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Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting of the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

Virtual, 28-30 July 2021

REPORT OF THE MEETING

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Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific States
AFMO	Administrative and Fund Management Officer
AMEP	Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution
CAR/RCU	Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAD	Central American Commission on Environment and Development
CEP	Caribbean Environment Programme
CETA	Communication, Education, Training and Awareness
CLME+	Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems
CM	Coordination Mechanism
CMA	Caribbean Marine Atlas
COP	Conference of the Parties
COPACO	Comisión de Pesca para el Atlántico Centro-Occidental
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CRew	Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management
CRew+	An integrated approach to water and wastewater management in the Wider Caribbean Region using innovative solutions and sustainable financing mechanisms
CTF	Caribbean Trust Fund
DoA	Delegation of Authority
DSS	Decision Support System
EBSAs	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas
EBM	Ecosystem-Based Management
EU	European Union
FDPI	Foundation for Development Planning, Incorporated.
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GCFI	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for International Coordination)
GPA	Global Programme of Action
IAEA	International Atomic and Energy Agency
ICRI	International Coral Reef Initiative

IGM	Intergovernmental Meeting
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
IWCAM	Integrated Water and Coastal Area Management
IWEco	Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
LBS	Land-Based Sources and Activities
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding / Memoranda of Understanding
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
OPRC	International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation
RAC	Regional Activity Centre
RAN	Regional Activity Network
RSP	Regional Seas Programmes
REMPEITC	Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
RPC	Regional Project Coordinator
RSP	Regional Seas Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOCAR	State of the Convention Area
SoMH	State of Marine Habitat
SPAW	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USA	United States of America
WCR	Wider Caribbean Region

INTRODUCTION

1. The Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) convened virtually from 28 to 30 July 2021.
2. The Meeting proposed to review the achievements of the Caribbean Environment Programme during 2019-2020 and to approve the Draft Work Plan for the 2021-2022 biennium.
3. The Secretariat, on behalf of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention), convened the Meeting to:
 - **Evaluate** the projects and activities implemented within the framework of the Caribbean Environment Programme during the period 2019-2020;
 - **Review** the progress made in the implementation of the Decisions of 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, held in Roatán, Honduras, 5 to 6 June 2019;
 - **Review** and **endorse** the Decisions of the Fifth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) in the Wider Caribbean Region, held virtually, 26 July 2021;
 - **Review** and **endorse** the Decisions of the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region held virtually, 27 July 2021;
 - **Review** and **approve** the Draft Work Plan and Budget for Cartagena Convention Secretariat for the 2021-2022 biennium, including activities of the Regional Activity Centres; and
 - **Decide** on the composition of the Monitoring Committee and the Bureau of Contracting Parties for the 2021-2022 biennium.
4. National focal points or their designated representatives of all States and Territories participating in the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Commission of the European Union (EU) were invited to attend the Meeting. Other States that have demonstrated concern for the protection of the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, United Nations (UN) and non-UN regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), donors and private sector representatives participating or interested in the Caribbean Environment Programme were also invited to attend the Meeting as Observers.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. The meeting commenced on Wednesday, 28 July 2021 at 7:37 a.m. (GMT-5). The opening session was moderated by the Coordinator of the Caribbean Environment Programme.

6. The Coordinator welcomed the ministers and high-level representatives to the meeting. She conveyed sincere appreciation to Mr. Orlando Jorge Mera, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic, and Mr. Romauld Ferreira, Minister of Environment and Housing of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, who provided opening statements during the LBS and SPAW Conferences of Parties (COP), respectively. She acknowledged Ms. Kerstin Stendahl, Head of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Ecosystems Integration Branch, who represented the Executive Director of UNEP. The meeting proposed to review the achievements of the CEP for 2019-2020 and approve the draft work plan and budget for the 2021-2022 biennium.
7. A recording was played of the national anthem of Barbados, Chair of the meeting. A moment of silence was then observed in solidarity with the Government and people of Haiti following the recent assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.
8. The Coordinator invited Ms. Liliam Rivera Hipp, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Honduras, to give her opening statement on behalf of the Bureau of the Cartagena Convention.
9. Minister Rivera Hipp stated that since the Fifteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention, tremendous efforts had been undertaken to support the implementation of the work plan and budget, as well as governance issues to improve implementation of the Convention. She then briefly highlighted Honduras' support to the Secretariat, having been the 26th country to ratify the Convention and having since increased their engagement at all levels. She added that the Government of Honduras, also assisted in leading the discussion on the development of a new strategy which included Sustainable Blue Economy. She closed her statement by highlighting that, in order to build back stronger as a region post the COVID-19 pandemic, collaboration was needed to protect and develop the marine assets of the Wider Caribbean Region. She encouraged the countries present to meet in the spirit of compromise and approve decisions that would be in the best interests of all the countries of the region.
10. The Coordinator thanked Minister Rivera Hipp for her inspiring words. She then invited Mr. Pearnel Charles, Jnr., Minister of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change of Jamaica, to give his opening statement. A recording of Minister Charles' statement was played.
11. In his statement, Minister Charles, Jnr. conveyed appreciation to the Cartagena Convention Secretariat on behalf of the Government of Jamaica, for organizing the intergovernmental meeting despite the overwhelming challenges being experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. He added that Jamaica was pleased to have supported the Wider Caribbean for the last 35 years through the hosting arrangement with the UNEP Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit (CAR/RCU). He stated that Jamaica has benefitted from several projects such as those financed by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), namely, Integrated Water and Coastal Area Management (IWCAM), Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CReW), UNDP GEF Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+), Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWEco), and the Trash Free Initiative funded by the United States of America. He added that Jamaica has been renewing its commitment to the Convention and was actively working towards ratifying the SPAW Protocol. In that regard, the government was amending the Wildlife Protection Act to include flora and several endemic species. The Climate Change Policy Framework was also being updated, in consideration of the interconnectivity between climate change and biodiversity loss. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, he stated that issues related to the 2030/2050 global biodiversity objectives would be considered. He added that, as a result of the pandemic, lives have become more dynamic, and lifestyles and livelihoods had to be altered. Subsequently, it was the ideal opportunity to reflect on the fragile nature

of economies in the region and ensure continued strategic innovation which could provide solutions that would help to maximize opportunities within those economies, while minimizing the negative effects on the environment. Minister Charles also honoured Mrs. Coral Fernandez who recently retired after 31 years of service to the Cartagena Convention Secretariat. He stated that she was an honorary ambassador for environmental issues and wished her a long, happy, and healthy retirement.

12. A plaque was also presented by the Secretariat to Mrs. Fernandez for her years of service.
13. Mrs. Fernandez expressed her appreciation for the congratulatory remarks from Minister Charles Jr., and for the plaque. She stated that it had been a pleasure working with the Member States over the years and expressed hope that they would continue working to protect the environment of the Wider Caribbean Region. The Contracting Parties congratulated her and expressed appreciation for her years of dedicated service to the Secretariat.
14. Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, brought greetings on behalf of the Executive Director, Ms. Inger Andersen. She stated that the functional review of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat conducted in early 2021 was triggered by the financial instability within the Secretariat's Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF), the only operational budget available to the Secretariat. She informed delegates that the annual contributions had been trending downwards for the past decade while the work of the Secretariat over the past years had been very satisfactory. Member States with arrears were urged to fulfil their commitments. Ms. Msuya expressed confidence that the Secretariat's vulnerable condition would stabilise, placing it on the path to sustainable financing. She highlighted the need to move from a linear to a circular model and pointed out that innovative solutions were needed to address the environmental issues being faced, given that the protection of the Caribbean Sea was of paramount importance, as it was a source of life. She expressed hope that the deliberations would be done cooperatively, with a united purpose and concluded by wishing for a fruitful outcome.
15. In commencing his opening statement, Minister Kirk D.M. Humphrey brought greetings on behalf of the Prime Minister of Barbados, Ms. Mia Amor Mottley, and stated that the Government was honoured to host the 19th IGM/16th COP. He also congratulated Mrs. Fernandez on her retirement and for her contribution to the region. Minister Humphrey further stated that the meeting was critical to achieving the goals of the Convention and affirmed Barbados' continued support to the initiatives of the Secretariat that had also provided much assistance to Barbados in areas such as Sustainable Blue Economy. He also expressed appreciation for assistance received through projects implemented by UNEP, such as the recently initiated Hedgerow Rehabilitation Project undertaken through the GEF IWEco Project. He then joined fellow ministers in encouraging Member States to actively participate in the discussions as the Convention celebrated 35 years, particularly in light of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. He explained that the aim was not to bounce back but to bounce forward. He concluded by wishing for a very fruitful meeting and declared the meeting officially open at 8:37 a.m. (GMT -5).
16. The Coordinator thanked Minister Humphrey for his zeal and enthusiasm, and for the important words shared.
17. The Secretariat proceeded to request that Contracting Parties introduce their delegations at the meeting, following which, a quorum was confirmed. The Secretariat then advised delegates about the organisation of the meeting.

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) (UNEP, 2010) were applied for the conduct of the meeting.

2.2 Election of Officers

19. A Chairperson, three (3) Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur were elected from among Contracting Parties as follows:
- Chairperson: Minister Adrian Forde / Anthony Headley (Barbados)
 - First Vice-Chairperson: Yoeri de Vries (Netherlands)
 - Second Vice-Chairperson: Van Reidhead (USA)
 - Third Vice-Chairperson: Sonia Angelica Jurado Caicedo (Colombia)
 - Rapporteur: Mervin Hastings / Joseph Smith Abbott (UK, BVI)

2.3 Organisation of Work

20. English, French and Spanish were the working languages of the meeting. Simultaneous interpretation in these languages was provided by the Secretariat for the plenary sessions. The working documents of the meeting were made available in all working languages. The meeting was informed that break-out rooms were available for Working Groups, however, simultaneous interpretation would not be accessible. The meeting agreed to the proposed organisation of work.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

21. The meeting was invited to adopt the agenda of the meeting as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/1, and note any amendments proposed by delegates. The agenda was amended and adopted to allow Barbados to deliver a presentation on Anti-microbial Resistance Monitoring in Barbados under Agenda Item 9: Other Business.

AGENDA ITEM 4: REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEE AND PRESIDENT OF THE BUREAU OF CONTRACTING PARTIES

22. The outgoing Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee and the President of the Bureau of Contracting Parties, the Government of Honduras, represented by Ms. Sara Zelaya, presented their Report for the period 2019-2020 as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.5.
23. She explained that the work of the Bureau focused on governance matters. She stated that the role of the Bureau had diminished since the 16th IGM and that meetings were held to revitalise it, making it more vibrant and functional. The topics identified for attention for the biennium included the ratification of the Convention by the European Union (EU), contributions to the CTF, Junior Professional Officers (JPOs)

and promotion of the environmental programme strategy.

24. The accomplishments of the Bureau included a review of the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP), advancements in ratification of the Convention by the EU, collaboration with the German government, partnership with the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention) on marine litter and discussions with the Government of Japan also on marine litter. The Secretariat made significant effort to reactivate the work and role of the Bureau so that it would have a more relevant role. It was therefore recommended that the Bureau assume a more structured role on the different topics being identified as priority to boost the visibility of the work of the Convention, its programmes and activities. Discussions were also held in relation to the COVID-19 impacts and summaries were done on topics such as the management of medical waste, domestic waste, residual domestic waters, nutrient pollution, among others.
25. The Coordinator stated that the Secretariat was very pleased with Honduras' leadership of the Bureau. She continued by stating that, as a result of the pandemic and the change in the mode of working, the Secretariat and the Bureau deemed it prudent to give Contracting Parties additional time to plan for the new biennium 2021-2022, and that pre-STAC meetings were held to allow countries more time for negotiations. Following the success of the early pre-STAC meetings, the Bureau and Secretariat agreed that it would be useful to have a pre-COP meeting to allow for initial reactions and exchange of views by Contracting Parties on issues to be raised at the 19th IGM/16th COP. The Coordinator gave an overview of the pre-COP discussions and the meeting was informed that a summary of that meeting was available.
26. Several issues were discussed during these preparatory SPAW and LBS pre-COP meetings. These included a freshwater technical paper, new strategies and roles for the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) and Regional Activity Networks (RANs) and the functioning of Working Groups. The draft 2021-2022 work plan and budget was reviewed, and initial comments were garnered. The UNDP GEF Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems Project (CLME+), including an effort to develop a coordination mechanism, was also discussed.
27. Representatives from UNEP Headquarters delivered a presentation at the pre-COP meeting on the strategic and functional review of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat. The strategy was also presented and there was a discussion on the relationship with other UNEP offices, and topics such as budget administration, human resources, and resource mobilization strategies.
28. The delegate of the Netherlands gave a summary of the functional review discussion held by Contracting Parties. He stated that a working session was held on 15 July 2021 with approximately forty-five (45) participants from eighteen (18) Contracting Parties and RACs, and representatives from UNEP Headquarters. In relation to the functional and strategic review, he indicated that action points under the four (4) thematic clusters were discussed. The main conclusions were that: i) the strategic action points that could be directly implemented should be addressed; and ii) some strategic action points required further consideration before implementation.
29. The Chairperson invited all Contracting Parties to make comments or raise questions on the information provided in the presentation.
30. Several Contracting Parties requested a copy of the documents and reports highlighted during the presentation and the Secretariat indicated that they would be provided.
31. The Chairperson then proceeded to next agenda item on the Report of the UNEP Executive Director.

AGENDA ITEM 5: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2019-2020 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET OF THE CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

32. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present on the activities implemented under the 2019-2020 Work Plan of the Caribbean Environment Programme.

Ratification Status

33. This segment commenced with a presentation on the ratification status of the Convention and its Protocols during the 2019-2020 biennium. The Secretariat invited the Government of Colombia, in its capacity as Depository of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols, to present this report.
34. The delegate of Colombia reported that there were no new ratifications/accessions to the Convention (26 countries). The SPAW Protocol had one (1) new ratification as the Government of Nicaragua deposited its instrument of ratification on 4 May 2021, which brought the total number of Contracting Parties to eighteen (18). During the 2019-2020 biennium, the Government of Barbados ratified the LBS Protocol on 29 June 2019, increasing the number of LBS Contracting Parties to fifteen (15).

Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP)

35. The Coordinator gave an overview of the activities carried out under the CEP 2019-2020 work plan and budget. She highlighted the common ground of the Convention which was to support and promote regional cooperation for the protection and development of the Wider Caribbean Region. She also noted the long-term objective of achieving the sustainable development of marine and coastal resources through effective integrated management that allowed for economic growth and sustainable livelihoods.
36. She summarised the actions taken in response to the decisions of the 18th IGM and other meetings. They were categorised as follows: work plan and budget, financial arrangement, Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, UNDP GEF CLME+ Project and coordination mechanism, State of the Convention Area (SOCAR) Report and the CEP Strategy. It was highlighted that as a result of increased engagement by the Secretariat in 2021 with Member States, there was an increase in the number of countries paying their contributions. Focus was also placed on resource mobilisation, partnerships at the regional level and extra-budgetary resource mobilisation. The Coordinator highlighted that the UNDP GEF CLME+ Project harmonised with other projects implemented by the CEP and resulted in synergies. She lauded the efforts undertaken in relation to the SOCAR report and further added that comments on the CEP Strategy were received from Contracting Parties.
37. The Coordinator highlighted the major achievements of the Secretariat during the last biennium which included the ratification of the LBS Protocol by Barbados, new sources of funding, enhanced activities of the CETA Sub-Programme, implementation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Global Environment Facility (GEF) Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+) Project, the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Phase III Project and improved knowledge of the state of the marine environment in the WCR.

38. The Coordinator then handed over to the Programme Officer for the Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution Sub-Programme to report on the status of activities under the 2019-2020 AMEP Work Plan.

Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution (AMEP)

39. In his presentation, the AMEP Programme Officer recognised the work of projects that have played an integral part of the delivery of the work programme, namely, GEF IWeco, GEF CReW+ (An integrated approach to water and wastewater management in the Wider Caribbean Region using innovative solutions and sustainable financing mechanisms), UNDP GEF CLME+ and the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund (UNHSTF) Project. Some of their achievements were also highlighted. The IWeco Project focused on national implementation of land management, water resources and marine pollution. The GEF CReW+ Project, which has been in the process of full implementation, supported the work of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) through the development of new nutrient standards and facilitating collaboration among regional partners on the issues of water resources management and wastewater management. The UNDP GEF CLME+ Project supported the development and finalisation of the first Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy, a landmark achievement for the Secretariat that has provided a roadmap to address pollution from multiple sources and was developed based on the work of the SOCAR report. A rainwater harvesting training tool was created under the UNHSTF Project, a joint UN initiative implemented in Jamaica, which supported the objectives and mandates of the Convention and LBS Protocol.
40. The AMEP Programme Officer (PO) acknowledged the contribution of the LBS Regional Activity Centres (RACs) and the partnership with the University of Para in Brazil in the development of the Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy.
41. On the topic of environmental monitoring and assessment, the AMEP PO explained that the SOCAR report had been launched, a harmonised marine litter monitoring manual was developed with support from the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention) and a webinar on emerging contaminants was held in collaboration with the UNEP Global Programme of Action (GPA). A laboratory assessment aimed at improving data and information management was supported through the GEF IWeco Project. The tremendous leadership provided by Ms. Adrian and Mr. Christian to the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, as well as the Contracting Parties who provided technical support, were acknowledged.
42. In relation to marine litter management, the AMEP PO highlighted several activities that were undertaken. These encompassed the development of a Regional Marine Litter Strategy and efforts that supported its implementation, collaboration with projects and various organisations, and the development of new projects on abandoned and lost fishing gear, plastics and microplastics, and sustainable cities. He added that the Secretariat was particularly proud of the increased engagement and work of the regional Caribbean Marine Litter Node, hosted by the Secretariat and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI).
43. He also gave an overview of the training activities and webinars conducted by RAC Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre (REMPEITC-Caribe) at the national and regional levels.

