



**SPAW Pre-COP11: A virtual meeting of National Focal Points
2021, June 21**

**Tasks undertaken by the SPAW STAC ad hoc Working
Group on Species during the biennium**

A stylized illustration of an underwater scene. A large sea turtle is swimming in the center, surrounded by various fish and coral reefs. The background is a gradient of blue, representing the ocean.

**Sandrine Pivard, Director,
Regional Activity Center for the SPAW Protocol (SPAW-RAC)**

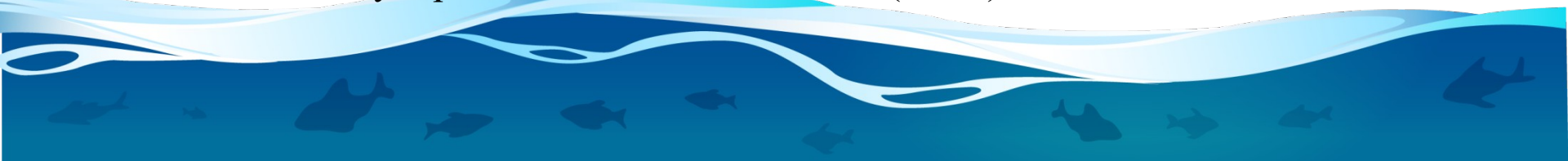


STAC Gouvernance strengthened and parties more involved through the working groups => Ensure that the formulation and implementation of programme activities satisfy the requirements and needs of the SPAW Parties

Terms of Reference of the SPAW STAC Ad Hoc Working Groups:

* SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42INF.12

SPAW-RAC's activity report: * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI) CAR WG.42 INF.4





Number of experts: Twenty-three (23)

- 13 experts nominated by 8 members states
- 10 experts nominated by observers

Meetings held: Nine (9)

- April 14th & December 15th 2020 / Parrotfish
- May 7th & December 16th 2020 / Sharks & Rays
- April 21st, June 6th & October 8th 2020 / Marine mammals
- April 29th & December 15th 2020 / Regional priorities and Management

Many discussions on the Teamwork dedicated platform and contributions on online documents.

Focus on five (5) species and groups of species:

- Parrot Fish
- Sharks and Rays
- Nassau Grouper
- Sea Turtles
- Sawfish

Assigned tasks

Mandatory tasks:

- Review, evaluate, and provide recommendations (including the basis for any recommendations) on proposals from contracting parties to add new species to the SPAW Protocol annexes or change the listing status of species.

Additional tasks from the priorities discussed during STAC 8 (not limited to):

- Evaluate the status of parrotfish and other herbivores associated with coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves to determine whether any species or group of species may warrant listing in the SPAW Protocol Annexes, with due consideration to socio-cultural-economic and ecological dimensions, and provide results of reviews to the STAC;
- Address as priority the whale shark *Rhincodon typus* and the giant manta ray *Manta birostris*, as well as other species deemed a priority by the STAC. Part of this assessment could include an evaluation of the current listing of species (evaluate whether they are in the appropriate Annex, identify management needs of the species).
- Develop priorities and strategies for regional collaboration on and implementation of management measures to improve protection of species listed under the Annexes of the Protocol.
- Discuss options for a simplified procedure for the listing of Critically Endangered and Endangered species

STAC8 recommended to revitalize the Working Groups by giving them flexibility to work in sub-groups on specific issues depending on the expertise and availability of experts.

The activities of the Species Working Group done during this biennial can be split into two (2) categories, and the experts were not necessary the same in each issue.

- Preparation of the addition of new species to the appendices and uplisting of species (Parrotfish, and Sharks and Rays)
- Regionwide management of species protected under the SPAW protocol (Nassau Grouper, Sea Turtles, and Sawfish)

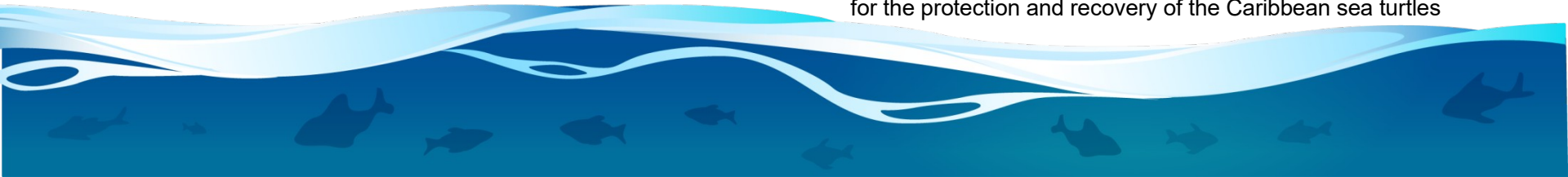


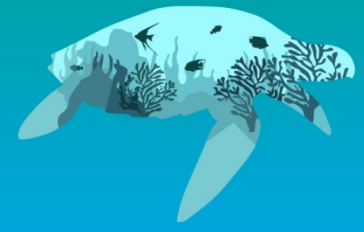
Species Working Group

- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42.4 Species working group report

