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

Oranjestad, Aruba, 5 October 2023

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2021-2022 WORKPLAN AND BUDGET OF THE CARTAGENA CONVENTION SECRETARIAT

For reasons of economy and the environment, Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of the Working and Information documents to the Meeting, and not to request additional copies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1. The Secretariat for the Cartagena Convention presents the status of implementation of its 2021-2022 work programme including financial overview to the Twentieth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean and the Seventeenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region held from October 3rd to 6th 2023 in Oranjestad, Aruba.
- 2. The report outlines actions taken by the Secretariat in response to the Decisions of the 19th IGM and 16th COP (Annex I).
- 3. The operations of the Secretariat are largely funded by the Contracting Parties through contributions to the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF), for which the total bi-annual level of pledges is US\$2,528,616. Total pledges received from 2013 through 2022 have consistently been below the bi-annual level of contributions and as a result, the Secretariat continues to employ various cost savings and resource mobilization strategies to address the long-standing financial constraints.
- 4. Governments with unpaid pledges, are strongly encouraged to make regular and timely payments to the trust fund to allow for programme continuity and subsequently a more effective response by the Secretariat to the needs of Contracting Parties.
- 5. The Secretariat renews its recognition of the cooperation shown by Governments which provided support and extraordinary contributions to facilitate the implementation of the 2021-2022 work programme and in particular for the convening of the 19th IGM and 16th COP. Noted is the continued support provided by the Governments of Cuba, France, Trinidad and Tobago, and Curaçao for hosting the Secretariat's Regional Activity Centres (RACs), the Government of Jamaica for hosting the Secretariat's Office, and the support by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and France towards the convening of the 20th IGM and 17th COP.
- 6. Implementation of the workplan's projects and activities was facilitated through partnerships with governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic, scientific and research communities and civil society, including the private sector. Increased cooperation continued with international, regional and sub-regional agencies.
- 7. Increased technical support was provided by the RACs in the execution of programme and project activities. Cooperation with a range of regional and sub-regional agencies facilitated the implementation of the 2021-2022 workplan.
- 8. The Secretariat is the executing and/or co-executing agency for several regional and/or sub-regional projects and continued to work with Governments and partners to develop new project proposals that have been reflected in the 2023-2024 Draft Work Plan and Budget for the Secretariat.
- 9. The major achievements of the Secretariat in the implementation of the 2021-2022 work programme were:
 - Increased Government contributions to the Caribbean Trust Fund and payments of outstanding contributions
 - Ratification of the SPAW Protocol by The Government of Nicaragua;
 - Mobilization of new sources of funding and technical assistance through the GEF LAC Cities and Promar Projects;
 - Improved synergies with other UNEP programmes, UN agencies, projects and activities in the Wider Caribbean Region as reflected in the work of the SPAW and AMEP Sub-programmes;
 - Improved data management, data sharing, and capacity building of Member Countries on

emerging issues within the region.

- Strengthened integration between the SPAW and LBS Sub-programmes through the implementation of the ACP MEA III Project and ongoing work on Sargassum, Oil Spills Monitoring, Ocean Acidification and Marine Plastics.
- Improved knowledge of blue economy approaches, ocean governance, solid waste, integrated wastewater resource management and nutrient management in the Caribbean through newsletters and dissemination of reports through website and social media.
- 10. Despite these achievements, development and implementation of new projects and activities continue to be limited by various factors in particular the lack of sufficient financial and human resources capacity at the Secretariat. Financial challenges have resulted from the lack of timely contributions by Contracting Parties and Member Governments to the Trust Fund and the continued accumulation of outstanding contributions. This lack of financial resources negatively impacts on the ability of the Secretariat to coordinate its activities and the need for financial sustainability remains a very high priority for the Secretariat. This is reflected in the new 2023-2030 CEP Strategy.
- 11. Activities will continue to focus on increasing the number of ratifications of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols, supporting the implementation of the new 2023-2030 CEP Strategy, subject to its approval and other relevant regional thematic strategies and action plans endorsed by Contracting Parties.

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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2021-2022 WORKPLAN AND BUDGET OF THE CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

I. MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANISATION

- 1. The staff composition of the UNEP-CEP at year-end 2022 included 11 staff positions. In addition to the Coordinator at the P5 Level, there were 2 full-time Programme Officers at P4, 1 Associate Programme Officer for CETA at the P2 Level, and 8 locally recruited staff paid out of the Carribean Trust Fund. (3-G6, 3-G5, 1-G4 & 1-G3).2. 1 post in the Secretariat's Administrative Unit, the Administrative/Funds Management Officer (P-4 level), was paid out of the 13 percent Programme Support Costs levied on the Trust Fund and other non-GEF Projects implemented by the Cartagena Convention Secretariat.
- 2. The Secretariat also hosted and administered the GEF/IWECO Project Coordination Unit, which funded 3 posts. (1 P3, 1 G6 & 1G5).4. The personnel changes at UNEP-CAR/RCU were as follows:
 - a. The Finance and Budget Assistant G-6 resigned in June 2022 and a replacement has since then been recruited in Year 2023,
 - b. The Information Assistant G-6 resigned in February 2022, and recruitment is in process.
 - c. With the appointment of Chris Corbin as Coordinator to the Secretariat, the Programme Officer (P4) AMEP post became vacant, and recruitment is in process.

II. FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS.

- 3. The Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF) has remained the primary source of financial support for the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) despite the total biannual pledges to the CTF remaining unchanged since 2015.
- 4. The financial situation of the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF) is shown in Annex II, which provides the status of the CTF as of 31 December 2022. The Secretariat has actively pursued the collection of pledges to the Caribbean Trust fund (CTF), including the collection of outstanding pledges.
- 5. It has also become a norm that the member governments provide in-kind contributions by hosting meetings and workshops of the CEP whenever the opportunity arises while ensuring that the programme support cost is not undermined. In October 2023, the Government of the Netherlands is hosting the present Cartagena Convention COP/IGM and the COPs of the LBS and SPAW Protocols.
- 6. Efforts continue to be made by the Secretariat to solicit funding from other sources, such as the Global Environment Facility and other donors. In addition to implementing activities within the projects, the Secretariat has benefited from the cost-sharing of operational costs with these projects, which has subsequently reduced such costs to the CTF, and this demonstrates the Secretariat's commitment to meeting regional needs and global demands despite the financial challenges posed by the unchanged pledges to the CTF.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND POLLUTION PREVENTION

- 7. This section is an overview of activities implemented for the Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution (AMEP) Sub-Programme which supports the Protocols Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) and Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills. It provides a summary of actions taken in response to decisions of the Fifth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (5th COP) to the LBS Protocol, 19th IGM/COP 16.
- 8. The goal of the AMEP Sub-Programme is to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the coastal and marine environment from land and marine-based sources thereby enabling countries of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) to meet their obligations under the LBS and Oil Spills Protocols.
- 9. The specific objectives of the Sub-Programme are to:
 - Coordinate and oversee the implementation of AMEP projects and activities within the framework of the Cartagena Convention;
 - Ensure that the formulation and implementation of projects and activities satisfy the obligations of the LBS and Oil Spills Protocols;
 - Promote ratification of, accession to and effective implementation of the LBS and Oil Spills Protocols and
 - Enhance coordination, collaboration and communication with Regional Activity Centres (RACs), members of the Regional Activity Network(RAN), and relevant regional and international organizations in the development and implementation of the AMEP work plan.
- 10. Two <u>virtual workshops</u> were convened in November 2021, one in English and another in Spanish, with Non-Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol to promote ratification, identify barriers to ratification, and develop a list of capacity-building needs.
- 11. The Governments of Guatemala, Mexico, Suriname and Saint Kitts and Nevis were provided with technical support and advice to assist them with becoming Parties to the LBS Protocol. As a result of this support, Saint Kitts and Nevis prepared and submitted a request to its Cabinet of Ministers for ratification of the LBS Protocol. The request was approved, and efforts are underway to formally deposit the instrument of ratification. In November 2022, St. Vincent and the Grenadines received cabinet approval for ratification of the LBS Protocol and Suriname submitted an internal request for ratification of the Cartagena Convention and its three Protocols (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.44/INF.3).
- 12. The AMEP Programme Officer (PO) coordinated the implementation of programme activities for 2021-2022 with support from the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) financed by the Government of Germany, the Communications, Education, Training and Awareness (CETA) Team Assistant and a temporary Programme Assistant who joined from March to December 2021 in the absence of a full-time staff member. The Directors and staff of the LBS Regional Activity Centres provided additional technical support. The JPO and AMEP Programme Management Assistant (full-time staff member) joined the Secretariat in October 2021 and March 2022, respectively.
- 13. The AMEP PO continued to be responsible for the Communications Sub-Programme in the absence of a CETA Programme Officer. The JPO was recruited to support both the LBS and CETA Sub-Programmes. Three interns provided additional support to the AMEP Sub-Programme over the 2021-2022 period.

