

# YEAR IN REVIEW

DECEMBER  
2024



## FUTUREFISHERS



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## Staying Focused on the Future

The Board of Future Fishers is pleased to present this report, highlighting the progress we have made in strengthening the fishing sector and supporting the livelihoods of our coastal communities. Over the past year, Future Fishers has remained committed to promoting sustainable fishing practices, enhancing fisher capacity, and fostering meaningful collaboration among stakeholders.

Through key initiatives such as leadership and financial management training for depot leaders, Safety at Sea training, and the development of FISHNET, we have worked to improve safety, governance, and access to critical resources for fishers. Our participation in national and regional events—including the Trinidad and Tobago Agri-Expo, the Tobago Agri-Tech Innovation Summit, and the Republic Bank Sustainability Expo—has provided valuable platforms to advocate for the sector and build strategic partnerships for the future of fisheries management.

These achievements would not have been possible without the dedication of our team. We recognise the invaluable contributions of our dedicated staff Dennis Sammy, Abigail Taylor, Evana Douglas, and Whitney Jennings, whose efforts have played a crucial role in driving our initiatives forward. Their commitment to empowering fishers, strengthening governance, and ensuring environmental sustainability continues to shape the impact of Future Fishers.

The Board remains steadfast in its commitment to guiding the organisation towards greater impact. We will continue to work alongside our fishers, partners, and stakeholders to navigate industry challenges and drive innovation in sustainable fisheries. We extend our deepest appreciation to all who have supported this journey—our members, funders, government agencies, and the wider community. Together, we are building a more resilient and sustainable fishing industry.

Ibrahim Abdullah  
Chair

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

4

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

Serving over  
1000 persons

4

## RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Initiatives

5

## COMMUNITY TRAINING

Serving 60  
fishers

35

## BUSINESS PLANS

16 fishers recieved grants  
from the Government  
Agro Incentive  
Programme





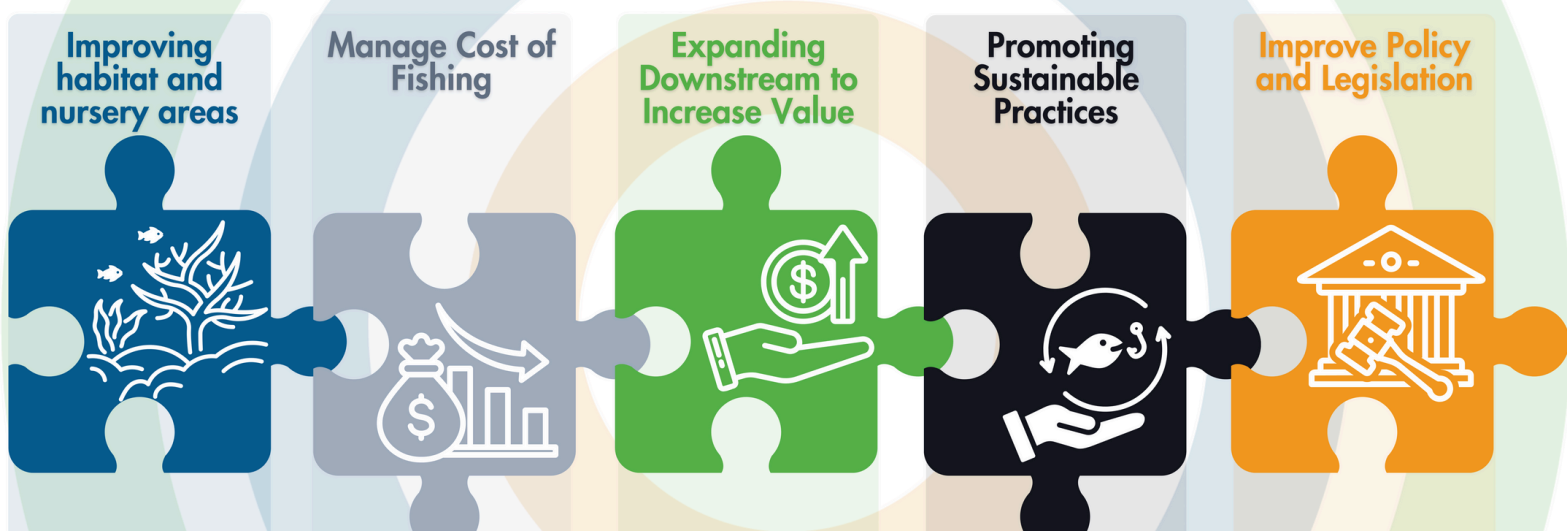
# FUTURE FISHERS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Future Fishers, driven by its vision of empowering the fishing communities to practice sustainability, is dedicated to fostering resilience in the sector for generations to come. Aligned with its mission to improve livelihoods and safeguard marine ecosystems, Future Fishers adopts a 5-pillar strategic approach to tackle key challenges. This includes conserving critical habitats, reducing fishing costs through innovative solutions, creating value-added products to enhance profitability, and promoting responsible fishing practices to improve catch quality.