Species

- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42-INF.15 Proposal for potential inclusion of all parrotfishes in Annexes of the SPAW Protocol
- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42INF.24-Recommendations for Effective management_Sharks and Rays
- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42-INF.24 Addendum 1- Proposal for the inclusion of Oceanic whitetip shark in Annex II of the SPAW Protocol
- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42-INF.24 Addendum 2 Proposal for the inclusion of the Whale Shark in Annex II of the SPAW Protocol
- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42INF.24 add3-Giant Manta Ray Proposal Annex II
- * UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42INF.24 add4- great hammerhead shark Annex II
- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42-INF.25 Recommendations for preventing sawfish extinction
- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42-INF.38 Recommendations for conserving the Nassau Grouper
- * SPAW STAC9 UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42-INF.39- Recommendations for the protection and recovery of the Caribbean sea turtles





- ✓ Annexes of the SPAW Protocol:

✓

Annex I



Flora species

(Marine, coastal or terrestrial)

→ Exploitation is forbidden

Annex II



Fauna species

(Marine, coastal or terrestrial)

→ Exploitation is forbidden

Annex III



Flora & Fauna species

(Marine, coastal or terrestrial)

→ Populations must be maintained at a sustainable level

- ✓ Current numbers of species listed :

53

plant species

153

species

3

gr. of species

43

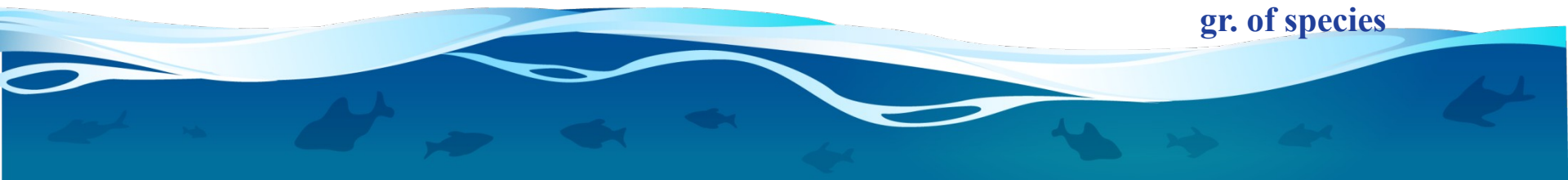
plant species

42

animal species

5

gr. of species





Expert name	Affiliation	Expert name	Affiliation
Julia Horrocks	Barbados	Patricia Kramer	AGRRA
Vivian Ramnarace	Belize	Camilo Thompson	AIDA
Jamal Galves	Belize	Susan Millward	AWI
Luis Chasqui Velasco	Colombia	Alejandro Acosta	GCFI
Heins Bent-Hooker	Colombia	Courtney Vails	Ind/Lightkeepers
Marcos Casilla	Dominican Republic	Monica Borobia-Hill	Ind/Previous SPAW program officer
Jean Vermot	France	Brice Semmens	Ind/parrotfish
Gérald Mannaerts	France	Chelsea Harms-Tuohy	Ind/parrotfish
Anne-Marie Svoboda	Netherlands	Twan Stoffers	Ind/sharks
† Paul Hoetjes	Netherlands	Irene Kingma	Ind/sharks
Eric F. Salamanca	Turks and Caicos	Olga Koubrak	SeaLifeLaw
Kristen Koyama	USA	Andrea Pauly	UNEP/CMS Sharks Mou
Nina Young	USA	Myles Philips	WCS /WECAFC
Patricia Kramer	AGRRA	Karen Eckert	WIDECAST
		Sandrine Pivard	SPAW-RAC/ chair



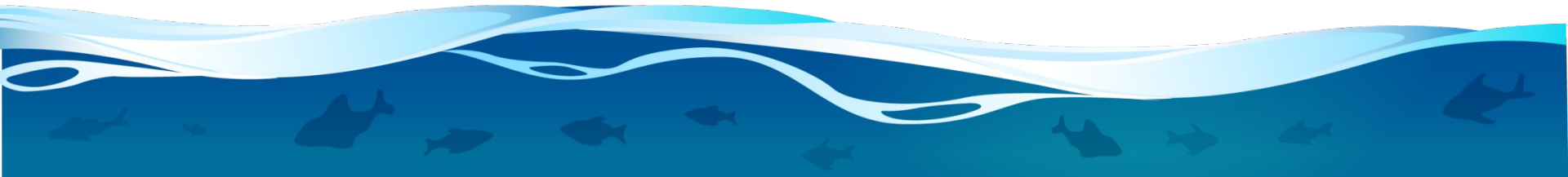
- ✓ COP6 (2010): Re-establishment of the Working Group to review the Criteria for the listing of Species in the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol
- ✓ STAC5 (2012): Presentation of a 100 species list by the WG
- ✓ COP7 (2012): Recommendation to renew the nomination process at next STAC to increase participating Parties number
- ✓ During 2013-2014: No new nomination. Establishment of short-list species (including list of 100 + Cuba propositions. Total:123 species)
- ✓ COP8 (2015): Circulation of Revised Guidelines and criteria to the Parties
- ✓ COP9 (2017&19): Inscription of 2 species to Annex II and 10 species to Annex III