- 14. The AMEP PO served as Officer-in-Charge from November 2021 to March 2022 and provided oversight for the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Sub-Programme in the absence of a SPAW Programme Officer who left the Secretariat in March 2022. He acted in the capacity of Coordinator from June to August 2022 and was responsible for monitoring the Decisions of the Convention and LBS Protocol and providing periodic updates to the Bureau and to UNEP headquarters. The AMEP PO was appointed as Coordinator of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat on 1st September 2022. The recruitment process for the position of AMEP Programme Officer is underway.
- 15. Two National United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) were recruited to support the work plan of the AMEP Sub-Programme, one to assist with marine litter activities and a Project Assistant to support the implementation of the 'Enforcing Environmental Treaties in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries ACP-MEA III project".
- 16. Discussions are ongoing between the Secretariat and the Government of Cuba regarding the finalization of the host agreement to formalize the Centre of Research and Environmental Management of Transport (CIMAB) as a Regional Activity Centre (RAC) for the LBS Protocol.
- 17. The activities for the sub-programme on the Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution (AMEP) for the biennium were implemented in support of the following thematic areas: (a) Monitoring and Assessment; (b) Waste Management; (c) Watershed Management; and (d) National Programmes of Action for Pollution Prevention.
- 18. Collaboration between the AMEP Sub-Programme and the UNEP Regional and Caribbean Sub-Regional Offices continued to focus on areas of solid waste including plastics and microplastics and chemicals management. Discussions are ongoing to identify countries that require support for the development of National Marine Litter/Plastics Reduction Strategies and Action Plans.
- 19. The Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment and related thematic sub-groups continued to provide technical support to the Secretariat and the Regional Activity Centres as they implement activities that support the implementation of the Cartagena Convention's Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021 2030.

IV. BIODIVERSITY AND PROTECTED AREAS

Programme Overview

- 20. This section is an overview of activities implemented for the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Sub-Programme. It provides actions taken in response to decisions of the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (11th COP) to the SPAW Protocol, 19th IGM/COP 16 and the status of activities for the 2021-2022 biennium.
- 21. During this biennium (2021-2022) the SPAW Sub-Programme focused on assisting countries with:
 - a) Strengthening the management and networking of marine protected areas (MPAs) and protected species;
 - b) Promoting and integrating the principles of the ecosystem-based approach in order to address the degradation of selected priority ecosystem services, and likewise respond through biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of coastal resources to development issues with support of the 'Enforcing Environmental Treaties in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries ACP-MEA III project";
 - c) Acknowledging the inter-dependency and multidimensional aspects of ecological and social systems. This approach was supported by other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

such as the CBD and the Ramsar Convention.

- 22. Activities were also aimed at coordinating with other environmental agreements and programmes dealing with issues relating to the conservation of biodiversity of particular relevance to the SPAW Protocol such as the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP's) Regional Seas Programme Strategic Directions 2022-2025, Abidjan Convention, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Caribbean Strategy and Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA), the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC), the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+) Project, the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO-WECAFC), the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), International Coral Reef Initiative, (ICRI), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Oslo and Paris Conventions (OSPAR) Commission.
- 23. Specific activities for the 2021-2022 Workplan fall under five major programme elements (subprogrammes):
 - a) Programme Coordination;
 - b) Strengthening of Protected Areas in the Wider Caribbean Region (including training and capacity building for protected area management);
 - c) Development of Guidelines for Protected Areas and Species Management;
 - d) Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species and
 - e) Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (including coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses using the ecosystem-based management (EBM) approach).
- 24. Additionally, the Secretariat focused on fundraising by strategizing and streamlining SPAW activities as financial contributions and human resources needed to fulfil programmatic execution continued to be limited. Therefore, interventions were opportunistic and strategic in nature.
- 25. During the period 2021-2022, the day-to-day coordination for implementation of programmatic activities continued to be overseen by the SPAW Programme Officer, who is responsible for the overall coordination of the SPAW Programme, with support from the Junior Programme Officer (JPO) and SPAW Programme Assistant. In March 2022, the SPAW Programme Officer resigned and the post for a replacement was advertised. The overall coordination of SPAW was overseen by the JPO and SPAW Programme Assistant for the interim period.
- 26. Additional support to meet the objectives of this sub-programme was received from the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC), which is located in Guadeloupe and supported by the Government of France (see UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.6 for details on the funds provided by the French Government through SPAW-RAC for implementation of SPAW activities). The functioning costs of the SPAW-RAC are covered by the French Ministry of Environment, including salaries for three (3) French officers/civil servants: one (1) Executive Director, one (1) Deputy Director and Programme Officer, and one (1) Administrative Assistant. In July 2022, the Executive Director of SPAW-RAC resigned after six years and the successive Executive Director position was filled in September 2022. The team is supported by two staff funded by European Union projects and two (2) civic service volunteers as support officers.
- 27. In keeping with the objectives of developing synergies, promoting the Protocol, and optimizing resources, the following activities were completed or initiated:
 - A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the OSPAR Commission in 2021 and ended in November 2022. The purpose of this MOU was to provide a framework of cooperation and understanding and to facilitate collaboration between the Cartagena

Convention and OSPAR Secretariats to further shared goals and objectives regarding the mutual protection and enhancement of the marine environment in the Atlantic. The MOU promoted the:

