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

Virtual Meeting, 27 July 2021

## MEETING DECISIONS

*For public health and safety reasons associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting is being convened virtually. Delegates are kindly requested to access all meeting documents in electronic format for downloading as needed.*



## Decisions of the Meeting

### The Contracting Parties:

**Having convened** the Eleventh 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 United Nations General Assembly of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, and **welcoming** Goal 14 calling for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;

**Recognizing** that ecosystem restoration is a complement to conservation activities and that priority should be given to conserving biodiversity and preventing the degradation of natural habitats and ecosystems by reducing pressures and maintaining ecological integrity and the provision of ecosystem services,

**Noting** the invitation to the United Nations General Assembly by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its fourteenth meeting, in its decision 14/30, to designate the decade 2021–2030 the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration,

**Taking note** of the Assessment of the Impact and Effectiveness of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and Strategic Directions and Plan for CaMPAM (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.7 Addendum 1 and UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.8 Rev1);

**Taking note** of the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MAMP): A Scientific and Technical Analysis (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29 Add.1);

**Taking note** of the “Status of Activities of the SPA Sub-programme for 2019-2020” (*includes status of STAC8 Recommendations and COP10 Decisions*) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.3) and “Report of the SPA Regional Activity Centre (SPA- RAC) in Guadeloupe: Operations and Budget for the period 2019-2020” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/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, mangroves, seagrasses, herbivorous fishes, sharks and marine mammals;

**Considering** the significant work carried out by the four SPA Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Working Groups and thanking SPA-RAC as chair and the experts appointed in the groups for their important commitment;

**Having reviewed** the “Recommendations of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPA Protocol (STAC9)”, Virtual, 17-19 March and 14-15 April 2021 contained in the Report of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/8);

**Having reviewed** the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Sub-programme for the 2021-2022 Biennium” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.42/3 Rev.1.);

**Considering** the current budgetary challenges, the Secretariat and SPA-RAC is facing that must be considered in implementing the 2021-2022 Workplan and taking particular note of the alert from the Secretariat and the SPA-RAC regarding the funding gap in 2022 for the maintenance of a number of SPA-RAC staff and the activities necessary for the implementation of unfunded sections of the 2021-2022 workplan;

### 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. **Urge** all Contracting Parties and others in a position to do so to increase voluntary contributions to the Regional Trust Fund for Implementation of the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme.
3. **Request** the Secretariat and the RACs to strengthen the integration between the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) and the SPAW Protocol including cross-representation of experts between Working Groups, as appropriate, and in accordance with the relevant Terms of Reference.
4. **Approve** the “Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Sub-programme for the 2021-2022 Biennium” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.42/3 Rev.1) as presented to the meeting, including the amendments proposed by the Working Group.
5. **Urge** Contracting Parties to respond to the requests of the Secretariat to nominate experts to the Working Groups established by the Contracting Parties as according to the Terms of Reference.
6. **Adopt** the Recommendations of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPAW Protocol as contained in UNEP/(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/8.
7. **Request** the SPAW Bureau to consider, as appropriate, the need, role and opportunity to create a new Committee or Working Group as referenced in SPAW STAC9 Recommendation IV (4), and that the Bureau report to STAC10 and COP12.
8. **Welcome** the designation by the United Nations General Assembly of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) and Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and **encourage** Parties to actively participate and support the Secretariat in the implementation of activities in this regard.
9. **Welcome** offers from Governments to explore with the Secretariat the possibility of hosting the SPAW STAC10 and the COP12 Meetings in 2022.
10. **Request** the Secretariat to consider the relative merits of convening SPAW STAC10 and COP12 Meetings in 2022, in person or virtually, taking into account the financial situation of the Secretariat.
11. **Urge** States to continue their efforts and meet their commitments in terms of the protection of areas, species and ecosystems. In particular, to strengthen and better coordinate efforts in terms of protection of important species such as elasmobranchs and parrotfish and also to provide, when applicable, reports of exceptions to the protection of species in compliance with the Protocol.
12. **Request** the Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC to systematically inform the Contracting Parties in advance of the activities, MoU / MoC and projects envisaged to encourage their participation, as appropriate.