44. The AMEP Programme Officer concluded by highlighting the actions taken by Secretariat in response to the Decisions of the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting/Fifteenth COP, the Recommendations of the Fourth Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) meeting and the Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol which were implemented within the work programme for 2019-2020.

Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW)

45. The Secretariat's presentation then continued with an overview of the status of activities under the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Sub-Programme for the 2019-2020 biennium, which was presented by the SPAW Programme Officer.
46. The SPAW PO explained that the activities in the SPAW work plan were structured over five (5) major areas, namely, (I) programme coordination, (II) strengthening of protected areas in the Wider Caribbean Region, (III) the development of guidelines for protected areas and species management, (IV) conservation of threatened and endangered species and (V) the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems. She thanked the SPAW RAC and the Government of France for their support and commitment over the years.
47. Summaries were provided of the outputs achieved under each of the aforementioned five (5) thematic areas. The outputs of programme coordination included the convening of the 10th SPAW COP, the development of Memoranda of Understanding with various partners, some of which had already been signed, and the work under existing and/or new Ad Hoc Expert Working Groups on species, protected areas, exemptions and sargassum. Under the topic of strengthening protected areas (PAs) in the WCR, the CaMPAM database was restructured, support was provided to the protected areas technical session at the 72nd GCFI Conference, and two Decision Support System (DSS) pilot projects were implemented under the Ecosystem-Based Management Project (EBM). The main goal of the pilot projects was to develop capacities and information systems that could help governments and non-governmental organisations in planning and managing coastal resources with an ecosystem-based approach.
48. An assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and Strategic Directions and Plan for CaMPAM were completed in response to STAC9 Recommendation V(6).
49. An analysis of thirty-five (35) SPAW-listed protected areas was done to ascertain their connectivity and the resulting recommendations from the analysis were presented. These included the establishment of sub-regional protected area networks, assisting protected area sites to fill in the gaps in their species and habitat data, investing in the science of ecosystem connectivity and Marine Protected Areas, developing a network condition evaluation to compare the status and trends in ecosystem condition across the network of sites, as well as, building effective communication and outreach mechanisms. An atlas of specially protected sites was also produced.
50. Several outputs were produced in support of the development of guidelines for protected areas. These included an updated list of protected areas, the development of a CaMPAM marine protected area (MPA) profile, and the inclusion of the Dominican Republic's Protected Area Cotubanama National Park as a SPAW-listed site as recommended by the 9th SPAW STAC (Recommendation V(2)).

51. With regard to the conservation of threatened and endangered species, new partnerships were formed on emerging issues, the marine mammal action plan was supported by CARI'MAM (EU-funded) and a second edition of the white paper on Sargassum was prepared. In response to Decision 13 of the 10th SPAW COP (“... look into potential health risks from heavy metals and liaise with the Atomic Energy Commission and CARICOM building synergies with other national and regional groups or initiatives”) the Secretariat collaborated with the International Atomic and Energy Agency (IAEA) on the subject of heavy metals in Sargassum.
52. The SPAW PO also noted that efforts continued to streamline and integrate the work of the SPAW and AMEP Sub-Programmes, particularly on the issue of sargassum. Other outputs included a report on the State of Nearshore Marine Habitats in the WCR and a Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021–2030 (RSAP), developed with support from the UNDP GEF CLME+ project. Ecosystems hotspots requiring restoration during the next biennium were identified. The SPAW Programme Officer also stated that work on coral reefs was done in collaboration with SPAW RAC and the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI).
53. A summary was also provided on the actions taken by the Sub-Programme to respond to the SPAW COP10 Decisions and the SPAW STAC8 Recommendations.

Communication, Education, Training and Awareness (CETA)

54. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present on the activities of the CETA Sub-Programme. The Secretariat reported that during the last biennium, several press releases and website articles were produced as well as support provided for the completion of reports requested from the Secretariat. Updates were made to the Cartagena Convention Reporting Template, the Secretariat’s website was updated, and a partnership initiated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) GEF CLME+ Hub. While there were face-to-face outreach activities up to February 2020, these activities came to a halt in mid-March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was increased participation, however, in virtual meetings and webinars, and support was provided for over 40 presentations and to more than 15 online events. Due to the lack of a dedicated budget for CETA, partnerships played an integral role in helping the Secretariat achieve its public awareness and education goals. This included support from the GEF IWEco Project.

Oil Spills

55. Further updates on the implementation of the Oil Spills Protocol were provided by the representative from RAC REMPEITC-Caribe who expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the meeting. He stated that the RAC had been supporting the region for 26 years and hoped to continue doing so. He highlighted the Centre’s staff complement, its mission (implementing the Oil Spills Protocol and working in collaboration with the International Maritime Organisation), partnerships, as well as collaboration with other conventions. The Centre updated its Geographic Information System (GIS) software given the paramount importance of monitoring oil spills. It also obtained support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for satellite imagery and activities were undertaken with the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC Convention). Other activities highlighted included antifouling training, sargassum and oil spill monitoring workshops, planned activities for 2021 and 2022, among others. He added that capacity-building trainings in oil spills were also conducted, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. He concluded by congratulating Ms. Carla Bikker, Acting Director of RAC REMPEITC-Caribe, on her twenty-six years of service to the RAC.

Cartagena Reporting Template

56. The Secretariat indicated that very few countries had submitted their reports, namely, Aruba, Colombia, Dominican Republic, France, Honduras, United States of America and Venezuela. The Secretariat expressed appreciation for the reports submitted .

Discussion

57. Following the presentations, the Chairperson invited all Contracting Parties to make comments or raise questions.
58. The delegate of Barbados congratulated the Secretariat on the achievements during this last biennium, especially regarding the development of the SOCAR Report. He reiterated that Barbados ratified the LBS Protocol during the biennium and reaffirmed the country's commitment to the Protocol and the Cartagena Convention, as a whole. He highlighted that oil spills was an area of interest for Barbados and was also very relevant to the augmentation of Barbados' national contingency plans. He also added that given the impacts of climate change, the rainwater harvesting tool developed in Jamaica had been useful in the current review of Barbados' National Rainwater Harvesting Policy.
59. The delegate of Colombia also thanked the Secretariat for the work carried out during the last biennium under very difficult global circumstances. She expressed her appreciation and gratitude to the governments that made and continued to make this important work possible through their financial contributions. She called for the Cartagena Convention to take a more central role vis-à-vis the various multilateral bodies, and in the global environmental agenda. As an example, she cited recent negotiations with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) where Colombia explicitly advocated for marine issues to be comprehensively included into the framework, however the matter was not adequately addressed. She stressed the importance of the participation of the Secretariat and the other Member States of the Cartagena Convention to ensure that the Convention was more closely integrated into the processes of other multilateral agreements. Consequently, she called on the Secretariat to continue to make contact and create synergies with the secretariats of other conventions, and to take an active role in strategic meetings and negotiations, as should the other Member States, to ensure the inclusion of topics of interest to the Wider Caribbean Region in such scenario. Lastly, she pointed out that Colombia had not been informed of all the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) mentioned in the presentations, and therefore appealed to the Secretariat to inform Member States of such processes in the future.

AGENDA ITEM 6: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WORK PLAN AND BUDGET 2021-2022

UNEP Strategic and Functional Review of the Secretariat

60. Ms. Susan Gardner, Director of the Ecosystems Division, UNEP, informed the meeting that the need for the strategic and functional review of the Secretariat arose mainly due to the critical financial situation encountered by the Cartagena Convention Secretariat. She said it was important that the Secretariat was in a position to continue to assist and provide support to its Member States, and that stable funding was essential for the Secretariat to achieve that goal. The review examined the factors resulting in the financial challenges and discussions were held with staff and Parties by the consultant. Ms. Gardner expressed appreciation to the Parties and various stakeholders who shared information with the review team.

61. Ms. Kerstin Stendahl, Head of the Ecosystems Integration Branch in the Ecosystems Division, then presented on the outline and findings of the review. She pointed out that the objective of the review was to contribute to strengthening the implementation of the Convention by providing an independent assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat's governance, management, and control process, including financial matters in relation to the provision of efficient and effective services to the Convention. The review also sought to assess the adequacy of the administrative, managerial and technical support provided by UNEP Headquarters to the Convention. Four (4) thematic clusters were examined, namely, (I) organisational structure, (II) work processes, (III) policy and programme coherence, and (IV) financial sustainability.
62. The review methodology consisted of a desk-based study, interviews and virtual meetings with Secretariat staff and senior management, information review and questionnaires for national focal points, stakeholders and Secretariat staff. The review was slightly impeded by COVID-19 as face-to-face engagements were not possible. The consultant hired to conduct the review was a former senior staff from UNEP Headquarters.
63. Based on the results and findings of the review, Parties appreciated the critical importance of the Convention and congratulated the Secretariat for its ability to implement important projects despite limited human and financial resources.
64. More than 90% of the recommendations from the review related to the need for improving operational effectiveness. Increasing the delivery of the Cartagena Convention's mandate and work plans was also highlighted as essential.
65. Ms. Annie Muchai, Chief of Administrative Services, UNEP, Nairobi, added to the presentation by providing an overview of the financial status of the Cartagena Convention from 2013 to 2021. She pointed out that contributions over the past six (6) years were insufficient to cover the expenditures of the work of the Convention, and that more was being spent than earned. She highlighted that a substantial amount of the budget was spent on staffing and one method to remedy the issue was to reduce staff costs, hence a reclassification of some positions was needed.

Discussion

66. The delegate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands thanked UNEP for initiating the strategic and functional review of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat. He expressed gratitude that some of the long-term systemic, yet urgent issues experienced by the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat were quickly picked up by UNEP and actively followed-up on, amidst the difficulties imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
67. He acknowledged that the time available to the consultant to complete the review before the COP was short. He underlined that the effectiveness of the present model and key characteristics of the delivery model for the Regional Seas Programme in the future could be the subject of a comprehensive analytic study involving stakeholders such as the Contracting Parties, UNEP, and other intergovernmental organisations, in particular all Regional Seas Programmes (RSP).
68. He welcomed the recommendations presented by the review, but also noted that certain strategic action points would require further analysis and substantive input from the Contracting Parties. For instance, he believed it would be very beneficial to align the Secretariat's resource mobilization strategies with those of UNEP, whereby the focus would be on further broadening the donor base of the Cartagena Convention and exploring other funding opportunities in close coordination with the UNEP resource mobilization strategies.

69. In conclusion, he said the review was considered a valuable first quick scan of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat's financial trends and organisational structure, as well as of the functioning of the Regional Activity Centres. He indicated that he was looking forward to a first exchange on the findings, with a view to deciding on the next steps.
70. The delegate of the USA stated that the strategic and functional review was a very valuable tool for improving the overall functioning of the Convention and the financial sustainability of the Trust Fund. Firstly, the USA strongly supported the recommendations in Chapter 7 dealing with organisational reform, including the proposed staffing realignment, which was also a recommendation of the Secretariat's draft Work Plan and Budget for 2021 to 2022. As noted in the report, salaries consumed a large portion of the Trust Fund annually, which was an untenable situation. He regretted that the Convention was in a challenging situation and added that the ongoing funding crisis left no choice but to revise the Secretariat's organisational structure and take other measures necessary to reduce spending, while retaining its core objective, which remained the full implementation of the Convention and its Protocols.
71. Secondly, he indicated that the USA strongly supported the recommendations in Chapter 9 of the review addressing the role of the RACs, including the call for a more systematic review of the RACs themselves, and of their roles in relation to the Secretariat and governing bodies. He added that the outcome of such a review should go a long way towards clarifying the responsibilities, authorities, and oversight arrangements of the RACs.
72. Thirdly, he indicated that the USA was pleased with the recommendation in Chapter 8 underscoring the need for stricter adherence to the Rules of Procedure. He pointed out that, as was seen during the 9th SPAW STAC, a lack of clarity regarding the rules could cause a great deal of confusion and disorganisation.
73. Finally, he applauded the consultant's creative efforts in Chapter 6 to identify additional ways to strengthen the Trust Fund's financial situation. He added that Chapter 6 accurately described the Fund's financial challenges and suggested some reforms which could help restore the Trust Fund's financial health. The USA strongly supported the proposed reforms which they thought could make a significant difference.
74. The delegate of France expressed the need for and importance of Strategic Action 1, and to strictly implement the Amendment to the Financial Regulations of the Convention. This meant that financial support for participation in meetings or for projects of the Convention would not be provided to countries that have had outstanding contributions for more than two (2) years, unless a commitment to pay was made by the Party and a first payment made. The Secretariat was urged to actively monitor this provision.
75. He added that France supported Strategic Action 4 which aimed to develop more relationships with donors outside the Caribbean Trust Fund, particularly the GEF, while ensuring that the CTF remained the main source of funding for the Secretariat's core functions, including its staff.
76. With respect to Strategic Action 6 on the role of the Secretariat vis-à-vis the UNDP PROCARIBE+ project, he urged the Secretariat to be cautious as it was up to the Parties that were a part of the PROCARIBE+ project to decide on the location of the Secretariat of the Coordination Mechanism (CM). If the Secretariat were to become a candidate to host the CM, the Contracting Parties would have to be consulted and give their agreement through a decision taken at the COP.

77. With regard to Strategic Action 9 on the possibility of voluntary contributions in the form of Associate Experts seconded by Member States, the delegate of France stated that his country would not consider a programme of young UN Volunteers within the Secretariat before the necessary financial and governance reforms of the Secretariat and its proper functioning were undertaken.
78. With regard to Strategic Action 10 on transparency and accountability, France insisted on the need for records of decisions of Bureau meetings to be communicated to all Contracting Parties no later than two weeks after the meeting.
79. As it related to Strategic Action 7, the delegate of France sought clarification on the relationship between the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) and the Secretariat. With regard to Strategic Actions 1 and 3, he expressed regret that, the proposal to include certain species in Annex II was refused during the 9th SPAW STAC in March and April 2021. He also strongly regretted that the work was not presented at the 11th SPAW COP. He therefore hoped that type of dysfunction, which jeopardized the balanced respect of the requests of the various Parties and the rules of procedure, would not be repeated, and that these proposals for the protection of species could be presented and discussed at the next SPAW STAC and SPAW COP.
80. With regard to Strategic Action 4, France was open to the establishment of a working group to evaluate the architecture of the Regional Activity Centres. The delegate called for the full implementation of the MOU between UNEP and France regarding the SPAW RAC, including its article 3.4 which stipulated that the activities of the RAC be financed mainly through the CTF. However, he recalled that since 2018, the SPAW RAC had not received any funding from the CTF. He concluded by indicating that France was not in favour of the proposal for a functional review of the RACs since some of the RACs had national mandates and it was not up to UNEP to carry out this audit.
81. The representative of the LBS RAC of the Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA), who was also the delegate for Trinidad and Tobago, suggested that in the review of the RACs, the differences in funding sources should be a factor to be considered for accountability. He welcomed coordination together with the Secretariat in accessing GEF funding and other sources.
82. The SPAW RAC Director supported RAC IMA's comment and the review of the RACs within the overall review of the Secretariat.
83. The representative of RAC CIMAB supported the recommendation to review the work of the RACs from the point of view of improving their integration with the Secretariat. She also supported France's statement that the RACs had national mandates independent of their functions as RACs that were not under the jurisdiction of UNEP. Therefore, the functional review of the RACs should focus only on their functions as RACs and on their working relationship with the Secretariat.
84. The delegate of the USA strongly supported the implementation of Clause 24 in Amendment 1 of the Financial Rules, which stated that the Coordinator should provide a payment schedule to any country with two (2) years of outstanding contributions, and countries with more than two (2) years of outstanding contributions would not be eligible to receive support for meeting participation and projects. This was agreed to in 2014 but not implemented and the USA considered it should be done now. He recalled that a section of the proposed 2021-2022 Work Plan and Budget stated that: "The financial health of the Secretariat depends on Member States meeting their financial obligations in full and on time. The effective implementation of the programme of work depends on the financial support of Contracting Parties.

