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UPDATE ON THE CARIBBEAN MARINE PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT NETWORK AND FORUM (CaMPAM) AND ITS MAJOR ACTIVITIES DURING THE 2019-2020 BIENNIUM

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

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since 1997, the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum's (CaMPAM) mandate has been to strengthen Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) within the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) through the provision of capacity building support. The main activities implemented under CaMPAM to support this mandate fall under the following categories:

- **Financial Resources.** The Small Grants Programme facilitates the exchange of experiences and lessons learnt between MPA managers/practitioners and fisheries managers.
- **Information and Communication.** The electronic forum or listserv provides a communication and outreach platform for marine natural resource managers throughout the WCR. Currently, The CaMPAM listserv, moderated by the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife's Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC), reaches approximately 1000 marine natural resource managers and scientists. CaMPAM also manages a database which provides detailed information on MPAs within the WCR.
- **Training.** The Training of Trainers Programme provides training on Caribbean MPA planning, stakeholder participation, management, research, monitoring, regional policy, communication and teaching skills.
- **Sharing of Lessons Learnt and Networking.** CaMPAM routinely organizes and coordinates an MPA session at the annual conferences of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute. The objective of these sessions is to facilitate the sharing of scientific findings, experiences and lessons learnt between MPA practitioners.

During the 2019-2020 biennium CaMPAM oversight shifted from Ms. Georgina Bustamante, upon her resignation as CaMPAM Coordinator, to Ms. Ileana Lopez, SPAW's Programme Officer – with support from SPAW-RAC. The activities implemented during the biennium primarily focused on the revamping and restructuring of the network and forum. A summary of the CaMPAM activities implemented during the 2019-2020 biennium may be found below.

2. MAJOR ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE 2019-2020 BIENNIUM

Activities implemented under CaMPAM were funded either by the Italian Cooperation Agency, under the "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean through Ecosystem Based Management (EBM-DSS)" project, or the European Union through its project "Enforcing Environmental Treaties in African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACP-MEAs Phase III). While activities primarily focused on improving CaMPAM's effectiveness, other activities continued to provide ongoing capacity building support to MPAs within the SPAW network.

2.1 Assessing and Enhancing CaMPAM Effectiveness

Restructuring of the CaMPAM MPA database. The MPA database, with funding from the EBM-DSS project, was restructured and expanded. The database originally included information on 320 MPAs from 33 countries / territories and this was expanded to provide data on 1069 MPAs from 44 countries / territories throughout the WCR. The format of the database was also changed and the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was replaced with a geospatial structure and now includes an online interactive map generated with the QGIS Cloud platform, which allows for the downloading of information in multiple formats, as well as allow users to share photos, videos and audio files through interactive buttons and generate statistics and reports. The [revised database](#) was launched at the Third Latin America and Caribbean Congress of Protected Areas in October 2019 in Lima, Peru. Training webinars on how to use the new database were given in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) on the 28th of February and the 2nd of March 2020, respectively.

Additional updates to the database will occur under the ACP-MEAs III project.

Development of a Regionally Representative Network of Marine Protected Areas. Funding provided by the ACP-MEAs III project will assist with the creation of a functional network of MPAs in the Caribbean. To that end UNEP-CEP engaged in a series of projects during the biennium that aimed to:

- Understand the ecological connections of the region and how cooperation between MPAs will strengthen these links and help MPAs achieve their management and conservation goals;
- Examine the role and effectiveness of existing mechanisms for capacity development and technical cooperation among MPA professionals; and
- Identify strategies and recommendations for creating an effective and sustainable relationship between protected areas in the Caribbean.