- o prevention of marine pollution;
- o protection of the marine environment and
- o sustainable use and conservation of marine resources.
- 28. The Government of Nicaragua ratified the SPAW Protocol in May 2021. Support was provided to the governments of Guatemala, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, Suriname, Saint Kitts and Nevis and the territories of the United Kingdom to assist them with becoming Parties to the SPAW Protocol which they have not yet ratified. The Governments of Saint Kitts and Nevis are reviewing cabinet submissions for the ratification of SPAW.
- 29. Implementation of activities under the EU funded project "Enforcing Environmental Treaties in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries ACP-MEAs Phase III" (USD1,961,264) continued (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.43). The four (4) year project (2020-2024) will result in:
 - The reinforcement of Regional Seas Conventions' Governance Frameworks and associated protocols;
 - A functional network of SPAW-listed Protected Areas covering interconnected marine habitats and ecosystems for restoring and sustaining the health of the oceans. The reduction of the influx of waste entering the marine environment of the WCR; and
 - Documentation of best practices and lessons learnt in marine litter management, at the community level.
- 30. Two White Papers were launched:
 - 2021 Sargassum White Paper: Turning the crisis into an opportunity (update)
 - 2021 Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) White Paper
- 31. A number of meetings and webinars were organized and/or attended in order to continue promoting the sub-programme and develop synergies. Due to the onset of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic from March 2020, some meetings were organized via virtual participation.

V. COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND AWARENESS

- 32. This section provides a summary of the communications work of the Secretariat as described in the 2021-2022 work plan approved by the 19th IGM and 16th COP: http://gefcrew.org/carrcu/19IGM/Work-Docs/IG.45-3%20Rev.1-EN.pdf
- 33. The objectives of CETA are to:
 - Disseminate information relevant to the implementation of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols.
 - Promote improved understanding of the value and importance of marine and coastal resources.
 - Facilitate training and capacity building of Contracting Parties including enhancing access to information on marine and coastal resource management.
 - Provide communication support to all areas of the Secretariat.
- 34. Communications and technical support were provided for the convening of the Secretariat's Intergovernmental Meetings, project events (workshops, webinars, meetings) and other outreach

activities.

- 35. The Communications Strategy of the Secretariat, which was updated during the biennium, was used as the framework for communication activities. These fell under four main pillars:
 - Corporate Communications and Public Relations: Raising the visibility of the Caribbean Environment Programme and promoting the projects and activities of the Secretariat;
 - Data Information and Management: Providing data, information, and technical support to Contracting Parties and partners;
 - Environmental Education and Public Awareness: Implementing activities to inform the public about specific environmental issues;
 - Participatory Communication for Development: Engaging stakeholders and project partners in project-based communication efforts to document and provide evidence of behavioural change.
- 36. Due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach and public awareness activities continued virtually in 2021 and 2022. During this period, the Secretariat supported UNEP headquarters and the wider UN system through promoting positive messages (and campaigns) on social media to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and the myths associated with the virus, disseminate guidance from the World Health Organization on COVID-19 health protocols, encourage proper waste management practices for the use and disposal of single-use masks, inter alia. The Secretariat also joined related webinars hosted by the UN Department of Global Communications concerning the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and Monkeypox.
- 37. In May 2022, the post of Information Systems Assistant became vacant. Given the critical functions associated with this post, additional duties were assumed by the CETA Team Assistant and Admin Driver/Clerk to allow for the continuity of IT support to the Secretariat. A temporary IT Assistant was onboarded in mid-September 2022 for 6 months which was later extended for a further 3 months. The job opening for a full-time IT Assistant is expected to be published in 2023 with selection by the middle of 2023.
- 38. Four interns¹ assisted with public awareness activities, social media posts, drafting of reports, presentations, LBS and SPAW activities and website updates. The work of the CETA Sub-Programme was further supported by an Associate Programme Officer, the GEF IWEco Communications Specialist, and two National United Nations Volunteers recruited in 2022 who have been assisting with communications activities related to marine litter and the ACP MEAs 3 project.
- 39. In June 2022, the Secretariat launched its first electronic newsletter featuring combined updates from all areas of work, including activities undertaken by Regional Activity Centres and country updates: Edition 1: June 2022; Edition 2: September 2022; Edition 3: December 2022.
- 40. In the lead up to the UN Ocean Conference in June July 2022, the United Nations Department of Global Communications developed a <u>podcast</u> which explored some of the ocean-related issues facing Barbados. The Secretariat also participated in an <u>interview on the importance and role of the Convention</u> in addressing pressing environmental issues in the Wider Caribbean.
- 41. As the Communications Sub-Programme does not have an assigned budget for the implementation of its work plan, the Secretariat continued to harness the resources available through partnerships and build on the communications work of ongoing projects in order to maximize the effectiveness of its work. The following communications and public education activities were undertaken through or with funding from projects that are co-executed or led by the Secretariat:

¹ Devika Roy, Hacer Eda Isik, Paloma Guzman, Mahsa Sanai

United Nations Jamaica Human Security Programme: The Secretariat's work under the UN Jamaica Human Security Programme was featured in a flipping book entitled <u>Bringing Data to Life: SDG human impact stories from across the globe</u> (page 29). The publication, prepared by the UN Statistics Division, collected a handful of human impact stories and was developed in preparation for the global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Report 2022.

