



Distr. LIMITED

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/4
25 November 2019

Original: ENGLISH

Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to
the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas
and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean
Region

Roatán, Honduras, 3 June 2019

REPORT OF THE MEETING

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Acronyms

| | |
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| ACP | African, Caribbean and Pacific countries |
| AGRRRA | Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment |
| AMEP | Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution |
| BWE | Ballast Water Exchange |
| BWM | Ballast Water Management Convention |
| BEST Initiative | The Voluntary Scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European Overseas |
| CABI | CAB International (formerly Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau) |
| CaMPAM | Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum |
| CARICOM | Caribbean Community |
| CMOU | Caribbean Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control |
| CANARI | Caribbean Natural Resources Institute |
| CARI'MAM | Caribbean Marine Mammals Preservation Network |
| CARIB-COAST | Caribbean Coastal Risks related to climate change for a monitoring and prevention network |
| Cariwet | Caribbean Wetlands Regional Initiative |
| CAR/RCU | Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit |
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| CBF | Caribbean Biodiversity Fund |
| CEP | Caribbean Environment Programme |
| CERMES | Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora |
| CLME+ | Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems |
| CMS | Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals |
| COP | Conference of Parties |
| CRFM | Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism |
| CTF | Caribbean Trust Fund |
| DSS | Decision Support System |
| EAF | Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries |
| EBM | Ecosystem Based Management |
| ECMMAN | Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network |
| ECRE | Bluefinance Economics for Coral Reef Ecosystems |
| FAO | Food and Agricultural Organisation |
| GCFI | Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute |
| GCRMN | Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| IAC | Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles |
| IAS | Invasive Alien Species |
| ICM | Interim Coordination Mechanism |
| ICRI | International Coral Reef Initiative |
| IGO | Intergovernmental Organization |
| IMO | International Maritime Organization |
| IAEA | International Atomic Energy Agency |
| IOCARIBE | Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission's Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions |
| IPBES | Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature |
| IWC | International Whaling Commission |
| LBS | Protocol Concerning Land-Based Sources of Pollution |
| LME | Large Marine Ecosystems |
| MARFund | Mesoamerican Reef Fund |
| MARPOL | International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships |
| MEA | Multilateral Environmental Agreement |
| MMA | Marine Managed Area |

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| MMAP | Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region |
| MoC | Memorandum of Cooperation |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MPA | Marine Protected Area |
| NFWF | National Fish and Wildlife Foundation |
| NGO | Non-Government Organizations |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| OAS | Organisation of American States |
| OECS-ESDU | Organization of Eastern Caribbean States–Environment and Sustainable Development Unit |
| OSPAR | Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic |
| PA | Protected Area |
| PCU | Project Coordination Unit |
| RAC | Regional Activity Centre |
| Ramsar | Convention on Wetlands of International Importance |
| RCDR | Reef Check Dominican Republic |
| RSAP | Regional Strategy and Action Plan |
| ROLAC | Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean |
| SAMOA | SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action |
| SAP | Strategic Action Programme |
| SBNMS | NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary |
| SCTLD | Stony coral tissue loss disease |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SLMR | Shared Living Marine Resources |
| SOMEE | State of the Marine Environment and associated Economies |
| SoMH | The State of Nearshore Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean |
| SPAW | Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region |
| STAC | Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee |
| STRAP | Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plan |
| TNC | The Nature Conservancy |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNEA-2 | Second session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly |
| UN Environment Programme | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| UNOPS | United Nations Office for Project Services |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| WCMC | World Conservation Monitoring Centre |
| WCPA | World Commission on Protected Areas |
| WCR | Wider Caribbean Region |
| WECAFC | Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission |
| WEN | Wildlife Enforcement Network (<i>e.g. CaribWen – Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network</i>) |
| WIDECAST | Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network |
| WWF | World Wildlife Fund |

INTRODUCTION

1. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region held in Kingston, 15 to 18 January 1990, adopted the SPAW Protocol to the Cartagena Convention, which came into force on 18 June 2000. Article 23 of the SPAW Protocol provided for the convening and functioning of the Meetings of the Parties and called for these ordinary Meetings to be held in conjunction with the Ordinary Meetings of the Parties to the Cartagena Convention. In light of the above, this Meeting was convened by UN Environment's Caribbean Environment Programme (UN Environment Programme -CEP), in Roatán, Honduras, on 3 June 2019, preceding the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Fifteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Roatán (COP15), Honduras, 5–6 June, 2019.
2. The main objectives of this Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP10) to the SPAW Protocol were to:
 - **Review** and **adopt** the Recommendations of the Eighth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC8) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Panama City, Panama, 5–7 December 2018;
 - **Review** and **approve** the 2019–2020 Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Subprogramme for subsequent approval by the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Fifteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region;
 - **Review** and **approve** the reports on protected areas presented by Parties for listing under the SPAW Protocol; and
 - **Review** and **adopt** the SPAW STAC8 recommendations on the species proposed for listing under the SPAW Protocol.
3. The 17 Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol were invited to nominate their respective representatives to participate in the Meeting. Representatives of governments that are Non-Contracting Parties and of international, regional, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations were also invited to attend the Meeting as Observers. The Provisional List of Participants is included in [Annex IV](#) of this report.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The Meeting was opened by the Secretariat on Monday, 3 June 2019, at 9:10 a.m., in Roatán, Honduras by Mr. Carlos Rodriguez, Strategic Advisor in the Ministry of Environment in the Government of Honduras. Delegates were welcomed to the island of Roatán and appreciation expressed to all in attendance on behalf of the Government of Honduras. General announcements were made, and the Meeting was reminded about basic etiquette to be observed – including submission of written interventions for the final meeting report. It was hoped that deliberations would advance as per the agenda and Programme Officer of the SPAW Protocol, Ms. Ileana Lopez, was invited to give opening remarks on behalf of the Secretariat.
5. Ms. Lopez welcomed all participants to the Meeting and invited the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment and Mining of Honduras, His Excellency Mr. José Antonio Galdames, to give welcome remarks.
6. Mr. Galdames expressed thanks for the opportunity to meet and discuss important topics concerning the environment and acknowledged the recent ratification of Honduras to the Cartagena Convention as a significant milestone. Current challenges for many governments in the region included improving institutional framework and defining efficient ways to effectively conserve marine and coastal biodiversity. It was therefore important to look towards the future and take concerted action to ensure that the conservation of the marine environment became a reality in keeping with sustainable development. There was recognition of those involved in the organization of the Meeting, along with participants for their attendance

7. This was followed by welcome remarks from Mr. Habib El-Habr, Coordinator of the Global Programme of Action (GPA). On behalf of the Executive Director of UN Environment Programme, gratitude was extended to the Government/people of Honduras for their hospitality and for the excellent meeting arrangements. The Meeting's theme "*Protecting Our Caribbean Sea and Sustaining our Future*" was timely as it encompassed the importance of partnerships for achieving sustainable development, alongside biodiversity protection through sustainable use of ocean resources, which was central for maintaining vibrant national and local economies in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR). A healthy ocean was essential for survival – approximately 40% of the global population lived along the coast, while 3 billion people relied on the ocean for their livelihoods. A recent report from UN Environment Programme's [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#), "*Nature's Dangerous and Unprecedented Decline*" served as a warning as it outlined that extinction rates were accelerating, with an estimated 1 million species at risk unless immediate action was taken.
8. It was highlighted that the UN Environment Programme was the leading global environmental authority in promoting the implementation of environmental sustainable development, and oceans were an important part of the work being carried out through existing mechanisms such as the [Regional Seas Programmes](#) and the [GPA](#). The Secretariat was the only regional legal agreement for the protection of the Caribbean Sea, with the SPAW Protocol providing the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of the region's coastal and marine biodiversity using an ecosystem-based approach. COP10 aimed to support Contracting Parties in their efforts to sustainably manage the use of these coastal and marine resources.
9. The Caribbean Sea was home to more than 116 million people living within 100 km of the coast and relying on the ecosystems of this area both culturally and economically. The coastal and marine ecosystems of the region accounted for almost 10% of the world's coral reefs, 20% of the remaining mangrove forests, and at least 25-50% of the seagrass beds. Accordingly, the SPAW Protocol directly supported the implementation of the outcome document [United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want"](#), [Aichi Biodiversity Target 11](#) on area-based conservation measures including marine protected areas, and target [14.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals](#) which call for the conservation by 2020 of at least 10% of coastal and marine areas.
10. The COP therefore served as a response to the [Governing Council decision 27/6 on oceans](#), which urged countries to protect and restore the health, productivity and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems, maintain biodiversity, and effectively apply an ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach in their management.
11. In closing, participants were reminded that they were expected to agree on actions to reduce harm to marine species and reconfirm joint commitment to protect and sustain the Caribbean Sea. It was important to seize this opportunity to ensure continued safeguard of the region's invaluable natural resource base.
12. Mr. Christopher Corbin, Programme Officer for the pollution sub-programme and Acting Coordinator of the Secretariat was invited to give remarks. Apologies were offered on behalf of the Coordinator, Ms. Lorna Inniss, who could not attend due to illness and who sent regards and best wishes for a productive meeting. Participants were welcomed once more, and Honduras's ratification in October 2018 was recognized as they now joined other countries across the region working together within the Protocol. Appreciation was reiterated to the Government of Honduras for logistical support in convening the Meeting.
13. Since inception and entry into force (1990 and 2000 respectively), the SPAW Protocol had served as a vehicle for the sharing of information and providing the tools and resources to preserve coastal and marine biodiversity, and ecosystems. As a collective, the objective of Contracting Parties was to work together to protect the region's vital and unique biodiversity – the richness and multiplicity of cultures and biodiversity in this small geographical space could be found nowhere else on Earth. Signatories to the Protocol had made a commitment to protect and preserve all plant and animal species listed on the [Annexes](#) with the objective of preventing threat and endangerment. The taking of marine mammals (Annex II species) for activities such as commercial trade or hunting for example, was strictly prohibited under the terms of the Protocol (*with exception under very specific circumstances*) – the importance of these migratory species had been recognized through a committed and lengthy process over the course of many years, culminating in the endorsement of a [Marine Mammal Action Plan \(MMAP\) in 2008](#).
14. It was recognized that many Parties were unable to enforce national legislation prohibiting activities that harm species or, had not yet implemented measures to comply with the Protocol thereby allowing the hunting or

commercial trade of listed species. There was shared interest in preserving the foundation of the Protocol as the only official instrument to protect coastal and marine biodiversity in the region – as such obligations should be taken seriously to maintain significance. The Secretariat was concerned that violations of the Protocol stood to undermine its authority and integrity while compromising the ability of all Parties to meet their obligations regarding species preservation. Parties were urged to protect the future of the Protocol through compliance with its provisions and requirements, in particular, reporting activities that were in contravention, sharing data that could enable assessment of activities impacting species and ecosystems, and requesting assistance to support training and capacity building. In turn, this would help determine the effectiveness of collective efforts thereby fulfilling mutual obligations.

15. Member states that had not yet ratified the Protocol were encouraged to do so towards strengthening the spirit of transboundary cooperation. The Meeting was reminded that outcomes of the STAC8 would be deliberated and an update of the ongoing development of the “[State of Marine Habitats Report for the Wider Caribbean](#)” and “[Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the valuation, protection and restoration of key marine habitats in the Wider Caribbean](#)” would be presented. This was expected to help Contracting Parties implement obligations under the Convention, its Protocols and related Global biodiversity agreements, and the recommendations of the STAC8 would be presented for review and approval. Parties would also be expected to discuss the possible enhancement of the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM) website and regional database, and establishment of a regional [Wildlife Enforcement Network \(WEN\)](#) to support improved marine biodiversity management.
16. The tremendous work of the SPAW team was recognized while highlighting that this was the first COP for Ms. Lopez – she was commended for her leadership since joining the Secretariat.
17. Ms. Lopez thanked Mr. Corbin and the participants while reminding of the objectives of the Meeting. This was followed by a moment of silence to express appreciation and gratitude in coming together towards peace and prosperity for the planet, and protection of the ecosystems.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

2.1 Rules of Procedure

18. The Rules of Procedure for the Meetings of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention) (UN Environment, 2012) were applied, *mutatis mutandis*, for the conduct of the Meeting.

