



Distr. LIMITED

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/5  
21 April 2021

Original: ENGLISH

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 to 17 March 2021

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

*For reasons of public health and safety associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting is being convened virtually. Delegates are kindly requested to access all meeting documents electronically for download as necessary.*

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## Recommendations of the Meeting

### The Meeting:

**Having convened** the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS STAC) in the Wider Caribbean Region virtually from March 15-17, 2021;

**Taking note of** the presentations made by the Secretariat, Regional Activity Centres, Working Groups and partner agencies and projects;

### Recommends the following:

**(A) Prior to the Convening of the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties to the Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution Protocol (LBS COP5) and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention (COP16).**

## RECOMMENDATION I

### REVIEW OF TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

1. Contracting Parties and other relevant agencies, experts and RACs **provide** technical inputs and comments on the Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy and Action Plan UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.10 and the following Technical Papers: Nutrients discharge criteria for domestic wastewater effluent UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.23, Incorporation of freshwater issues into the LBS Protocol UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.24, and the Revised Template for National Reporting on the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.25 focussing on sections of the Reporting Template that are relevant to the LBS Protocol.
2. Contracting Parties and other relevant agencies, experts and RACs **submit** all comments on the Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy and the aforementioned Technical Papers, to the Secretariat, no later than April 30, 2021.
3. Contracting Parties **welcome** the progress made towards the finalization of the Draft Strategy for the Cartagena Convention Secretariat: UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.41/INF.22 and **encourage** involvement of all Contracting Parties and RACs in further reviews, as appropriate, prior to its submission to the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention for approval.
4. Contracting Parties **share** the 2021/2022 draft AMEP work plan and budget with relevant national authorities and Ministries to demonstrate the work of the Secretariat and to underscore the importance of continued financial contributions to the Secretariat and that the Secretariat **continue** its efforts to develop and share material that demonstrates its value added at the regional and national levels.

**(B) To the LBS COP5 and Cartagena Convention COP16**

**RECOMMENDATION II  
WORKPLAN AND BUDGET**

1. Contracting Parties provisionally **endorse** the 2021-2022 Draft Work Plan from a technical perspective including any recommendations made during the 5<sup>th</sup> LBS STAC.
2. Contracting Parties **endorse** the new format for presentation of the work plan for the AMEP Sub-Programme.
3. Contracting Parties **submit** additional input on the draft Work Plan for the biennium 2021-2022 to the Secretariat by April 30, 2021. This will enable an updated draft Work Plan and Budget to be submitted to the 5<sup>th</sup> LBS COP for further review and approval, and to the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention for information and endorsement.
4. Contracting Parties **support** new and/or enhanced partnerships between the Secretariat and relevant organizations including Global Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) Secretariats to facilitate work plan implementation building on recently developed MOUs and expanding the Regional Activity Network (RAN). This should include synergies especially with the chemicals cluster of Conventions.
5. Contracting Parties **endorse** efforts by LBS RACs to develop their own Strategies and Work plan and invite Contracting Parties to **provide** additional input through the Secretariat to the LBS RACs by April 30, 2021 to enable submission of final draft strategies for approval at the 5<sup>th</sup> LBS COP and the 19<sup>th</sup> IGM.
6. Contracting Parties **welcome** the ongoing efforts to integrate activities under the AMEP and SPAW Work Programmes and encourage greater integration of the sub-programmes in the implementation of the work plan including greater interaction among the existing four RACs of the Secretariat.
7. Given the overall situation of the budget and Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF), Contracting Parties **propose** that the overall budget for the Secretariat and implications be considered during the Cartagena Convention COP XVI and that a comprehensive presentation on the financial status be made including what project funding will be available and what resources will be needed by the Secretariat from the CTF for effective programme and project implementation.

**RECOMMENDATION III  
SOURCES AND IMPACTS OF MARINE POLLUTION**

Nutrients Pollution

1. Contracting Parties **provisionally endorse** the Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy and Action Plan subject to further review and comments that would enable a final draft to be submitted to the 5<sup>th</sup> LBS COP for approval. To facilitate implementation of the Strategy, it is further recommended that the Secretariat:
  - i. **Establish** a sub-group(s) of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to support implementation of the Strategy including consideration of issues such as monitoring and assessment, targets and indicators, ecological quality, and remote sensing.

- ii. **Facilitate** sharing of experiences among Parties of the Convention, e.g. USA on nutrient pollution action plans for Gulf of Mexico; and Colombia/INVEMAR on coastal monitoring; and with other Regional Seas Programmes including work done under the European Water Framework Directive for setting ecological objectives.
- iii. **Use** the UNEP Global Programme of Action (GPA) Global Partnership on Nutrients Management (GPNM) to facilitate further training and capacity building.
- iv. In collaboration with Contracting Parties, **prioritize needs and actions** required at the national and regional levels including timeframes for implementation, data and capacity gaps and determination of targets and indicators.
- v. **Identify and/or use** existing opportunities for implementation of the Strategy through pilot projects in high priority areas (hot spots) for nutrient reduction and habitat restoration. This should consider the pollution reduction and habitat restoration investment plans developed by the Secretariat with support of the CLME+ project.
- vi. **Identify** new funding opportunities including private sector partnerships, in particular with the tourism and agricultural sectors.
- vii. **Identify** opportunities through the Decade of Ocean Science and UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration to establish/strengthen enabling conditions.
- viii. **Implement** Advocacy/stakeholder engagement efforts with regional partners to facilitate uptake, collaboration, and effective implementation.
- ix. **Prepare** an implementation plan for the Strategy at national and regional levels.

