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Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to  
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and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean  
Region

Roatán, Honduras, 3 June 2019

**CLME+**

## **Paper on the Coordination Mechanism**

*(Status of the development of a permanent Coordinating and Financing Mechanism for improving  
Oceans Governance in the Wider Caribbean Region)*

***For reasons of economy and the environment, Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of the Working and Information documents to the Meeting, and not to request additional copies.***

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## Status of the development of a permanent Coordinating and Financing Mechanism for improving Oceans Governance in the Wider Caribbean Region

It has been broadly recognised that enhancing ocean governance in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) will be critical for the continued provision of ecosystem goods and services that will support sustainable socio-economic development and the development of the sustainable ocean's economy. Accordingly, the politically endorsed Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Strategic Action Programme (SAP) calls for the establishment of a Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism (PPCM) and Sustainable Financing Plan (SFP) for ocean governance. It is anticipated that such PPCM and SFP will directly and indirectly provide a number of critical benefits to the region. Direct benefits include the consolidation of the regional framework for integrative ocean governance, which builds upon and links national governments and a number of Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) with a mandate on oceans, including UN Environment CEP, regional Fisheries Bodies and regional geopolitical integration mechanisms. Such is expected to result in more efficient and synergistic ocean governance processes across the wider Caribbean (*"good governance"*). Indirectly, the establishment of such a Coordination Mechanism is anticipated to result in improved health of coastal and marine ecosystems and resources, fostering the development of the region's ocean-based economies, livelihoods and well-being, including through disaster risk reduction and the preservation of the cultural value of ecosystem goods and services (*"effective governance"*).

During the Seventeenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme, Contracting Parties requested that *"the Secretariat participate in the process to identify options for a Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism for Ocean Governance and for a Sustainable Financing Mechanism for strengthening the roles and capacities of regional organizations responsible for ocean governance as articulated under the CLME+ SAP."*

The UNDP/GEF CLME+ Project (2015 – 2021), which seeks to support the CLME+ countries implement the politically endorsed CLME+ SAP, is facilitating a consultancy on *"Options for a Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism and Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance in the CLME+ region."* The consultancy aims at identifying options for a regional coordination mechanism and for sustainable financing to strengthen the Regional Governance Framework (RGF) for shared living marine resources and ocean governance in the CLME+ region.

In September 2018, twenty CLME+ countries and 10 intergovernmental organisations participated in a first regional consultation meeting to review and discuss the cost and benefits to the region of establishing a Coordination Mechanism. Options for the Coordination Mechanism which ranged from a basic to a more complex model were presented. As a major outcome of the consultation meeting, countries

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formulated a set of recommendations including a list of proposed functions for the Coordination Mechanism.

The Phase 2 report of the Consultancy “*Proposal on Options for a Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism and a Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance in the CLME+ Region*” presented as an Annex to this Information Paper builds on the outcomes of the first consultation meeting and defines the proposed mandate, geographic scope, expands on the proposed functions of the Coordination Mechanism and proposes options for a financing plan for Regional ocean Governance Framework. The Phase 2 Report of the Consultancy will be discussed during a second regional consultation meeting scheduled to take place 30 July – 1 August 2019 in Panama City, Panama.

The proposed mandate of the Coordination Mechanism is to *promote and facilitate regional collaboration and cooperation by coordinating policies and programmes on the marine environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR), in support of sustainable socio-economic development, inter alia by pursuing the development of an oceans-based economy and disaster risk reduction*. It is anticipated that the geographic scope of the Coordination Mechanism will include the entire WCR (including the Caribbean, North Brazil Shelf and Gulf of Mexico LMEs). The thematic mandate as discussed by countries during the first regional consultation meeting in September 2018 includes shared living marine resources, and progressively other thematic areas, sectors and economic activities that are related to the marine environment and resources, such as Tourism, Oil and Gas, Shipping, Mining, Biotechnology, Bioprospecting and Renewable Energy. Climate change resilience is a key cross-cutting theme of the mandate. It is further anticipated that the Coordination Mechanism can either be informally established, e.g. through a Memorandum of Understanding, or more formally through the negotiation of a new regional agreement.