Article 21 of the SPAW Protocol:

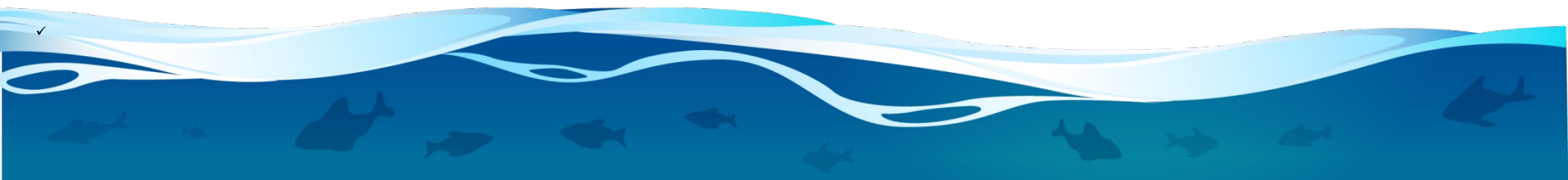
→ Mandatory information and criteria for inscription of a species to be listed under SPAW Annexes:

- a) scientific and common names of the species;
- b) estimated populations of species and their geographic ranges;
- c) status of legal protection, with reference to relevant national legislation / regulation;
- d) ecological interactions with other species and specific habitat requirements;
- e) management and recovery plans for endangered and threatened species;
- f) research programmes and available scientific and technical publications;
- g) threats to the protected species, their habitats and their associated ecosystems, especially threats which originate outside the jurisdiction of the Party.



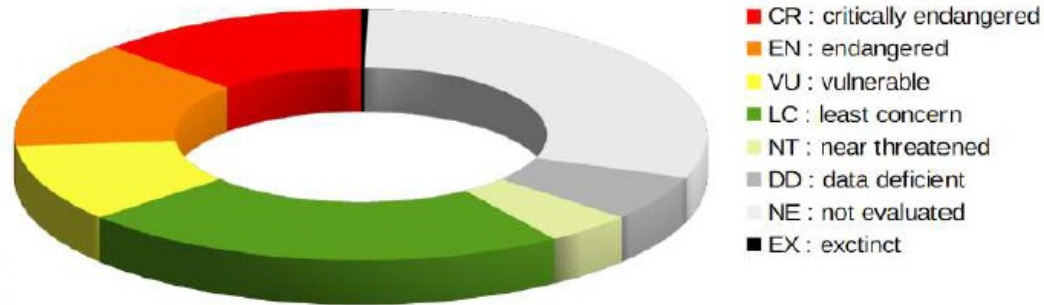


- ✓ **Revised criteria for the listing of species in the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol (2014)**
- ✓ Criterion #1. Factors for the scientific evaluation of the threatened or endangered status of the proposed specie: aspects of population dynamics, conditions clearly increasing the vulnerability of the species, and the importance of the species to the maintenance of fragile or vulnerable ecosystems.
- ✓ #2. When evaluation of the factors enumerated above clearly indicates that a species is threatened or endangered, the lack of full scientific certainty about the exact status of the species is not to prevent the listing of the species on the appropriate annex.
- ✓ #4. Application of the IUCN criteria in a regional (Caribbean) context
- ✓ #5. Subject of local or international trade, regulated under CITES or other instruments.
- ✓ #6. Importance and usefulness of regional cooperative efforts on the protection and recovery of the species.
- ✓ #8 In the case of Annex III, higher taxa can also be used to simplify the list.
- ✓ #10 species essential to the maintenance of such fragile and vulnerable ecosystems/habitats may be listed if the listing of such species is felt to be an "appropriate measure to ensure the protection and recovery" of such ecosystems/habitats