Additionally, the organisation advocates for stronger policies and informed decision-making to protect marine resources and ensure equitable access for all. Recognizing the impacts of climate change, Future Fishers integrates adaptive measures and empowers fishers through continuous education and training to equip them with the skills to overcome evolving challenges. By building partnerships, fostering cooperation, and supporting sustainable practices, Future Fishers ensures a future where fishing communities and marine ecosystems can thrive in harmony.



## 5-Pillar Strategic Approach to Sustainability in the Fishing Sector



All five pillars of the strategic approach to sustainability are influenced by the need to **adapt to climate change** and **incorporate capacity building**. Addressing climate change through actions like habitat protection and sustainable practices helps mitigate its impacts across all pillars. Additionally, integrating continuous education and training into each pillar ensures that fishers are empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate evolving challenges and enhance their resilience.



# EAST TRINIDAD COOPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED



## Expanding Downstream

The Trinidad East Co-operative Society Limited was officially established on August 15, 2024. Its inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on September 18, 2024, at the Toco Regional Complex, where members elected the official board and supervisory committee. The co-operative now comprises 59 members and was formed with the mission of enhancing the livelihoods of fishers and their families along the east coast of Trinidad.

Future Fishers played a key role in facilitating the formation of the East Trinidad Co-operative Society Limited, working under the guidance and support of the Co-operative Division. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the GEF SGP and the Green Fund, whose generous funding made it possible to conduct consultations and other essential activities that brought this co-operative to fruition.

Looking ahead, the co-operative plans to offer smoked and salted fish, essential fishing equipment, and other critical inputs to support fishers. Additionally, it aims to create a sustainable space for capacity building and ongoing support for its members, ensuring long-term growth and resilience in the sector.



Future Fishers and the Trinidad East Co-operative Society Limited are committed to establishing a Fishers Business Hub that will transform low-value fish and bycatch into valuable economic opportunities. At present, efforts are underway to secure suitable land where the necessary infrastructure can be developed to bolster local livelihoods and sustain the fishing industry. In pursuit of this objective, both organisations are actively seeking to forge a strategic partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, recognising that collaborative support is pivotal in realising this critical initiative.





# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Future Fishers participated in the January 2024 Energy Conference, through the support of Woodside Energy. The pilot information system called FISHNET displayed and highlighted fishing data and challenges. The event facilitated engagement with over 300 key stakeholders in the energy sector, who praised FISHNET and the work with the fishing community which focused on collaboration and innovation for the sustainability of coastal communities.