2.2 Election of Officers

19. The Meeting was invited to elect from among the representatives of the Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol: the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons and the Rapporteur for the conduct of the Meeting.

Chairperson : Mrs. Marnie Portillo (Honduras)

Vice-Chairperson : Marc Porter (USA)

Rapporteur : Paul Hoetjes (Netherlands)

2.3 Organisation of Work

20. English, French and Spanish were the working languages of the Meeting. Simultaneous interpretation in these languages was provided for the Meeting, and the Working Documents were available in all the working languages. The Provisional List of Documents of the Meeting was presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.1 and is included in [Annex III](#) of this report.
21. The Secretariat proposed to convene the Meeting in plenary sessions, with the assistance of working groups if necessary, which would be established by the Chairperson. No simultaneous interpretation would be available for the working groups. Participants were reminded that, given the length of the Meeting, breaking into working groups

might not be feasible. Participants were therefore expected to come prepared, having reviewed all working documents as appropriate, in order to provide concrete inputs at the time of discussion.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

22. The Meeting was invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda, prepared by the Secretariat based on inputs received from the Contracting Parties during preparations for the Meeting, on relevant Recommendations and Decisions from previous STAC and COP Meetings of the SPAW Protocol, as well as on emerging issues of relevance to the biodiversity of the Wider Caribbean Region. The Provisional Agenda proposed by the Secretariat was presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/1 and is included in [Annex I](#) of this report.

AGENDA ITEM 4: STATUS OF ACTIVITIES OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR 2017-2018, INCLUDING ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPAW (SPAW-RAC) IN GUADELOUPE

23. The Secretariat presented the “Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2017-2018” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.3), including a brief presentation by SPAW-RAC of the “Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe with regard to RAC operations and budget for the period 2017-2018” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.4). During the presentations the Secretariat would also briefly refer to the following documents:
- ["An Overview of the Report on the State of Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean and the Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021 -2030" SoMH and RSAP; \(UNEP\(DEPI\)/CAR IG.40/INF.3\)](#)
 - Update on the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its major activities (2018) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.5);
 - Report on the “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean through Ecosystem Based Management” Project (2018) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.6).
24. A summary was provided on staffing and administration outlining the core staff for the SPAW sub-programme in Kingston, which consisted of a Programme Officer and Programme Assistant, with further support through internships.
25. The specific activities of the 2017-2018 Workplan which fell under 5 major programme elements (sub-programmes), implemented in close collaboration and partnership with the SPAW-RAC in Guadeloupe were highlighted:
- a) Programme Coordination
 - b) Strengthening of Protected Areas (including CaMPAM activities consisting also of [the Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network \(ECMMAN project\)](#) and the *Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean through Ecosystem Based Management (EBM)* project funded by the [Italian Agency for Cooperation](#)
 - c) Guidelines for Protected Areas and Species Management Conservation of Threatened and Endangered species
 - d) Conservation and Sustainable use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems
26. Progress made on *Programme Coordination* was facilitated through participation/attendance at 29 major meetings in over 13 countries to continue promotion of the Protocol and develop synergies – in many instances the sub-programme guided, sponsored and provided significant input. The participation of the Secretariat was funded by the organizers in many cases as well. The Protocol also convened the COP9 (13 March 2017 in Cayenne, French Guiana) and STAC8 (5–7 December 2018 in Panama City, Panama). A strategic and streamlined Workplan had been developed to meet the objectives of the sub-programme in the 2019–2020 biennium.
27. There were increased regional and international collaborations with partner organizations/countries and donor agencies for the successful implementation of SPAW projects (e.g. [World Wildlife Fund \(WWF\)](#), [The Nature Conservancy \(TNC\)](#) and the [Waitt Institute](#)). These were developed to facilitate data sharing, environmental

education and awareness and capacity building, particularly with other partners such the [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#), [the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora \(CITES\)](#), [the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals\(CMS\)](#), [Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies \(CERMES\)](#), [Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism \(CRFM\)](#), [Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network/International Coral Reef Initiative \(GCRMN/ICRI\)](#), [Food and Agriculture Organization - Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission \(FAO-WECAFC\)](#), [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\)](#), [The Ocean Foundation](#) and the [Oslo and Paris Conventions \(OSPAR Commission\)](#).

28. The *Strengthening of Protected Areas* included the addition of the 32nd Marine Protected Area (MPA) National Park Cayos de San Felipe (Cuba) which occupied 26.250 hectares and was home to highly diverse coral reefs and mangroves, with 188 species of fish, over 100 species of birds (including endemic species), marine mammals such as manatees and a known nesting area for sea turtles (including the endangered green sea turtle). It was noted that France and the Kingdom of the Netherlands had also submitted new protected areas for consideration by the relevant working group (WG) for listing under the Protocol in 2018.
29. More MPA practitioners were involved in capacity building and training programmes designed to improve their ability to respond to management issues and emerging environmental threats in marine and coastal areas, and grant funding was provided to enhance this aspect. [An MPA Science and Management session was held at the 70th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute \(GCFI\) meeting](#), along with the [13th Training of Trainers](#) (Barbados) aimed at strengthening competencies of MPA managers/marine environmental officers from the English-speaking Caribbean with an ecosystem-based approach - 21 MPA practitioners from 14 countries were trained in this cycle with funding from the [EBM project](#) and [the International Union for Conservation of Nature/Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management programme \(IUCN-BIOPAMA\)](#).
30. There was improved information dissemination on MPAs with an increased number of practitioners, policy makers, scientists and other stakeholders engaging with, and contributing to the CaMPAM internet forum and MPA database. Stronger relationships and collaborations were developed between stakeholders, as well as with international/regional experts, along with efforts to revitalize the Cooperation Programme of SPAW-listed MPAs and further the cooperation with the OSPAR Commission.
31. Achievements under *Guidelines for Protected Areas and Species* included a new exemptions report submitted by the United States of America (USA), and continued emphasis for Contracting Parties to submit similar reports before engaging in activities which did not comply with their legal obligations as SPAW Parties.
32. Outputs for the *Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species* included the development of a strategy for implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the [CRFM](#) to promote improved management of fisheries species, recovery plans for commercially important species, and control and mitigation of impacts from marine invasive species in the region. There were renewed efforts regarding negotiations for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the [International Whaling Commission \(IWC\)](#) Secretariat to promote the implementation of the [MMAP](#). There was also an increased commitment to the development of the newly created [Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network \(CaribWEN\)](#) by Member States and collaboration established with CITES and UNODC. For the first time, the Protocol was also pleased to include cartilaginous fish on the list of protected species, owing to the crucial role they play in regulating marine ecosystems.
33. Under the *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystem Project*, there was participation at the [32nd General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative ICRI, 7-9 December 2017, Nairobi](#) and strengthening of the [Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network \(GCRMN\)](#) by enhancing the ability of countries to monitor and protect coral reef ecosystems through the use of standardized data collection and reporting methods. A [two \(2\) day workshop was convened in Panama](#) to review the [SoMH and RSAP](#). During the workshop, several Contracting Parties and other partner organizations worked on the development of these reports with a scope on coral reefs and associated subsystems (mangroves and seagrass). Progress continued under the [EBM Project](#) in collaboration with various partners (e.g. [PROGES](#), Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Dominican Republic ([MARENA](#)), [Reef Check DR](#), CERMES, [GCFI](#)), the SPAW-RAC, and independent consultants to develop capacities and information systems for use by governments and non-governmental organisations, to enhance decisions on the planning and management of coastal resources using an EBM approach.

34. During the biennium, expenditure was greater in 2018 in comparison to 2017, with funds secured primarily through the EBM and GEF CLME+ projects. There were no funds allocated from the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF) to support sub-programme activities.
35. A brief summary was provided on the status of the COP9 decisions which addressed on-going steps to urge governments, which had not yet done so, to become Contracting Parties, and the Secretariat's initiative to continue support for protected areas listed through a cooperation programme (under development). Highlighted accomplishments included **1)** the approval of the 13 protected areas presented by STAC6 for listing under the Protocol; **2)** the call for Contracting Parties to participate more actively in the established WGs, in particular those on the review of species for listing under the Protocol and on the format for the exemptions reports; **3)** the development of the format for exemptions; **4)** the amendment of Annexes II and III with the addition of the requested and approved species; **5)** adoption of the STAC6 recommendations; **6)** approval of the proposed SPAW Workplan/Budget for 2015–2016 (forwarded to COP15 of the Secretariat for final adoption); and **7)** the review of offers from governments to host the STAC7 in 2016.
36. The Chair thanked the Secretariat for all the hard work and the contribution of the Observers, NGO's and WGs, and invited the Director of the SPAW- RAC, Ms. Sandrine Pivard, to present the Report of the SPAW-RAC 2017–2018.
37. The Director explained that the SPAW-RAC (*created in 2000 via an agreement between the UN Environment Programme and the Government of France*) was located in Guadeloupe and up until September 2018, had been hosted by the National Park of Guadeloupe (since 2009) – as of January 2019, it was integrated with the *Direction de l'Environnement, de l'Aménagement et du Logement*. The functioning costs of the RAC were covered by the French Government, including salaries for: a Director, 1 Senior Project Coordinator (currently vacant), and 1 Administrative Assistant. Since the last STAC staff complement had reduced to only 1 junior officer funded by BEST as it was not administratively possible to initiate new projects and additional recruitment over the last 2 years. The RAC had now actively regrouped with 3 positions opened in early 2019 (the project coordinator and 2 civic service volunteers), along with posts for 3 dedicated project officers later in the year, funded by the CARI'MAM, and the CARIB Coast projects.
38. The RAC supported the Secretariat by contributing to *Programme Coordination* through joint programming/networking and fundraising of relevant activities, preparation of the reports for SPAW listings (PAs and species), representing the Secretariat at various fora and assisting with preparation for the biennial meetings (including translation), and maintaining the trilingual [RAC website](#) and SPAW quarterly newsletter. Support was also provided for various activities for the *Strengthening of Protected Areas* through CaMPAM specific to the EBM project (scheduled to end in 2019), the ECMANN Project (coordinating the small grant component - ended in July 2017) funded by TNC/The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU), and the *Transatlantic North-South Cooperation Project on Marine Protected Areas* (participating in 2 twinning projects since July 2017 on MPA networks and marine mammals).
39. Assistance was provided for follow-up actions mandated by COP9 regarding *Development of Guidelines for Protected Areas and Species Management* via the listing of protected areas and species under SPAW. There was a call for new proposals in Spring 2018 with assistance provided to Parties in the nomination process. This resulted in 3 new areas being proposed - 1 from the Netherlands (Mount Scenery National Park (Saba island)), and 2 from France (National Natural Reserves of Amana and Kaw-Roura). The list of species included in the Annexes was also revised, and 6 new species had been proposed for listing under Annex II by both France and the Netherlands, and 1 new species proposed for listing under Annex III by the Netherlands. Activities for further follow-up included assessment and completion of the existing listings, development of cooperation, and updates regarding rules and nominations.
40. Achievements under the *Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species* included an Action Plan for the conservation of marine mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region consisting of the dissemination of a pamphlet on principles and guidelines for whale watching activities, and “*Mon Ecole Ma Baleine*” (translation “my school my whale”) funded by the RAC. Following an application for EU funding in Spring 2017 and validation a year later in 2018, the CARI'MAM project focusing on marine mammals was [finally launched in October 2018](#). It was led by the AGOA Sanctuary/L'Agence française de la biodiversité (AFB) with the SPAW-

RAC, several SPAW MPAs, along with representatives from the Netherlands, Dominican Republic, Cuba, and the Turk and Caicos Islands in attendance.