ACP MEAs 3: <u>project webpage</u> created and updated quarterly; six (6) combined contributions made to the ACP MEAs 3 project newsletter and monthly digest;

- 42. In commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, the Secretariat produced a video which traced the legacy of the Convention, from its adoption in the 1980s amidst increasing attention on environmental challenges, to its continued role for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supporting policymakers and legislators, protecting livelihoods that depend on marine resources, and responding to new and emerging threats and challenges. The production was made possible through funding from the ACP MEAs 3 project and supported the Secretariat's efforts to promote ratification of the Convention and its Protocols.
- 43. The video is on YouTube https://youtu.be/vDvgHBF1Ubc and is available in English, Spanish and French.

GEF IWEco

44. Through funding from the GEF IWEco project, a four-part video series on sargassum was produced. The videos raised awareness among the wider public on the origins and impacts of the sargassum influx that has plagued the Wider Caribbean for the past several years. The series explored the origin of the seaweed in the region and the efforts of governments and other stakeholders to reduce the influx and its impacts on coastlines, health and livelihoods. The featured testimonials also provided insight into the actions and associated costs to mitigate and monitor the influx, and the innovations of young entrepreneurs to turn sargassum into a valuable economic opportunity. The video series is available in English, Spanish and French.

English (YouTube):

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1b4CjsKoE4cfr8RDO0gkrI4ASrmF9mcK English, Spanish, French (SharePoint): Sargassum video series.

- 45. In support of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, a social media campaign titled #RestorationBeginsWithMe (https://iweco.org/news-and-media/news-releases/restoration-begins-with-me) was developed and promoted in collaboration with the GEF IWEco Project team, the UNEP Caribbean Sub-Regional Office (CSRO), and the Food and Agriculture Organization Representation for Jamaica, the Bahamas and Belize. Members of the public were invited to submit a photograph with a short description, or a short video, of an activity such as tree planting or caring, or anything associated with such an activity that showed how they valued plants, trees or forests, and what they meant to them. The campaign aimed to introduce the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and its significance, raise awareness of the value of ecosystem restoration and the value of trees and forests. The campaign was launched on the International Day of Forests (IDF) and culminated on World Environment Day (WED) 2021, when the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration was formally launched.
- 46. GEF CReW+: Five (5) articles were contributed to the GEF CReW+ newsletter (in 2022 when newsletter was launched); participation in the project's "Meet the Team" social media campaign to introduce members of the co-implementing and co-executing agencies; procurement of interpreters and consultants for GEF CReW+; support in the planning and execution of the GEF CReW+ Project Steering Committee meetings in 2021 and 2022; review of and input provided to the project's Communication Strategy and annual activities; support in the development, promotion and execution

of webinars under the GEF CReW+ Academy; technical support provided in the development of the project website.

- 47. Other environmental days were commemorated through the following activities:
 - World Wetlands Day- social media posts
 - World Wildlife Day- social media posts
 - World Water Day- social media posts on the theme and the Secretariat's work on integrated water resources management; CReW+ article in 2021 https://www.unep.org/cep/news/blogpost/sewage-sells-unexpected-value-wastewater;
 - International Biodiversity Day- GEF IWEco poster series launched. Website articles posted https://www.unep.org/cep/news/blogpost/our-gef-iweco-project-launches-poster-series-international-biodiversity-day, social media posts made, and posters featured in newsletter.
 - World Oceans Day, World Environment Day- social media posts.
 - UN Day- in 2021 the Secretariat participated in virtual activities hosted by the UN Communications Group which serves Jamaica and Bahamas. In 2022, the <u>Secretariat chaired a panel discussion on Sustainable Development Goal 14</u> during the UN Jamaica Partnership Forum. Virtual booths were also set up on VFairs in 2021 and 2022 to promote the work of the Secretariat and available resources.
 - World Toilet Day- social media posts and publication of GEF CReW+ articles (https://www.unep.org/cep/news/blogpost/world-toilet-day-making-visible-linkage-between-groundwater-and-marine-ecosystems).
- 48. Several other activities were undertaken to raise awareness on environmental issues and the importance of protecting coastal and marine resources. These included the:
 - Publication of new factsheets on thematic issues and new projects, website articles and publications;
 - Seven press releases and 48 publications (combination of stories, blogposts, web announcements) made to the website from Jan. 2021 to Dec. 2022.
 - Dissemination of information to focal points (Calls for nominations received from other agencies, invitations to webinars and project events, etc.);
 - The Secretariat continued to use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to share programme updates and highlight relevant national, regional and global environmental news. Our <u>Facebook</u> followers have increased by 11% from a total of 9,454 at the end of 2020 to 10,496 at the end of 2022. <u>Twitter</u> followers grew from 5,555 to 5,783. Our total number of followers on <u>Instagram</u> at the end of the biennium stands at 1,862 followers (increase from 1,637). <u>LinkedIn</u> followers are at 1500.
- 49. Programe and project documents and reports continued to be uploaded to UNEP's Document Repository where they formed part of UNEP's official database and were more easily monitored in terms of access and downloads, and more easily located through search engines.
- 50. The CETA Sub-Programme also supported AMEP and SPAW with the review of the region's first environmental database that was developed by GRID Geneva.
- 51. The CETA Sub-Programme also continued to review the Cartagena Convention reporting template to incorporate improvements based on feedback from Parties.