*Information sharing at Energy Conference*

At the Trinidad and Tobago Agri-Expo 2024 (August 16-18, Queen's Park Savannah), Future Fishers engaged with nearly 500 visitors at its booth. Under the theme "Farm to Table," the expo focused on sustainability, innovation, and food security. Future Fishers emphasises the power of information in making decisions related to sustainable fishing practices and marine conservation, while also sparking partnerships and interest in volunteering for future initiatives.



*Community engagement at T&T Agri-Expo*

Future Fishers participated in Republic Bank's Sustainability Expo (September 13-14, 2024, Centre of Excellence, Macoya) under the theme "Transforming Talk into Action." Future Fishers showcased its information system to over 100 participants and emphasised the economic role of low-value fish in coastal communities. Moving forward, Future Fishers aims to engage Republic Bank further to explore partnerships and funding opportunities for the fishing communities.



*Stakeholder engagement at RBL Sustainability Expo*

On December 2-3, 2024, Future Fishers participated in the inaugural Tobago Agri-Tech Innovation Summit, an event dedicated to advancing agricultural innovation and sustainability. This event provided an opportunity to showcase Future Fishers' ongoing initiatives with over 100 stakeholders including fishers in Tobago while also highlighting the organisation's work in Northeast Trinidad. Future Fishers aimed to foster collaboration, raise awareness of sustainable fishing practices, and explore opportunities for growth and innovation within the sector. Tobago Updates did a small video clip highlighting the need for more data collection.



*Raising awareness at Tobago Agri-Tech Innovation Summit*



Future Fishers conducted a series of Depot Talks across six landing sites in the M2M region, engaging 76 fishers to discuss sustainable fishing practices and bycatch reduction. Supported by the Fisheries Division/FAO, the sessions built on recommendations previous bycatch mitigation meeting, encouraging fishers to adopt more targeted methods for high-value species like Kingfish and Carite. Participants voted on various fishing techniques, with live bait (49%) and trolling (41%) emerging as the top choices.



*Depot Talks with Grande Riviere fisherfolks*



*Members of Fish Family United meet Dennis Sammy, Project Manager*

Future Fishers assisted Fish Family United in successfully registering their group in compliance with the Non-Profit Organisations (NPO) Act of Trinidad and Tobago. This support ensured that Fish Family United could operate within the legal framework, enhancing their ability to engage in sustainable fishing initiatives, access funding opportunities, and strengthen their organisational governance.

The inaugural Troll Fishing Competition, held from June 25th to 27th, 2024, successfully engaged local fishers in sustainable fishing practices, culminating in a prize-giving ceremony on June 28th at the Grande Riviere Visitor Centre. In the Largest Kingfish category, Jeffery Martin (Balandra) and Akeem Mendoza (Grande Riviere) tied with 20 lb catches, sharing the \$5,000 grand prize, George Ramnarine, assisted by Captain Leon Emmanuel Solomon Grayham from Matura Salybia Port, won the Most Fish Caught category with 36 fish, earning \$4,000. Akeem Mendoza also won the Longest Fish category with a 42-inch fish, receiving \$3,000. The competition was well received, strengthening community ties and reinforcing conservation efforts for future events.



*The Honourable Mrs Penelope Beckles-Robinson, Minister of Planning and Development, and Councillor A. Williams-Penny*

This event also marked the graduation of **over 89 individuals** who completed training in Safety at Sea, Engine Repair, and Smoked and Salted Fish Production. Participants who received certificates from communities spanning Matelot to Mayaro benefited from these capacity-building initiatives, enhancing their skills and resilience within the fisheries sector.



*Specially invited guests and fishers for the Graduation Ceremony & Fishing Competition prize-giving*



# RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

## Economic Valuation of M2M Fisheries

In 2024, Future Fishers embarked on a groundbreaking initiative to evaluate the economic, social, and cultural contributions of the fisheries sector within the Matura-Salybia to Matelot (M2M) area. In partnership with Neo Environment Limited, this initiative sought to assess the direct and indirect economic impacts, non-market values such as biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the vital role fisheries play in local livelihoods. The findings will guide sustainable management policies and identify opportunities to enhance the sector's contribution to the economy, ensuring long-term resilience for our coastal communities.