41. Under CARI'MAM, the RAC will lead 4 work packages linked to outputs such as an assessment on the legislation on the protection of marine mammals, capacity building, and support for sustainable/compatible whale watching activities. Overall combined funding (2019–2020) between the EU and SPAW-RAC will be approximately €650,000. The RAC participated as Observer on behalf of the Secretariat and contributed to the [2nd CMS MOU meeting and workshop on sharks](#) held in Bonaire (November 2017). Work on sea turtles continued with the WIDECAS network and for invasive alien species, efforts were sustained in networking with stakeholders in the control of lionfish.
42. The *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems* involved numerous activities focused on coral reefs and the GCRMN–Caribbean with the RAC serving as steering committee chair, and representation ICRI and Coral Restoration Consortium (CRC) forums. Outputs included the development of guidelines for socio-economic monitoring presented to the COP9, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) funding renewed until 2019, and 2 training workshops organized by the RAC (Jamaica, 2017 and Sint Maarten, 2018) on biophysical monitoring, and future trends/socio-economic value of corals in the Caribbean.
43. Progress on mangroves was primarily via funding (~€78,000 from 2014 to 2018) of the 2nd pilot project in the north of Haiti integrating mangrove reforestation and public awareness for local communities through a partnership with Prefecture Guadeloupe, the French Embassy in Haiti and the SPAW-RAC. Additional EU funding (~€450,000/launched in summer 2018) was also secured for a second project, CARIBCOAST (2019 – 2020) for the implementation of activities related to soft ecosystem solutions, coral reefs and mangroves ecosystems. Advancements in sustainable tourism and funding of PAs was through the implementation of the Blue Finance Project in Barbados which was funded by the UN Environment-Coral Reef Unit (2015–2017).
44. Though not formally part of the SPAW sub-programme, achievements under the BEST initiative for Overseas territories was highlighted. The first phase **BEST III**: (funding ~€191,000 between 2014–2017) focused on *the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas and Definition of a Regional Investment Strategy Funding*. A second phase, **BEST 2.0** (~€300,000) included almost 20 projects implemented in the WCR including 7 SPAW territories under key themes (e.g. invasive species management, marine turtle conservation, coral reef restoration, lionfish control, protection of endemic species, reforestation/restoration of key areas for biodiversity, and establishment of MPAs). The project which commenced in 2017 was slated to end in 2019
45. It was noted that there was no funding for Sargassum - work focused on the networking of stakeholders involved in communication/awareness, and research and management of the influx with tentative cooperation (dependent on funding) with international organizations (e.g. Association of Caribbean States (ACS), GCFI, UWI, Abidjan Convention, Sargasso Sea Commission) and UNEP Global Programmes. [An online platform](#) had been developed to facilitate sharing messages related to Sargassum detection/prediction within the region, management techniques/best practices, and impacts on biodiversity - it also contained numerous shared files related to detection, including posters and reports with approximately 300 participants from nearly 200 different organizations actively subscribed.
46. The Meeting was invited to provide comments on the activities implemented during 2017–2018 and to make the necessary recommendations. Parties were also be requested to complement the information provided by the Secretariat and inform the Meeting on their activities in support of SPAW objectives within their countries, including SPAW workplan activities in which they had participated and their impact.
47. The delegate of the Dominican Republic (DR) thanked participants and the Government of Honduras for hosting the Meeting. The excellent work of the Secretariat was acknowledged, and it was suggested that the presentations be designed to better reflect the work being undertaken – possibly with matrices to measure outputs.
48. The delegate of Colombia thanked the Secretariat for the organization of the Meeting and Honduras for hosting. Clarification was requested on two points regarding [the overview document](#) - 1) did this cover the entire convention area or only countries enclosed in the orange line – the map presented was unclear; and 2) how would this be coordinated within the scope of the CLME + Project – it was indicated that the RSAP would support the project's

strategies, but it was not clear how this would be done to ensure that efforts/activities were not duplicated between both components, and with the Protocol/Cartagena Convention.

49. Though Colombia acknowledged that these new initiatives could be invaluable, this was one of the aspects which made governance most difficult in the region, specifically, the numerous initiatives, projects, and strategies with similar objectives which encompassed the various instruments addressing the efficient management of the Caribbean Sea. This scenario reduced clarity, effectiveness and coherence in the overall objective of achieving operative governance in this management, and in solving the main problems affecting the resource. In light of this, Colombia wished to call for reflection, so that instead of creating new initiatives/instruments/reports etc, the existing mechanism was used appropriately to prevent confusion.
50. Colombia also wished to congratulate the SPAW-RAC for the good work during the biennium, and for maintaining/keeping the centre's website updated (in the 3 working languages) with relevant information on the Protocol, general activities, and funding opportunities. The RAC was encouraged to continue efforts coordinating with other relevant institutions to address regional issues such as invasive species e.g. the lionfish, with consideration for the evaluation of other invasives such as the Giant tiger prawn (*Pennaeus monodon*), Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*), and moose horn sea moss (*Kappaphycus alvarezii*). The strengthening of MPAs with a focus on SPAW listed sites, was viewed as an effective tool, however, it was important to ensure that these sites benefited with adequate promotion and support so that the region as a whole, could advance and evolve satisfactorily via these management and conservation tools.

The project for the transboundary protection of marine mammals was considered by Colombia to be a necessary initiative. To achieve adequate management and accomplish more efficient results, it was essential to involve all countries of the region to generate a positive impact given that these marine mammals were not only present in the waters of some countries, but moved throughout the region.

51. The Secretariat thanked Colombia for the positive contributions and interest in the scope of work in the region. Addressing first point on regional strategy – it was reminded that Colombia participated in the consultative process via the 2 meetings in Panama taking into account various multilateral agreements which were part of an analysis to establish the commitments that each country must comply with. Analysis was conducted on the various commitments for the habitats identified – nothing new was being created. The process was inclusive and synergistic working together on all components. Regarding boundaries, it can be agreed that marine mammals and the sea were not confined to boundaries. The Secretariat operated on funding from contributions/grants and was therefore limited in what could be covered according to donor requirements – realistically everything could not be covered. The same applied for MPAs wherein the work of the Secretariat was linked to that of the CLME+ and [SDGs 14](#) and [17](#) respectively. It was hoped that this overview satisfactorily clarified the points raised.
52. The delegation of the USA thanked the Secretariat and the Government of Honduras for all the hard work in organizing and hosting the Meeting respectively, and expressed well wishes to the Coordinator *in absentia* and Mr. Corbin for taking over the role. Appreciation was expressed to the SPAW-RAC for all their work and accomplishments over the last biennium. The work on marine species and protected areas was acknowledged in spite of various challenges and the USA continued to be involved in various WGs and other activities in support of the subprogramme.
53. The Regional Project Coordinator for the CLME+ ([Project Coordination Unit- PCU](#)), thanked the Meeting, and in noting the interventions thus far by the USA and Colombia, conveyed how the UNDP/GEF CLME+ Project was supportive of the request by Contracting Parties for enhanced coordination. The project had supported the creation of an [Interim Coordination Mechanism \(ICM\)](#) among relevant intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), with the Secretariat playing an active role in this mechanism. Support for efforts towards the establishment of a permanent coordination mechanism for ocean governance also continued. Additionally, the project provided a means to support the implementation of activities/work programmes of regional IGOs in the execution of their formal mandates. This included work by the Secretariat on the *State of Habitats*, which constituted a building block for the wider-ranging integrated reporting mechanism on the *State of the Marine Environment and associated Economies (SOMEE)*. It was further highlighted that regional IGO's had previously endorsed the draft outline for the SOMEE report.

54. The Secretariat added that in conjunction with the coordination mechanism, and given the scarcity of resources, it was important to capitalize on synergies and as such through the project, the Secretariat aimed to improve regional economies – attention was called to recommendations outlined in information document [Paper on the Coordination Mechanism](#).

AGENDA ITEM 5: WORKPLAN AND BUDGET OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE 2019-2020 BIENNIUM

55. On behalf of the Secretariat, Ms. Lopez presented the Draft Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Sub-programme for the 2019–2020 Biennium” (contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/5 Rev1), developed following decisions of previous COP Meetings to address relevant and emerging global and regional biodiversity issues and initiatives, and to continue the development of strategic alliances.
56. Main aspects under *Programme Coordination* would focus on **1)** increased ratification and participation by Parties – especially their commitment and support to MEAs, as well as enhanced participation of donors and funding agencies to raise funds to support SPAW objectives; **2)** increased/enhanced collaborations/synergy between Parties, the Secretariat, NGOs, private sector and civil society to address environmental issues – Memorandums of Cooperation (MoCs) with partners would be implemented; **3)** improved incorporation of EBM approaches by states, and facilitation of capacity building training and awareness campaigns into national development and planning processes; and **4)** organization of COP10 and STAC9 – oversight for activities continue to be provided by the Programme Officer along with a Programme Management Assistant, with support from the SPAW-RAC.
57. A summary of funding for the biennium reflected that salaries and supporting costs would be roughly the same for 2019 and 2020 respectively via the CTF, along with projected funds and support to be raised for the convening of the COP and STAC. Additional funding was forecasted from the Government of France through the SPAW-RAC along with the CLME+ project.
58. For the *Strengthening of Protected Areas* there would be continuation of the ToT and small grants programme (e.g. continued development of the MPA Cooperation Programme via finalized proposal between CEP and the Asia Caribbean and Pacific ACP MEAs Phase 3 Project on MPAs (2019–2023) and participation in the European Commission’s transatlantic project on MPAs). Specifically, through the EBM project, efforts would be made to strengthen the integrated management capacities in 2 SPAW listed sites as an extension of the ECMMAN project. Improvement of CaMPAM’s internet forum and website effectiveness along with expansion of the MPA database would be a priority. Funding would be provided by the EBM project, along with support from France through the SPAW-RAC and other sources.
59. Development of *Guidelines for the Management of Protected Areas and Species* addressed the call for applications to update the lists for protected areas and species while also encouraging Parties to use the voluntary reporting format. Avenues would be explored to source in-kind support from partners to raise additional funds to assist Parties with the listing process and formulation of exemptions reports. Proposed next steps included the formation of a regional task team to advance feasibility assessments related to issues mentioned in the recommendations of the STAC8, and to demonstrate concrete steps necessary to improve their workflows (e.g. necessary political/human capacity and technical arrangements). These measures would also be linked to the update for [the CaMPAM database](#) and [the Capacity Building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in ACP Countries – Phase III \(ACP MEAs 3\) project](#). In-kind support was being explored from partners to supplement the projected budget for 2019/2020.
60. Efforts for the *Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species* would focus on **1)** marine mammals (e.g. coordination of the CARI’MAM project, development of transboundary cooperation/marine mammal monitoring efforts to address data gaps identified during the LifeWeb project, and support for sustainable Marine Mammal Watching/promotion of best practice guidelines); **2)** sea turtles (e.g. support elaboration/implementation of Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plans (STRAPs) and continued promotion of standard guidelines/criteria for monitoring at nesting sites); **3)** invasive species through support for regional efforts with relevant partners (particularly the lionfish invasion); **4)** illegal trade of species in collaboration with CITES and UNODC; and **5)** Sargassum (e.g. development of a cohesive regional strategy, dissemination of public awareness information and data sharing). Projected budget would include in-kind contributions from partners such as [SBNMS](#), the Centre for Coastal Studies and Whale and Dolphin Conservation, and from France through the SPAW-RAC.