85. The delegate of the USA requested clarification on the relationship between the Secretariat and the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) and supported the seconding of a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) to reduce arrears. He also stated that the staffing budget needed to be in alignment with other Regional Seas Programmes (RSP) and within the budget.
86. The delegate of Barbados thanked the United States for the contribution made. He stated that one disadvantage of online meetings was the inability to meet in the corridors and have discussions. He indicated that there were elements from the review that could be addressed. As it related to Strategic Action 1 on the structuring and reclassification of posts (cost-saving measure), he asked if there would be any limitations to the potential of the UNDP GEF CLME+ CM if hosted by the Secretariat and added that it would require a certain level of engagement. In addition, he wanted to know the limitations of reclassifying the post of Coordinator from D1 to P5 and if the Secretariat would be able to deliver on its mandate given the need for increased political engagement. He underlined that the aim was to ensure that the Secretariat would still be able to deliver efficiently on its work programme.
87. In relation to the reclassification of the post of Coordinator, Ms. Stendahl clarified that there would be no issues regarding the delegation of authority (DoA), that is, D1 versus P5, as the authority was determined by the function of the post not the level. She pointed out that D1 had the same DoA level as P5. She added that other Regional Seas Programmes had P4 and P5 Coordinators. She also explained that demotion could occur due to financial reasons and that the number of countries being served by a legal instrument did not determine the level of a Coordinator. The appropriate DoA required to function would be assigned by UNEP HQ.
88. The delegate of the Netherlands thanked Ms. Stendahl for the clear explanation and thanked the delegate of Barbados for raising the issue. He also thanked the delegate of the USA for the clear and concise intervention and expressed his agreement with the four (4) elements proposed. He said the review of the RACs could include the RANs and the establishment of new RANs in the future. He indicated that it was important to look at how the vacancies at the centres could be filled and linked with divisions in UNEP. With regard to the reclassification of the post of Coordinator, he agreed with the USA and Barbados, and added that it was for Parties to decide upon.
89. On the matter of recommendations regarding the functional review and Contracting Parties, the delegate of France expressed his desire to see some aspects in relation to mobilization of resources put in place, including the amendment of the financial rules, financial resources and other resources that could be mobilised, as seen with other donors. He thanked UNEP for the clarification. Due to the change in budget and the state of the Trust Fund, France considered that the reclassification of the post of Coordinator was wise and a decision needed to be taken. The delegate of France also added that there should be closer ties between UNEP ROLAC and the Secretariat and stated that support was being provided for the work of the RACs. In concluding, he suggested that the COP should adopt a decision to put in place working groups so that all the decisions could be audited and implemented.

CEP Strategy

90. The Secretariat was invited to provide an update on the development of the new CEP Strategy for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) and the Cartagena Convention Secretariat. Delegates were reminded that the draft Strategy was presented at the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting during which Contracting Parties recognised the usefulness and importance of the Strategy as a guiding document to enable the Secretariat to respond to emerging issues, and to ensure that the Convention and the work of

the Secretariat remained relevant and useful for all Contracting Parties. Part of the reason for a new strategy was triggered by an audit of the Secretariat done by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in 2018. The aim was to ensure that the strategic documents of the Secretariat were updated. The completion of the strategy was a requirement of the audit.

91. Delegates were advised that two (2) documents were circulated, namely, the regional strategy and a summary of the strategy. Following the discussion on the functional review, it was decided by Contracting Parties to have a full deliberation on the implications of the functional review before embarking on the detailed discussion relating to the CEP Strategy. The establishment of an intersessional working group was suggested by a Contracting Party to work with the Secretariat to finalise and respond to some of the comments by Contracting Parties so that the CEP Strategy could be adopted intersessionally.
92. The floor was opened for further feedback, comments and recommendations from Contracting Parties on the presentation and discussions concerning the functional review and CEP Strategy.
93. The delegate of the Netherlands brought attention to Decision 5/2 sub-decision 17 taken by the Fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) regarding the establishment of a resource mobilisation strategy with the objective of broadening the contributor base. He urged the Secretariat to keep in line with UNEP's resource mobilisation strategy. In relation to the UNEP Thematic Trust Funds being discussed and likely to be established, he further urged the Secretariat to make use of them, especially those relevant to the Protocols of the Convention. He indicated his support of the interventions made by Contracting Parties, in particular, the reclassification of the D1 post to P5. He stated that further analysis of the points of the functional review was required and urged the Secretariat and/or UNEP to provide more information.
94. The delegate of the USA supported the intervention of the Netherlands and agreed that elements of the review should be taken up urgently. He said there was a lack of resolution on the review and more time was needed to conclude some decisions and move forward. He added that a direct line of communication with Nairobi was needed and requested a delay in adopting the strategy given its dependence on the review as it should take into consideration any reforms, clarifications, etc.
95. On the matter of the review, the delegate of France pointed out that it was imperative to implement, where possible, the decisions made by the COP on the recommendations on the review and not wait for another COP. He supported the request of the Netherlands and further suggested that the formal adoption of the 2021-2030 Draft CEP Strategy be delayed.
96. The delegate of Cuba thanked the Secretariat for the work done and indicated their support for the CEP strategy. He stated that he was concerned about the constitution of the CTF. He also stated that the financial challenges in his country had increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic but added that Cuba had political will and commitment to the Convention. He indicated his agreement for the partial payment option mentioned and added that total payment would only be possible once the economic situation of the country improved. He further indicated Cuba's desire to liaise with the Secretariat on the issue and pointed out that their payment transactions were affected by the North American block.
97. In relation to the CEP Strategy, the representative of the Foundation for Development Planning Incorporated (FDPI) recommended that Parties take a step back to examine the underlining principles articulated in the document. He said both the principles and strategies mentioned were a continuation of what had been used over many decades; some were rebranding, and some had failed. He inquired about the extent to which the strategy was forward looking in the context of the Wider Caribbean Region facing economic and ecological disruptions and if it was realistic on the social and environmental front. He pointed out that a certain level of urgency was required to diverge from the way business had been done for

decades. He strongly recommended that Contracting Parties examine some of the underlying assumptions in the document and how they would shape the Secretariat's work if the intent was to improve the situation of the people of the Wider Caribbean Region.

98. The delegate of Colombia stated that their comments were sent to the Secretariat but had not been reflected in the strategy posted on the website of the Secretariat and requested that they be incorporated. She indicated her agreement with comments made by the FDPI representative and stated that there was a need for a review and deep analysis particularly regarding challenges being faced. She highlighted that from the comments submitted by Colombia, she would suggest that ways be found to incorporate a conservation and sustainable use approach in all actions of the Convention.
99. The delegation of the USA supported the view of the delegate of Colombia on mainstreaming sustainable use and conservation in the Secretariat's work. In consideration of the COVID-19 impacts on the financial situation of Contracting Parties, one creative avenue for making pledges was to second professional staff to the Secretariat and the RACs, and then quantify it so that the amount would be deducted from the arrears.
100. In response to Colombia, the Secretariat stated that the comments were sincerely appreciated and had been incorporated into a matrix with comments provided by other Contracting Parties. The Secretariat further apologised for the delay in providing the updated document and informed the meeting that the updated version would be made available on its website.
101. In response to the USA, the Secretariat stated that while recognising the need to give priority to completing the strategy, the decisions coming out of the functional review might have an impact on the content of the CEP Strategy. The Secretariat noted the additional comments and suggestions by delegates and observers that the strategy needed to be forward looking and establish synergies with other global multilateral agreements and commitments, to ensure that the work of the Secretariat continued to be relevant and implemented the best way possible to meet the obligations of the Convention and its Protocols. The Secretariat added that there was a close link between the discussions on the functional review and the expected final content of the strategy.
102. The delegate of the Netherlands supported the interventions made by Colombia and the USA, particularly on the importance of creative solutions to the challenge of countries with outstanding contributions.
103. The delegate of the Dominican Republic (DR) stated that as an island country and a signatory to the CBD and the Cartagena Convention and its three Protocols, among other multilateral agreements, the Dominican Republic supported Colombia in their call for marine and coastal issues to be duly included and incorporated into the new post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The delegate also seconded Colombia's recommendation to the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention and its Member States for greater involvement in the processes of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and to promote synergies in the Wider Caribbean.
104. In her intervention, the delegate of Mexico stated that as a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Convention, Mexico supported Colombia in the call for marine and coastal issues to be duly included and incorporated into the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. She also indicated her support of the recommendation for greater involvement and transversality in the processes of other MEAs that would allow for the promotion of synergies and for effectively addressing common challenges.

105. With regard to the comments from the delegates of Mexico and Dominican Republic in support of Colombia's intervention, the Secretariat stated that it would continue to welcome additional points as Parties reflected on them, since a clear decision had not been determined.
106. The delegate of Colombia added that she was able to understand more based on the questions asked. She stated that there were other topics to be worked on and would like the Secretariat to take the necessary steps. She also wanted to know when the updated document would be circulated and the length of time that delegations would have to review the strategy.

Sustainable Blue Economy

107. In this segment, the Secretariat presented an overview of the paper on "Sustainable Blue Economy- A crucial solution for a sustainable future in the Caribbean". The presentation provided a summary of an analysis of ongoing projects and activities being undertaken in the region on Blue Economy. Possible roles for the Secretariat on the subject were provided for the consideration of Contracting Parties.
108. The delegate of Guatemala indicated their interest in the subject of Sustainable Blue Economy, while noting that there was no internationally recognized definition for the term "Blue Economy". The delegate stated that Guatemala was participating in the elaboration of the proposal for the Regional Protocol of Sustainable Blue Economy, with a ridge to reef focus in the Mesoamerican reef region (Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras). Guatemala indicated that they supported the Central American Strategy for a Sustainable Blue Economy of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD).
109. The delegate of the Dominican Republic added that the Blue Economy platform was being proposed for a new regional project, and that inputs would be made to the MOU following discussions. In addition, she said the discussion on the PROCARIBE+ Project needed to be clearer. While she felt that more work was required, it was necessary to reflect on the point being discussed.

Coordination Mechanism for Caribbean Ocean Governance

110. The Secretariat was invited to provide an overview of the status relating to the coordination mechanism for improving ocean governance in the Wider Caribbean Region. This had been proposed under the UNDP GEF CLME+ Project. The Coordinator indicated that the issue of governance was raised in the Strategic Action Programme and that there was considerable fragmentation and several stakeholders working in the WCR. Consequently, the outcomes and results were not coordinated. Countries that participated in the project needed non-legal means to coordinate work hence the establishment of an interim coordination mechanism was needed. Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) were able to understand the work of others and had coordinated and ensured that there were no conflicts. She said it would therefore be good to harmonise the work of the IGOs and the work of CEP.
111. The delegate of France thanked the Coordinator for the information provided. He stated that funds had been made available for the project since 2011 and that the coordination mechanism was provisional. He also stated that the coordinator of the programme had been seeking a permanent participation through an MOU. He explained that France took part in the discussion and supported the mechanism on marine species and sustainable development, then pointed out that according to the Convention, permanent cooperation was necessary. He requested an update on the MOU and how the COPs would participate in this legal review and the MOU. He added that France was examining the MOU and would review the regional cooperation.

112. The delegate of the USA thanked the Coordinator for the overview. He indicated that the USA was actively engaged in the UNDP GEF CLME+ project steering committee discussions and that project implementation was quite successful. He said the MOU should not direct the work by other agencies such as the Secretariat in the region nor should it compete with other regional initiatives, but rather, serve as a complement. He said the USA was flexible in terms of the role the Cartagena Convention Secretariat would play but noted that the engagement of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat was essential.
113. The delegate of Barbados supported the USA on the matter of the coordination mechanism. He stated that the Secretariat should perform an essential role in the mechanism.
114. The representative of FDPI sought clarifications on the document. Firstly, he said there was a lack of efficiency versus putting in place a process that complicated actions at the national/regional level and the value added was not clear in terms of efficiencies. Secondly, in the ecological context, he said the Caribbean Sea was a single ecological space and it seemed that all actions of the actors in the space would be sensitive to the shared ecological space. There was an advantage in having a less formal mechanism that supported programme alignment and should not supersede the legal mechanisms. He said it should be placed at the top to reinforce the capabilities of the region. However, it seemed as if it was not focused on the purpose of the Convention but on the mandates of the various institutions. He concluded by stating that the wrong focus was taking precedence and that the alignment would be out of balance if the focus was to act collectively in the shared ecological space.
115. The delegate of the Netherlands indicated his country's support for the coordination mechanism but found it a bit challenging to decide whether the Secretariat should host or play an active role. Given that it was dependent on the organisation's structure, the realistic options of the core work programme, priorities and financial means of the Secretariat were important to take into consideration. He wanted to know the extent to which it would be a core aspect of the Convention and how it would affect the present organisational capacity. He also wanted to know if it would be beneficial or would come at a cost to the Secretariat. Due to these concerns, he said it was difficult to make a decision as the implications to the Secretariat were unclear.
116. In response to the delegate of France, the Coordinator explained that legal agreements were sent to UNEP Headquarters for revision and that comments received from the legal department were sent to the CLME+ Regional Project Coordinator (RPC). Other IGOs were awaiting comments from their legal units. The Coordinator also added that a draft MOU was available but had not yet been cleared for signature. UNEP Headquarters would sign on behalf of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat.
117. The Secretariat welcomed and took note of the comments of all the delegates. While there would be opportunities for additional financing from being involved in Blue Economy or from being part of the coordination mechanism, there was a need to consider these matters in light of other financial challenges and demands, and to ensure that there would be complementarity and not competition.
118. The Secretariat also highlighted that it had benefitted from involvement as a partner agency for the UNDP GEF CLME+ project and served as vice-chair of the interim coordination mechanism. The AMEP PO stated that when the coordination mechanism was brought up at the last intergovernmental meeting, the decision was for the Secretariat to stay engaged in the discussion and not make any commitment if there were implications for hosting it. Legal opinion was already obtained, and policy implications were being evaluated. He stated that the PROCARIBE+ project was still in the developmental phase and that the Secretariat was engaged in discussing the full proposal but needed to find out if it would have a role and what that role would be. He added that it would be an opportunity to build on the work of UNDP GEF CLME+ project through the State of the Marine Habitats (SoMH) Report and the State of the Convention

Area (SOCAR) Report. Whether hosting the unit or implementing parts of it, he believed it was important for the Secretariat to be a part of the development process.

119. The AMEP Programme Officer concluded by stating that the Secretariat would also remain engaged in the discussions concerning the coordination mechanism and that maybe the Bureau could play an oversight role in the matter. The MOU was provided as a document for the pre-COP meeting. Parties that had not seen the MOU could find it on the Secretariat's website.

AGENDA ITEM 7: DRAFT WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR THE CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME FOR THE 2021-2022 BIENNIUM

120. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the Draft Work Plan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the 2021-2022 biennium as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/3 Rev.1.
121. The Secretariat provided context to the work plan and budget. The STAC meetings were utilised to discuss and negotiate the work programmes of the LBS and SPAW Protocols. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the steering committee meeting for the Oil Spills Protocol was not able to convene, hence the work plan and budget were not yet available. It was anticipated that the programme of work identified would continue. The Secretariat indicated that the CEP work plan and budget would be modified as proposed by the Parties with respect to the strategic and functional review.
122. The AMEP Programme Officer provided an overview of the proposed 2021-2022 work plan and budget for the AMEP Sub-Programme. He indicated that the information provided in the CEP work plan and budget was a summary of the work to be done within the Sub-Programme. For more detailed information, delegates were urged to review the work plan and budget that was presented to Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol. The work of the Sub-Programme had been consolidated into five (5) thematic areas covering programme coordination, land and marine-based sources of pollution, monitoring and integrated ecosystems assessment, ecosystem-based management and knowledge management. He indicated that the programmatic and thematic elements of the activities were endorsed by Contracting Parties to the Protocol.
123. The AMEP PO explained that RAC REMPEITC-Caribe, which supported the Oil Spills Protocol, was considered as a Regional Activity Centre that supported all of the maritime-related conventions, such as the Ballast Water Convention, London Convention, OPRC Convention, the Civil Liability and Fund Convention, among others. A substantial amount of the work required within the framework of the Oil Spills Protocol was fully and comprehensively covered by the work of the Centre. He advised delegates that funding for most of the capacity building activities conducted by the Centre was provided by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Some activities were still unfunded.
124. Several ongoing projects from the previous biennium were expected to conclude in 2021 while new ones were slated to begin during the upcoming biennium. Other projects were at the development stage and expected to commence by the end of 2022.
125. A summary of the timeframe for project funding was provided (up to 2024) and key activities and targets for the biennium were highlighted. Most activities would focus on strengthening synergies and collaboration at national, regional and global levels. The RAC Institute of Marine Affairs (RAC IMA) and RAC Centro de Investigación y Manejo Ambiental del Transporte (CIMAB) were expected to play a key role in programme coordination and supporting the implementation of projects. In relation to funding for

the various thematic areas, it was highlighted how the different projects would contribute to each thematic area.