*Economic Valuation survey participants*

## Exploring Opportunities for Locally Produced Smoked Fish

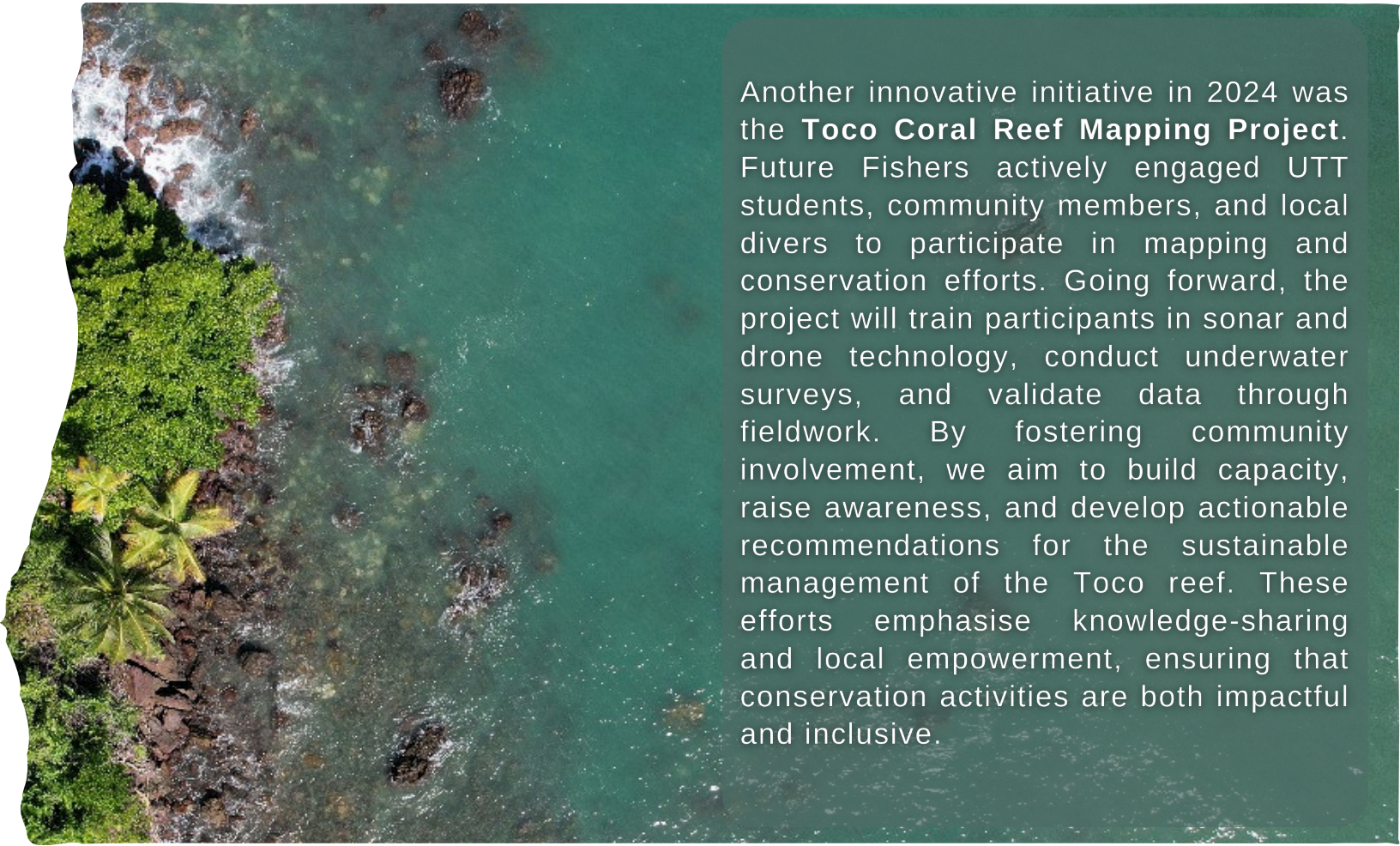
Future Fishers also undertook a study to assess the market feasibility and supply chain potential for a new locally produced smoked fish product in Northeast Trinidad. Through surveys and analyses, we aim to understand consumer demand, preferences, and the competitive landscape while identifying key suppliers and distribution channels. This initiative supports local producers and promotes sustainable practices, aiming to introduce a high-quality product that complements existing preserved fish options. Input and collaboration from all our stakeholders will help shape this promising venture, fostering economic growth and innovation in our community's seafood industry.