Nine main functions for the Coordination Mechanism have been proposed and include: (1) Coordination of programmatic approaches for ocean governance and monitoring progress with critical ocean sustainability instruments, goals and commitments; (2) Communication, outreach and awareness raising; (3) Policy Coordination and consolidation of the regional institutional and policy framework for ocean governance; (4) Knowledge management and data and information sharing; (5) Stakeholder engagement; (6) Strengthening science-policy interfaces; (7) Identification of new areas for collaboration and emerging issues; (8) Development of joint programmes; (9) Sustainable financing and resource mobilisation for ocean governance. It should be noted that the proposed Coordination Mechanism in no way seeks to compete or overlap with the mandate, scope and functions of existing inter-governmental organisations within the WCR which make up the regional ocean governance framework. The Coordination Mechanism is expected to instead enhance and support the work of these organisations.

Once established it is proposed that the Coordination Mechanism’s operation will be guided through four main elements: (i) Steering Group with CLME+ country representation which will provide the overall guidance and direction of the Coordination Mechanism; (ii) an Executive Group consisting of the inter-governmental organisations making up the Coordination Mechanism will provide technical and strategic guidance to the Coordination Mechanism in-line with the overall guidance from the Steering Group; (iii) Working Groups (countries, IGOs and other stakeholders/experts from science, private sector as required) which are constituted by the Executive Group on a “needs basis”; and (iv) a Secretariat, which provides the technical and administrative support. Hosting options for the Coordination Mechanism including how and where the Secretariat will be housed are discussed in detail in the Annex to this Information Paper.

Regarding the resource requirements and costs for the operation of the Coordination Mechanism, the cost of implementing each of the proposed functions have been estimated and included in the attached Annex.

Much attention has been placed on the proposed financing plan in an attempt to ensure reliable, sufficient and resilient funding of the mechanism's recurring expenses. However it is recognized that achieving sustainable financing will be a gradual process implemented through a number of transitional phases. Included in the plan are specific milestones towards self-sufficiency which define the choices of major and complementary funding sources.

In order to be viable and sustainable in the long term, the financing solutions for the Coordination Mechanism cannot disregard the required financing schemes for the IGO's that currently constitute the RGF. The proposed solutions therefore need to be embedded within a wider-ranging sustainable financing scheme for the RGF. In light of this, the financing plan proposes the following measures to be adopted by the IGOs for the mid to long term in order to secure sustainable financing of the RGF: (i) coordinated grant leverage; (ii) a strategic regional approach to private sector partnerships and (iii) catalysing investment for a thriving and sustainable ocean-based/blue economy.

Contracting Parties are invited to review the full report submitted as an Annex under this Information Paper, particularly Sections 4 (Coordination Mechanism) and 5 (Sustainable Financing Plan).

**Recommendation to the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting of 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 (Cartagena Convention)**

1. That Contracting Parties take appropriate actions within their governments to participate in the process towards the establishment of the Coordination Mechanism as well as the development of a Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance, particularly through (1) undertaking national consultations to discuss the attached Annex in preparation for the Regional Consultation scheduled for 30 July – 1 August 2019 in Panama, and, subsequent to this meeting, through (2) further country-level deliberations leading to a decision on the form and functions of the Coordination Mechanism, and a Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance, which is expected to be taken by the CLME+ Project Steering Committee during the last CLME+ Project Steering Committee Meeting planned for the first semester of 2020, and by (3) subsequently leveraging the political support for such Mechanism and Financing Plan
2. The Secretariat continues to participate, inter alia through the Monitoring Committee or electronically involving all Contracting Parties, in the process towards the establishment of the Coordination Mechanism and the development of a Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance, and undertakes further investigations, with the CLME+ Project Coordination Unit, regarding the possibility of the Secretariat hosting the Coordination Mechanism.

## ANNEX