

The Virgin Islands Consortium

BVI Fisheries Minister Denounces Claims Of Widespread Fish Killing Because Of Sargassum Seaweed

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TORTOLA -- Deputy Premier and Minister for Natural Resources and Labor, Dr. the Honorable Kedrick Pickering has denounced claims that there is wide spread fish kills in the Virgin Islands as a result of the Sargassum Seaweed.

At a press briefing held on Monday, October 5, Minister Pickering in response to questions posed by journalists stated that it was factually incorrect that there was wide spread fish kills in the Territory.

He added that there was also no correlation between the dead fish found on the beaches to that of the oversupply of fish at the BVI Fishing Complex.

Minister Pickering said, “Your statement is factually incorrect. There are no wide spread of fishes dying on the beaches in the BVI.

The fishes and other marine life that have been noted have been in specific areas where the Sargassum seaweed is very thick.

There is absolutely no relationship to what is taking place there and the oversupply of fish at the Fishing Complex.” Minister Pickering stated that the oversupply of fish at the fishing complex is a direct result of the fishermen getting involved in the fishing industry, and are learning new techniques.

He added that fishermen are taking advantage of the Fish Aggregated Device System that has been put in place, and are now willing to embark on that part of the industry.

The Minister added that Government is embarking on marketing strategies to promote the Territory’s fishing industry. Some of the proposed tactics he said include price reduction, extended operating hours and a radio program featuring updates on the stock of fish at the Fishing Complex.

The Conservation and Fisheries Department will embark on a public education campaign to educate the Virgin Islands community on the environmental and agricultural benefits of the Sargassum seaweed.

A territory wide clean-up campaign will be held October 17th to 19th.