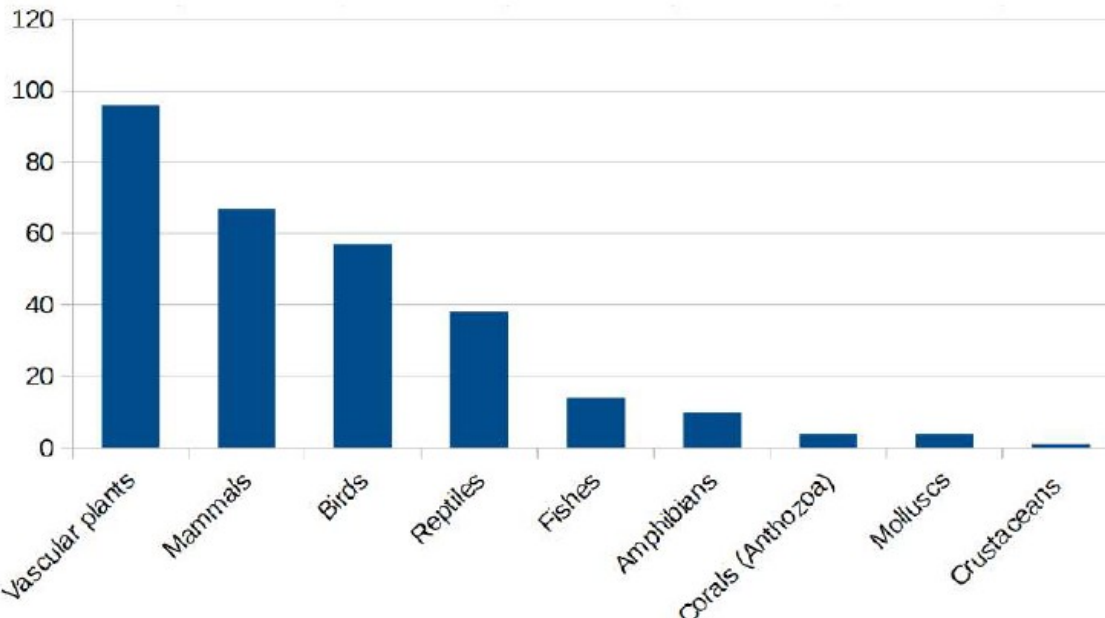


Class and IUCN Status of species listed under the SPAW Protocol

Distribution in percentage of species listed under the SPAW Protocol by their IUCN Red List category

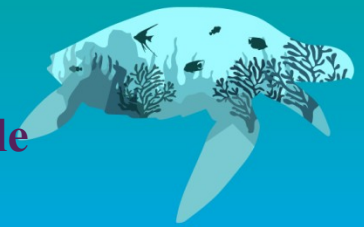


NB: Classes Hydrozoa and Anthozoa included in Annex III aren't represented here



Tally of species listed under the SPAW Protocol by their class

NB: These statistics doesn't include the species of the following groups Hydrozoa et Anthozoa listed under the SPAW Protocol and mentionned as "all spp"



- Reviewed in 2014 by the Ad Hoc Species Working group : five species are priority species for listing on Annex II

- First nominated by the Netherlands during STAC7 (2016).

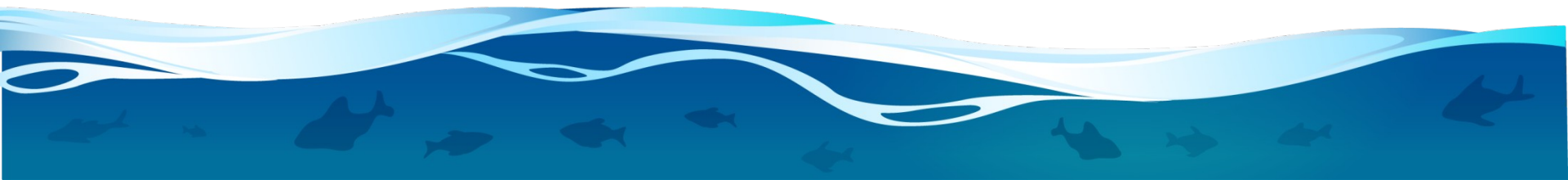
→ species were listed during COP9 (2017) under Annex III of the SPAW Protocol . Annex II listing was considered as premature because of the lack of scientific information and the importance of the species to the economy of certain member states.

- Nomination of those 5 species in Annex II of the SPAW Protocol was reiterated by France during STAC 8 (2018).

→ A large debate took place during STAC8

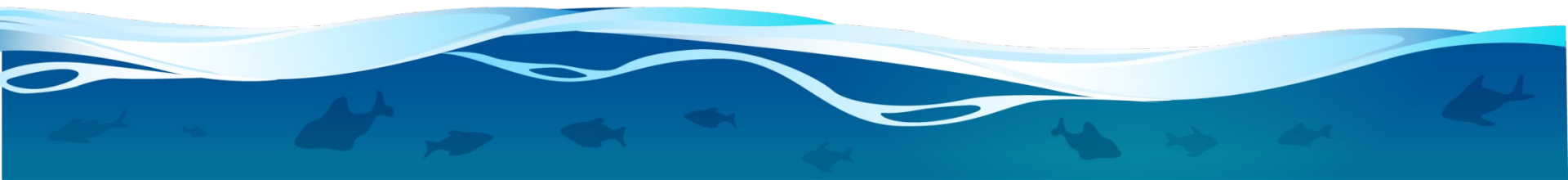
→ no consensus could not been reached, it was concluded the matter would be transfered to STAC9/COP11, ... a revitalised species working group would be given the task to provide additional information to the proposals intersessionaly.