*Smoked Fish kiln in use*



# RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT *cont'd*



Another innovative initiative in 2024 was the **Toco Coral Reef Mapping Project**. Future Fishers actively engaged UTT students, community members, and local divers to participate in mapping and conservation efforts. Going forward, the project will train participants in sonar and drone technology, conduct underwater surveys, and validate data through fieldwork. By fostering community involvement, we aim to build capacity, raise awareness, and develop actionable recommendations for the sustainable management of the Toco reef. These efforts emphasise knowledge-sharing and local empowerment, ensuring that conservation activities are both impactful and inclusive.

## Bycatch Reduction

In collaboration with Future Fishers and the Fisheries Division, Ecolibrium Inc. has been actively working with fishers along the Northeast Coast to test innovative fishing equipment aimed at reducing bycatch and improving fish catch. These initiatives focused on evaluating the effectiveness of trolling techniques and illuminated nets, the latter designed to deter sea turtles while maintaining fish catch rates.



*Bryan Wallace (left), Ecolibrium Inc, presents findings to stakeholders*

Future Fishers continue to play a critical role in facilitating all field coordination, ensuring smooth execution and engagement with local fishers. By supporting these trials, Future Fishers continues to drive innovation in sustainable fishing practices, balancing conservation efforts with the livelihoods of the fishing community.



# CAPACITY BUILDING AT WORK

## Leadership Development

As part of the Green Fund Project, Future Fishers conducted a Leadership Training programme for depot leaders from Matelot to Salybia, Matura. Hosted at the Toco Foundation Agro-Tourism Centre, this initiative aimed to enhance the leadership skills of local fishers, equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to manage community challenges effectively. The training engaged 12 selected leaders in an intensive programme covering key areas such as Introduction to Leadership, Importance of Leadership, Leadership Styles, Challenges in Leadership, How to Lead, Group Dynamics, and Conflict Management. Sessions were designed to be interactive, incorporating icebreakers and team-building exercises.

A critical outcome of the training was the development of action plans by participants, ensuring a proactive approach to addressing local challenges. By fostering effective leadership, Future Fishers continues to strengthen community resilience and promote sustainable fishing practices, reinforcing its commitment to environmental conservation and socio-economic development.



*Evana Douglas, Technical Co-ordinator of Research, (third from the right) engages with Leadership participants*



*Abigail Taylor (standing), Finance and Administration Officer, speaks on the importance of good financial management*

## Financial Management Training

Future Fishers delivered personal financial management workshop for fishers on the North East Coast of Trinidad. Two sessions were hosted at the Toco Foundation Agro-Tourism Centre at Cumana. A total of 29 fishers were trained in personal financial management from the M2M area. The focus was on Personal Financial Management decisions. Participants were enlightened by the different financial management tactics that can be used daily. Lessons learned will be used to strengthen future activities.



# CAPACITY BUILDING AT WORK *cont'd*

## Safety at Sea

As part of the Safety at Sea – Northeast Coast Fishers Capacity Building Project, Future Fishers conducted a Safety at Sea Training programme aimed at strengthening the emergency response skills of artisanal fishing vessel captains from Manzanilla, Matelot, Grande Riviere, Toco, and Balandra. Organised with the support of Woodside Energy, the training was held at the Northeastern Community Centre, with practical exercises conducted at North Manzanilla Beach.