#### Wastewater Discharges

1. Contracting Parties **support** efforts by the Secretariat and the GEF CReW+ Project to finalize a technical information paper on nutrient discharge limits from domestic wastewater including a review of the existing limits for effluent of domestic origin as outlined in Annex III.C of the LBS Protocol UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.23.
2. The Open-Ended Working Group) including LBS RACs **provide** technical oversight and input for the finalization of this technical information paper for further review by Contracting Parties and submission to the LBS COP5 for further consideration.
3. Secretariat **share** best practices from Barbados and other relevant case studies relating to the reuse of treated wastewater UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/5.

#### Freshwater Management

1. Contracting Parties **recognize** the relevance of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the future work of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols and the need for Governments of the Wider Caribbean Region to accelerate IWRM adoption and implementation to meet the 2030 Agenda, Paris Agreement and Sendai Framework.
2. The Secretariat **establish** a new Working Group or OEWG sub-group to explore how this integration can take place building on the recommendations of the Information Paper UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.41/INF.24 and what should be the main role of the Secretariat in supporting implementation of IWRM Plans at a national level.

### Marine Litter Management

1. Contracting Parties **provide** and **use** information on the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML)-Caribe platform to enable sharing of lessons learned and best practices relating to marine litter management.
2. Secretariat and the Caribbean Regional Node for Marine Litter **support** a review of existing research and provision of capacity building on microplastics that could aid Contracting Parties in understanding the potential impact of plastics on the coastal and marine environment and human health in the Wider Caribbean Region.
3. Secretariat, LBS RACs and Contracting Parties **work to identify** major sources of marine litter, including regional hotspots and propose mitigating actions.

## **RECOMMENDATION IV MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT**

1. Contracting Parties **establish** new OEWG sub-groups as appropriate with special consideration given to nutrients including nutrient discharge standards, Integrated Water Resources Management/Freshwater, LBS/SPAW Integration (Sargassum), and remote sensing with consideration of inclusion of experts, such as academia, private sector, etc, recommended by the Focal Points.
2. Contracting Parties **endorse** the formation of an Open-Ended Working Group and/or dedicated sub-group to support the implementation of the Regional Nutrients Pollution Reduction Strategy and Action Plan including *inter alia* work on targets, indicators, and ecological objectives.
3. The Open-Ended Working Group **consider** recent reports such as the GEF IWeco lab capacity assessment in identifying priorities for future lab capacity building and training with respect to monitoring and assessment.
4. The Open-Ended Working Group **consider** inclusion of additional monitoring parameters to those identified in the SOCAR and propose methodology that will allow for monitoring of these parameters including for example the indicator of Index of Coastal Eutrophication Potential.
5. Secretariat **maximize the use** of the LBS RACs to provide regional training for ongoing and new projects within their technical areas of competence.

## **RECOMMENDATION V KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, DATA, AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

1. Contracting Parties provisionally **endorse** the new Cartagena Convention Reporting Template and encourage greater reporting by countries including changes relevant to the AMEP Sub-Programme made during the STAC.
2. The Secretariat **continue** its efforts to establish synergies between various projects – IWeco, CReW+ – for supporting improved national and regional data and information management systems.
3. The Secretariat **prepare** information management guidelines for the sharing of data and information

relevant to the LBS Protocol and recommend that such guidelines be considered within the context of the new CEP Strategy.

## RECOMMENDATION VI

### LBS PROTOCOL RATIFICATION

1. Contracting Parties **welcome** the ratification by the Government of Barbados as the 15<sup>th</sup> country to ratify the LBS Protocol in June 2019.
2. Contracting Parties **recognize** efforts by non-Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol to become Contracting Parties, taking advantage of support being provided by projects for that process.
3. Contracting Parties **support** the ongoing efforts by the Secretariat to work with Contracting and Non-Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol to, as appropriate, ratify, implement, and report on their implementation of their obligations under the LBS Protocol.
4. Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, **provide assistance** to non-Contracting Parties in their efforts to ratify the LBS Protocol.

## RECOMMENDATION VII

### POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO THE LBS PROTOCOL AND/OR ANNEXES

1. The Secretariat in collaboration with OEWG and the LBS RACs **consider** recommendations from the Technical Papers relating to freshwater and nutrients, and **prepare** an information paper for the LBS STAC6 on possible amendments to the LBS Protocol and/or its Annexes for further discussion and submission of recommendations to the LBS COP6 for further consideration.

## RECOMMENDATION VIII

### CARIBBEAN LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM + PROJECT (CLME+)

1. Contracting Parties **welcome** the presentation by the Regional Project Coordinator of the UNDP/GEF CLME+ Project and **noted** the extent of support by the project to the implementation of previous AMEP and SPAW Work Plans.
2. Contracting Parties **note** the ongoing discussions relating to the formalization of the Coordinating Mechanism and the finalization of the draft Memorandum of Understanding among States, Territories and Intergovernmental Agencies including the Cartagena Convention Secretariat for improving ocean governance.
3. Contracting Parties **further note** the efforts to develop a new follow up project proposal concept (PIF) to CLME+ entitled PROCARIBE+ which is to be submitted to the GEF by March 24, 2021 for consideration.
4. Secretariat and Contracting Parties, that endorsed the new project proposal, **participate** in the development of the full-sized proposal for PROCARIBE+ ensuring that activities involving the Secretariat support the implementation of the LBS and SPAW Protocols respectively.