ANNEX I: Status of Responses to Cartagena Convention COP Decisions

Status of Responses to Relevant Decisions of the Nineteenth (19th) Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth (16th) Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean

Cartagena Convention COP16 Decisions				
	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments	
	Dec	ision I Workplan and Budget		
1. Secretariat produce more Knowledge Management Products in French and Spanish	Completed	Resources mobilized from multiple projects to support translation. New Knowledge Management products uploaded to website in all three languages. Social Media Campaigns and posts done in all three languages. Captions completed for Anniversary video.	Efforts ongoing to have any new project briefs and fact sheets translated in the three working languages of the Convention. New contracts for translators advertised. Request to be included as part of UNEP HQ cooperate contract for translation.	
2. Secretariat mobilize financial resources for implementing unfunded activities	Completed	Successful in mobilizing resources from UNEP HQ for LBS Activities on Nutrients including national nutrient pollution reduction strategies in Jamaica and Barbados, the convening of a regional workshop on coastal eutrophication, the development of a Regional Data Platform, and support to developing national marine litter action plan for St. Lucia. Through partnership with ACS, 5 day webinar on Microplastics convened.	This is being done through the development of new GEF proposals and through greater coordination with UNEP HQ. Discussions ongoing on how the Secretariat can benefit from GEF 8 Programming and development of new joint project proposals. Unfunded activities to be presented within the 2023/2024 Work Plan.	

	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments
3. Secretariat identify new partnership opportunities	Completed	Partnerships were enhanced and/or developed with GWP-C, GRID Geneva, Government of Germany, Ocean Sewage Alliance, Community of Practice of Ocean Acidification, COSTA on remote sensing of Oil Spills, GEMS Oceans and GEMS Freshwater and OSPAR Commission. Formal introductory communication sent to OECS, CARICOM and CCAD. Collaboration with IAEA and INVEMAR to consider expansion of a network of laboratories (REMARCO) to be a RAN for the Convention.	
4. Secretariat enhance synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, and international global agenda	Completed	Participation in activities of the BASEL Centre, signing of MOU with OSPAR and technical support provided on Nutrients, experience sharing on Marine Litter with SPREP, with COBSEA on Nutrients, with Barcelona Convention on Online Reporting and Regional Information Systems, and with Abidjan on MPAs. Collaboration with CBD Secretariat for OECMS joint workshop - April 2022 and development of road map for collaboration between Regional Seas and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations. Side event on sargassum to take place at CBD COP.	This is taking place primarily through the ACP MEA Project and in collaboration with MEA Secretariats and under the Regional Seas Strategy.
	Decis	ion II Financial Arrangements	

	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments
5. Secretariat invoke Clause 24 on Administration of Amendment 1 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.	Completed	Secretariat has engaged in communication and/or discussions with countries regarding outstanding contributions including Anguilla, Grenada, Cuba. Several country briefs completed and summary template finalized to keep bureau updated on status of contributions. Support requested from OECS, CARICOM, CCAD and UNEP Regional Office as far as contributions	This is an ongoing process and will continue into the next biennium.
6. Secretariat request the Executive Director of UNEP to extend the Caribbean Trust Fund until the next Conference of Parties.	Completed	Request sent and approved. No further action required.	
7. Secretariat to convene in-person meetings of future COPs should the financial situation of the Secretariat improve.	Completed	Discussions held with the Kingdom of the Netherlands to co-host the COP in April 18-21 2023	
		Decision III Governance	
8. Secretariat keep Contracting Parties informed of all memoranda of understanding (MOUs) processes and negotiations.	Completed	IWC did not accept UNEP clauses in draft MOU. Initial discussion has taken place with the OECS on a possible new MOU based on Ministerial Decision.	No new MOUs expected in this biennium. This will be an ongoing operational process.