61. Activities under the *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems* would be enabled through **1)** coral reefs (e.g. continued reactivation of the Caribbean coral reef monitoring network under GCRMN-Caribbean, promotion/implementation of the regional guidelines for Coral Reef biophysical monitoring, and the [Bluefinance](#) project aimed at achieving environmental, social and financial returns through strengthened collaborations with the private sector on coral reef conservation); **2)** outputs under the CLME+ project via advanced development of the regional strategy and action plan, and implementation of pilot projects demonstrating the transition to an EBM approach at the sub-regional/site level in the CLME+; **3)** the BEST Initiative to support conservation of biodiversity in overseas countries of the European Union which included 4 medium-sized grants and 15 small-sized grants; and **4)** wetlands and mangroves in collaboration with the Caribbean Wetlands Regional Initiative (Cariwet), with promotion of mangrove conservation managed by the SPAW-RAC subject to funding availability.
62. Of particular importance, it was anticipated that there would be substantial progress under the CLME+ for the finalization of the report on the [SoMH and RSAP](#) via strategic stakeholder engagement and review/validation at the next STAC for endorsement at COP11. The [ICM](#), of which the Secretariat was a member, would also enable for the first time, an institutionalized integrated assessment of the state of the marine environment, associated socio-economies, and associated governance processes in the Wider Caribbean. These assessments were expected to trigger action to enable informed policy and decision-making, thereby supporting environmental protection, enhanced livelihoods and the development of a sustainable blue economy. Thematic assessments on habitats and pollution through existing work by the Secretariat, would integrate this mechanism, and so improve the inter-linkages between habitats, pollution, fisheries, climate change and human societies. The latter however demanded a common, harmonized and systematic approach to “*State of...*” reporting adopted by the ICM and its IGOs.
63. Further input was requested from Contracting Parties on identifying priorities to appropriately guide the Secretariat based on continued challenges as a result of shortfalls/funding in certain programme areas which limited the sub-programme’s ability to carry out many activities.
64. The delegate of the Bahamas requested clarification on the total budget presented for the workplan – the Secretariat referenced the budget in [Annex II of the workplan](#) which provided the detailed breakdown for further examination by the delegate.
65. The delegate of Colombia thanked the sub-programme for all the work undertaken to execute activities given limited financial resources over the years. It was evident that for the 2019 budget only 12.4% of the funds were available, and by 2020 only 13.5%. In light of this, it was Colombia’s recommendation for Protocol activities to focus on strategic programmes capable of generating the greatest impact for Contracting Parties. It was also essential for the Secretariat to evaluate measures to address the lack of internal resources required to execute sub-programme activities vs. proposing an increase in contributions – given the precarious financial situation of many countries such as Colombia, it would not be prudent or in the best interest of the Secretariat to exacerbate this issue. Specific to the programme of work, each sub-programme was relevant and should be continued and strengthened – especially those related to strategies for the control of the lionfish, along with alternative initiatives to address other invasive/exotic species impacting the region.
66. The delegate of Venezuela made a few observations regarding aspects of the Spanish text in the workplan and requested to send revisions to the Secretariat (in writing) to help with accuracy. There was also a request for additional information on original efforts concerning alien and invasive species specific to the direction of the Secretariat – Venezuela would welcome the opportunity to collaborate. Taking into account the Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework, this could be a good platform to highlight these issues.
67. The delegation of the USA applauded the efforts of the Secretariat while making one observation – quite a lot of resources in the budget were currently dedicated to marine mammals and sea turtles – it was recommended that attention and resources be considered for allocation to other SPAW listed species in future workplans and budgets. A correction was also made regarding text in the workplan (paragraph 35 *Indicators of Achievement* row 2) which stated “*Improved submissions, and examination, of species proposed for exemptions under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol in order to ensure the continued survival of the species*” – in terms of context Parties *were not* required to submit proposed exemptions, they were only required to report on those that they had granted.

Additionally, it was not *species* that were proposed for exemptions, but exemptions from the prohibitions contained in the Protocol.

68. The delegate of the DR thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and the impressive effort made considering limited resources, especially staff. Recalling the intervention from STAC8, the need to discuss alien invasive species and those competing against endemic species (e.g. the green iguana in Puerto Rico) was reiterated. In relation to MPAs, there was also the need to address the illegal trafficking and poaching of species which should be considered equivalent to the trafficking of weapons, and therefore must be taken seriously.
69. The Secretariat responded to the Bahamas by reminding the Meeting that a more comprehensive budget would be presented, but perhaps a summary slide providing a breakdown of all the programme areas would be helpful for delegates. This might also address the interventions from both the DR and Colombia considering the request to identify priority areas for focus by the sub-programme.
70. The RAC was invited to provide further comments on invasive species and acknowledged that this was an area from the previous biennium requiring more attention. It was noted that since work on lionfish had been accomplished, focus on this area had stagnated – this however did not mean the issue was solved regionally, but there were successes (e.g. published cookbooks on how to prepare the fish). Sargassum was another issue which though not categorized exclusively as invasive, was a recent addition under the sub-programme. Some work on iguana had also taken place, however nothing major had materialized since there was no explicit directive to focus on this.
71. The Chair invited Observers to add comments.
72. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands remarked that in speaking not only as a delegate, but also as part of the [Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles](#) (IAC), wished to call attention to new and unsettling developments concerning the Northwest Atlantic Leatherback based on recently received/distributed data from the [Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network](#) (WIDECASST). Non-Contracting Parties or countries that had ratified the Protocol, but were not part of the Convention, especially those with large nesting areas (e.g. Guyana and Trinidad), were encouraged to become active members and work closely with the Secretariat of the IAC. Apologies were also offered on behalf of the IAC Secretariat as they intended to attend the COP, but it was not possible.
73. The delegate of Honduras provided a warm welcome to all participants and thanked the Secretariat for the presentation. It was noted that Honduras was not only concerned about invasive species such as the lionfish, but also species from ballast which required coordination with the International Maritime Organization (IMO). As this was the first COP for Honduras and given that Sargassum was categorized as a medium impact issue, it was hoped that this could now be an area of greater focus considering the recent ratification. Poaching was also an area of focus currently impacting marine species – Honduras was therefore working with a country representative to address this at local ports. It was also common to see ships grounded on reefs – this was flagged as another area requiring attention.
74. The Secretariat thanked the delegate from Honduras noting the need for greater integration/collaboration on shipping, and working closely with the IMO (possibly via the [Ballast Water Management Convention](#) (BWM) and [International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships](#) (MARPOL)) and the RACs. There were also new initiatives on shipwrecks which the Secretariat hoped could be incorporated into its programme of work for the next biennium.
75. The Observer from Healthy Reef Initiative highlighted the [Stony coral tissue loss disease](#) (SCTLD) currently impacting Mesoamerican reefs and other areas as an important area for consideration. The Meeting was urged to look into the [Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment \(AGRRA\) Programme](#) where sightings of this disease could be reported.
76. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands thanked the Healthy Reef Initiative for highlighting this very serious disease and recalled the linkage with the impacts from ballast water. Reference was made to [the Caribbean Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control \(CMOU\)](#) which requested that ships exchange ballast far enough from shore to prevent potential spread of this disease, as it was not yet certain if ballast played a role.

77. The Observer from GCFI agreed that the issue of coral disease was now a major problem in the region highlighting the impacts in Florida. A possible way forward was a regional approach linking work currently being done in Florida and with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – of interest, a new initiative through NOAA would be coming to GCFI.
78. The delegate of Aruba offered a small recommendation – based on the presentation from the Secretariat, indeed more could be accomplished by working together e.g. as per what was currently being achieved through the Meeting. Improved collaboration would enable mutual focus to address coral disease and encourage work on a management mechanism to address this issue in a unified way.
79. The Secretariat thanked Aruba and assured that this recommendation would be taken into consideration for the next Meeting.
80. The Meeting was invited to approve the draft SPAW Workplan and Budget as revised by the STAC8 and provide specific comments and recommendations as needed. Subsequently, the Workplan and Budget would be presented to the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Fifteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Roatán, Honduras, 5 - 6 June 2019 as part of the Workplan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the 2019-2020 Biennium, for its final adoption.
81. The Chair welcomed the delegation of France to the floor (late arrival due to flight issues) and invited any interventions.
82. The delegate of France thanked the Chair, apologized for the late arrival, and thanked the Government of Honduras for hosting the Meeting and the Secretariat for its work. Regarding Annex II of the Workplan and Budget, it would be useful to have further guidance concerning the difference between the budgeted amounts for 2019–2020. Concerning OSPAR and the Transatlantic Agreement, the scope was not clear as it seemed to be lacking a global vision – considering that the funds were external, it would be important to include work on coral reefs and other programmatic areas to give a broader scope.

As representative of the Chair of the outgoing Bureau and Oversight Committee, it was highlighted that over the past 2 years, despite not being able to convene as many Bureau meetings as anticipated, this remained a useful mechanism to interact with, and provide support to the Secretariat, and relieve Contracting Parties/focal points of purely administrative matters. The Bureau was also aware of the impacts of the ongoing financial situation and the challenges faced by the Secretariat (*which constituted a real threat to the future of the Convention*) towards developing an agreed plan with Member States for the regularization of contributions.

On a positive note, progress on the ban on plastic bags, straws and polystyrene was highlighted, and Member States were encouraged to join the movement with the hope that the region could be one of the first to have a comprehensive ban which could provide good visibility for the Convention .

83. The Secretariat requested clarification from the delegate regarding the point on the overall budget – was it a request to have it updated or amend the figures.
84. The Administrative/Funds Management Officer for the Secretariat added that reporting for the current biennium was deferred, with figures from 2018 carried over into 2019 as the Secretariat did not want to make adjustments without the permission of Contracting Parties. More details would be provided during the IGM/COP15 and the Secretariat was open to discussing this further with France as needed.
85. It was also agreed that the OSPAR arrangement would require more in-depth analysis and preparation. The Secretariat was not fully satisfied with the approach taken and work was currently underway to expand the terms of reference (ToR) to improve the scope to ensure a harmonized vision covering all areas (including coral reefs), vs. the traditional approach that had been used over the years.

AGENDA ITEM 6: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC8) TO THE SPAW PROTOCOL (PANAMA CITY, PANAMA, 5–7 DECEMBER 2018)

86. The Secretariat presented the Recommendations of the SPAW STAC8 for review and approval (Panama City, Panama, 5–7 December 2018) (contained in documents UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/6 and Annex III of UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/7). The Secretariat called to the attention of the Meeting, the relevant documents in support of the STAC8 Recommendations:
- The proposals for Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/4 and UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.37/4 regarding **STAC8 Recommendation II**);
 - The Report of the Working Group on the Listing of Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/3 and supporting documents on status of species of sharks and rays (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.7) regarding **STAC8 Recommendation III (1) and (3)**);
 - "An Overview of the Report on the State of Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean and the Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021–2030 " (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.3).
87. Regarding ToRS, the director of the RAC explained that reformulation of the WG with the relevant governments (USA, Colombia, The Netherlands and France and one Observer) was underway – however according to COP1 and STAC1, the recommendations of the STAC regarding ToRs were to be submitted to STAC assembly for approval and not to the COP's. Discussions were ongoing within the group on the best way forward to present this for formal approval.
88. The delegate of the DR expressed confusion with the wording of **Recommendation II (4)** – based on the translations it appeared that formal approval was needed – it now appeared that the ToRs would not be presented at this moment.
89. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands, as Rapporteur of the STAC8, offered clarity by recalling that the COP1 had decided that since WGs were guided by the STAC, this was a matter for the STAC and there was therefore no need for approval by the COP.
90. The Director of the RAC added that there were 3 avenues for approval – **1**) await approval at the next STAC a little over a year away; **2**) electronic consultation – in this case all Parties would be placed on a platform for sharing the document; and **3**) the possibility for approval by the Bureau.
91. The Secretariat agreed that at the time this recommendation was made, the Meeting was not aware of the decision from COP1 which already outlined this process. The Meeting would therefore be guided by the 3 options outlined by the RAC as Coordinator of the WG.
92. With reference to CaMPAM, the delegation of the USA queried if there had been a review on the work of the network. If not, the request was made for the addition of a bullet on conducting an impact assessment on the work of CAMPAM to date – this was towards identifying any tangible achievements over the years with a measurable analysis to guide future activities.
93. The delegate of St. Lucia thanked the Secretariat and Government of Honduras for facilitating the Meeting and highlighted some amendments for consideration under **Recommendation VII**.
94. In response the Secretariat recommended that amendments be submitted in writing to ensure accuracy.
95. The delegate of the DR recalled initial discussions regarding a proposal and presentation for **Recommendation VII** – participants at that time were instructed to provide feedback in writing for review by the Secretariat.
96. The delegate of Aruba noted that for **Recommendation I**, in line with the intervention made by the USA and what was discussed earlier regarding the transition to a new CAMPAM, it would be useful to have a clear idea of the way forward. Coral reef disease should also be included as a starting point to be addressed as an urgent issue.
97. The Chair shared a new point for consideration and inclusion under **Recommendation VII** regarding a geospatial

component to manage data within the Protocol. It was explained that this was discussed at the STAC8, but the Secretariat felt it would be opportune to add this in writing so that it could be reflected appropriately.