Reports on the activities implemented to meet these objectives will be submitted for review and approval to the next STAC meeting and include:

Survey of Protected Areas Management Effectiveness of SPAW Sites. A Protected Areas Management Effectiveness (PAME) survey was conducted across the thirty-five (35) SPAW-listed Protected Areas between July and September 2020 to identify the problems protected area managers face when conducting management effectiveness surveys, as well as their priority needs to better manage their sites. The survey collected information on:

- Country and designated protected area;
- PAME assessments conducted within their MPAs, including:
 - Date of the last assessment
 - Tools used
 - Number of PAME assessments implemented
 - Whether or not mandatory reporting on PAME assessments is required within countries
 - Report / data availability
- Priority needs;
 - Challenges preventing effective management
 - Areas for capacity building support
 - Recommendations / suggestions to improve future PAME assessments
- Contact information; and
- Willingness to share photos for publication

(See documents UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.19)

Review of Ecological Connections in the Region. The SPAW Secretariat aims to develop a regional representative network of MPAs within the WCR. This will improve the conservation of migratory species and shared resources throughout the region. During the 2019-2020 biennium the first phase of the protected area network was implemented and resulted in a review of the ecological connections in the region and how biological populations and habitats between marine protected areas are linked, as well as a strategy to strengthen cooperation between network sites to improve ecosystem protections and threat responses at individual sites in the network.

((See document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.10)

Review of CaMPAM's Effectiveness. During SPAW COP10, the Contracting Parties recommended that “the Secretariat undertake a comprehensive review to determine the impact of CaMPAM activities thus far, envisaged to evaluate effectiveness and guide future work with a view towards ensuring activities linked to overall SPAW Protocol activities/goals”. To that end a network development plan and a CaMPAM evaluation report was commissioned. The report builds on the recommendations made during the 2016 CaMPAM assessment ([UNEP/DEPI/CAR WG.38/INF.6](#)), and, with a focus on CaMPAM's activities between 2016 and 2020, determines the extent to which the recommendations made in the 2016 report were implemented. The report was based on a comprehensive literature review, the administration of an online survey administered to subscribers of the CaMPAM listserv and interviews with key stakeholders.

(See documents UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.7Addendum 1)

Establishment of a SPAW MPAs Networking Group. An MPAs Networking Group was established to improve MPA management effectiveness and improve MPA networking within the WCR. Members include representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), MPACConnect, the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA), Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA), the North American Marine Protected Areas Network (NAMPAN) and SPAW-RAC, as well as other MPA network experts. The group was formed in 2020 and has provided recommendations on how to restructure CaMPAM in support of the CaMPAM Effectiveness Review.

Updated Booklet on SPAW MPAs. In 2020 the Booklet on SPAW-Listed MPAs was updated to provide comprehensive information on all 35 of the MPAs listed under the SPAW Protocol, including the three protected areas approved during the STAC8 meeting in 2018 (Mount Scenery National Park and the National Natural Reserves of Amana and Kaw-Roura). The booklet also contains information on the importance of protected areas and the selection process for their inclusion under the SPAW Protocol.
(See document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.18)

2.2 Ongoing Networking Activities

A number of activities continue to be implemented as part of CaMPAM's ongoing initiatives to promote networking and capacity building throughout MPAs within the WCR. These activities include:

Support to Regional Projects. CaMPAM continues to provide support to the project “*Cooperation and Common Strategy Between MPA Networks of Managers in the Atlantic Region (Networks Twinning)*”. As one of the project partners, CaMPAM helps to facilitate the building of partnerships between MPA managers throughout the Atlantic and contribute to better MPA management effectiveness for improved conservation of marine ecosystems.

Ongoing Maintenance of the CaMPAM Listserv. With approximately 1000 subscribers, CaMPAM continues to improve the electronic CaMPAM list in order to facilitate the sharing of information between regional stakeholders, researchers and natural resource managers.

Participation at the 72nd Annual Conference of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 4-8 November 2019). Through funding under the EBM-DSS project, CaMPAM was able to provide support for one (1) participant at the conference. Nine (9) oral presentations were also made during the session on MPAs, which was sponsored in part by CaMPAM. Presentations during the MPA session included “*Collective construction of the CaMPAM comprehensive database of marine protected areas necessary to improve the conservation of marine biodiversity in the Caribbean*” and “*Decision Support System, based on a set of information, data and indicators, for integrated management of the coastal-marine environment. Final outcomes of the Caribbean EBM-DSS pilot project of the Dominican Republic*”.