	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments
9. Secretariat liaise with UNEP (HQ) and 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	Ongoing	Secretariat in ongoing discussions with UNEP HQ on how best to internalize support from projects, and to cover Project Support Costs. More careful monitoring of expenditure and operational expenses shared between multiple projects.	HQ to be invited to present at the next Cartagena Convention COP on Financial Sustainability
10. Secretariat ensure that there is stricter adherence to the Rules of Procedure for all meetings of the Cartagena Convention and its protocols	Completed	Requested support from HQ for funds to assist in Training Parties on Rules of Procedure. Internal workshops held with all staff in September 2022.	Orientation session to be held for new Focal Points in advance of COPs in March 2023
11. Secretariat conduct a detailed review and analysis of the architecture of the general operations, funding sources, and the organization with the Secretariat of the RACs and RANs.	Completed	Consultant - Ms. Monica Borobia finalized consultancy report in June 2022. Secretariat provided coordinating support. First Meeting with RACs took place in December 2021, second meeting in June 20, 2022 and third face to face meeting in July 2022. Implementation plan and responses to report's recommendations completed and were shared with Host RAC Governments in August and with all Contracting Parties in September.	Contracting Parties to consider the need to update the RAC/RAN guidelines.
12. Secretariat to provide an analysis on how it sees the UNEP Regional Seas Programme and other Divisions supporting the work of the Secretariat.	Ongoing	This is specifically covered by ongoing consultancy by Mr. Gaetano Leone, hired by UNEP HQ. Support to the new Regional Seas Strategy and participation in the Annual Regional Seas Meeting for 2022 will form the basis for this analysis. It will be included as part of the updated CEP Strategy.	

	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments
13. Secretariat encourage the Bureau to monitor the implementation of the work programme and that a report be given to Contracting Parties halfway through the biennium.	Completed	This has been included in the new TORs for the Bureau. At least two Bureau meetings are planned prior to the next Conference of Parties. One on December 5th 2022 and the second in February or early March 2023.	
	I	Decision IV CEP Strategy	
14. Secretariat compile comments on the CEP Strategy and establish a working group to review and consider how best to incorporate these comments into the current draft.	Ongoing	Resources mobilized from ACP MEA Project to support finalization of the Strategy based on comments received. TORs for consultant finalized and advertised. Updated Strategy expected by 15th January.	Given how advanced the CEP Strategy is, and the limited capacity of the Secretariat, the draft CEP Strategy will be shared with the Bureau and all Contracting Parties for input.
15. Secretariat ensure that the finalization of the CEP Strategy is informed by the decisions of the 19th IGM and 16th COP.	Completed	ACP MEA project to support consultant who will use Governance Report and the recent Regional Seas Strategic Directions to finalize the CEP Strategy. This consultant was recruited and the updated strategy to be presented to the next COP.	
16. Secretariat supports blue economy work without taking on additional work streams, creating working groups and/or utilizing additional resources.	Completed	This has been clearly communicated to UNEP HQ and UNEP Regional Office. Some support to Regional BE work to take place through ACP MEA Project. Input provided to BE paper for CBD COP	Together with UNEP HQ, a study on blue economy focusing on link with biodiversity financing and supporting country financing plans (CBD and others) will be financed through ACP MEA. This will be presented as Information paper to the COP.

	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments
	Deci	sion V Decisions of the COPs	
17. Secretariat further integrates the two sub-programmes through joint STACs, COPs and/or joint representation.	Completed	Ongoing programmatic and admin integration - taking place through several projects and activities. New JPO and UNV ACP MEA is facilitating such integration. Joint face to face meeting of RACs took place in Jul 2022 following two virtual meetings between the Secretariat and the RACs. Detailed review and preparation of action plan in response to RAC RAN analysis also completed.	Development of 2023/2024 Work Plan as well as convening of STACs and COPs will continue to promote further integration.
	Decisio	on VI RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe	
18. Secretariat promotes the work of the Centre and disseminate information on their activities and capabilities	Completed	Work of RAC REMPEITC actively promoted through website, social media and communications with focal points and new CEP Newsletter. Representatives of RAC REMPEITC asked to be part of Anniversary Video and to make presentation at various webinars including ELAW. The Centre's activities have also been noted in recent reports to the UN Secretary General on the Caribbean Sea and Oceans and Law of the Sea. RAC REMPEITC Steering Ctee Meeting and IMO Meeting of Maritime Directors also used to promote work of RAC REMPEITC and their new Website	
19. Secretariat strengthen collaboration in the region on oil spill monitoring.	Completed	Being facilitated through discussions with IMO, IMA, RAC REMPEITC and NOAA. Information Paper to be submitted to COP for expansion of the COSTA Programme. Linked to 20.	