98. The Observer of [Shark Advocates International \(SAI\)](#) expressed appreciation for the opportunity to address the Meeting and explained that the SAI was a project of The Ocean Foundation and SeaLife Law – together with marine researchers, it had formed a coalition dedicated to the study and protection of sawfishes (the world’s most threatened marine fish). Efforts were focused on the Caribbean because of the region’s exceptional potential to reverse population declines. The Government of the Netherlands was recognized for its leadership in sawfish conservation in the Caribbean, and the SAI offered its strong support for the proposal to list the largetooth sawfish on Annex II of the Protocol. Associated commitments for strict national protections and cooperative recovery actions were also urgently needed for this critically endangered species.

The Meeting was reminded that the smalltooth sawfish, which was recently added to Annex II, remained in urgent need of conservation attention, including legal protection in several range states. With the listing of the largetooth sawfish, it was hoped that as a priority, Parties would focus on collaborative initiatives to prevent local extinction and promote recovery of both sawfish species – SAI would be pleased to assist with such efforts.

99. The Observer of the [Animal Welfare Institute \(AWI\)](#) thanked the Government of Honduras for hosting the Meeting and given the AWI’s long history of supporting the Protocol, conveyed appreciation for the opportunity to support the Convention and its Parties. In reference to **Recommendation IV**, it was recounted that at the STAC8, Parties had shared concern for activities that might be undermining the integrity and effectiveness of the Protocol, including hunting and commercial trade in sea turtles and small cetaceans (whales and dolphins). All species in these taxa were listed on Annex II affording total protection and included prohibitions on capture, possession, killing and commercial trade. Attention was called to the [report submitted as an information document](#) which consolidated data on the capture and trade of small cetaceans in the region. There had been increasing concerns regarding compliance with Protocol requirements and reporting from Parties which enabled the Secretariat to assess the status of species being exploited or traded.

As a reminder, Parties were obligated to regulate and, where necessary, **1)** prohibit activities having adverse effects; **2)** endeavor to co-operate in the enforcement of prohibited activities; and **3)** manage species of fauna and flora with the objective of preventing them from becoming endangered or threatened. There was also increasing international awareness and knowledge on the distribution and abundance of populations, human health effects of consuming contaminated cetacean meat, along with concern about unregulated hunts (*reference to the recent [Annual Meeting of the IWC Scientific Committee in Nairobi, Kenya, May 2019](#)*).

Parties were therefore respectfully encouraged to **1)** comply with the Protocol by implementing national legislation prohibiting the hunting of small cetaceans/undertaking enforcement and conservation measures to aid their protection and recovery; **2)** report the numbers and species of small cetaceans captured or involved in other prohibited activities; **3)** improve collaboration with the Secretariat, STAC, other Parties and experts to identify research needs and opportunities to collect and share data relating to the distribution/status of small cetaceans in the region; and **4)** reinstate the experts WG on marine mammals and charge it with overseeing the assessment of populations of exploited small cetacean species in the Wider Caribbean.

100. The delegate of Colombia voiced support for the STAC8 recommendations taking into account Colombia’s participation at the meeting in Panama (December 2018, and further familiarization with the draft document shared by the Secretariat. Colombia had provided technical input to the various versions of the [overview document](#) – adoption was recommended if the Secretariat could ensure **1)** timely completion of the SoMH report to facilitate its incorporation into the SOMEE report; and **2)** sharing of the final version for endorsement by Contracting Parties. Colombia also supported the creation of new WGs on Sargassum and parrotfish while noting the importance of having clear ToRS on the purpose and scope of each group.
101. The Observer of the [International Fund for Animal Welfare \(IFAW\)](#) congratulated and thanked the Government of Honduras for their hospitality, and the Secretariat for the organization of the Meeting. As highlighted by delegates, illegal wildlife trade was a major threat for species and ecosystems. IFAW wished to reiterate interest in supporting the Secretariat and Parties in the development of the CaribWEN, to strengthen collaboration in the region on information sharing, capacity building and enforcement. According to a recent report from the [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#), more than a million-species were at risk

of extinction. The region therefore needed a strong voice and platform to combat this threat – CaribWEN provided an ideal solution.

The expertise and other resources of IFAW were available to the Secretariat given past engagements with other [Wildlife Enforcement Networks \(WENs\)](#) such as the [Horn of Africa Wildlife Enforcement Network \(HAWEN\)](#), the [Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Wildlife Enforcement Network \(ASEAN-WEN\)](#), as well as established relationships and partnerships in wildlife crime projects with Interpol, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CITES. IFAW has also conducted 4 wildlife trafficking trainings in the WCR with the desire to explore additional opportunities and needs surrounding this issue.

102. The delegation of the USA reiterated support on **Recommendation III** for the largemouth sawfish and silky shark. Regarding the ad hoc WG, USA strongly encouraged increased participation in the species WG, and for members to utilize the WG as a forum for developing regional conservation and management strategies for listed species. With regard to the addition of new species under the Protocol, the USA emphasized the importance of ensuring more robust scientific evaluations of any new proposals., it would be important to ensure more robust analyses. For **Recommendation IV**, Parties were encouraged to report on their exemptions – the USA looked forward to the review of its submission at the next STAC.
103. The Secretariat reminded the Meeting that feedback/additional points and recommendations on the previous STAC would be noted for appropriate reflection in the meeting report, however, adopted recommendations could not be edited. Concerning Sargassum and ocean acidification, given the interlinkages with pollution and that these were areas of interest to the Parties, perhaps they could be brought forward to the COP15 for consideration and adoption as decisions – especially by Non-Contracting Parties of the Protocol.
104. The delegate of the DR requested the addition of another point on MPAs as there was nothing speaking to the subject – it was important to have reference in the meeting report to reflect impacts from activities such as agriculture which could impact ecosystems in MPAs – as such some discussion on this was needed.
105. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands acknowledged the reasoning outlined by the delegate of the DR as it was rather tempting to look at the presentations on these areas and discuss during the Meeting. The 3-day discussion at the STAC8 was recalled which was for this very purpose i.e. to determine the way forward based on recommendations made – this was accomplished with the STAC in agreement.
106. The delegate of the DR thanked the delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands for this recollection and agreed that much work was done in Panama as this became a heated topic. However, as with species and the recommendations by Colombia, the point was to ensure discussion on all relevant aspects which could impact the integrity of these areas – it was simply a point of reference for future consideration given that the Meeting did not provide any comments to enable meaningful discussions.
107. The Secretariat queried if the delegate wished to add this as a proposal for a new decision, or for consideration to add to the criteria in the management of protected areas.
108. The delegate of the DR clarified that this was not mentioned for inclusion as a new decision, but to remind the Meeting to consider all criteria for maintaining the integrity of an area. In reviewing the feedback from the experts, it was clear there was some discord – more rigorous follow-up would therefore be needed along with appropriate assessment for these areas in line with the required standard.
109. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands concurred with the points raised by the DR – some aspect of this was covered in the STAC8 recommendations – perhaps a report could be developed for protected areas to ensure compliance with Article 5 of the Protocol. Alternatively, a request could be made to the STAC9 to examine/ address this via recommendation (e.g. an evaluation mechanism to ensure compliance with requirements).
110. The Director of the RAC suggested that a format could be created from the existing guidance document – it could then be evaluated through electronic consultation and be ready for proposal at the STAC9 via approval by the Meeting.
111. The delegation of the USA requested clarification on whether the action being proposed was for the Meeting to

approve the suggestion by the RAC Director, or the existing recommendations.

112. The Secretariat clarified that the current discussion was as a result of the number of interventions concerning the STAC8 recommendations for consideration by the Meeting – these would be compiled for inclusion as decisions of the COP15.
113. Taking into account the points raised, the Chair concluded that the existing recommendations had been accepted and approved.

AGENDA ITEM 7: OTHER BUSINESS

114. Participants were invited to raise any other issues not covered by the preceding Agenda items, but relevant to the scope of the Meeting.
115. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands shared that new research had found high levels of arsenic in samples of Sargassum – though full data had not yet been received, this would mean levels 4 times the lethal dose for rats which would now be categorized as toxic waste. This was something that should be discussed seriously given proposals to use Sargassum as a food source (e.g. for cattle). The subject was also being considered by the LBS Protocol.
116. In response, the Secretariat highlighted the recent [MoU signed between the International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\) and CARICOM](#) to measure heavy metal residue in Sargassum and the concerns on its use in agriculture. Via the proposed working group, the Secretariat would ensure collaboration with the CRFM to disseminate and discuss information of relevance on this issue.
117. The delegate of Barbados thanked the Government of Honduras/the Secretariat for facilitating the Meeting and supported the concerns raised about arsenic levels. In an effort to remove Sargassum from its beaches, Barbados was currently using it as a fertilizer and as mulch to eradicate the invasive giant African snail – there had also been reports of it being used to make soup. From a food security perspective, it clearly presented a potential health risk which required further exploration.
118. Representatives from the Department of Marine Environment Protection (Government of Honduras) presented on the impacts of Sargassum in Honduras and measures used to combat the influx. Citing examples from Mexico, this included use as an agricultural fertilizer/animal feed, for pest control, and for making biodegradable/disposable items among others. Future plans included development of a forecasting system and management strategy, along with active integration with the UN Environment Programme regional forums/action plan.
119. The delegate of France thanked Honduras for the presentation which elicited many thoughts given similar challenges faced by French territories. The upcoming Sargassum expo scheduled to take place in Guadeloupe (October 2019) was noted. It was also important to work on regional collaboration focused on a long-term vision to determine any lasting impacts on human health, along with allocated funding to address the issue with the help of expert analysis. As a pivotal topic and given the far-reaching impacts and complexity of the phenomenon, steps should be taken to enhance understanding and adaption – many countries have suffered from all viewpoints (health, environmental, economic and social). It was also a transversal subject for both the SPAW and LBS Protocols which therefore required an integrated approach and could provide an opportunity to work more synergistically.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of the Convention and the implementation of the ecosystem approach/ integrated spatial planning, both protocols should not operate in silos as they were complementary. The working group would therefore need to reflect on this with an aim to establish coordination and collaboration with relevant regional and global initiatives to promote maximum impact of synergies and solutions to combat the influx.

120. The Observer from The Ocean Foundation thanked the Meeting for the opportunity to participate and highlighted the foundation's role as part of [the Sargasso Sea Commission](#) with reference to the 2014 meeting held in Bermuda (attended by the SPAW-RAC). It was agreed that there was a tremendous opportunity for regional cooperation considering the various uses of Sargassum – including the development of maps and transport mechanisms to help address this on a country by country basis.

121. The Secretariat reminded the Meeting that the recommendations proposed for amendment would be reviewed, followed by the adoption of the draft decisions.
122. The delegation of the USA indicated that a note should be added on the allocation of resources – specifically that, in addition to sea turtles and marine mammals, allocation of resources be considered for other SPAW-listed species in future budgets and work plans.
123. The delegate of France indicated that ocean acidification also required further studies to better anticipate consequences in terms of economic damage and food security in the region – this would be achieved via the MoU to be concluded between the Secretariat and The Ocean Foundation. The passage of hurricane's Irma and Maria in 2017 also highlighted the urgent need to stress climate change adaptation, as these weather patterns were expected to multiply/become more powerful – it was therefore important to protect and enhance the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems. In this respect, the regional strategy and action plan should provide the opportunity to align the UN Environment programme of work with the ocean strategy, and possibly introduce a *blue economy* approach to the region's work aligned with sustainable development as a vector for the protection of biodiversity.