126. The summary budget was presented, and it was clarified that funds from the CTF, based on the current level of contributions, were unable to cover meetings, projects and activities, only staffing costs. Funds reported under “other sources” for activities would come from regional projects and external donors. It was explained that the “required balance” addressed additional activities that were recommended from meetings of experts and the 4th Conference of the Parties to the LBS Protocol which were considered important for countries to meet their obligations under the Protocol, but funding sources were not identified. He concluded by stating that activities under “required balance” served as a basis for resource mobilisation and a framework for negotiation with external donors interested in supporting specific activities of the Secretariat. He then handed over to the SPAW Programme Officer to continue the presentation by the Secretariat.
127. The SPAW Programme Officer presented the 2021-2022 activities for the SPAW Sub-Programme. She highlighted the five (5) major areas for work, namely, programme coordination, strengthening of protected areas in the WCR, development of guidelines for the management of protected areas and species, conservation of threatened and endangered species, and conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems.
128. She expressed gratitude to the Contracting Parties for the guidance provided allowing the Sub-Programme to fully respond to its needs and core functions. She added that monthly meetings would be held with Contracting Parties during the biennium to monitor and decide how to manage the SPAW Sub-Programme. An overview of the organisational structure of the Sub-Programme was presented and she indicated that the post of programme management assistant was vacant since the first quarter of 2021. The activities under the five (5) major areas of work were highlighted.
129. In relation to programme coordination, in addition to the activities, the pertinent articles of the Convention and/or SPAW Protocol to which they corresponded were highlighted. The activities included promoting the ratification of the SPAW Protocol and increasing collaboration and communication with other organisations, non-governmental organisations, and multilateral agreements. The support from various partners was acknowledged.
130. Under the strengthening of protected areas, focus would be placed on MPA management effectiveness and financing to address the gap in financial resources. MPA managers were affected by the lack of financial resources for implementation mainly due to COVID-19. Therefore, funds previously allocated for exchanges and multilateral travels would be reallocated to this area. The African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) Phase III Project would be implemented to enhance the functional network(s) of SPAW-listed protected areas.
131. The guidelines for the management of protected areas and species would support a cooperation programme of SPAW-listed marine protected areas thanks to the pooling of resources with other partners, such as regional non-governmental organisations working on protected areas, for a far-reaching effect. Donors, Contracting Parties, observers, experts, universities, and institutions that would be able to support the work of the SPAW Sub-Programme through SPAW RAC were urged to do so.
132. The SPAW Programme Officer also noted that in relation to the conservation of threatened and endangered species, there would be continued focus on marine mammals, the marine mammal action plan and the proposals that were presented at the 9th SPAW STAC. These proposals would be presented at SPAW STAC10 and later at SPAW COP12.

133. An overview was also presented on efforts to conserve and sustainably use coastal and marine ecosystems, as well as activities related to sargassum. The summary budget for each major area was shared. The SPAW Programme Officer concluded by giving an overview of projects and their timeframes, some of which would conclude in 2024. She then handed over to the Administrative and Fund Management Officer to do the financial presentation.
134. The Administrative and Fund Management Officer (AFMO) presented an overview of the past and current financial status of the Secretariat. She outlined the breakdown of the sources of funding for 2021 associated with the implementation of the action plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme. This included the Caribbean Trust Fund, projects, grants and programme support costs.
135. She highlighted that the Secretariat had been able to deliver project outputs despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2008, there had been a decline in the required funding level from Contracting Parties from US\$1.3M to US\$1.264M in 2015, and it subsequently remained at that level. A summary of the status of pledges was provided and she explained that the pledges had consistently not met the required annual fund level and had resulted in arrears of approximately three (3) years of the core operating requirements of the Secretariat.
136. The AFMO thanked the Parties who contributed in a timely manner and/or made efforts to reduce their arrears. She strongly encouraged Parties with arrears, of 10 years or more than US\$50K, to discuss a payment plan with the Secretariat.
137. When the proposed 2021-2022 budget was presented, it was explained that it was a zero-growth budget for 2021 and 2022. Details of the budget line items were shared and an overview of the organisational chart and the proposed staffing changes across all sources of funding for the Secretariat was provided.
138. Following the presentation, the delegate of France recalled that in 2019, the Convention had difficulties with implementing activities as well as paying employees. He thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and stated that the situation required considerable follow-up. He added that it was important to mention the special allocation fund of US\$1M and noted that the annual budget was also for voluntary contributions. He said that as staff positions were being downgraded to reduce salary cost, stabilisation was expected. He wanted to know what the savings were from not having to convene face-to-face meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
139. The AFMO responded to the questions raised by the delegate of France. On the matter of the increase in staffing cost, she said the functional review provided proposals put forward to the Contracting Parties for their consideration and once decisions were made on those proposals, the staffing cost would be revised. The information provided was based on the current baseline from the International Civil Service Commissions (ICSC) Cost of Living Adjustment. She said the budget line would be modified accordingly once decisions were made. As it related to cost savings, the AFMO referred to the budget and explained that it was tight. She stated that staff costs were sometimes offset by projects, where staff members were providing direct technical support, if the project document or donor allowed. For example, in the first quarter of the biennium, the Secretariat was able to offset US\$45K of staff costs and had tried to save costs by selecting vendors that were within the parameters of the budget for meetings. She ended by stating that the Secretariat was actively trying to reduce expenditures to the Trust Fund.
140. The delegation of the USA requested clarification on the charges to the Convention for the renovation costs for UN House. He expressed appreciation for the presentations, stating that the information highlighted the need for immediate action to improve the sustainability of the Trust Fund, adopt realistic work plans and budgets and prioritise effectively for the direct implementation of the Convention and its

Protocols.

141. The delegation of the USA further supported the proposed work plan and budget for the Convention and the individual work plans and budgets presented to the LBS and SPAW COPs subject to a few minor clarifications, for example, the renovation issue. It also appeared that the SPAW section of the overall Convention work plan and budget should consider the revisions agreed to following the 9th SPAW STAC and adopted at the 11th SPAW COP. The USA delegation requested that the revisions to the SPAW work plan and budget be incorporated into the Convention work plan and budget.
142. As it related to the cost of meetings, the USA had noted that due to the pandemic, virtual meetings, though not ideal, could be successful, accomplish the required tasks and move the mandate forward. Due to the financial challenges being experienced by the Convention, the convening of virtual meetings would be useful to minimize the expenses of the Secretariat. It should, however, not be a permanent change but a temporary one considering the financial crisis. The USA noted that it was reflected in the decisions of the 2021 COPs of the LBS and SPAW Protocols and would like to see the agreement reflected in a Cartagena Convention COP decision.
143. The Chairperson requested that the Secretariat provide clarity to the question regarding the renovation costs.
144. In response to the query on the renovation costs for UN House, the Coordinator stated that as a member of the UN Country Team for Jamaica, she had made every effort to negotiate that point, given that the Secretariat had been housed in the building for several decades. With the assistance of the Administrative and Fund Management Officer they were able to reduce the amount as low as could be agreed by the UN Country Team. The US\$395K was a negotiated figure downward as the other agencies within the UN Country Team including the Resident Coordinator advised that all agencies that were resident in Jamaica must contribute to the renovation cost. If that was not done, she was unsure if Contracting Parties had an alternative as to where the funds would come from. However, at that point there was no alternative. The Secretariat apologised for any omissions relating to the work plan and budget and advised that the necessary adjustments would be made.
145. The Chairperson opened the floor for additional comments.
146. The delegate from Trinidad and Tobago thanked the Secretariat for the presentation on the work plan and budget. On the issue of costs related to unfunded projects, he explained that those might have a direct impact on the operations of the RACs in terms of meeting their obligations and would also be an important factor in the structural and functional review of the RACs. He mentioned that unprecedented times were being faced by countries in the Caribbean region due to the economic downturn. With regard to the CTF, he said there could be a consideration to allow alternative forms of payment, for instance, in-kind contributions by those countries that were not able to make payments. For example, countries could contribute towards environmental projects which would benefit the region.
147. The Secretariat thanked the representative from Trinidad and Tobago and RAC IMA for his comments as well as the USA for their feedback on the SPAW work plan and budget. The Secretariat noted the question regarding the relationship between the RACs and the Secretariat and proposed that deeper analysis was needed to ensure that the work plan and budget could be delivered among the various organs of the Secretariat.
148. In relation to alternate forms of payment to the CTF, although in-kind contributions were encouraged, it was the financial contributions that had allowed the Secretariat to convene meetings and meet operational expenses including personnel costs. Expenses had been severely minimized during this period of

adjustment, both for the Secretariat and the region and they had continued to exercise extreme prudence in that regard. There were countries that had provided technical support and offered to host meetings. In many cases it was not considered an alternate form of support as it was neither actual funding spent by the countries nor provided to the Secretariat as cash. While there were alternative forms of payment, they did not negate the need for the CTF to be supported. The Secretariat thanked the Member States that submitted early payments for 2021 and enabled the Secretariat to continue its operations in 2022.

149. In relation to the co-financing support from the RACs, the Secretariat confirmed that funds from the CTF were not paid to the RACs, but rather, the RACs provided co-financing through their contributions to the implementation of the biennial work plan and projects.
150. The Secretariat also highlighted the significant in-kind contributions by Contracting Parties for hosting meetings and the implementation of activities. Moving forward, it might be possible to find ways that this level of support could be reflected in reports.
151. The Secretariat welcomed additional co-financing support particularly for activities that would reduce the expenditure from the CTF for translation, interpretation, and use of virtual platforms.
152. The SPAW RAC Director stated that the SPAW RAC no longer received funding from the CTF or projects. The SPAW RAC relied on funding from projects done by themselves. As Director of the SPAW RAC, she expressed concern as there were three (3) out of eight (8) staff positions that were unfunded for 2022.
153. Delegates expressed that the inconsistencies between host agreements with RACs, COP Decisions and actual practices highlighted the importance of the work of the functional review and additional analysis required on the RACs/RANs.
154. The delegate of France expressed concern especially as it related to the work of the SPAW RAC. The Secretariat advised that this would be one of the priority items for further review and analysis so that a mutually agreeable solution could be determined.
155. The Chairperson requested that the Secretariat ensure that all documents referenced during the presentations and discussions were made available for review by Contracting Parties. The Secretariat confirmed that these documents would be made available on the 'Events' page of the Secretariat's website.
156. Ms. Stendahl (UNEP Ecosystems Integration Branch) highlighted the participation of other representatives of UNEP Headquarters in the meeting. They had worked with the Administrative and Fund Management Officer on the budget and financial statistics presented earlier in the meeting. The issue regarding the possible staff restructuring of the Secretariat and the reclassification of some posts was addressed. As no further discussion on that matter was needed, the COP could therefore take action as the matter concerned the amount of funding that would be allocated to staff and the levels of staff that would be funded by the budget. This, she said, could be addressed within the budget decision and there would be no need to wait to adopt another decision. Ms. Stendahl also further deliberated on the follow-up of the review and the follow-up measures that Parties would want to put in place. In terms of additional reviews and further investigation into any issue, these should be costed as reviews were usually performed by external consultants. The cost of the reviews should therefore be included in the budget if the COP decided that further reviews were needed. If it was decided that a funding source other than the CTF was needed, then this would require a discussion. Funding would not be available from the Ecosystems Division of UNEP Headquarters.

157. Following the discussion on the budget and financial status of the Secretariat, the presentation on the communications (CETA) work plan for the 2021-2022 biennium was made. Focal points were encouraged to collaborate more closely with the Secretariat to increase visibility of the Secretariat's work in the region and carry out more public education and awareness initiatives. Activities during the 2021-2022 biennium would also include greater social media engagement and posts in Spanish and French, the production of more knowledge management and promotional materials, strengthening links with Regional Activity Centres and partners, and supporting the UN Decades on Ecosystem Restoration and Ocean Science. A Knowledge Management Strategy would also be produced to support the 2021-2030 Regional Strategy of the Caribbean Environment Programme.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEE ON THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME FOR THE 2021-2022 BIENNIUM

158. The Secretariat was invited to provide the background for this Agenda Item.
159. The AMEP PO outlined the historical context of CEP, the development of the Caribbean Action Plan, the establishment of Rules of Procedures and the establishment and role of the Bureau. He then summarized the development of the Cartagena Convention as a legally binding, multilateral environmental agreement.
160. The AMEP PO explained that the use of terms such as "intergovernmental" would ensure that all twenty-eight (28) Member States in the Wider Caribbean participated in the discussions and development of the work of the Secretariat. It was further explained that the need had arisen to maintain the Monitoring Committee in the event of an urgent need to address concerns from a representative number of Contracting Parties.
161. It was made clear that the Monitoring Committee was not a requirement of the Cartagena Convention or its Protocols, nor was it referenced in the Rules of Procedure. However, it had been used to support the work of the Convention and the Bureau.
162. Over the years, a Monitoring Committee had been elected and consisted of the members of the Bureau along with selected members from the remainder of Contracting Parties, taking into account geographical representation, language and status of ratification of the Convention and its Protocols, as well as general political interest and commitment.
163. Contracting Parties were requested to consider the need and possible composition for this Committee for the next biennium as well as its mandate and role in supporting the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols.
164. The Secretariat highlighted that the strategic and functional review also referenced the role of governing bodies. In that regard, it was important to define the following: 1) Was a Monitoring Committee needed?; 2) What will the role of the Monitoring Committee be going forward?; and 3) Who would be the members of the Monitoring Committee?
165. The Secretariat indicated that the Parties elected to the Bureaus of the 5th LBS COP and 11th SPAW COP could be considered to join the Bureau of the Convention: Barbados, USA, Dominican Republic, the Netherlands, Colombia, the United Kingdom, France and Belize. The floor was then opened for further discussion.

166. The delegate of the Netherlands highlighted Draft Decision 6 of the SPAW COP in consideration of the Decision to establish a Monitoring Committee.
167. The delegate of the USA suggested that time be allowed for Parties to consider the matter, read the paper provided by the Secretariat and decide later.
168. The delegate of Barbados highlighted the issue of funding for the Monitoring Committee and being endowed on the Bureau and report intersessionally. Given the number of working groups and challenges of participation, assigning the role of Monitoring Committee to the Bureau should be considered.
169. Since there was no consensus of the establishment of a Monitoring Committee, Contracting Parties were invited by the Chairperson to submit any further comments in writing to the Secretariat. Given that no additional feedback was received, a decision was not taken to elect a Monitoring Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 9: OTHER BUSINESS

170. The delegates and observers of the meeting were invited to raise any other matters not covered by the preceding agenda items but relevant to the scope of the meeting, and were presented as follows.

(a) *Trinidad and Tobago – Oil Spills Tracking Project*

171. The representative from the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), delivered a presentation on Trinidad and Tobago's development of an oil spill monitoring programme. The presentation highlighted oil spill incidences in the region and the importance of satellite monitoring as a proven, timely and cost-effective way to monitor oil spills. She noted that the project partners in Trinidad and Tobago included the Institute of Marine Affairs, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries and the Environmental Management Authority, with the Satellite Analysis Branch (SAB) from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) providing training and support. From May to July 2021, eighteen (18) persons from these three (3) agencies in Trinidad and Tobago completed a virtual training organized by NOAA. The training covered background information about synthetic aperture radar (SAR) and optical imagery for oil monitoring, data portals and data acquisition, GIS software and product generation, as well as hands-on training on examining satellite imagery, drawing oil polygons and issuing reports.
172. Following the training (1st July), Trinidad and Tobago started monitoring near real time oil spill incidents and issuing reports for their Exclusive Economic Zone. So far, numerous oil spill incidents were discovered using satellite imagery which otherwise would have been difficult to discover and mitigate. It was hoped that similar programmes could be set up in other parts of the Caribbean Sea to address oil spill problems and protect the ocean environment.

(b) *Barbados – Anti-microbial resistance monitoring*

173. The delegate of Barbados delivered a presentation on antimicrobial resistance monitoring in Barbados. The presentation highlighted a pilot study to determine if resistant indicator organisms (*Escherichia coli* (E. coli), *Enterococcus spp.*, faecal coliforms and Klebsiella) were present in Barbadian waters, with the results of national assessments conducted in 2015 and 2020 also presented.

174. A presentation was then made by Mr. Rickardo Ward on the development of Barbados' Blue Economy Framework spearheaded by the country's Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy. The overarching goal of the Blue Economy Policy Framework in Barbados has been to create and implement governance that would enable inclusive and distributive economic growth within the limits of healthy and resilient marine ecosystems. Given the current situation, the main strategy for Barbados was the creation of a policy regime aimed at economic diversification and resilience primarily using its marine (not coastal) natural resource base, driven by private investment fostered by enabling government policies.

AGENDA ITEM 10: ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS

175. The meeting was invited to endorse the Decisions of the Fifth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) in the Wider Caribbean Region (LBS COP5) and the decisions of the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPAW COP11) as endorsed by the relevant COPs. The decisions of the meetings were reviewed and endorsed by the meeting.
176. The Rapporteur of the 19th IGM/16th COP then presented the draft Decisions of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/5). The decisions were reviewed, and discussions held on each decision. The comments made on each decision were incorporated during the meeting, leading to their final adoption. The Secretariat was expected to review the language of the decisions after the meeting and circulate them to Contracting Parties for final review. The decisions can be found in Annex IV of this report.

AGENDA ITEM 11: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

177. On behalf of the Secretariat, the Coordinator thanked all delegates for their participation in the meeting. The meeting ended at 7:02 p.m. (GMT-5) on Friday, 30 July 2021.

