwise, it should indicate and describe the nature of those legal proceedings.
5. The following contact information must be provided:
  - a. Legal Name of Company/Individual(s)
  - b. Company's Authorised Representative(s) (Name/Title) (in the case of a Firm)
  - c. Full address
  - d. Telephone and Fax numbers
  - e. Email address
  - f. Website
  - g. Number of technical persons in the company
6. The cost of preparing and submitting the proposal is not reimbursable as a direct cost of the assignment.

7. IICA is not bound to accept any of the proposals submitted.

IICA's policy requires that respondents provide professional, objective, impartial advice and at all times, hold IICA's interests paramount without any consideration for future work, and strictly avoid conflicts with other assignments or their own corporate interests. Respondents shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of not being able to carry out the assignment in the best interest of IICA.

## EVALUATION AND SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

### **Evaluation**

Proposals shall be evaluated taking into consideration, but not limited to, the requirements listed below:

- i. The Lead Consultant (or key personnel) should possess:
  - a. A minimum of an advanced degree in Food Safety, Veterinary Public Health, Aquatic Animal Health, Fisheries Science, Environmental Health, Public Health, or a related discipline.
  - b. Additional certification or training in SPS measures, Codex standards, or international food trade regulations will be considered an asset.
- ii. At least five years' overall consulting experience, with specific experience in fisheries SPS standards, fisheries regulations, developing food safety systems, international/regional trade and in preparing technical and analytical reports.
- i. Combined expertise in:
  - a. fisheries management
  - b. development and management of SPS import requirements.
  - c. selection and implementation of SPS measures for use in fishery trade
  - d. development of regional and international sanitary standards
- ii. Proven experience with developing standards, protocols and guidelines, particularly as elaborated by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
- iii. Demonstrated familiarity with the fisheries value chain, including post-harvest handling, export procedures, and compliance mechanisms.
- iv. Knowledge of the fisheries sector in CARICOM States.
- v. Familiarity with the SPS agenda internationally as well as in CARIFORUM countries.
- vi. Experience in stakeholder consultation and facilitating multi-country workshops or policy dialogues, especially in CARIFORUM states or Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- vii. The firm/company/consortium's approach and methodology for implementing the project.
- viii. Experience in carrying out consultancy assignments for the EU or other equivalent international development partners would be an advantage.

### **Submission**

- i. The completed proposal must be submitted by end of business **June 16, 2025, at 4:00 PM Eastern Caribbean Time**. Proposals should be submitted electronically as **three (3)** separate files to:  
[sps.project@iica.int](mailto:sps.project@iica.int) AND [iica.bb@iica.int](mailto:iica.bb@iica.int)

- ii. The files submitted should include: a) the technical bid; b) the financial bid; and c) the legal documents (only applicable for Firms/Companies).
- iii. The email subject line should indicate the Number of the EOI and the name of the Firm/Company/Consortium Leader.
- iv. The proposal submissions will be reviewed and a selection made within two months of the close of the Call for Expression of Interest.