Much work had been carried out across the French Antilles which included the drafting of a *Strategic Basin* document. Following 2 years of consultation/ several seminars bringing together dozens of stakeholders within the territories (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint-Martin, Saint Barthélemy), an initial draft was slated for presentation at a meeting in Martinique (June 2019). This mechanism could be considered a good example of an integrated maritime policy serving as a representation of a 'true' *blue sustainable economy*.

The role of focal points in supporting and monitoring the ratification process of the Convention and its Protocols at the national level was reiterated, as it was more than just a legal and administrative issue. By extension, Honduras was congratulated for its recent ratification – France stood ready to support as needed and looked forward to meeting the new Chair.

124. The Chair thanked the delegate of France and expressed appreciation for the support.
125. The delegate of the DR advised that given the proposed amendments to the English text arising from the discussions on the recommendations, it would not be possible for the DR to approve without the appropriate Spanish translation.
126. The Secretariat assured that translation would be provided within an hour – to ensure that all changes were reflected, this would be shared to solicit feedback.
127. The delegate of Cuba supported the concerns raised by the DR, reiterating the need to have the translated text to facilitate review and enable approval.
128. The Secretariat proposed meeting in a small group or sharing via email for review and approval – agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

129. The Rapporteur presented the draft [Decisions of the Meeting](#) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/4). The Meeting was invited to adopt the decisions, with amendments and corrections to be introduced, as appropriate.
130. The Chair indicated that the decisions would be made available to the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Fifteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (COP15) (Roatán, Honduras, 5 - 6 June 2019) for adoption.
131. The Secretariat reminded the Meeting that the document would be revised with the relevant changes (including those received after meeting of small group to review translated versions).

AGENDA ITEM 9: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

132. Participants were reminded to consider a country for hosting or providing support for the next STAC. A great deal of resources was required to convene these meetings, and so the Secretariat welcomed offers for assistance to enable the Protocol to fulfil its obligations.
133. The Meeting was reminded of the Side event on ocean acidification organized by The Ocean Foundation.
134. On behalf of the Coordinator, Mr. Corbin expressed appreciation to the Chair, the Rapporteur and Vice Chair of the Meeting for the important work achieved – extremely good decisions were developed. The significant support provided by the Government of Honduras and the Kingdom of the Netherlands was recognized – this allowed the Secretariat to sponsor travel for all delegates. Funding from the CLME+ and IWeco (GEF projects) assisted with translation along with additional financial and staff support. The Ocean Foundation also assisted with translation at the last minute.
135. In closing, Mr Corbin highlighted that serving in the capacity of Acting Coordinator afforded new insight into the issues faced by the Parties of the SPAW Protocol. Representation by the Coordinator of the GPA, and the work of the Secretariat’s Administrative/Funds Management Officer was acknowledged.
136. The Secretariat thanked Parties for their participation and patience, and the interpreters for their support.
137. Having participated in the Convention for over 30 years, the Rapporteur thanked the Secretariat for all its hard work noting its evolution over time becoming highly effective in the execution of duties, and the Government of Honduras for hosting the Meeting.
138. The Chair thanked participants and the Government of Honduras as hosts.
139. The Meeting was closed on Monday, 3 June 2019 at 6:37 p.m. by the Secretariat.

ANNEX I: AGENDA

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Organisation of the Meeting
 - 2.1. Rules of Procedure
 - 2.2. Election of Officers
 - 2.3. Organisation of Work
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2017-2018, including activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe
5. Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Subprogramme for the 2019-2020 Biennium
6. Recommendations of the Eighth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the SPAW Protocol (Panama City, Panama, 5 - 7 December 2018)
7. Other Business
8. Adoption of the Decisions of the Meeting
9. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX II: DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

The Contracting Parties:

Having convened the Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region;

Recalling the adoption by the General Assembly of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, which reaffirmed the commitment contained in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and **welcoming** target 14.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, calling for the conservation, by 2020, of at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas;

Recognizing the International Coral Reef Initiative Action Plan 2016 which set a basis for the integrated management of marine biodiversity following the International Coral Reef Initiative's General Meeting in Paris, November 2016;

Taking note of the “Status of Activities of the SPA Sub-programme for 2017-2018” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.3)” and “Report of the SPA Regional Activity Centre (SPA-RAC) in Guadeloupe: RAC Operations and Budget for the period 2017-2018 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.4);

Acknowledging the work of the Secretariat and SPA-RAC to address emerging issues such as Sargassum influx, as well as the continued work on conservation of coral reefs, management of invasive species and marine mammals;

Having reviewed the “Recommendations of the Eighth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPA Protocol”, Panama City, Panama, 5-7 December 2018 contained in the Report of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/8);

Having reviewed the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Sub-programme for the 2019-2020 Biennium” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.40/5 Rev.1);

Decide to:

1. **Encourage** the governments of the region, which have not yet done so, to become Contracting Parties to the SPA Protocol in particular the Mesoamerican Region.
2. **Approve** the proposed SPA Workplan and budget for 2019-2020 as presented to the meeting, including the amendments proposed by the STAC8; while noting that in addition to marine mammals and sea turtles, attention and resources for the conservation of other listed species in the Protocol should be considered in future workplans and budgets; that additional attention is needed for invasive species other than lionfish; as well as illegal traffic of species listed in the protocol and the new coral disease Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) and its spread through the Caribbean (possibly through ballast water); and work with the LBS Protocol and the regional Caribbean Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (CMOU) to take measures against ballast water exchange in coastal waters.
3. **Urge** the Secretariat to allocate funds or seek funding sources for the management of protected areas listed as SPA sites.
4. **Recommend** that the STAC consider the inclusion of SCTLD as a subject of discussion and review at eh next meeting reflecting the seriousness of this threat to the region's economy, food security and environmental integrity.

5. **Recommend** that the Secretariat undertake a comprehensive review to determine impact of CAMPAM activities thus far, envisaged to evaluate effectiveness and guide future work with a view towards ensuring activities linked to overall SPAW Protocol activities/goals.
6. **Urge** Contracting Parties to respond to the requests of the Secretariat and to participate more actively in the Working Groups established by the Parties.
7. Secretariat **work closely** with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention (IAC) and call on key countries and territories (Trinidad and Tobago, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname and Canada) to cooperate with the SPAW Protocol and IAC to identify and address the threats to the North-West Atlantic leatherback population.
8. **Adopt** the Recommendations of the Eighth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPAW Protocol as contained in UNEP/(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/6 with the following amendment:
 - i. Consider that according to the decisions of the first Conference of Parties and first Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee, the Recommendations of STAC8 regarding the terms of reference (recommendations II.4, III.3, IV.1 and V.1) are to be submitted for the STAC assembly's approval and not to the COP's.
9. **Call upon** all Parties to the SPAW Protocol of the Wider Caribbean region in regards to cetaceans to:
 - i. Comply with the Protocol by implementing national legislation prohibiting the hunting of cetaceans and taking enforcement and conservation measures to aid their protection and recovery;
 - ii. Report the numbers and species of cetaceans taken in hunts or involved in other prohibited activities;
 - iii. Improve collaboration with the Secretariat, Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), other parties and experts to identify research needs and opportunities to collect and share data relating to the distribution and status of cetaceans in the Region;
 - iv. Reinstate the experts working group on marine mammals and charge it with overseeing the assessment of populations of exploited small cetacean species in the Wider Caribbean.
10. **The Secretariat prepare a proposal** for consideration by the COP and IGM on a formal network of data platforms for internalization of Geospatial information relevant to the SPAW Protocol (including the outputs of the State of Habitats report) and consider the trial use of the Caribbean Marine Atlas Phase 2 Geonode as one of such platforms. This information paper should consider issues such as sustainability, financial implications, data sharing and data sensitivities and how such a platform could be formalized for use as a possible regional data base or platform (preliminary information paper: UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.10).
11. The Secretariat and Contracting Parties **continue to** contribute to the process developed by the CLME+ Project to identify a Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism (PPCM) and a Sustainable Financing Plan (SFP) for consolidation of an integrated ocean governance framework in the WCR as appropriate.
12. **Encourage Parties** to report exemptions in a format in which all relevant information be included. A possibility is the Reporting Format for Exemptions accepted at STAC 7 and emphasize that the Reporting of exemptions is a critical component of the SPAW Protocol which enables Parties to confirm their compliance with the obligations they have taken on as Parties to the SPAW Protocol as appropriate.
13. **Recommend that** the SPAW Ad Hoc Working group on Sargassum also include members/experts of the LBS protocol; look into potential health risks from heavy metals and liaise with the International Atomic Energy Agency and Caricom building synergies with other national and regional groups or initiatives working on this issue that working in this area.

14. The Secretariat **continues** progress towards completing the draft State of Habitat and the 2020-2030 Regional Strategy and Action Plan and Investment Plan, supported by the CLME+ Project, for consideration at COP11 and further relevant action, taking into account the comments and inputs received by Parties and partners during the deliberations at the above Regional Workshop, the recommendations contained in Information Paper UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.7 and other consultations as appropriate.
15. The Secretariat and Contracting Parties **ensure that** efforts are undertaken to communicate on and highlight the relevance of the State of the Habitat Report for supporting sustainable socio-economic development in the Wider Caribbean.
16. The Secretariat to **strengthen** and **enhance** cooperation links with international instruments adopted by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) aiming to promote cooperation and integrality with the SPAW Protocol and the Convention in general, as well as with maritime issues affecting marine biodiversity, including among others, the transfer of invasive species and diseases as a result of the discharge of ballast water, physical damage to the coral reefs or threats to marine mammals due to navigation, shipwrecks, pollution and noise from ships and wrecks, among others. (Secretariat and RACs to strengthen cooperation accordingly).
17. **Welcome** offers from Governments to explore with the Secretariat the possibility of hosting the 9th SPAW STAC Meeting in 2020.

ANNEX III: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

| Symbol | Title | Agenda Item |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| <u>Working Documents</u> | | |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/1 | Provisional Agenda | 3 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/2 | Provisional Annotated Agenda | 3 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/3 | Report of the Working Group on the Listing of Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/4 | Proposals for Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/5 Rev.1 | Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Sub-programme for the 2019 - 2020 Biennium | 5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/7 | Report of Eighth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region | 5,6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/3 | Decisions of the Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Roatán, Honduras, 3 June 2019 (<i>to be prepared during the meeting</i>) | 8 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/4 | Report of the Meeting (<i>to be prepared after the meeting</i>) | |
| <u>Information Documents</u> | | |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.1 | Provisional List of Documents | |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.2 | Provisional List of Participants (<i>to be finalised during the meeting</i>) | |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.3 | An Overview of the Report on the State of Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean and the Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021 -2030 | 4,6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.4 | Paper on the Coordination Mechanism - CLME+ | 4,6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.5 | Cooperation between The Ocean Foundation (TOF) and the Regional Coordination Unit of the Caribbean Environment Program (CEP) of UNEP, for the development of the marine environment in the Caribbean region | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.6 | Report to SIDA - OSPAR/CEP cooperation grant (<i>prepared by Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute</i>) | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.7 | Paper on the State of the Marine Environment and Associated Economies (SOME) - Collaborative Development & Institutionalization of a Regional Integrated Reporting Mechanism | 4,6 |