For more details see UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/CPR2 and (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/7 Page 21-28- paragraphs 189 to 279)





- 28th ICRI General Meeting (Adopted on 17 October 2013) that urged Caribbean nations to protect parrotfish to improve coral reef resilience
- STAC 6, the Observer of MAR Fund raised for the first time the idea to propose for listing under the SPAW Protocol, a species like the parrot fish whose importance in the functioning of coral reefs was stressed in the recent report entitled “Status and trends of Caribbean Coral Reefs : 1970- 2012”.
- proposal formulated by France in 2018 to have a working group,
 - upcoming Species working to evaluate the status of parrotfish and determine whether any species or group of species may warrant listing in the SPAW Protocol Annexes.
 - process was relatively similar to the one above, but for the fact that there was no formal proposal from a Country.
 - understanding was that WG is to provide its conclusions to STAC9 and countries could formally nominate or co-nominate species
 - questions conformity to the rules of procedure and guidelines but also of consistency between them and with the discussions during last STAC.





Working group Species Objectives

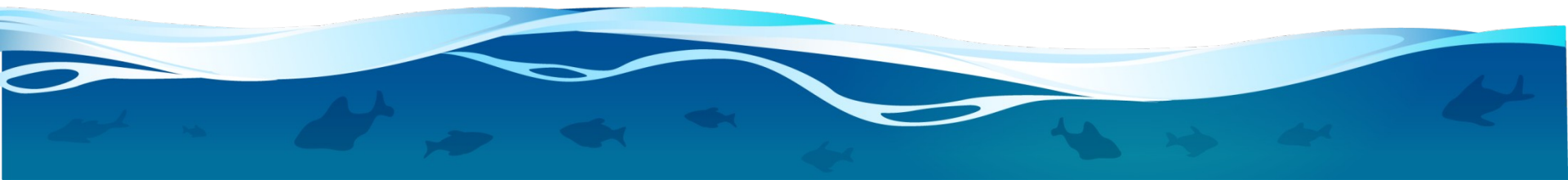


- Strengthening the implementation of management measures of the species listed under the Annexes of the Protocol (annex II or annex III) and developing priorities and strategies for regional collaboration and implementation of management measures to improve protection of migratory species.

- Nassau grouper (annex III),
- sawfish (annex II),
- marine turtles (annex II),
- species of sharks and rays (annex III)
- marine mammals (annex II)

and in all case strongly advocate on the necessity of engaging in adapted management measures

- Address as priority species deemed a priority by the STAC and evaluate the status of those species to determine whether species or group of species may warrant listing in the SPAW Protocol Annexes and provide results of reviews to the STAC. They focus parrotfish and species of sharks and rays.





ICRI General Meetings urged Caribbean nations to protect parrotfish to improve coral reef resilience,

- A STAC species working group was dedicated to the task: 17 experts answered the final consultation
- Consensus : the group at unanimity strongly supports the inclusion of all parrotfishes in Annex III of the Protocol** notably based on the importance of parrotfish to the protection of vulnerable coral reef ecosystems, effectiveness of the partial or full measures or protection taken by several SPAW parties already and population decline
- Almost consensus : a very large majority additionally support the listing of *Scarus guacamaia*, *Scarus coeruleus* and *Scarus coelestinus* in Annex II based on increased decline, vulnerability and their major and unique ecosystemic roles.**
- One expert (1) considers that the proposal lacks sufficient specific data and information biology, range and decline (criterion #1)

Recommendation on addressing the decline of herbivorous fish populations for improved coral community health throughout the Tropical Eastern Pacific, the Eastern and Western Atlantic, and the Greater Caribbean Region

adopted on December 2019, at the 34th ICRI General Meeting (Australia)

Recent studies have shown that coral-algal phase shifts, in which coral cover declines to low levels and is replaced by algae, challenge the management and survival of coral

DRAFT

NB: Please use the "Suggestion Mode"

Species Working Group (SWG)

Task n° 2.2

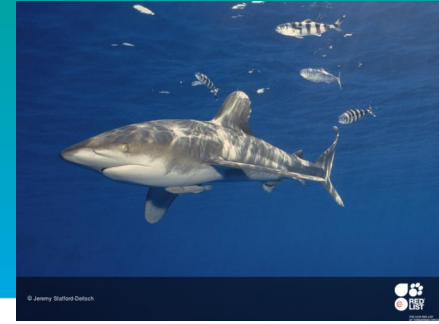
Proposal for the inclusion of all parrotfishes (Perciformes: Scaridae) in Annex III of the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPAW Protocol)

Table of Contents

Acronyms	3
I. Nomination Requirement:	3
II. Nomination Statement and Description of Appendices	4
A. Importance of the Species to the Maintenance of Fragile or Vulnerable Ecosystems and Fisheries	4
B. Socio-economic importance of the taxonomic group	5
III. Substantiated Nomination Requirements to Support Inclusion in Annex III	6
A. Article 10(2) – Information to be included in reports relevant to protected species, to the extent possible	6
a. Article 10(2)(a) – Scientific and Common Names of the Species	6
b. Article 10(2)(b) – Estimated Populations of Species and their Geographic Ranges	7
b.1. Size of Populations	7
b.2. Evidence of Decline	8
b.3. Restrictions on its Range of Distribution	8
b.4. Degree of Population Fragmentation	8
b.5. Summary table	8
c. Article 10(2)(c) – Status of Legal Protection, with Reference to Relevant National Legislation or Regulations	10
c.1. Bahamas	10
c.2. Belize	10