The programme covered topics including general and personal safety, sea survival theory, emergency preparation, and First Aid. All 20 invited captains successfully completed the training, achieving a 100% completion rate. This initiative represents a significant step towards ensuring that every fishing vessel has at least one safety-trained crew member, reinforcing resilience and preparedness within the fishing community.



**Safety At Sea participants, Manzanilla**

**Safety at Sea video**

## DISTRIBUTION OF SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Lifejackets, flares and First Aid kits were given to 46 boat owners to assist in the safety response. More will be distributed in 2025 as fishers demonstrate their willingness to work together for the development of the fishing community.



## SAFETY CARDS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Safety and Emergency Response guidelines were placed in 7 landing sites to support fishers in their operations.

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDELINES**  
San Souci Fishing Depot

**Fisheries Support Numbers**

Fisheries Division	623-8542 or 623-8525 or 623-6028
Future Fishers	610-2259
ODPM	800-ODPM (6376) or 640-1285
Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard	800-TTCG
Coastal Protection Unit	623-6797
Maritime Services Division	625-4815 or 627-1784

**Nearest Public Health Facility**  
San Souci Outreach Centre  
Main Road San Souci  
670-2382

**Nearest 24-hour Accident and Emergency**  
Toco Health Centre  
Paria Main Road  
226-1576 or 670-8277

**Nearest Hospital**  
Sangre Grande Hospital  
Ojoe Road  
226-4744 or 668-2468

**Nearest Police Station**  
Toco Police Station  
29 mm Paria Main Road  
670 - 8256

**Nearest Fire Station**  
Sangre Grande Fire Station  
Cor. Ojoe & Ramoutar Road  
668-2222

**Emergency Numbers**

Emergency	911
Police	990
Fire	990
Ambulance	811
Anti-Crime Hotline	555
Cross Shoppers	866-3095 (8477)







*Matura Secondary School students learn about net-mending from Don Miguel Pavy, Cumana fishers*



*Youths from Cumana Community having an engaging session with Evana Douglas*

Future Fishers also collaborated with community leaders on two impactful activities. Alongside Ms. Hannah Roberts, a series of "Teach a Child to Fish" workshops targeted students aged 14-18 from three secondary schools, providing hands-on education about fishing as a livelihood, sustainable practices, and safety in fishing. In addition, a "Catch and Release" game was conducted during a vacation camp for children aged 5-13 at Calvary Pentecostal Church in Cumana, Toco. This interactive fishing activity taught the younger participants about fish size limits, conservation, and protecting endangered species in a fun, engaging way. Both activities emphasised sustainability, fostering awareness of responsible fishing practices among future generations.

## Fishers Business Plans

Under the Agro-Incentive Grant Programme under the Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries, fishers from seven fishing landing sites in Northeast Trinidad received assistance in preparing and submitting their grant applications. As part of this initiative, 35 business plans were developed to support their applications, demonstrating the potential for improved efficiency and sustainability in their fishing operations. Of these, 16 fishers successfully secured grants so far, enabling them to invest in much-needed equipment and upgrades. Notably, many beneficiaries utilised their grants to purchase four-stroke engines, a investment that not only enhances the efficiency of their vessels but also significantly reduces fuel consumption and operational costs. This initiative has contributed to promoting more sustainable and cost-effective fishing practices, ultimately strengthening the livelihoods of fishers in the region.