ANNEX I: AGENDA

DRAFT

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. Report of the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee and President of the Bureau of Contracting Parties
5. Report of the Executive Director of UNEP on the Implementation of the Caribbean Environment Programme (2019-2020)
6. Implications for the Work Plan and Budget 2021-2022
 - 6.1. UNEP's Strategic and Functional Review of the Secretariat
 - 6.2. CEP Strategy
 - 6.3. Sustainable Blue Economy
 - 6.4. Coordination Mechanism for Caribbean Ocean Governance
7. Draft Work Plan and Budget of the Caribbean Environment Programme for the 2021-2022 biennium
8. Election of Members of the Monitoring Committee on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme for 2021-2022 biennium
9. Other Business
10. Adoption of the Decisions of the Meeting
11. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX II: DECISIONS OF LBS COP5

DRAFT

Decisions of the Meeting

The Contracting Parties:

Having convened the Fifth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS COP5) in the Wider Caribbean Region, virtually on 26 July 2021;

Taking note of the Status of Implementation of the Work Plan and Budget for the AMEP Sub-Programme for the period 2019-2020 as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.4;

Also taking note of the Report on the Activities of the Regional Activity Centres for the LBS Protocol (LBS RACs) in Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago for the period 2019-2020 as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.5;

Taking further note of the opportunities provided through participation of countries in ongoing projects such as the GEF IWEco, GEF CREW+, ACP MEAs 3, and new pipeline projects to assist them in meeting their obligations under the LBS Protocol;

Welcoming the increased global focus on the control, prevention, and reduction of marine pollution through UNEP's new Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work;

Recognizing the efforts taken by the Secretariat to increasingly integrate the work of the AMEP and SPAW Sub-Programmes, including through partnerships and new Memoranda of Understanding signed between the Secretariat and partner agencies;

Further recognizing the importance of these partnerships in forming part of the Regional Activity Network (RAN) for supporting priority action on wastewater, nutrients and marine litter pollution including through the work of UNEP Global Partnerships on these pollutants;

Having reviewed the Report on the *Ad-Hoc* Open-Ended Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.6 Rev.1;

Having also reviewed the Recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS STAC5) in the Wider Caribbean Region contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/5;

Having further reviewed the Workplan and Budget for the activities of the AMEP Sub-Programme for the biennium 2021-2022, as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/3 Rev.1;

Welcoming the new Medium-Term Strategies developed by the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) for the LBS Protocol reflected in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/4a/Rev.1 and UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/4b/Rev.1, which outline how the LBS RACs will contribute to the implementation of the 2021-2022 work plan;

Considering the proposed Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy and Action Plan contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.10/Rev.1;

Congratulating the Government of Barbados for its ratification of the LBS Protocol in 2019 and the progress made by Non-Contracting Parties in their efforts to ratify the LBS Protocol;

Noting the efforts by the Secretariat to mobilize project funding that will further support ratification of the LBS Protocol by Non-Contracting Parties and assist Contracting Parties in meeting their national obligations under the LBS Protocol;

Further noting the need to finalize the Host Agreement with the Government of Cuba for LBS RAC CIMAB;

Recognizing the budgetary constraints faced by the Secretariat, and **further noting** the importance of implementing prudent financial management in the implementation of the 2021-2022 work plan and budget.

Decide to:

1. **Endorse** the recommendations of LBS STAC5.
2. **Endorse** for final approval by the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties, the Work Plan and Budget for the AMEP Sub-Programme for the 2021-2022 biennium, including the prioritization of proposed unfunded activities and modifications agreed during the meeting which include a review and redistribution of allocations to support priority activities that will assist countries in meeting their obligations under the LBS Protocol.
3. **Request** the Secretariat to engage in partnerships with non-governmental organisations and private sector entities to support the implementation of the LBS Protocol in the region including through the provision of funding for unfunded activities in the 2021-2022 work plan.
4. **Encourage** Contracting Parties to maximize on opportunities for financial support for capacity-building through ongoing projects and activities that will enable Contracting Parties to comply with their national obligations under the LBS Protocol.
5. **Endorse** the Medium-Term Strategic Plans presented by RAC IMA and RAC CIMAB and **request** the development of biennial work plans by the LBS RACs that could be approved as part of the 2023-2024 biennium work plan thus enabling greater integration of RAC activities into future AMEP work plans and budgets.
6. **Request** the LBS RACs to support the Secretariat in resource mobilization and provide technical support and advice to Contracting Parties for implementing the LBS Protocol, and to Non-Contracting Parties for ratification of the LBS Protocol.
7. **Adopt** the Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (RNPSAP) and request the Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment to provide technical support and oversight for its phased implementation at national and regional levels subject to availability of funding and to amend its Terms of Reference accordingly.
8. **Acknowledge** with thanks the significant contribution of the outgoing chairperson of the OEWG, Ms. Stephanie Adrian from the Government of the USA and encourage other Contracting Parties to consider chairing the OEWG during the 2021-2022 biennium, and **request** that the Secretariat share the Terms of Reference for the working group with all Contracting Parties.
9. **Establish** the following sub-groups of the OEWG to consider issues of importance for the further development of the LBS Protocol: (i) standards and criteria that would include discussions on comparable data, nutrients standards, wastewater effluent standards and defining Class I and II waters, (ii) information management, and (iii) future planning including consideration of emerging issues such as freshwater management, and invite all Contracting Parties to nominate national and/or regional experts to participate actively in the OEWG and new sub-groups established.
10. **Request** Contracting Parties and LBS RACs to submit nominations of national government and non-government experts to the OEWG and the new sub-groups by August 31, 2021.
11. **Request** the Secretariat to strengthen the integration between the LBS and SPAW Working Groups, including the cross representation of experts, when possible, among the groups, to provide increased expert and technical support to the implementation of the AMEP programme of work.

12. **Request** the Secretariat to continue its efforts to promote the work of the RAC REMPEITC-Caribe and encourage greater collaboration among all the RACs of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols.
13. **Request** the Secretariat to enhance its efforts to finalize the Host Agreement with the Government of Cuba for the formal recognition of RAC CIMAB as an LBS RAC.
14. **Request** the Cartagena Convention COP to endorse the Revised Template for National Reporting on the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.25 Rev.1 reflecting additional questions that would facilitate improved reporting toward the development of future State of the Convention Area Reports.
15. **Further request** the Secretariat to implement measures to make it easier for Contracting Parties to complete and submit national reports including establishing a fixed deadline for submission of these reports.
16. **Recommend** to the Cartagena Convention COP that due to the financial challenges faced by the Secretariat and the importance of exercising financial prudence during the 2021-2022 biennium, that in the short-term, the Secretariat convene its intergovernmental meetings virtually, including the 6th LBS STAC and 6th LBS COP.
17. **Request** the Cartagena Convention COP to encourage all Non-Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol to become Contracting Parties at their earliest opportunity, and in doing so, the Secretariat should provide Non-Contracting Parties with examples of benefits of ratification including through the achievements of Contracting Parties in addressing marine pollution from land-based sources and activities.

ANNEX III: DECISIONS OF SPAW COP 11

DRAFT

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 Work Plan 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 SPAW-RAC is facing that must be considered in implementing the 2021-2022 work plan and taking particular note of the alert from the Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC regarding the funding gap in 2022 for the maintenance of a number of SPAW-RAC staff and the activities necessary for the implementation of unfunded sections of the 2021-2022 work plan;

Decide to:

1. **Encourage** the governments of the region, which have not yet done so, to become Contracting Parties to the SPAW 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 Work Plan 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 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.

ANNEX IV: DECISIONS OF THE 19TH IGM and 16th COP

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DECISIONS OF THE 16TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA CONVENTION

The Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties:

Taking into account the Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on the Implementation of the 2019-2020 Work Plan and Budget of the Caribbean Environment Programme as presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.4;

Welcoming the Decisions of the Fifth Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) in the Wider Caribbean Region, held virtually on 26 July 2021 (UNEP(DEPI) CAR IG.43/3);

Also welcoming the Decisions of the Eleventh Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, held virtually on 27 July 2021 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.44/3);

Noting the Recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities, held virtually from 15–17 March 2021, as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/5; and

Also noting the Recommendations of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region, held virtually from 17–19 March 2021 and 14-15 April 2021, as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/8;

Adopt the decisions as per below.

DECISION I

WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

The 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Cartagena Convention:

Having reviewed the draft Work Plan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the biennium 2021-2022 contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/3 Rev.1;

Taking note of the status of contributions to the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF) by the States and Territories of the Wider Caribbean Region for 2019-2020;

Having examined the budgetary needs of the Caribbean Environment Programme to implement its proposed work plan for 2021-2022;

Noting with concern the severe impact that continued non-payment of annual contributions and outstanding contributions will have on the viability of the Secretariat, its ability to meet operational costs, and to implement the 2021-2022 work plan;

Considering the need for the Secretariat to adopt realistic work plans and budgets that prioritize effective, direct implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, as the status of activities from the 2019-2020 work plan and the proposed work plan for 2021-2022 highlight the need for immediate action to improve the financial sustainability of the Caribbean Trust Fund; and

Taking note of Clause 24 on administration of Amendment 1 dated 13 December 2014 to the Financial Rules for the Convention;

1. **Approves** the Work Plan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the biennium 2021-2022, as attached.
2. **Welcomes the** efforts by the Secretariat to produce more knowledge management products in French and Spanish and **requests** the Secretariat to continue to expand these efforts as reflected in the 2021-2022 Communications Work Plan and within available resources.
3. **Requests** the Secretariat, with the support of the Contracting Parties, to mobilize financial resources for implementing the as of yet unfunded activities within the 2021-2022 work plan.
4. **Urges** the Secretariat to continue to identify new partnership opportunities to enable the most effective implementation of the 2021-2022 work plan of the Cartagena Convention, while ensuring synergy, harmonization of efforts, and optimization in the use of resources.
5. **Encourages** greater involvement and participation of all Contracting Parties in the implementation of the 2021-2022 work plan.
6. **Requests** the Secretariat, in close collaboration with Contracting Parties, to enhance synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, Regional Seas Programme conventions and action plans, and the international global agenda as appropriate, by collaborating on topics of interest to the Wider Caribbean Region without prejudice to their specific objectives and recognizing their respective mandates.

7. **Notes** the urgent call for marine and coastal issues to be duly included and incorporated into the new post-2020 global framework for biodiversity, which is currently being negotiated.
8. **Urges** Contracting Parties to participate, as appropriate, in discussions on the development and implementation of strategies of interest to the Caribbean Sea in other international settings to ensure that the States of the Wider Caribbean Region have a vocal participation in these processes.

DECISION II

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Noting with concern the financial situation of the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF) which threatens the sustainability of the Secretariat;

Recognizing that the effective implementation of the 2021-2022 work plan is dependent on the Secretariat being able to meet, at a minimum, its ongoing operational costs;

Noting the additional financial commitments for the Secretariat associated with the UN Reform process, including the Umoja maintenance fees and the non-recurrent cost associated with the renovation and establishment of the UN House in Jamaica;

Acknowledging with thanks the commitments by Contracting Parties to contribute in a timely manner to the Caribbean Trust Fund and making arrangements with the Secretariat to honour outstanding pledges; and

Further acknowledging the importance of the need for the Secretariat and UNEP to provide efficient and effective services to the Contracting Parties of the Convention;

Recognizing that the strategic action points in the Strategic and Functional Review provide a valuable tool for improving the overall functioning of the Secretariat and the financial sustainability of the Trust Fund; and

Taking note of Clause 24 on administration of Amendment 1 dated 13 December 2014 to the Financial Rules for the Convention;

1. **Recognizes** the urgent need to strengthen and stabilize the financial situation of the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF) and **encourage** Contracting Parties, including through high-level political engagement, to make their annual contributions as early as possible in the financial year to enable adequate planning and budgeting by the Secretariat.
2. **Requests** the Secretariat to invoke Clause 24 on Administration of Amendment 1 dated 13 December 2014 to the "Financial Rules for the Convention" and work with Contracting Parties with outstanding contributions to the CTF to agree on individual debt-payment plans.
3. **Requests** the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to make the necessary provisions to extend the Caribbean Trust Fund until the next meeting of the Conference of Parties of the Cartagena Convention.
4. **Endorses** strategic action point 9 from the Strategic and Functional Review and **urges** Contracting Parties to support junior professional officers or other professional secondments to the Secretariat, in line with the UN policies, rules and procedures, as a supplementary resource to the existing capacity of the Secretariat.
5. **Proposes** that in light of the difficult financial realities of the Secretariat and the current lack of available funding for the next group of Intergovernmental Meetings, that these meetings should be convened

virtually during the next biennium, with the aim of reconvening physical meetings in the subsequent biennium. Contracting Parties further recognize the importance of convening in person meetings, in particular for the decision-making fora of the COPs, and **further requests** that if the financial situation of the Secretariat improves sufficiently during the biennium through improved contributions by Contracting Parties to the Caribbean Trust Fund and/or through extraordinary contributions for the convening of the meetings, that in person meetings of the COPs should be made a priority.

DECISION III

GOVERNANCE

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Acknowledging that Parties' views and stances should be dealt with in a balanced and equitable manner;

Noting the call by Contracting Parties for more transparency and accountability by the Secretariat; and

Further acknowledging the request of Contracting Parties to the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention and its three (3) Protocols to ensure that the governance arrangement is clear to all Contracting Parties;

1. **Encourages** the Secretariat to keep Contracting Parties informed of all memoranda of understanding (MOUs) processes and negotiations.
2. **Recommends** that UNEP provide further analysis and substantive input to the Contracting Parties on strategic actions of the review related to the financial sustainability of the Secretariat and financial reform.
3. **Notes the need for** stricter adherence to the Rules of Procedure for all meetings of the Cartagena Convention and its protocols.
4. **Requests** that the Secretariat, in collaboration with the four (4) Regional Activity Centers (RACs), UNEP HQ and members of the Regional Activity Networks (RANs), conduct a detailed review and analysis of the architecture of the general operations and funding source, and the organization with the Secretariat of the RACs and RANs including reviewing the current guidelines and associated decisions and host agreements for the RACs.
5. **Requests** that UNEP, through the Secretariat, provide an analysis on how they see the UNEP Regional Seas Programme and other Divisions supporting the work of the Secretariat.
6. **Requests** that the Bureau, in addition to preparing for the 20th IGM/17th COP to monitor the implementation of the work programme, report to Contracting Parties halfway through the biennium.
7. **Decides to** move forward with the organizational restructuring to align it to the work plan especially the new Secretariat staffing pattern and reclassification of posts, which is already reflected in the 2021-2022 Work Plan and Budget, attached.

DECISION IV

CEP STRATEGY

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Recognizing that the Caribbean Action Plan developed in 1983 and the associated strategy adopted in 1990 do not reflect many of the current regional and global issues and priorities;

Acknowledging the importance of having an updated strategy for the Caribbean Environment Programme that will serve to guide the future work of the Secretariat and enable greater integration of the Sub-Programmes;

Noting that several thematic strategies and action plans already exist and/or are under development by the Secretariat;

Further noting that the updated strategy would provide the overall framework for the further implementation of regional strategies and action plans and enable the Secretariat to respond to new and emerging issues as well as take advantage of new funding opportunities;

Welcoming the presentation by the Secretariat of the updated draft Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.22/Rev.1; and

Recognizing that the work of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat is contributing to the sustainable development of coastal and marine resources in an integrated manner and is directly related to the concepts of “blue economy” or “ocean-based economies” and that the most appropriate path towards a Blue Economy is full implementation of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols.

1. **Requests** that the Secretariat compile all comments received on the CEP Strategy to date and establish a working group to review and consider how best to incorporate these comments into the current draft, with a view to having formal adoption take place intersessionally no later than December 2021.
2. **Urges** the Secretariat to ensure that the finalization of the CEP Strategy is informed by the decisions of the 19th IGM and 16th COP.
3. **Encourages** the Secretariat to formulate the work that needs to be done under the Convention as essential to support and arrive at sustainable blue economies, but not to take on additional work streams, create working groups and utilize additional resources.

DECISION V

DECISIONS OF THE COPs

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Having reviewed the Reports, Recommendations and Decisions of the Meetings convened under the Caribbean Environment Programme since the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting;

Noting the Decisions of the Fifth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP5) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.43/3) and Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.44/3);

Further noting the need for collaboration between the AMEP and SPAW Sub-Programmes and the Regional Activity Centres in responding to recommendations and decisions of the Meetings; and

Welcoming the opportunity to have Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention which are not Parties to specific Protocols being able to attend those COP meetings as observers;

1. **Endorses** the Decisions of the Fifth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP5) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) in the Wider Caribbean Region, held virtually on 26 July 2021 as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.43/3.
2. **Endorses** the Decisions of the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP11) to the SPAW Protocol held virtually on 27 July 2021 as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.44/3.
3. **Encourages** the Secretariat to continue in its efforts to have further integration of the two sub-programmes through joint STACs, COPs and/or full representation of all Contracting Parties at meetings of the Protocols.

DECISION VI
RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Recognizing with gratitude the continuous contribution of the Governments of Curaçao (Kingdom of the Netherlands), the United States and Jamaica to the operational support of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, as well as the continuous funding support from many nations through the International Maritime Organization that enables RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe to conduct activities throughout the Region;

Noting the risk of oil spills and other contaminants in the Convention area from maritime activities and other pollution sources and the need to monitor for response and mitigation; and

Welcoming the presentation made by NOAA on their efforts to support Trinidad and Tobago's creation of a pilot Satellite Oil Spill Monitoring Programme;

1. **Urges** the Secretariat to continue to enhance the promotion of the work of the Centre and disseminate information on their activities and capabilities to Contracting Parties in the Wider Caribbean Region.
2. **Recommends** that the Secretariat strengthen collaboration in the region on oil spill monitoring.
3. **Requests** the Secretariat, RACs and other partner agencies to actively explore opportunities for replicating and upscaling training for detection of oil spills using satellite remote sensing technology as well as for other emerging pollutants.
4. **Encourages** those Contracting Parties in a position to do so, to commit human or financial resources to support the operations of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe.