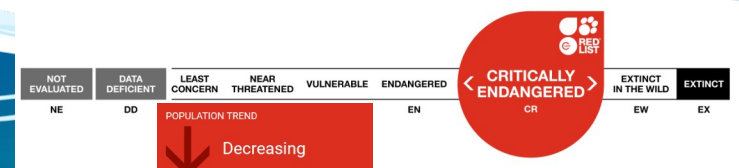
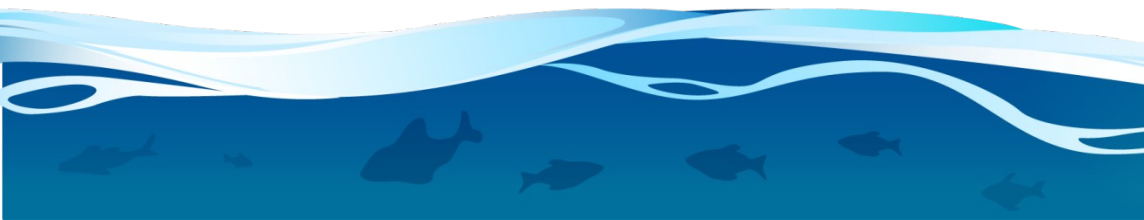
Oceanic whitetip shark (Carcharhinus longimanus)

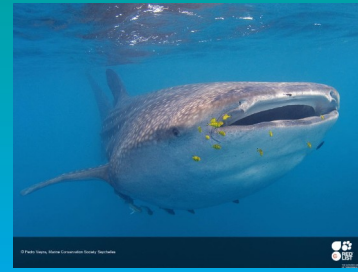


- 15 experts answered the final consultation
- Almost consensus : 14 experts** consider the species meets key criteria notably because of evidence of drastic decline, the most recent IUCN assessment for the global population that is Critically Endangered and the necessity to fully protect the species to align with other international treaties (criterion #5) and effectiveness of cooperative efforts on the protection and recovery for species (criterion #6).
- One expert** considers Annex II listing is not justified because of lack of information about population size, and no evidence of restrictions on its range of distribution or population fragmentation and evidence of recovery for the Atlantic population(criteria #1).

For other experts, this recovery for the Atlantic population is considered as not relevant compared to their global collapse and most recent IUCN assessment for the global population evaluated as Critically Endangered with decreasing trend (criterion #4) and because of range of the recovery.

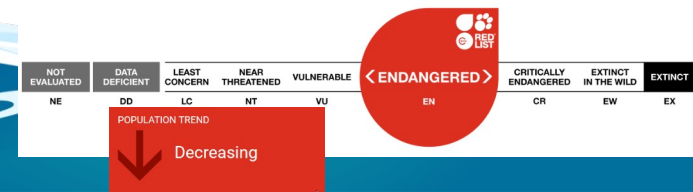
- All emphasize that Parties must focus on improving national and regional management and facilitating collaboration between states.

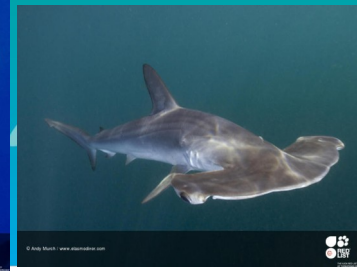




Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) and Giant Manta Ray (*Manta birostris*)

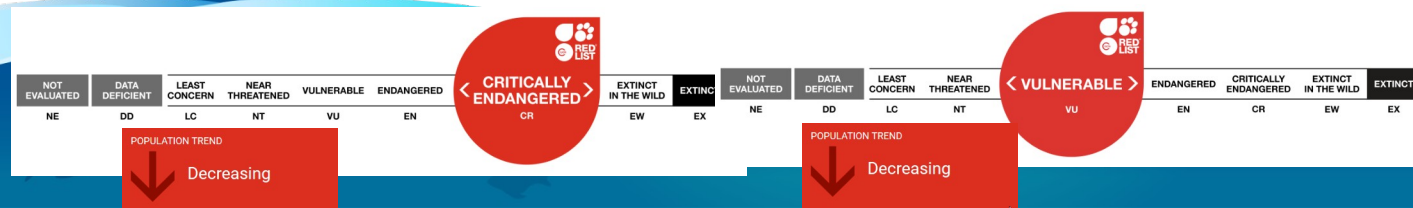
- 16 resp. 15 experts answered the final consultation
- Almost consensus** : all experts minus one consider Annex II listing justified because of scientific acknowledgment of global decline, very increased vulnerability to threats (criterion #1), the most recent IUCN assessment for the global population as Endangered with decreasing trend (criterion #4), the necessity to fully protect the species to align with other international treaties (criterion #5). The lack of full scientific certainty, normal for such rare and difficult to study species cannot be evoked to prevent the listing of the species and cannot be a barrier to implementing effective management and commitments (criterion #2).
- One expert** considers Annex II listing is not justified because of limited information supporting that the species is in decline globally and within the Caribbean region, about population size, and no evidence of restrictions on its range of distribution or population fragmentation (criteria #1). The amount of data available at this time is insufficient to warrant a precautionary approach (criteria #2).