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| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.8 | Action Document for Capacity Building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in ACP Countries – Phase III (ACP MEAs 3) | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.9 | Summary of Prohibited Acts Under the SPAW Protocol Related to Small Cetaceans | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.10 | Establishing a Formal Network of Geospatial Information Platforms to Support Marine Resources Governance and Management in the Wider Caribbean | 4,6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.3 | Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2017 - 2018 (<i>includes status of STAC7 Recommendations and COP9 Decisions</i>) | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.4 | Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe: operations and budget for the period 2017 - 2018 | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.5 | Update on the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its major activities (2018) | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.6 | Report on the “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean through Ecosystem Based Management” Project (2018) | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.6 Addendum 1 | Summary of Project accomplishments: January to December 2017 | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.7 | Proposals Submitted by Parties of Species for listing under the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.8 | Sargassum White Paper - Sargassum Outbreak in the Caribbean: Challenges, Opportunities and Regional Situation | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.8 Addendum 1 | Establishment of a Working Group on the Sargassum influx proposal - Government of France | 4,6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40 /INF.9 | United States Exemptions Report to the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol of the Cartagena Convention for 2017 | 4,6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.10 | Updating CaMPAM MPA Database - <i>Product of a consultant agreement with GCFI</i> | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.11 | Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network (CaribWEN) Briefing | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/3 Rev.1 | Draft Reporting Format for Exemptions under Article 11(2) of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol (SPAW) - Annex (<i>includes case study from the Government of Curaçao</i>) | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/4 | Report of the Working Group on the Listing of Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/5 Addendum 1 Rev.1 | Map of SPAW Protected Areas already Listed In 2012 and 2014, and Protected Areas to be Listed | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.6 | Evaluation of CaMPAM Activities and Recommendations for Improvement - <i>An analysis of the last 15 years</i> | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.8 Rev.1 | Factsheet on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean through Ecosystem Based Management” | 4 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/ INF.10 | Agoa Caribbean Marine Mammals Preservation Network (CARI’MAM) White Paper: <i>Strengthen Regional Cooperation for The Conservation of Marine Mammals within the Caribbean Region and Beyond</i> | 4,5 |

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| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/ INF.13 | Overarching Principles and Best Practice Guidelines for Marine Mammal Watching in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/ INF.16 | The Sister Sanctuaries Program for Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean – A US/NOAA, Dominican Republic, France and the Netherlands Initiative | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/ INF.17 | GCRMN-Caribbean Guidelines for Coral Reef Biophysical Monitoring | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.37/INF.7 Rev.3 | The GEF Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Project and its joint implementation through the AMEP and SPAW Subprogrammes | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.37/INF.10 | Annex A and C (Agreement) – CLME+: Catalysing Implementation of Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.36/INF.7 | Report on the Ratification of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region and its Protocols (Cartagena Convention) | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.37/3 | Guidance document - Criteria and process to assess exemptions under Article 11(2) of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol (SPAW) (<i>includes draft format for reporting exemptions</i>) | 6 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.37/5 | Decisions of the Ninth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Cayenne, French Guiana, 13 March 2017. | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/ 8 | Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, 31 October- 4 November 2016 Miami, Florida. | 4,5 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.39/INF.11 | OSPAR and Caribbean Environment Programme Cooperation Project Document | 4,5 |

Reference Documents

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| EU/UNEP/2018 | Applying Marine and Coastal Area-based Management Approaches to Achieve Multiple Sustainable Development Goal Targets Summary for Policy Makers |
| UNEP/RSRS/205/2018 | The Contributions of Marine and Coastal Area-based Management Approaches to Sustainable Development Goals and Targets - UN Environment Regional Seas Reports and Studies No. 205 |
| CLME+-PCM-SFP Phase II Report | Proposals for a permanent Coordination Mechanism and a Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance in the Wider Caribbean region |
| SOMEE: Booklet | An Information Booklet - State of the Marine Environment and associated Economies CLME+ SOMEE in the Wider Caribbean (a collaborative, integrated long-term reporting mechanism) |
| CLME+ SAP v1.6.1 | CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP) Information Booklet (v1.6.1), 2017 |
| MTS 2018-2021 | UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2018-2021 |
| UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/6 Rev.1 | Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2017 - 2018 Biennium |

Reference Documents

- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.39/6 Report of the Seventeenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Fourteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Cayenne, French Guiana, 15-17 March 2017
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.37/6 Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Cayenne, French Guiana, 13 March 2017
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.39/3 Work plan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the biennium 2017-2018
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.34/3 Decisions of the Eighth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Cartagena, Colombia, 9 December 2014
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.10 Report on the Workshop of Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) for the Wider Caribbean: Review, improve and revitalize the network and the nodes for more effective coral reef monitoring and data management, Curacao, 6 - 8 August 2014
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.9 Report of the First Meeting of Managers of the Protected Areas Listed under the SPAW Protocol of the Cartagena Convention at the 66th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) Conference, Corpus Christi, Texas, USA, November 5, 2013
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.8 Report on the LifeWeb-Spain UNEP-CEP Meeting on Scenarios for Transboundary Marine Mammal Management in the Wider Caribbean, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 23 - 24 April 2014
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.6 Update on the Implementation of Activities in Support of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP), including the Government of Spain-UNEP Lifeweb project "*Protecting Habitats and Migration Corridors for Marine Mammals in the South and Northeast Pacific and the Wider Caribbean through Marine Protected Area Networks*"
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.6 IUCN Caribbean Red List of Threatened Species – A Proposal
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.29/INF.5 Exemptions to the SPAW Protocol Under Article 11(2): A Legal Review
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.32 INF.9 Rev.3 Template FOR National Reporting on the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols
- UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.26/4 Draft Grid for the Objective Evaluation of Proposals for Inclusion in the SPAW Protected Areas List
- UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/4 Structure and Scope of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the SPAW Protocol
- UNEP(OCA)/CAR IG.11/7 Proposed Legal Framework for the Administrative Technical and Financial Operations of RACs and RANs
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.36 CRP.1 Amendment to the Financial Rules for the Cartagena Convention
- UNEP, 2010 Rules of Procedure for the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)
- UNEP, 2008 Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region. United Nations Environment Programme – Caribbean Environment Programme, Kingston, Jamaica. 2008. (English and Spanish)

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| UNEP, 1991 | Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries for the Adoption of the Annexes to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region |
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ANNEX IV: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

List of Participants**CONTRACTING PARTIES**

| | Participant | Country | Title /Address | Tel/Email |
|----|--|----------------|--|--|
| 1. | Gisbert Boekhoudt | Aruba | Director Directorate for Nature & Environment Bernhradstraat 75 San Nicolas, Aruba | Tel: 297-585-1199 Email: gisbert.boekhoudt@dnmaruba.org |
| 2. | Rochelle Newbold (Head of Delegation) | Bahamas | Acting Director BEST Commission Ministry of Housing and Environment Ground Floor, Charlotte House Charlotte and Shirley Streets P.O. Box N-7132 Nassau, Bahamas | Tel: 242-322-4546 Email: rnewbold@best.gov.bs |
| 3. | Keith Philippe | Bahamas | Environmental Officer BEST Commission Ministry of Housing and Environment Ground Floor, Charlotte House Charlotte and Shirley Streets P.O. Box N-7132 Nassau, Bahamas | Tel: 242-801-7509 Email: kphilippe@best.gov.bs |
| 4. | Anthony Headley (Head of Delegation) | Barbados | Director Environmental Protection Department Ministry of Environment and National Beautification L.V Harcourt Lewis Building NUPW Complex Dalkeith, St. Michael Barbados | Tel: 1 246-535-4601 Email: anthony.headley@epd.gov.bb |
| 5. | Fabian Hinds | Barbados | Coastal Planner (Ag) Coastal Zone Management Unit 8th Floor, Warrens Tower II Warrens, St. Michael Barbados | Tel: 1 246- 256-3169 Email: fhinds@coastal.gov.bb |
| 6. | Maxine Monsanto | Belize | Environmental Officer Department of the Environment Market Square, Belmopan City Belize | Tel: 501-822-2819 Email: lawunit@environment.gov.bz |

| CONTRACTING PARTIES | | | | |
|---------------------|---|--------------------|---|--|
| | Participant | Country | Title /Address | Tel/Email |
| 7. | Claudia Patricia Cuevas Ortiz | Colombia | Counselor Ministry of Foreign Affairs Centro Morazán, Torre 1, Piso 11, Oficina 11110 Boulevard Morazán Tegucigalpa D.C., Honduras | Tel: 504-99119416 Email: claudia.cuevas@cancilleria.gov.co |
| 8. | Pedro Julio Ruiz Hernandez | Cuba | Licenciado CITMA 18 A Nro.4118 E/ 41 y 47 Playa, La Habana | Tel: 537-2144256 Email: pruiz@citma.gob.cu |
| 9. | Nina Lysenko (Head of Delegation) | Dominican Republic | Directora de Recursos Marinos Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales Ave. Cayetano Germosén esq. Ave. Gregorio Luperón Ensanche El Pedregal, Santo Domingo 11107, Rep. Dominicana | Tel: 809-501-8173 Email: nina.lysenko@ambiente.gob.do |
| 10. | Jose Manuel Mateo Feliz | Dominican Republic | Director de Biodiversidad Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales Calle Cayetano Germosen, esq. Avenida Luperon, Sector El Pedregal Distrito Nacional, R.D. | Tel: 809-501-4182 Email: Jose.Mateo@ambiente.gob.do |
| 11. | Nadia Deckert (Head of Delegation) | France | International Ocean Protection Policy Officer Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs 27 rue de la Convention 75015 Paris, France | Tel: 33 762-098347 Email: nadia.deckert@diplomatie.gouv.fr |
| 12. | Alona Sankar | Guyana | Commissioner Guyana Wildlife Conservation and Management Commission Ganges Street, Sophia Georgetown | Tel: 592-223-0940 Email: alonasankar2@gmail.com |
| 13. | José Antonio Galdames | Honduras | Secretary of State Ministry of Energy, Natural Resources, Environment and Mining | Tel: Email: joseantoniogaldames@gmail.com |

| CONTRACTING PARTIES | | | | |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | Participant | Country | Title /Address | Tel/Email |
| 14. | Sara Isabel Zelaya Landa | Honduras | Head Department of Marine Environment Protection General Directorate of Merchant Marine Boulevard Suyapa, Edificio Pietra Contiguo a ALUPAC Apdo. Postal 3625 Tegucigalpa, M.D.C. Honduras, C.A. | Tel: +50498273483 Email: szelaya@marinamercante.gob.hn |
| 15. | Carlos Thompson Flores | Honduras | Director CESCCO Secretaria de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente | Tel: +5042231106 Email: carlosalbertothompson@yahoo.com |
| 16. | Marnie Xiomara Portillo Rodriguez | Honduras | Ing. Ambiental Ministry of State in the Office of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment | Tel: +50488362986 Email: portillomarnie@yahoo.com |
| 17. | Solomon Ioannou | Honduras | Delegation of the European Union to Honduras | Tel: +50498880032 Email: solomon.ioannou@eeas.europa.eu |
| 18. | Marino Eugenio Abrego | Panama | Head of Department Conservation of Coastal and Marine Resources Calle Diego Dominguez, Bldg, 804 Albrook Ancon | Tel: 507 61502101 Email: meabrego@miambiente.gob.pa |
| 19. | Kris Isaacs | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | Senior Fisheries Officer Fisheries Division Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour Richmond Hill Kingstown | Tel: 784 4562738 Email: Kris.isaacs@yahoo.com |
| 20. | Thomas Nelson | Saint Lucia | Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer Department of Fisheries Conway Post Office Castries, LC04 301 | Tel: 758-468-4136 Email: tomfinch90@hotmail.com |