DECISION VII

COORDINATION MECHANISM

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Noting the alignment between the vision of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Plus (CLME+) Strategic Action Programme and the work of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat;

Acknowledging the significant support received through Global Environment Facility (GEF) International Waters Projects such as the Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWEco), Testing a Prototype Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CReW), An integrated approach to water and wastewater management in the Wider Caribbean Region using innovative solutions and sustainable financing mechanisms (CReW+), Shared Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) and Catalysing Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+) for the work of the Secretariat and the recent approval by the GEF of the Project Information Form (PIF) for the project on Protecting and Restoring the Ocean's natural Capital, building Resilience and supporting region-wide Investments for sustainable Blue Socio-Economic development (PROCARIBE+), as a follow up to CLME+ to enhance ocean governance in the Wider Caribbean Region; and

Recognising the support for the work of the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention through the Coordination Mechanism;

1. **Requests** that the Secretariat continue to participate in the PROCARIBE+ project development process with a view to possible involvement as a partner executing agency for project activities that build on activities implemented under the previous CLME and CLME+ projects, dependent on available resources, and keep the Contracting Parties informed.
2. **Acknowledges** the Secretariat as an essential partner in the Coordination Mechanism, and encourage their participation in the Coordination Mechanism, once established, thus promoting collaboration and synergies in ocean governance in the region.

DECISION VIII

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE SECRETARIAT

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Recognizing the urgent need to strengthen and stabilize the financial situation of the Cartagena Convention Trust Fund;

Noting the recommendations from the Strategic and Functional Review of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat, conducted during the first half of 2021, to "assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the Secretariat in terms of organizational structure and function and the adequacy and sustainability of the financing of Secretariat operations to meet the needs of Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention";

Acknowledging the importance of efficient and effective services to the Contracting Parties of the Convention by the Secretariat and UNEP;

Intent on increasing transparency and accountability of the operations of the Secretariat; and

Acknowledging that Parties' views and positions should be considered and implemented in a balanced and equitable manner;

1. **Decides** on a revised staffing structure of the Secretariat, to fit within the available financial resources and ensure operational efficiency, by reclassifying three posts, under the Caribbean Trust Fund of the Coordinator from D1 to P5, that of G6 Finance and Budget Assistant to G6 Administrative Assistant and that of G2 Driver to G3 Driver Team Assistant.
2. **Requests** the Coordinator as a matter of priority, and in close consultation with UNEP HQ, to put in place the new organizational structure of the secretariat, ensuring that responsibilities, delegation of authority, reporting lines and accountability of each position on the organization chart are clear and coherent.
3. **Requests** that the Coordinator, in close consultation with UNEP and UNON Human Resources, ensure that the competencies and skillsets in job descriptions of staff are up-to-date and that training needs of staff are identified and rationalized.
4. **Requests** that the work of the Bureau be guided by established terms of reference and rules of procedure of the Convention and that its work be conducted transparently and inclusively. The terms of reference of the Bureau and Steering Committee Meetings of the Oil Spills Protocol should be shared with all Contracting Parties no later than two (2) weeks after the meeting, thus increasing Parties' opportunity to engage in its work through the members of the Bureau. The Coordinator should be supported by secretariat staff in the servicing of the Bureau meetings.
5. **Requests** that the Secretariat, in collaboration with UNEP headquarters, continues to engage with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to ensure involvement of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat in more marine projects that support implementation of the Convention and protocols and that Parties through the Bureau or at COP meetings be informed of progress.
6. **Requests** that the Secretariat present a resource mobilisation strategy to the next Conference of the Parties that would build on UNEP's Resource Mobilisation Strategy and the action points of the Strategic and Functional Review, including increasing coordination and communication with Contracting Parties

that have arrears and contributions of Contracting Parties in the form of secondment of Junior Professional Officers/Associate Experts.

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DECISION IX CARTAGENA REPORTING TEMPLATE

The 16th meeting of the COP to the Cartagena Convention:

Having reviewed the progress of the Caribbean Environment Programme during 2019-2020;

Recognizing the need for the continuing development and implementation of the Caribbean Environment Programme for the 2021-2022 biennium and beyond;

Welcoming the progress made by several Parties towards ratification of the LBS and SPAW Protocols;

Noting the importance of the Cartagena Convention Reports as a tool for monitoring progress in implementing the obligations of the Cartagena Convention by Contracting Parties;

Acknowledging the efforts taken by Contracting Parties to submit biennial reports to the Sixteenth Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention; and

Further welcoming efforts by the Secretariat to update the reporting template and provide in an online format that will enable easier reporting by Contracting Parties;

1. **Strongly urges** Governments in the Wider Caribbean Region to ratify the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols.
2. **Encourages** all Contracting Parties to submit future biennial reports in a timely manner through the online reporting platform or by e-mail.
3. **Also encourages** the Secretariat, dependent on available resources, to improve the reporting template's online format taking into account formats used by other Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Regional Seas Convention Secretariats and Action Plans.

ANNEX V: INDICATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE BIENNNIUM 2021-2022

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INDICATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE BIENNNIUM 2021-2022

COUNTRY	2021	2022
ANGUILLA	12,791	12,791
ANTIGUA and BARBUDA	12,791	12,791
ARUBA	11,663	11,663
COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS	12,791	12,791
BARBADOS	12,791	12,791
BELIZE	11,663	11,663
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	7,547	7,547
CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS	6,000	6,000
CAYMAN ISLANDS	7,101	7,101
COLOMBIA	22,914	22,914
COSTA RICA	13,917	13,917
CUBA	24,059	24,059
CURACAO	10,000	10,000
-COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA	12,791	12,791
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	15,044	15,044
FRANCE	291,597	291,597
GRENADA	12,791	12,791
GUATEMALA	13,917	13,917
GOVERNMENT OF THE CO-OP REPUBLIC OF GUYANA (GCRG)	12,791	12,791
HAITI	12,791	12,791
HONDURAS	12,791	12,791
JAMAICA	18,514	18,514
MEXICO	40,000	40,000
MONTSERRAT	3,430	3,430
NICARAGUA	12,791	12,791
PANAMA	13,917	13,917
ST KITTS and NEVIS	3,430	3,430
ST LUCIA	11,663	11,663
ST MAARTEN		
ST VINCENT and THE GRENADINES	11,663	11,663
SURINAME	12,791	12,791
TRINIDAD and TOBAGO	15,044	15,044
TURKS and CAICOS ISLANDS	6,174	6,174
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	393,975	393,975
VENEZUELA	170,375	170,375
	1,264,308	1,264,308

ANNEX VI: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
<u>Working Documents</u>		
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/1	Provisional Agenda	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/2	Provisional Annotated Agenda	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/3	Draft Work Plan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the 2021-2022 biennium	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/4	<i>Document on the Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE)– A Crucial Solution for a Sustainable Future in the Caribbean</i>	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/5	<i>Decisions of the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (to be prepared during the Meeting)</i>	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/6	<i>Report of the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (to be prepared after the Meeting)</i>	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.22 Rev.1	Draft Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Environment Programme and Network 2021-2030	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/4a Rev.1	Draft Strategy and Work Plan for LBS RAC IMA 2021-2026	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/4b Rev.1	Draft Strategy and Work Plan for LBS RAC CIMAB 2021-2026	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.25	Revised Template for national reporting on the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols	
<u>Information Documents</u>		
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.1	Provisional List of Documents	

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.2	Provisional List of Participants	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.3	Strategic and Functional Review of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat	

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.4	Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on the Implementation of the 2019-2020 Work Plan and Budget of the Caribbean Environment Programme	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.5	Report of the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee and President of the Bureau of Contracting Parties	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.7	Summary of National Reports of Contracting Parties to the Convention 2019-2020	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.8	Regional Strategy on Sustainable Ocean-based Economies in the Wider Caribbean Region	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.43/INF.3	Protecting and Restoring the Ocean's Natural Capital, building Resilience and supporting region-wide Investments for Sustainable Blue Socio-Economic development (UNDP GEF PROCARIBE+) PIF	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.41/INF.10/ Rev.1	Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.11	RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe Report of Activities for 2019-2020	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.44/3	Decisions of the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, 27 July 2021 (virtual)	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/INF.12	A Pilot Program for Satellite Oil Spill monitoring for the Caribbean Region	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.42/INF.6	Communications Strategy of the United Nations Environment Caribbean Environment Programme for 2021-2022	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.41/INF.5	Pollution Research Strategy for the UNDP/GEF Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystems.	

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Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.41/INF.9	The GEF CReW+ Project Proposal- "Upscaling and enhancing the experience of the Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management to the wider Caribbean promoting through an integrated approach of innovative technical solutions and financing mechanisms."	
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, Roatan, Honduras, 3 June 2019	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/9	Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean, Virtual, 17-19 March 2020 and 14-15 April 2021	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/8	Recommendations of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Virtual, 17-19 March 2020 and 14-15 April 2021	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.41/3	Decisions of the Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Roatan, Honduras, 4 June 2019	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/6	Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities in the Wider Caribbean, Virtual, 15- 17 March 2021.	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/5	Recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities in the Wider Caribbean, Virtual, 15- 17 March 2021.	

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
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	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.4	Paper on the Coordination Mechanism- CLME+	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/INF.7	Paper on the State of the Marine Environment and Associated Economies (SOMEE)- Collaborative Development and Institutionalization of a Regional Integrated Reporting Mechanism	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.4	Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe: Operations and Budget for the period 2019-2020	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.35	Sargassum White Paper 2021	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.10	Report on Establishing a Formal Network of Geospatial Information Platforms.	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.3	Status of Activities of the SPAW Sub-Programme for 2019-2020	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.42/INF.10	RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe Long-Term Strategic Plan 2015-2025	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.4	Status of Activities of the AMEP Sub-Programme 2019-2020	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.5	Report of Activities for the LBS Regional Activity Centres - IMA (Trinidad and Tobago) and CIMAB (Cuba) for 2019-2020	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.6/ Rev.1	Report of the Ad-Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment 2019-2020	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.7	Report on the work on the Caribbean Node for Marine Litter (2019-2020)	

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.37/INF.7 Rev.3	The UNDP GEF Caribbean and North Brazil Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+) Project and its joint implementation through the AMEP and SPAW Sub-Programmes	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.37/INF.9	Project document for GEF-funded Integrating Land, Water, and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean SIDS (GEF IWEco)	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.8	State of the Convention Area (SOCAR) Report for the Wider Caribbean Region	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.21/Rev.1	Regional Project Proposal for Plastics Management in Caribbean SIDS	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.43/INF.5	GEF PIF - Reduce marine plastics and plastic pollution in Latin American and Caribbean cities through a circular economy approach	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.43/INF.4	GEF IW:LEARN 5: Supporting Portfolio Coordination Within and Beyond the International Waters Focal Area, particularly in Small Island Developing States, Through Knowledge Sharing, Information Management, Partnership Building and Programmatic Guidance Services	
<u>Reference Documents</u>		
UNEP XXII LAC-B Dec I, 2021	Bridgetown Declaration: XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean	
UNEP, 2016	Regional Seas Strategic Direction (2017-2020)	
UNEP, 2021	Directory of Focal Points of the Caribbean Environment Programme	
UNEP, 2012	Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills, Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife and the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities	

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP, 2010	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)	
UNEP, 2010	Financial Rules for the Cartagena Convention, its Caribbean Environment Programme and Terms of Reference for the Caribbean Trust Fund	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.36 CRP.1	Amendment to the Financial Rules for the Cartagena Convention	
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.24/CRP.9/Rev.1	Guidelines for Establishment and Operation of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks for the Cartagena Convention	
UNEP/EA.5/3/Rev.1	UNEP Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2025	
UNEP/CPR/144/7d/2019	Draft United Nations Environment Programme's Marine and Coastal Strategy to 2030	
UNEP WBRS18/INF9 2016	Regional Seas Core Indicators Set	
UNEP RS-SDG14, 2020	Regional Seas and SDG 14: The contribution of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans to a Healthy Ocean	

ANNEX VII: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Melissa Meade (Secondary contact-National Focal Point)	Anguilla	Chief Natural Resources Officer Department of Natural Resources	Tel: 2644970217 Email: melissa.meade@gov.ai	Ms. Chanelle Petty-Barrett Permanent Secretary Ministry of Economic Development, Investment, Commerce, Information Technology and Natural Resources chanelle.pettybarrett@gov.ai
	Linroy Christian (LBS focal point)	Antigua and Barbuda	Microbiologist Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment	Tel.: 268-562-1273 E-mail: lchristian@apuainet.ag ; linroyc@gmail.com	Ambassador Diann Black Director Department of Environment Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment dcblack11@gmail.com
	Oriana Wouters	Aruba	Policy Advisor Nature & Environment Bernhradstraat 75 San Nicolas, Aruba	Tel. E-mail: oriana.wouters@dnm-aruba.org	Roraima Arends Advisor Office of the Minister of Spatial Development, Infrastructure and Environment Roraima.Arends@gobierno.aw
	Hon. Adrian Forde (Head of Delegation)	Barbados	Minister Ministry of Environment and National Beautification	Tel: 1 (246) 535-4353 E-mail: menb@barbados.gov.bb	Ms.. Daphne Kellman Permanent Secretary Ministry of Environment and National Beautification daphne.kellman@barbados.gov.bb
	Kim Downes Agard (SPAW Focal Point)	Barbados	Senior Environmental Officer Ministry of Environment and National Beautification 10 Floor Warrens Tower II Warrens, St. Michael Barbados	Tel: 1 246-535-4385 E-mail: kimdownesagard@barbados.gov.bb	

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Anthony Headley (LBS Focal Point)	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	
	Fabian Hinds	Barbados	Coastal Planner Coastal Zone Management Unit 8th Floor, Warrens Tower II Warrens, St. Michael Barbados	Tel: 1 246- 233-8317 Email: fhinds@coastal.gov.bb	
	Adrian Bellamy	Barbados	Assistant Project Coordinator Ministry of Environment and National Beautification 10 Floor Warrens Tower II Warrens, St. Michael Barbados	Tel: 1 246- 843-7420 Email: adrian.bellamy@barbados.gov.bb	
	Rohan Payne	Barbados	Assistant Project Coordinator Ministry of Environment and National Beautification 10 Floor Warrens Tower II Warrens, St. Michael Barbados	Tel: 1 246-535-4391 Email: rohan.payne@barbados.gov.bb	
	Dr. Leo Brewster	Barbados	Director Coastal Zone Management Unit Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy		
	Ann-Marie Eversley	Barbados	Senior Marine Pollution Officer Environmental Protection Department Ministry of Environment and National Beautification	Tel: 2465354620 Email: ann-marie.eversley@epd.gov.bb	
	Wilber Sabido	Belize	Chief Forest Officer Forest Department Belmopan, Belize	Tel: 501-822-1524 Email: cfo@forest.gov.bz	Martin Alegria Chief Environmental Officer Department of the Environment doe.ceo@environment.gov.bz ; envirodept@environment.gov.bz

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Hon. Vincent Wheatley (Head of Delegation)	British Virgin Islands	Minister Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration	Tel: 284-468-2147 Email: vinwheatley@gov.vg	
	Joseph Smith Abbott (National focal point)	British Virgin Islands	Permanent Secretary (Acting) Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration	Tel: 284-468-2147 Email: Jsmith-abbott@gov.vg	
	Mervin Hastings	British Virgin Islands	Sr Marine Biologist Ministry of Natural Resources Labour & Immigration	Tel: (284) 468-2702 Email: mhastings@gov.vg	
	Sonia Angelica Jurado Caicedo Jurado (Head of Delegation)	Colombia	Environmental Affairs Coordination Advisor Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Tel: 57 3214834045 Email: sonia.jurado@cancilleria.gov.co	Juliana Arciniegas Rojas Coordinator- Environmental Affairs Group juliana.arciniegas@cancilleria.gov.co
	Ana Maria González-Delgadillo (SPAW focal point)	Colombia	Professional Directorate of Marine, Coastal and Aquatic Resources Affairs Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	Tel: 3162796022 Email: amgonzalez@minambiente.gov.co	
	Heins Clayton Bent Hooker	Colombia	Specialized Professional / Head of delegation Support Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	Tel: 3107681125 Email: hbent@minambiente.gov.co	
	Ulises Fernandez Gomez (National focal point)	Cuba	Principal Multilateral Specialist Directorate of International Relations Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment	Tel: 5352858992 Email: ulises@citma.gob.cu	
	Pedro Julio Ruiz Hernandez (LBS focal point)	Cuba	Specialist Directorate of International Relations Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment	Tel: 5352144530 Email: pruiz@citma.gob.cu	
	Yadira González Colombie	Cuba	Principal Multilateral Specialist Directorate of International Relations Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment	Tel: 52791096 Email: Yadira.gonzalez@citma.gob.cu	