Great hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*) and Smooth hammerhead shark (*S. zygaena*)

- 14 experts answered the final consultation
- Mixed opinion:** A majority of experts consider of great importance to uplist them in the Annex II, especially **the Great Hammerhead Shark (10 out of 13 experts that took position)** considering evidence of significant decline for all hammerhead shark species, status under the IUCN, and intensified pressure due to the commercial trade in shark fins (criterion #1), the necessity to increase the level of protection of this species to align with other international treaties (criterion #5) and effectiveness of cooperative efforts on the protection and recovery for species (criterion #6).
- Other experts disagree with listing because of successful national-level management strategies (in the US) showing that enforcement of management measures alone could work, the potential success of those strategies in increasing the West Atlantic population, regular misidentification or identification only to genus in fisheries.

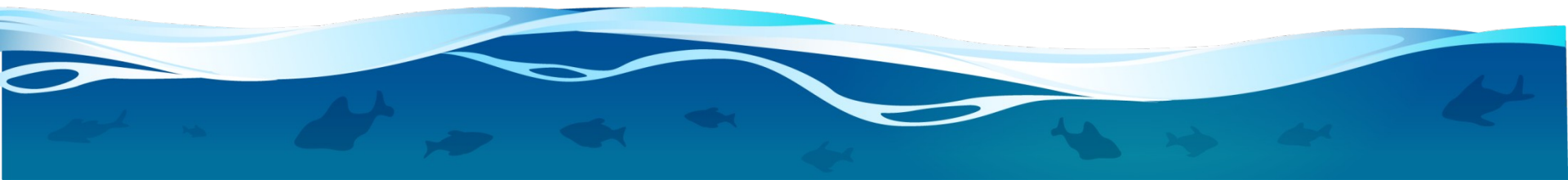




Working group Species – General recommendations



- Communication and Capacity Building (website platform through the CEP/SPAW Regional Activity Centre, communication campaign on the potential regionally agreed closed areas and season, report card to track and report Fish Spawning Aggregations);
- Improve data collection and identification (conduct research into nearshore critical habitats and bycatch, increase the capacity to monitor commercial fishing fleet, review available species identification tools)
- Protections for critical habitats and prevention of further degradation throughout the region;
- Develop, review, and/or update Regional Plan of Action for species Recovery to facilitate alignment, cooperation, information sharing, and capacity building among SPAW Parties;
- Develop and administer a questionnaire to SPAW Parties and observers looking at issues around national level enforcement to help identify gaps and barriers to effective enforcement;
- Protect and enhance existing populations by reducing negative effects from overharvesting, unsustainable fishing methods and harmful fisheries subsidies;
- Improve the understanding of species by supporting fisheries-independent research on their physiology, life history, and ecology;
- Support programs to assist the transition of fishers to alternative livelihoods & strengthen education
- Prevent accidental bycatch in fisheries





Working group Species – Specific recommendations



Nassau grouper recommendations include

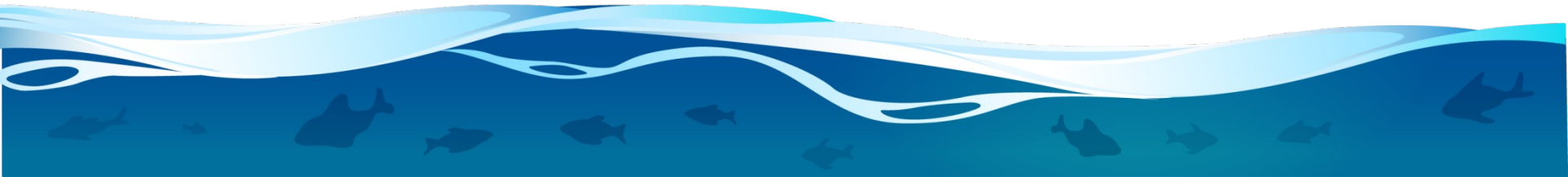
- Linkages with the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM) under SPAW
- A specific task dedicated to Nassau Grouper in the SPAW Species WG could be established to facilitate implementation of these recommendations and to enhance coordination with regional fisheries bodies such as WECAFC.

Sawfish recommendations include

- National regulations to explicitly and specifically prohibit sawfish fishing, killing, retention, sale, and trade, particularly in Countries with a regional responsibility
- A specific task/subgroup dedicated to Sawfish in the Species Working Group

Turtle

- Coordinate with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention (IAC) to develop a cooperative mechanism to facilitate implementation of the recommendations
- Create a working group of country representatives and sea turtle experts to compile information on the type of nearshore fisheries for each country and any existing sea turtle protection measures for those fisheries
- Request that Parties with indigenous harvest under Article 14 of the SPAW Protocol, provide information on these activities