| CONTRACTING PARTIES | | | | |
|---------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | Participant | Country | Title /Address | Tel/Email |
| 21. | Claudius Carty (Head of Delegation) | Sint Maarten | Section Head Maritime Affairs Maritime Authority, St. Maarten A.C Wathey Cruise Facility CBT Building, Office # 12 Pointe Blanche, St. Maarten | Tel: 1-721-520-1024 Email: claudius.carty@sintmaartengov.org |
| 22. | Paul Hoetjes | The Netherlands (Caribbean Netherlands) | Policy Coordinator Nature Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands P.O. Box 357, Kralendijk Bonaire, Caribbean Netherlands | Tel. +599 781 0206 Email: paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com |
| 23. | Denny Dipchansingh | Trinidad and Tobago | Conservator of Forests Forestry Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries Long Circular St. James, PoS | Tel: 868-729-9826 Email: ddipchansingh@yahoo.com |
| 24. | Marc Porter (Head of Delegation) | United States of America | Foreign Affairs Officer Department of State | Tel: 1 202-294-2545 Email: portermr@state.gov |
| 25. | Stephanie Adrian | United States of America | Senior Marine Specialist US Environmental Protection Agency 1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW MC2660R Washington, DC 20004 | Tel: 202-564-6444 Email: adrian.stephanie@epa.gov |
| 26. | Chelsey Young | United States of America | Natural Resources Management Specialist National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Highway, Room #13632, Silver Spring MD 20910 USA | Tel: 301-427-8491 Email: chelsey.young@noaa.gov |
| 27. | Samantha Dowdell | United States of America | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | Tel : Email: samantha.dowdell@noaa.gov |
| 28. | Katherine Gorove | United States of America | Attorney-Adviser U.S. Department of State | Tel: 202-776-8441 Email: gorovekm@state.gov |

| CONTRACTING PARTIES | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| | Participant | Country | Title /Address | Tel/Email |
| 29. | Troy Pierce | United States of America | Acting Director/Chief Scientist Environmental Protection Agency 2510 14 th Street Suite 1212 Gulfport, Mississippi 39501 USA | Tel: 228-679-5909 Email: pierce.troy@epa.gov |
| 30. | Betzabey Motta | Venezuela | Directora de Prevención de Amenazas a la Diversidad Biológica Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Ecosocialismo | Tel: 58 04142540161 Email: prevencion.dgdb.ve@gmail.com |

| NON - CONTRACTING PARTIES | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| | Participant | Country | Title & Organization | Contact Information |
| 31. | Linroy Christian | Antigua & Barbuda | Director of Analytical Service Department of the Environment | Tel: 268-764-8338 Email: linroy.christian@ab.gov.ag |
| 32. | Francisco Sekou Maffei | Dominica | Assistant Forest Officer Forestry Department 22 Glasgow Road, Fond Cole Roseau | Tel: 767-285-8353 Email: fmaffei@hotmail.com |
| 33. | Carlos Walberto Ramos Salguero | Guatemala | Viceministro de Recursos Naturales y Cambio Climático Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales | Tel: 50230374275 Email: cwramos@marn.gob.gt |
| 34. | Richard Nelson | Jamaica | Senior Manager National Environment & Planning Agency | Tel: 876 754 7540 Email: rnelson@nepa.gov.jm |
| 35. | Milana Dravnel | Mexico | Environmentalist UNIFYTULUM Boca Paila KM 8 Quintana Roo Tulum, Mexico 77788 | Tel: 984 1662016 Email: milana@shaktiny.com |
| 36. | Arnold Ricalde De Jager | Mexico | Director Ocean Alliance Mexico | Tel: 525-534341952 Email: arnoldricalde@gmail.com |

| NON - CONTRACTING PARTIES | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| | Participant | Country | Title & Organization | Contact Information |
| 37. | Eavin Parry | Saint Kitts and Nevis | Environmental Scientist Department of the Environment Ministry of Agriculture, Marine Resources, Cooperatives, Environment and Human Settlement 2nd Floor, Ursula Amory Building Corner of Central and New Street Basseterre | Tel: 869-661-5437 Email: Eavin.Parry@gov.kn ; elvinparry@hotmail.com |
| 38. | Eric Salamanca | Turks and Caicos Islands | Assistant Director Department of Environment and Coastal Resources | Tel: 649-338-4175 Email: efsalamanca@gov.tc |

| OBSERVERS | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | Participant | | Organization | Contact Information |
| 39. | Courtney Vail | Animal Welfare Institute | Consultant P.O. Box 50429, Phoenix Arizona 85076 United States of America | Tel: (480) 747 5015 Email: courtney@lightkeepersfoundation.com |
| 40. | Susan Millward Tomiak | Animal Welfare Institute | Director Marine Programmes 900 Pennsylvania Ave, SE Washington DC 20003 | Tel: (202) 446-2123 Email: |
| 41. | Daniel Camilo Thompson Poo | Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense | Attorney Calle Privada Norte 30510, Col. Puesta del sol, La Paz B.C.S. Cp. 23090 Mexico | Tel: 51 (967)1302346 Email: cthompson@aida-americas.org |
| 42. | Joel Doland McLaughlin Matute | Dirección General de la Marina Mercante | Technical Assistant Oficinas de Capitanía de Puerto de Roatan Barrio el Centro Calle Principal Frente al Parque Central Edificio del Correo Nacional Coxen Hole, Roatán Isla de la Bahía - Codigo Postal 34101 | Tel: 504-98467-781 Email: jmclaughlin@marinamercante.gob.hn |
| 43. | Carlos Sagrera | Dirección General de Marina Mercante (DGMM) | Environmental External Advisor Calle 47 – 1er. Piso Edif. Bellomar – Marbella Ciudad de Panama Panama | Tel: 598-91 230654 Email: carlos.sagrera@int-marconsult.com |

| OBSERVERS | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | Participant | Organization | | Contact Information |
| 44. | Ana Carolina Cassani | Fundación Cethus | Member of the Board Gral. Justo G. Bermúdez 1598 Olivos, Prov. Buenos Aires Argentina | Tel: 54-11-4790-0491 Email: carolina.cassani@cethus.org |
| 45. | Christian Neumann | GRID-Arendal | Senior Expert Teaterplassen 3 4836 Arendal Norway | Tel: 47 94823838 Email: christian.neumann@grida.no |
| 46. | Alejandro Acosta | Gulf Caribbean Fisheries Institute | Science Coordinator 2796 Overseas Hwy., Suite 119, Marathon FL 33050 United States of America | Tel: 1-305-676-3273 Email: alejandro.acosta@gcfi.org |
| 47. | Joaquin De La Torre Ponce | International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) | Regional Director for Latin America & the Caribbean Palma Real 149, Redcial Cocoyoles C.P. 97305 Mérida, Yucatán Mexico | Tel: (521) 9848762809 Email: jdelatorre@ifaw.org |
| 48. | Ian Drysdale | Iniciativa Arrecifes Saludables | Coordinador Para Honduras Hummingbird Hill #7 West End, Roatan Bay Islands, Honduras 34101 | Tel: 504-3336-0406 Email: drysdale@healthyreefs.org |
| 49. | Olga Koubrak | Sealife Law & Dalhousie University | PhD Student 2034B Oxford St., Halifax, NS, B3L 2T2 Canada | Tel: 902-223-8999 Email: olga_koubrak@hotmail.com |
| 50. | Sonja Fordham | Shark Advocates International (SAI) | NGO Observer c/o The Ocean Foundation 1320 19 th Street NW Washington, DC 20036 | Tel: 1 202 436 1468 Email: sonja@sharkadvocates.org |
| 51. | Jennifer Carla Myton Drysdale | The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL) | Directora Asociada al Arrecife Mesoamericano | Tel: (504) 333 61090 Email: jmyton@coral.org |
| 52. | Mark Joseph Spalding | The Ocean Foundation | President 1320 19th Street NW 5 th Floor Washington, DC 20036 | Tel: 1.202.887.8996 Email: mospalding@oceanfdn.org |

| OBSERVERS | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| | Participant | Organization | | Contact Information |
| 53. | Laverne Walker | United Nations Office for Project Services | Senior Project Officer Edificio Inteligente Chambacu Oficina 405 Cra 13b #26-78 Cartagena, Colombia | Tel: Email: lavernew@unops.org |
| 54. | Patrick Debels | United Nations Office for Project Services | CLME+ Regional Project Coordinator Edificio Inteligente Chambacu Oficina 405 Cra 13b #26-78 Cartagena, Colombia | Tel: Email: PatrickD@unops.org |
| 55. | Ute Katrin Zischka | Waitt Institute | Program Manager Waitt Foundation and Waitt Institute PO Box 1948 La Jolla, CA 92038 USA | Tel: 1 619-6354933 Email: uzischka@waittinstitute.org |

| REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTERS | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|---|
| | Participant | Organization | | Contact Information |
| 56. | Darryl Banjoo | Institute of Marine Affairs | Senior Research Officer | Tel: 868-634-4291 Email: dbanjoo@ima.gov.tt |
| 57. | Antonio Villasol Nunez | RAC Cimab | <i>Outgoing Director</i> Calle A6 No. 71 e/ 7ma A y 7ma B Playa, La Habana Cuba | Tel: 53 52840820 Email: avillasol@gmail.com |
| 58. | Lina de las Mercedes Tello Cebrian | RAC Cimab | Directora General Carretera del Cristo No. 3 Casablanca. Regla La Habana Cuba | Tel: 53 52865509 Email: linatello@cimab.transnet.cu |
| 59. | Marlen Perez Hernandez | RAC Cimab | Investigadora Auxiliar Carretera del Cristo No. 3 Casablanca. Regla La Habana Cuba | Tel: 53 52114641 Email: marlen@cimab.transnet.cu ; mp420ale@gmail.com |
| 60. | Fabien Jean Rémi Barthelat | SPAW-RAC | Programme Officer CAR SPAW c/o DEAL Saint-Phy - B.P. 54 97102 Basse-Terre Guadeloupe (FWI) | Tel: 590-690382539 Email: fabien.barthelat@developpement-durable.gouv.fr |

| REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTERS | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------|---|
| | Participant | Organization | Contact Information |
| 61. | Sandrine Pivard | SPAW-RAC | Programme Officer CAR SPAW c/o DEAL Saint-Phy - B.P. 54 97102 Basse-Terre Guadeloupe (FWI) |
| | | | Tel: 590-690527280 Email: sandrine.pivard@developpement-durable.gouv.fr |

| UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| | Participant | Organization | Contact Information |
| 62. | Habib El-Habr | UN Environment Nairobi | Coordinator Global Programme of Action |
| | | | Tel: 254-20 762 4591 Email: habib.el-habr@un.org |
| 63. | Nancy Soi | UN Environment Nairobi | Coordinator Regional Seas Programme |
| | | | Tel: 254 020 7624763 Email: nancy.soi@un.org |
| 64. | Alberto Pacheco | UN Environment ROLAC | Regional Coordinator 103 Morse Avenue City of Knowledge, Clayton Panama |
| | | | Tel: 507 (305) 3139 Email: alberto.pacheco@un.org |
| 65. | Lauren Weatherdon | UN Environment WCMC | Senior Programme Officer Conserved Landscapes and Seascapes |
| | | | Tel: Email: Lauren.Weatherdon@unep-wcmc.org |
| 66. | Isabelle Vandebeck | UN Environment, Washington D.C. | GEF International Waters Task Manager |
| | | | Tel: 1-202-974-1314 Email: isabelle.vanderbeck@un.org |

| SECRETARIAT UN Environment Programme-Cartagena Convention 14-20 Port Royal Street Kingston, Jamaica Tel: +876-922-9267 / Fax: +876-922-9292 E-mail: rcu@cep.unep.org | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------|--|
| 67. | Christopher Corbin | Secretariat | Programme Management Officer (AMEP) & Officer-in-Charge |
| | | | christopher.corbin@un.org |
| 68. | Ileana Lopez | Secretariat | Programme Management Officer (SPAW) |
| | | | ileana.lopez@un.org |
| 69. | Clementine Pinder | Secretariat | Administrative/Funds Management Officer |
| | | | pinderc@un.org |
| 70. | Donna Henry-Hernandez | Secretariat | Programme Management Assistant, (IWEco Project) |
| | | | donna.hernandez@un.org |
| 71. | Jodi Johnson | Secretariat | Programme Management Assistant (SPAW) |
| | | | jodi.johnson@un.org |
| 72. | Sancha Foreman | Secretariat | Programme Management Assistant (AMEP) |
| | | | sancha.foreman@un.org |
| 73. | Tracey Tucker | Secretariat | Team Assistant, Administration |
| | | | tracey.tucker@un.org |