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Jose Manuel Mateo Feliz (Head of Delegation)	Dominican Republic	Director of Biodiversity Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources Calle Cayetano Germosen, esq. Luperon Avenue, El Pedregal Sector National District, R.D..	Tel: 809-501-4182 Email: Jose.Mateo@ambiente.gob.do	
	Nina Lysenko (Secondary contact-national focal point)	Dominican Republic	Director of Marine Resources Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources	Tel: 809- 567-4300 EXT.7156 Email: nina.lysenko@ambiente.gob.do	Milagros De Camps Vice Minister for International Cooperation Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Milagros.DeCamps@ambiente.gob.do
	Juan Luis Gonzalez	Dominican Republic	Professional Directorate of Marine, Coastal and Aquatic Resources Affairs Head of the Marine Resources Management Department	Tel: 829-853-2754 Email: juan.gonzalez@ambiente.gob.do	
	Antony De Oleo	Dominican Republic	Environmental Compliance Analyst Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	Tel: 809-299-5043 Email: Antony.DeOleo@ambiente.gob.do	
	Rosa de la Cruz	Dominican Republic	Director International Conventions and Treaties Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	Tel: 8096097824 Email: Rosa.delacruz@ambiente.gob.do	
	Clément Payeur (Head of Delegation & national focal point)	France	Global Ocean Protection Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs	Tel: 01 43 17 70 52 Email: clement.payeur@diplomatie.gouv.fr	
	Benoît Rodrigues (National focal point)	France	Marine Protection Policy Advisor Ministry for an Ecological Transition / Ministry of the Sea	Tel: 33667582560 Email: benoit.rodrigues@developpement-durable.gouv.fr	
	Luisa Fernandez (Secondary Technical focal point)	Guatemala	Advisor Ecosystems. Department Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	Tel: (502) 30032001 Email: lmfernandezbio@gmail.com	Fredy Antonio Chiroy Barreno Vice Minister of Natural Resources and Climate Change fachiroy@marn.gob.gt ; ivortiz@marn.gob.gt ; jcdiaz@marn.gob.gt

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Gabriela Castellanos	Guatemala	Head of the Ecosystems Department Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	Tel: (502)5511-5343 Email: gabrielacastellanos.marn@gmail.com	
	Brenda Liana Pocasangre Pérez	Guatemala	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Non-Advisory International Cooperation Unit	Tel: 50256155399 Email: bipocasangre@marn.gob.gt	
	Diana Fernandes	Guyana	Multilateral Environmental Agreements Coordinator, Department of Environment, Ministry of the Presidency	Tel: +592 225-5467 Email: dianafernandes2300@gmail.com	
	Karen Small	Guyana	Senior Environmental Officer Environmental Protection Agency	Tel: +592 225-5467 Email: ksmall@epaguyana.org	
	Stacy Lord (Head of Delegation)	Guyana	Senior Environmental Officer. Multilateral Environmental Agreements Programme Area.	Tel: +592 225 5467 9 ext 2328: Email: slord@epaguyana.org	Ndibi Schwiwers Director Department of Environment - Ministry of the Presidency nschwiwers@motp.gov.gy
	Hon. Liliam Lizeth Rivera Hipp (Head of Delegation & national focal point)	Honduras	Minister Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment	Tel: 504 9812-6374 Email: cooperacionserna@gmail.com	
	Marnie Xiomara Portillo Rodriguez (SPAW focal point)	Honduras	Technical assistant Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment	Tel: +50488362986 Email: portillomarnie@yahoo.com	Additional contact: Dr. Rosibel Martinez Arriaga Director-External Cooperation Ministry of Environment rmarriaga.miambiente@gmail.com
	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	

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Carlos Alberto Thompson Flores (LBS focal point)	Honduras	CESCOO Director Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment CESCOO building, Paseo Juana Lainez 50 mts. South of the National Stadium, Tegucigalpa, Honduras	Tel: +50488008892 Email: carlosalbertothompson@yahoo.com	
	Brenda Darlenne Flores Bustillo	Honduras	Environmental Analyst My environment Colonia Los Robles Block B Honduras	Tel: 504 89225762 Email: bdarlaflares@gmail.com	
	Scarlett Julissa Inestroza Colindres	Honduras	Environmental Analyst General Directorate of Biodiversity, Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment	Tel: Email: caly_2_3@hotmail.com	
	Richard Nelson (secondary- LBS focal point)	Jamaica	Senior Manager National Environment & Planning Agency 10 & 11 Caledonia Avenue, Kingston 5, Jamaica	Tel: 876 754 7540 Email: rnelson@nepa.gov.jm	
	Lisa Kirkland	Jamaica	Manager Pollution Monitoring & Assessment National Environment & Planning Agency 10 & 11 Caledonia Avenue, Kingston 5	Tel: 876 754 7540 Email: lkirkland@nepa.gov.jm	
	Gillian Guthrie (National focal point)	Jamaica	Chief Technical Director (Acting) Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change	Tel: 876 633 7500 Email: gillian.guthrie@mhurecc.gov.jm	
	Valeria Cruz Blancas (Head of Delegation)	Mexico	Director of Environment of Climate Change Vice Ministry for Global Affairs and Humans Rights, Global Affairs Division	Tel: 521 55 32756415 Email: vcruz@sre.gob.mx	
	Luz María Ortiz	Mexico	Coordinator of Multilateral Environmental Agreements Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	Tel: 521 55 17989738 Email: luz.ortiz@semarnat.gob.mx	
	Alfonso de la Torre	Mexico	Director for Gray Agenda Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	Email: sstg@sre.gob.mx ; dgtglobales@sre.gob.mx	
	Santos Roberto Hernández López	Mexico	Deputy Director of Living Marine Resources Vice Ministry for Global Affairs and Humans Rights, Global Affairs Division	Tel: 521 55 36895100 xt.7242 Email: shernandez@sre.gob.mx	
	Rene Castellon (National focal point)	Nicaragua	Director of biodiversity Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources	Tel: (505) 85409995 Email: rcastellon@marena.gob.ni	

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Marino Eugenio Abrego (LBS focal point)	Panama	Head of Department Conservation of Coastal and Marine Resources Ministry of Environment Panama	Tel: 507 6150-2101 Email: meabrego@miambiente.gob.pa	
	Rosas Osvaldo	Panama	Attorney at Law Ministry of Environment	Tel: +507 5000855 Email: orosas@miambiente.gob.pa	
	Eavin Parry (Head of Delegation)	St. Kitts and Nevis	Environmental Scientist Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment and Cooperatives	Tel: 1-869-466-8535 Email: Eavin.Parry@gov.kn	
	Vicia Woods	St. Kitts and Nevis	Biosafety Officer Ministry of Environment and Cooperatives	Tel: 18697630010 Email: vicia.woods@gov.kn	
	Lynelle Bonaparte	St. Kitts and Nevis	Conservation Officer Department of Environment	Tel: 18697644071 Email: bonaparte_lzb@hotmail.com	
	Lavina Alexander (LBS focal point)	Saint Lucia	Sustainable Development and Environment Officer Department of Sustainable Development	Tel: 7587234998 Email: lalexander@sde.gov.lc	Annette Rattigan-Leo Chief Sustainable Development & Environment Officer annetteleo.sde@gmail.com
	Ildiko Gilders (SPAW focal point)	Sint Maarten	Policy Advisor Nature and Environment Government of Sint Maarten	Tel: +1 (721) 553-4840 Email: Ildiko.Gilders@sintmaartengov.org	Altisha Pantophlet Policy Support Officer Cabinet of the Minister of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Altisha.Pantophlet@sintmaartengov.org
	Rochelle Newbold (Head of Delegation)	The Bahamas	Director The Department of Environmental Planning & Protection 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@depp.gov.bs	Mr. David Cates Permanent Secretary Ministry of the Environment and Housing davidcates@bahamas.gov.bs
	Danielle Cartwright	The Bahamas	IWECO Bahamas Biological Field Consultant The Department of Environmental Planning & Protection 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: dcartwright@depp.gov.bs	

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Herbert Pinder	The Bahamas	ABS Project Consultant The Department of Environmental Planning & Protection 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: hpinder@depp.gov.bs	
	Melissa Ingraham	The Bahamas	National Project Coordinator The Department of Environmental Planning & Protection 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: mingraham@depp.gov.bs	
	Nicholas Archer	The Bahamas	Biological Field Consultant The Department of Environmental Planning & Protection 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: narcher@depp.gov.bs	
	Yoeri de Vries (Head of Delegation)	The Netherlands (Caribbean Netherlands)	Policy Officer Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands, P.O. Box 357, Kralendijk, Bonaire, Caribbean Netherlands	Tel. 599 715 8395 Email: yoeri.devries@rijksdienstcn.com	Liz ter Kuile Senior Policy Advisor Polar Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Inclusive Green Growth (IGG) liz-ter.kuile@minbuza.nl
	Darryl Banjoo (Head of Delegation)	Trinidad and Tobago	Acting Director Institute of Marine Affairs Hilltop Lane Chaguaramas	Tel: (868) 634-4291 Email: dbanjoo@ima.gov.tt	Joanne Deoraj Permanent Secretary Ministry of Planning and Development joanne.deoraj@planning.gov.tt
	Denny Dipchansingh (SPAW focal point)	Trinidad and Tobago	Conservator of Forrest Forestry Division Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries Long Circular St. James, PoS	Tel: 1 (868) 729-9826 Email: ddipchansingh@yahoo.com	
	Van Reidhead (Head of Delegation)	United States of America	International Relations Officer U.S. Department of State	Tel: Email: ReidheadVE@state.gov	Mary Suzanne Archuleta ArchuletaMS@state.gov

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Stephanie Adrian (LBS focal point)	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	
	Nina Young	United States of America	Foreign Affairs Specialist National Marine Fisheries Service National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Tel: 301-427-8383 Email: Nina.Young@noaa.gov	
	Samantha Dowdell (SPAW focal point)	United States of America	International Relations Specialist National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Tel : 202-384-4433 Email: samantha.dowdell@noaa.gov	
	Gonzalo Cid	United States of America	International Act. Coordinator NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Marine Protected Areas Center, 1305 East Hwy. Room 11606, Silver Spring, MD 20910 United States of America	Tel. 1 240-533-0644 E-mail: Gonzalo.Cid@noaa.gov	
	Iris Lowery	United States of America	Attorney-Advisor National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Tel: 202-309-6085 Email: iris.lowery@noaa.gov	
	Angela Somma	United States of America	Chief, Endangered Species Division National Marine Fisheries Service National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Tel: Email: angela.somma@noaa.gov	
	Xiaofang 'Bonnie' Zhu	United States of America	Outreach Lead/International Training Focal Point/ Physical Scientist National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Tel: 17864736922 Email: xiaofang.zhu@noaa.gov	
	Kristen Koyama	United States of America	Endangered Species Recovery Coordinator National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service	Tel: 301-427-8456 Email: kristen.koyama@noaa.gov	
	Emily Pierce	United States of America	Attorney-Advisor U.S. Department of State	Tel: Email: PierceER@state.gov	
	Alicia Cheripka	United States of America	Program Analyst National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Email: alicia.cheripka@noaa.gov	

	Participant	Country	Title /Address	Tel/Email	National Focal Point
	Betzabey Motta (SPAW focal point)	Venezuela	Director of Prevention of Threats to Biological Diversity Ministry of Popular Power for Ecosocialism	Tel: 58 04142540161 Email: prevencion.dgdb.ve@gmail.com	Mariana Hernández Director General Office of Integration and International Affairs, Ministry of People's Power for Ecosocialism oi.iai.minec@gmail.com
	Carlos González	Venezuela	Professional II Ministry of Popular Power for Ecosocialism	Tel: +584140279718 Email: carlosgonzalez.oi.iai@gmail.com	

OBSERVERS

OBSERVERS			
	Participant	Organisation	Contact Information

DRAFT

REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTERS			
	Participant	Organisation	Contact Information
	Darryl Banjoo	RAC IMA Trinidad and Tobago	Acting Director Institute of Marine Affairs Hilltop Lane Chaguaramas Tel: 868-634-4291 E-mail: dbanjoo@ima.gov.tt
	Marlen Perez	RAC CIMAB Cuba	Assistant Researcher and Coordinator of RAC Centre of Research and Environmental Management of Transport (CIMAB) Tel. : +53 5211 4641 E-mail : Mp420ale@gmail.com ; marlen@cimab.transnet.cu
	Lukas Rodriguez	RAC REIMPEITC Curaçao	IMO Consultant Aviation & Meteorology Building Tel: +1-409-749-7676 E-mail: lrodriguez@cep.unep.org
	Sandrine Pivard	SPAW-RAC Guadeloupe	Director Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Parc national de la Guadeloupe - Tel: + 590 (0)5 90 99 46 86 E-mail: sandrine.pivard@developpement-durable.gouv.fr
	Fabien Barthelat	SPAW-RAC Guadeloupe	Program Manager Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Parc national de la Guadeloupe Tel: +590-590 99 46 90 E-mail: fabien.barthelat@developpement-durable.gouv.fr
	Geraldine Conruyt	SPAW-RAC Guadeloupe	CARI'MAM Project Coordinator Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Parc national de la Guadeloupe Tel: +590 (0)5 90 99 43 43 E-mail: geraldine.conruyt@developpement-durable.gouv.fr
	Marius Dragin	SPAW-RAC Guadeloupe	Assistant Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Parc national de la Guadeloupe Tel. + 590 (0)5 90 99 43 43 E-mail: marius.dragin@developpement-durable.gouv.fr
	Marine Didier	SPAW-RAC Guadeloupe	Project officer Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Parc national de la Guadeloupe Tel. + 590 (0)5 90 99 43 43 E-mail: marine.didier@developpement-durable.gouv.fr

	Elizabeth Fries	SPA-W-RAC Guadeloupe	Support Officer Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Parc national de la Guadeloupe	Tel. + 590 (0)5 90 99 43 43 E-mail: elisabeth.fries@developpement-durable.gouv.fr
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UNEP HEADQUARTERS
Nairobi, Kenya

	Joyce Msuya	UNEP Deputy Executive Director	joyce.Msuya@un.org
	Susan Gardner	Director, Ecosystems Division	susan.gardner@un.org
	Kerstin Stendahl	Head, Ecosystems Integration Branch	kerstin.stendahl@un.org
	Annie Muchai	Chief of Administrative Services	annie.muchai@un.org
	Nancy Soi	Programme Management Officer	nancy.soi@un.org

CARTAGENA CONVENTION SECRETARIAT
UNEP CEP
14-20 Port Royal Street
Kingston, Jamaica
Tel: +876-922-9267 / Fax: +876-922-9292
E-mail: unep-cartagenaconvention@un.org

	Lorna Inniss	Coordinator	lorna.inniss@un.org
	Christopher Corbin	Programme Officer (AMEP)	christopher.corbin@un.org
	Clementiene Pinder	Administrative and Fund Management Officer	pinderc@un.org
	Ileana Lopez	Programme Management Officer (SPAW)	ileana.lopez@un.org
	Georgina Singh	Team Assistant (CETA)	georgina.singh@un.org
	Jhenelle Barrett	Programme Management Assistant (AMEP)	jhenelle.barrett@un.org
	Tamoy Singh	Programme Management Assistant (SPAW)	tamoy.singh@un.org
	Shamene Parker Millen	Programme Management Assistant (IWEco Project)	shamene.parker@un.org
	Tracey Tucker	Finance Assistant	tracy.tucker@un.org
	Terrike Brown	Team Assistant	terrike.brown@un.org
	Donna Henry-Hernandez	Programme Management Assistant (IWEco Project)	donna.hernandez@un.org

ANNEX VIII: OPENING REMARKS

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Opening Session

Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

Virtual Meeting. 28th July 2021

By Her Excellency Liliam Rivera Hipp, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment (Honduras)

Salutations

Mr. Chair

- Honourable Minister Kirk Humphrey, Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy of Barbados
- Honourable Parnel Charles Jr., Minister of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change of Jamaica
- Other Honourable Ministers virtually present today and your delegations,
- Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UN Environment Programme
- Representatives of Donor Governments
- Representatives of International Organisations
- Members of the UN Country Team in Jamaica
- Partner Organisations
- Directors of the Regional Activity Centres
- Coordinator and Staff of the Secretariat
- Specially Invited Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure today to greet you on behalf of the members of the Bureau of the Cartagena Convention and the Monitoring Committee for the Caribbean Action Plan, as well as on my own behalf, and to join with our Coordinator to welcome you all to this Conference of Parties. The last biennium heralded an unprecedented time for countries globally, and the Wider Caribbean Region is no exception.

Since the Fifteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention held in a beautiful part of my country, Roatan, Honduras, in June 2019, considerable effort has been put forward by the Secretariat staff and the Bureau, to support the implementation of the approved work plan and budget, as well as explore governance issues that would improve implementation. We will report on the work of the Bureau during this meeting. However, looking back towards our previous COP, we never anticipated the COVID-19 crisis, which is still very much affecting our societies, and we are conscious that further efforts are needed to ensure the sustainable development of the Wider Caribbean.

Honduras continues to work with the Secretariat on projects and activities to promote regional co-operation for

the protection and development of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) and its long-term objective of achieving sustainable development of marine and coastal resources in the WCR through effective, integrated management that allows for economic growth and sustainable livelihoods.

During the meeting of the last biennium, the Government of Honduras provide in-kind contributions estimated at US\$150,000 to host the Cartagena Convention's Conference of Parties Meetings in Roatán, Honduras in July 2019. Given the economic challenges of our region, as well as the critical nature of the Convention's work, all parties must seek such creative opportunities to support the Secretariat, in-kind and in-cash.

We are still very much the new party to the Convention, having become the 26th country to ratify the Cartagena Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region and the 14th country to ratify the LBS Protocol and the 17th country to ratify SPAW.

Since ratification, we have become much more engaged with the Secretariat, at all levels. I have engaged with the Coordinator, Ms. Lorna Inniss, both on the national development aspirations of Honduras, but also on the regional priorities for the Central American countries. We are very pleased with the strengthened relationship, and we trust that the Secretariat will engage even more with SICA during this coming biennium, on matters of mutual importance.