*From left: The Honourable Nigel De Freitas, President of the Senate, Ms. Nela Dwarika-Ali, Permanent Secretary (Ag) and Mr. Denny Dipchansingh, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag), Mr. Ibrahim Abdullah, Chair of Future Fishers, visit our booth at the Agro-Expo 2024*



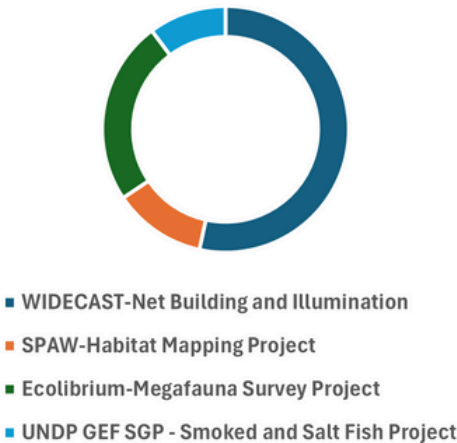
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In the past fiscal year, Future Fishers has made significant strides toward achieving financial stability, ensuring that our operations not only support the long-term sustainability and growth of our fishing community but also lay the foundation for innovative collaborations. We recognize the value of partnerships and are actively exploring collaborative efforts to enhance existing initiatives and develop new projects that align with our mission. Future Fishers funds come from grant funding and consultation fees.

Future Fishers financial reporting is conducted in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars (TTD), maintaining transparency and consistency in reflecting the true financial position of our organization. This practice ensures clarity for both our local stakeholders and international partners. Future Fishers total income for the year 2024 was derived from both ongoing and new projects, amounting to \$330,700.19. Future Fishers total expenditure for the year 2024 was \$1,480,928.18. The majority of funds were spent on our Green Fund project activities and financed with existing funds received from the previous year.

FISCAL YEAR 2024  
(1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER, 2024)

Income for the year 2024



MAJOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION  
(AS OF 31ST DECEMBER 2024)

Capacity Building and Project Implementation Support	\$934,486.85
Safety At Sea	\$171,401.9
Industry Development and branding	\$101,275.01
Alternative Fishing and Gear Testing	\$168,150.00

## Transparency and Accountability

Future Fishers remains committed to prudent financial management, resource mobilization, and transparency. For the upcoming year, we aim to:

- Diversify income streams through expanded partnerships.
- Optimize expenditure to maximize impact without compromising quality.

We thank our members, donors, and partners for their continued support and look forward to another year of growth and collaboration.

## Looking Ahead

Future Fishers uses its newly Financial Management Resource and Mobilization Plan as one of its guides to the achievement financial sustainability and continued transparency.

This plan provides a roadmap for the organisation to follow in the mobilisation and management of its financial and non-financial resources for the years 2024 to 2027. We have audited financial reports that can be easily shared with our stakeholders and we are in the process of completing our audited financial report for the year 2023.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Future Fishers extends its deepest gratitude to all our donors and partners whose generous support has been instrumental in advancing our mission of sustainable fisheries development and community empowerment.

We would like to extend special recognition to the Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land, and Food Production for its unwavering commitment to supporting our work in the fishing sector. Your guidance and collaboration have been invaluable in shaping dialogue, enhancing fisher training, and ensuring that our initiatives align with national priorities for fisheries management and marine conservation.

We are also profoundly grateful to The Green Fund, Woodside Energy, and the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) for their steadfast support. Your investment in our work has enabled us to expand our impact, from implementing, safety training to developing leadership programmes, promoting sustainable fishing practices, and strengthening community resilience.

It is through the generosity and vision of our donors that Future Fishers continues to empower fishing communities, drive innovation, and safeguard the future of our marine resources. We look forward to deepening these partnerships as we work together towards a thriving and sustainable fisheries sector.



## Directors & Officers

Mr. Ibrahim Abdullah – Chair  
Mrs. Lori Lee Lum – Vice Chair  
Ms. Hannah Roberts – Treasurer  
Mr. Dennis Sammy – Secretary  
Mr. Anderson Zoe  
Dr. Vivian Alexander  
Mr. Don Miguel Pavy



**FUTUREFISHERS**

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