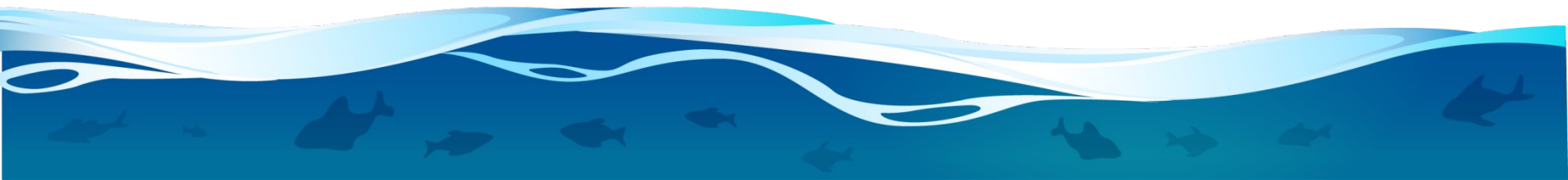


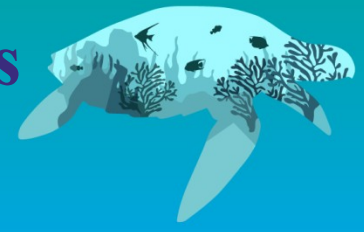
Sharks and rays

- Participate in the WECAFC/CITES/OSPESCA/CRFM/CFMC Working Group on Shark Conservation and Management.
- Adopt precautionary catch limits for all shark and ray species listed on Annex III of the SPAW Protocol
- Prohibit the removal of shark fins at sea and require that all sharks be landed with their fins naturally attached
- Comply with the CITES and CMS requirements (for SPAW Parties that are also Parties to CMS)
- Implement data collection on shark and ray (by)catches, to set up a fisheries independent monitoring system and to develop outreach and education materials in collaboration with shark and ray experts
- Cooperate with CMS and the CMS Sharks MOU on the conservation of sharks and rays in the region

Parrotfish

- Develop a specific task/subgroup dedicated to Parrotfish in the Species Working Group and work towards developing a Caribbean Parrotfish Management Plan.
- Establish ‘fisheries-dependent’ data collection program to better record fisheries and landing data to determine the effects of fishing
- Conduct socioeconomic evaluations to understand role of parrotfish





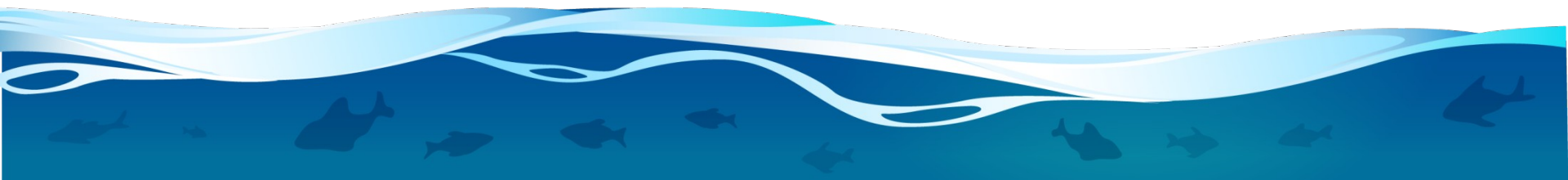
OBJECTIVE	WHAT	WHO	FUNDING
<p>Enhance knowledge monitoring and management of populations in the WCR</p>	<p>To engage assessment and management recommendations of other species or group of species and to pursue on-going tasks on aforementioned species</p>	<p>All Contracting Parties/ Secretariat/ SPAW RAC/ WG</p>	
	<p>To review progress in the implementation of sustainable management of species listed on Annex III and Annex II on a biennial basis to avoid further decline and population risks.</p>	<p>All Contracting Parties/ Secretariat/ SPAW RAC/ WG</p>	
	<p>To engage research and protection for critical habitats and nursery areas, throughout the regio</p>	<p>Contracting parties</p>	
	<p>To encourage the end of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices</p>	<p>Contracting parties</p>	
	<p>To engage in stricter management measures to effectively reverse declining population trends for species listed in annex II and III. Such measures need to be developed, enforced and advanced on a realistic or desired time-scale and when appropriate developed in regional action plans</p>	<p>Contracting parties</p>	



Recommendations summarize



OBJECTIVE	WHAT	WHO	FUNDING STATUS
To strenghten regional coordination	To nominate experts in order to diversify skills and expertise, ensure the most exhaustive geographical and political representation and better voice their needs in the SPAW protocol.	Contradicting parties	
	To work closely with the exemption working group as both are strongly linked	Working Group	
	To continue efforts to engage fisheries bodies to improve management but also to get regional fisheries data that could inform assessment of regional levels of bycatch or directed take of these species and link this with the WG	All Contracting Parties/ Secretariat/SPAW RAC/ WG	





SPAW Pre-COP11: A virtual meeting
of National Focal Points
2021, June 21

The floor is yours...

SPAW-RAC

DEAL Guadeloupe

Site de Saint-Phy

sandrine.pivard@developpement-durable.gouv.fr

<https://www.car-spaw-rac.org/?Key-documents>