As part of our engagement, we are benefitting, along with other countries and small island developing states, from the GEF CReW+ Project developed and now being implemented by the Secretariat.

The Mesoamerican Reef along the coasts of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras is the largest barrier reef in the Western Hemisphere and the second largest in the world. For Honduras, the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems. services of the Mesoamerican Reef is critical to our children's future, and together with our Cartagena Convention partners, we worked on a programme to develop a financing mechanism to improve emergency response actions and restoration of key sites in this area. These ecosystems. provide essential ecosystem services and tangible and intangible benefits to adjacent coastal communities and countries.

Honduras has also supported the Cartagena Convention Secretariat in leading discussions regarding the development of a new Strategy that would have as one of its key objectives ocean-based economies or Sustainable Blue Economy, a framework and approach that was discussed during the Blue Economy Summit that took place in association with the last COP in 2019.

- The summit called for effective actions that enable the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal resources towards the sustainable development of countries in the region, a mandate that is harmonized with the Cartagena Convention's work.
- Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, regional policymakers are urgently calling for national roll-out of Sustainable Ocean-Based Economies. This is more crucial than ever to ensure an expansion of the sustainability capacity of each Caribbean country, as they seek to diversify Caribbean economies away from an overdependence on tourism.

A unique feature of the Wider Caribbean Region is the presence of 22 Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the largest number of SIDS in any of the world's Large Marine Ecosystems. It is also the region with the highest number of maritime boundaries in the world. This means that the marine resources as well as the environmental problems are common to all of us and require a regional response within the legal framework of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols.

In our efforts to build back better after the Coronavirus pandemic, together, and more sustainably, we must work hand-in-hand, for the protection and development of the marine assets of the Wider Caribbean Region. These *exceptional times* require *exceptional action* on our part, as Member States. Let us, during this meeting, meet in the spirit of compromise, to approve decisions in the best interests of our countries and our neighbours also.

Thank you.

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Opening Session

Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

Virtual Meeting. 28th July 2021

By The Honourable Pearnel Charles Jnr., Minister of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change (Jamaica)

Salutations

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

- Her Excellency Liliam Rivera Hipp, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Honduras
- Honourable Minister Kirk Humphrey, Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy of Barbados
- Other Honourable Ministers virtually present today and your delegations,
- Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UN Environment Programme
- Representatives of Donor Governments
- Representatives of International Organisations
- Members of the UN Country Team in Jamaica
- Partner Organisations
- Directors of the Regional Activity Centres
- Coordinator and Staff of the Secretariat
- Specially Invited Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government of Jamaica, permit me to convey my appreciation to the United Nations Environment Programme's Cartagena Convention Secretariat, for convening this important regional intergovernmental meeting – IGM19 through virtual means, despite the overwhelming challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. These are indeed unprecedented times for countries globally, and the Wider Caribbean Region is no exception.

The Government of Jamaica is pleased to have supported the Wider Caribbean Region, for the last 35 years, through the hosting arrangements for the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention. The Jamaican Government, in 1986, recognised the critical importance of protecting and developing the Region's fragile and vulnerable marine and coastal resources for the strengthening of sustainable livelihoods. It was for this reason, that we agreed to the arrangements for the hosting of the Secretariat of this comprehensive regional Multilateral Environmental Agreement, in our island's capital city – Kingston.

Jamaica throughout the years and like many other Member States of the Convention, have benefitted from several projects which have enabled us to meet our obligations to the Convention and its Protocols. Some previous UNEP-

facilitated projects which Jamaica has benefitted from include:

- Integrating Watershed and Coastal Areas Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (GEF IWCAM) Project;
- Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CReW);
- the Trash Free Waters Initiative; and
- The Sustainable Management of the Shared Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) and Adjacent Regions Project.

A more recent initiative, The Integrating Water, Land, and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (GEF-IWEco) Project, builds on the work of previous initiatives to address water, land, and biodiversity resource management as well as climate change in ten participating countries including Jamaica. US\$88.7 million in cash has been mobilised through this Project towards building resilience against environmental degradation in the Caribbean region; moreover, directly impacting over twenty-seven million lives. I note that Jamaica is monetarily benefitting from US\$ 3,114,685 from the Global Environment Facility, for the execution of the project entitled 'Biodiversity Mainstreaming in Coastal Landscapes within the Negril Environmental Protection Area of Jamaica' - the largest of the eight national sub-projects under IWEco. This project, which is being implemented over a 4-year period, focuses upon the Negril Great Morass, which is the second largest wetland in Jamaica and one of the largest natural coastal wetland ecosystems in the Caribbean.

To this end, under my tenure as Minister, Jamaica renews its commitment to the Cartagena Convention, and will work towards the long-delayed ratification of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife. With Jamaica having the highest number of endemic birds and plants of any Caribbean Island, biodiversity protection and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity is of utmost importance of our Government. In our efforts to achieve environmental sustainability as one way of minimising the expected impacts of climate change, we will initiate dialogue with the Secretariat to accelerate progress towards SPAW ratification.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, our lives have become more dynamic. We have been forced to alter our lifestyles and our livelihoods. Despite the uncertainties, this pandemic has presented the ideal opportunity for us to reflect on the fragile nature of our economies and rethink the need for continued strategic innovation which provides solutions for the maximisation of our economies but minimisation of the negative effects on the environment. In that regard, Jamaica fully supports the Cartagena Convention Secretariat, in its efforts to lead discussions regarding the development of a new Strategy for the Caribbean Environment Programme, with the key objective of promotion of ocean-based economies or Sustainable Blue Economy to provoke sustainable and inclusive recovery in the Wider Caribbean Region post-COVID-19. Jamaica envisages that this dialogue will enable the Governments of the Region to strengthen our alliances and reconsider our individual developmental paths and to collectively transition into avenues of renewed economic growth, innovation, and digitalization.

Moreover, Jamaica recognises the critical importance of, and the role the Secretariat plays in, the conservation and sustainable development of marine resources in the Wider Caribbean Region. However, the Secretariat cannot function without our continued support and the voluntary contributions to which we, the Contracting Parties, have committed. Therefore, I implore all Contracting Parties to honour your commitments to the Caribbean Trust

Fund. As this is the only operational budget available to the Secretariat and given the recommendations of the Strategic and Functional Review of the Secretariat, it is imperative that we, as Contracting Parties, also seek to address any arrears to the budget of the Secretariat. In these trying times, Jamaica joins all other Contracting Parties in supporting UNEP's Cartagena Convention Secretariat in its work to emerge greener, bluer, and stronger, and as we continue to grapple with increasing novel challenges for coastal and marine ecosystems in the Region.

Mr. Chair, let me close by saying, may our discussions over these three days be productive and fruitful, and our respective countries benefit from these sessions.

I, thank you.

DRAFT

Opening Ceremony

Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

Virtual Meeting. 28th July 2021

By Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP

Salutations

- Honourable Minister Rivera Hipp, who so ably oversaw the work of the Cartagena Convention during the biennium 2019 to 2020
- Honourable Minister Charles Jr., whose government has been a tower of support during the Secretariat's 35 years in operation
- Honourable Minister Humphrey, our keynote speaker, who graciously agreed to host this virtual meeting
- Other Honourable Ministers virtually present today and your delegations,
- Representatives of Donor Governments
- Representatives of International Organisations
- Members of the UN Country Team in Jamaica
- Partner Organisations,
- Directors of the Regional Activity Centres
- Coordinator and Staff of the Secretariat
- Specially Invited Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I bring you greetings on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP - Ms. Inger Andersen.

The Convention for the Protection and Development of the Regional Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, the only regional legal instrument for governance and cooperation among its parties, stands strong and is as relevant today as it was 35 years ago when countries began to express their commitment to sustainable use and conservation of the Region's marine resources, through signature of its newly opened articles in the beautiful coastal city of Cartagena.

Since then, Parties have solidified their framework for cooperation through agreement of The Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region adopted in 1990, and The Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities which was adopted in 1999. This incremental process of advancing multilateralism in the Region was the vision of UNEP in 1974 when the Regional Seas

Programme was established; an action-oriented programme that implements region-specific activities and brings together stakeholders including governments, scientific community, and civil society. The strength of UNEP's strategic regional presence propels our work towards regional and global consensus as well as policy coherence. Given that this geo-politically complex region has come so close, UNEP's call to the wider Caribbean region, today, is to work together to achieve full ratification of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols. We also encourage you to implement the UNEA Resolution (UNEP/EA.2/10) calling on countries within Regional Seas Conventions to consider the expansion of their convention areas to include neighbouring countries. In the case of the Cartagena Convention, the two western Atlantic countries of Canada in the north and Brazil in the south will provide complete coverage and lead to greater collaboration.

UNEP, as the administrator of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat, commissioned a Strategic and Functional Review of the Secretariat's operations this year, triggered by financial instability within the Caribbean Trust Fund, the only operational budget available to the Secretariat. This Fund, established by regional states and supported with annual voluntary contributions, has been trending downwards for the past decade. Having expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the work of the Secretariat over the years, we urge Member States with arrears to fulfil the terms of their agreement and join those Member States who have been maintaining their annual payments. Remember, the Secretariat is mandated to serve your interest but without adequate funding, the viability of the organisation is compromised. So, we call on you, our Member States, to honour your commitments or at the very least, engage with the Secretariat to see how best we can assist you, because we do understand that these are difficult times but rest assured, we will grow stronger together.

UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (2021-2025) is to a large extent based on the clear science linking the shape of our societies and economies to the three current planetary crises: climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The common thread that runs through these global crises jeopardizing every country's aspirations for prosperity is unsustainable production and consumption patterns. This Strategy is based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – "The Future We Want". Strengthening the environmental dimension of the sustainable development goals and supporting countries to deliver on their environmental commitments under international agreements is a key transformative strategic goal for its five-year period. 'The Ocean We Need' for the future we want is a regional imperative at the level of frameworks such as the Cartagena Convention. We urge all countries to seek interconnected initiatives that employ the seven sub-programmes of the Strategy – climate action, chemicals and pollutions action, nature action, science policy, environmental governance, finance and economic transformations, and digital transformations. Through the workplan and budget of the Secretariat, which you will be negotiating this week, these complex but necessary underpinnings must be considered.

As the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic move closer and closer behind us, the post-pandemic recovery is just only beginning. Unfortunately, according to real-time data retrieved from the UNEP-supported Latin America and the Caribbean COVID-19 Recovery Tracking Tool, in 2020, for countries within the region, only 0.5 percent of total spending and 2.2 percent of long-term recovery spending were classified as environmentally friendly, compared to 2.8 percent and 19.2 percent globally. Investments in green technologies can facilitate recovery through job creation and economic diversification into new and eco-friendly industries while enabling Member States to meet their obligations under the Paris Agreement.

High-impact investment opportunities for the entire region are numerous, embracing a multi-focal policy that includes, for example, sustainable energy and nature-based solutions to ensure adaptation in key sectors, such as agriculture, tourism, shipping, fishing, and regenerative urban planning.

The recovery from the pandemic has brought us to a crossroads, presenting all of us with the opportunity to move forward with renewed vision, renewed purpose and renewed hope. Now is the time to embrace new sustainable economic opportunities for the region. Today, more than ever, innovative and creative solutions must be placed at the forefront of policy and decision making. We must endeavour to bring prosperity to present and future generations while protecting our planet and environment. Lifestyle changes that incorporate sustainable consumption and production patterns require a retraining of minds to focus on the needs of humanity rather than desires; thus, minimising the use and overdependence on our natural resources and the production of CO₂ emissions.

This COP is the occasion for Member States to exchange views and negotiate such strategies and solutions together; thereby, increasing regional synergies and efficiency while paving the way for prosperity and inclusive growth, and creating a sustainable future for the Governments and People of this region. So, let us all agree to move towards one common goal as we grow stronger. I, thank you.

Opening Session

Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region

Virtual Meeting. 28th July 2021

By The Honourable Minister Kirk Humphrey, Minister of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy of Barbados

Salutations

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

- Her Excellency Liliam Rivera Hipp, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Honduras
- Honourable Pearnel Charles Jnr., Minister of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change of Jamaica
- Other Honourable Ministers virtually present today and your delegations,
- Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UN Environment Programme
- Representatives of Donor Governments
- Representatives of International Organisations
- Members of the UN Country Team in Jamaica
- Partner Organisations
- Directors of the Regional Activity Centres
- Coordinator and Staff of the Secretariat
- Specially Invited Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I bring you greetings on behalf of the Prime Minister of Barbados, Her Excellency, Mia Amor Mottley. It is my pleasure to join you, virtually, this morning for the Opening of the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region. This meeting is critical and is the ideal regional forum for discussions amongst Member States to analyse, share experiences, and find solutions for common marine environmental challenges in the Wider Caribbean Region. For this reason, the Government of Barbados is honoured to have been invited by the United Nations Environment Programme's Cartagena Convention Secretariat to virtually host this very important and timely regional meeting. My colleagues and I have appreciated working closely with the Coordinator and her team at the Secretariat, in the planning and organising of this Meeting.

The Government of Barbados affirms its continued support of the Secretariat's initiatives, all of which are geared towards the implementation of the Cartagena Convention: promoting regional cooperation for the protection and development of marine and coastal resources in the Wider Caribbean Region through effective, integrated

management that allows for economic growth and sustainable livelihoods. With our aspirations to be a value-driven economy, on the 1st April 2019, we joined several other Member States of the Secretariat, in enforcing an outright ban on the importation, retail, sale and use of petroleum-based single-use plastic products, as well as polystyrene - Styrofoam items. Further, on the 29th June 2019, the Government of Barbados became the fifteenth Contracting Party to ratify the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities. These policy initiatives highlight our government's commitment to implement measures to reduce and control marine pollution from all land-based sources and activities. In our gradual transition to a circular economy, these strategies and policy interventions solidify Barbados' unwavering commitment to reduce marine degradation by encouraging the use of sustainable alternatives, thereby minimizing our land-based sources of marine pollution.

Correspondingly, Barbados was one of the earliest member states to formalise our commitment to the protection of the Caribbean Sea, having ratified the Cartagena Convention and the Oil Spills Protocol in May 1985. Moreover, the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA), was subsequently endorsed in October 2002.

Through the years, the Government of Barbados has also received financial and technical support from the Secretariat through projects such as the Integrating Watershed and Coastal Areas Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (IWCAM), the Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CRew), and more recently, the Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management (IWEco), all funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Through the IWEco Project, we are currently in the process of mobilising with the Secretariat, approximately US\$100,000 for the Hedgerow Rehabilitation Project in our National Botanical Garden. The project is aimed at reducing agricultural run-off into coastal and marine ecosystems; thus, improving the health of terrestrial and marine ecosystems. These types of interventions are critical as Barbados is considered one of the most water-scarce Small Island Developing States in the world, due to its limited water availability, high population demands, salinization and pollution of its coastal aquifers, all compounded by high-density development along the island's western corridor.

Barbados has also supported the Cartagena Convention Secretariat in contributing to discussions regarding the development of a new CEP Strategy that include the Sustainable Blue Economy or Sustainable Ocean-based Economies. This framework encourages better stewardship of our ocean or 'blue' resources and presents opportunities for island states like Barbados to sustainably extend the benefits of these resources to all. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, policymakers are urgently calling for the national roll-out of Sustainable Blue Economy, as it is crucial now more than ever before to ensure an economy that both expands the capacity of each Caribbean country and is also sustainable, especially when considering the critical need to diversify Caribbean economies away from an overdependence on tourism.

It is our view, that the Secretariat's role in initiatives of Sustainable Blue Economy, be focused on the sustainability aspects, promoting the advancement of work already ongoing with respect to the implementation of the marine pollution and biodiversity/ecosystems protocols. Indeed, such linkages allow for greater integration of the SPAW and LBS workplans, a decision already taken by Contracting Parties to the Convention.

In addition, as it is critical not to overexploit natural marine resources, the sustainable use of ocean resources to

foster job creation in the fisheries, tourism and energy sectors, among others, will ultimately contribute to sustainable and economic development and help in building socio-economic resilience necessary for Barbados to revitalise our coastal economies.

Barbados highly commends the important role that the Cartagena Convention has played in the economic and social development landscape of the Wider Caribbean Region. In this context, I would wish to join my fellow ministers in urging Contracting Parties to maintain, and where possible increase, your support to this critical regional framework. If we, as Contracting Parties, appreciate the technical and financial support provided over the last thirty-five years, then our appreciation must be translated into ensuring the Secretariat's sustainability over the next thirty-five years and beyond.

As the Secretariat celebrates its thirty-fifth anniversary, I encourage all Member States to avail themselves by actively participating in the deliberations and negotiations being exchanged during the sessions of the Conference of the Parties (COP). The outcomes will dictate the work of the Secretariat over the 2021-2022 biennium in the protection of the Caribbean Sea for the region's citizenry. Further, the COVID-19 crisis requires our collective efforts in building back better – ushering a new era of economic prosperity that is considerate of – and in alignment with – the region's marine and coastal resources.

To conclude my statement, Mr. Chair, I have taken note of the fact that there is a rather long and demanding agenda ahead; for that reason, I would not wish to keep you any further. It is therefore my absolute pleasure to wish you a very fruitful meeting and to declare the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region officially open.

I, thank you.