

SARGASSUM PRODUCTS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN

Since 2011, the picturesque seascapes of several Caribbean States have been marred by periodic influxes of massive quantities of *Sargassum* seaweed, which has resulted in substantial economic losses and adverse impacts on human and environmental health. The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) has been working with its Member States, and regional and international partners to counter these adverse impacts on affected Member States. The latest such partnership was established with Plant & Food Research.

In September 2020, the CRFM entered into a 3-year collaborative agreement with Plant & Food Research, to address *Sargassum* seaweed influxes in affected Caribbean countries. Plant & Food Research, a New Zealand Crown Research Institute, and the CRFM, an inter-governmental organization which promotes and facilitates the responsible utilization of the Caribbean's fisheries and other aquatic resources, are collaborating to explore the creation of new technologies and value chains from marine biomass, particularly the *Sargassum* seaweed.

The overall aim of the project is *to mitigate the environmental and economic impacts of Sargassum seaweed influxes in affected Caribbean countries through the creation of inclusive value chains for Sargassum seaweed.*

The CRFM-Plant & Food Research collaboration will identify and use appropriate sustainable technologies for efficient harvesting of *Sargassum*, according to international best practices. The parties will also develop *Sargassum*-derived product prototypes and production processes, including a commercialisation strategy to support its marketing. The project, to span 2020-2023, will deliver 4 main outputs under 4 activity areas. A stakeholder survey has already commenced.



In 2016, the CRFM adopted a “Model Protocol for the Management of Extreme Accumulations of *Sargassum* on the Coasts of CRFM Member States”. Scan the QR code to the right to access the Protocol.

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