	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments
20. Secretariat explore opportunities for replicating and upscaling training for detection of oil spills and for other pollutants using satellite remote sensing technology	Completed	Being facilitated through discussions with IMO and NOAA. Recommendations of RAC REMPEITC and Decisions of the Maritime Administrators Meeting call for this cooperation based on presentations made by the Secretariat, RAC REMPEITC and NOAA	
	Decisio	n VII Coordination Mechanism	
21. Secretariat continue to participate in the PROCARIBE+ project development process and keep the Contracting Parties informed.	Completed	Secretariat provided nominees for Thematic Groups for the Proposal development process, participated in the final PSC Meeting and the first Validation Workshop. Procaribe+ submitted and under consideration by the GEF. Final decision expected by Dec 2022	Specific involvement of the Secretariat will be based on the final project document and the extent to which the Secretariat will be involved will be included in the Draft 2023/2024 Work Plan being presented to Parties.
22. Secretariat participates in the Coordination Mechanism, once established.	Completed	Awaiting formal decision on Procaribe+ project	See above.
	Decision VIII Ins	stitutional Arrangements of the Secretariat	
23. Secretariat 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.	Completed	Covered as part of Consultancy by Gaetano Leone. Final reports circulated to all Parties. A draft implementation plan will be developed and presented to the next COP. Changes to the existing structure will be dependent on funding and Cop Decisions.	

	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments
24. Secretariat 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.	Completed	Completed as part of Consultancy by Gaetano Leone. Training needs of staff identified and internal capacity building training conducted once a week in the month of May 2022. Additional training identified and ongoing.	Longer term training needs will be developed and subject to availability of financing. Several training courses being provided and reflected in Staff EPAs
25. Secretariat ensure that "draft" terms of reference of the Bureau are shared with Contracting Parties no later than two (2) weeks after the meeting.	Completed	Draft Terms of reference shared, comments received and incorporated. Final Terms of Reference shared in English, Spanish, French in April 2022. Bilateral Discussions convened with the Government of Barbados. First meeting to take place in December 2022	
26. Secretariat 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.	Completed	Secretariat is actively participating as a partner executing agency in IWEco, Procaribe+, CReW+, IW Learn, Cities, Gulf of Mexico, in discussions for developing new re Trinfrio and CarBlueFin. Regional Concepts under GEF 8 including on Blue Economy, BBNJ, Nutrients and Freshwater EBM.	The new GEF Programme areas are Plastics, Blue-Green Islands, Restoration and Clean/Healthy Oceans. Concepts under discussion include on Blue Economy, BBNJ, Nutrients and Freshwater.
27. Secretariat present a resource mobilisation strategy to the next Conference of the Parties.	Ongoing	Outline of Resource Mobilization Strategy developed by UNEP HQ Consultant. New consultancy funded by the ACP MEA Project to be used to further enhance this strategy as part of the broader CEP Strategy. TORs for consultant finalized, approved and advertised.	A more comprehensive resource mobilization strategy might need to be developed subject to resource availability and considering updated strategies of UNEP HQ.

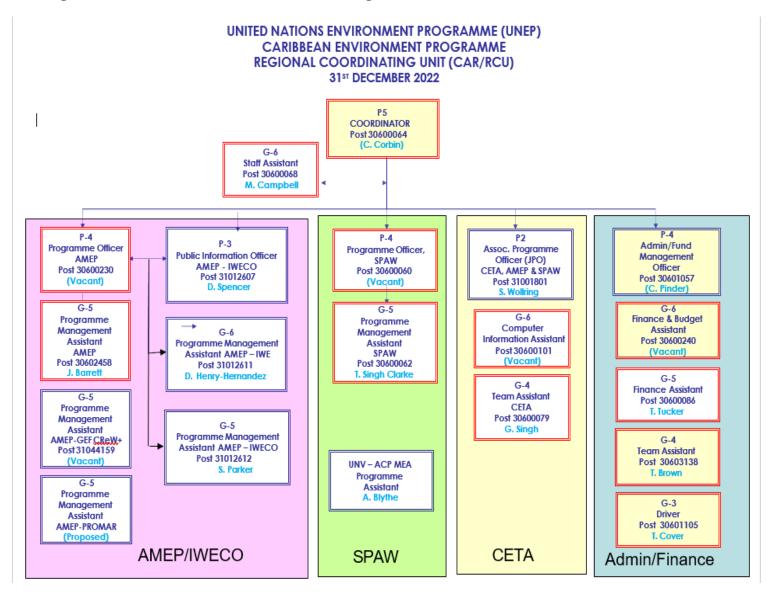
	Status (Completed, Ongoing or Not Started) Color Code	Actions(s) Taken	Comments						
	Decision IX Cartagena Reporting Template								
28. Secretariat support Governments in the ratification process of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols.	Ongoing	SSFAs developed with LBS RACs CIMAB and IMA with funding support from ACP MEA and CReW+ projects to support ratification. Regional Workshops convened in November 2021 with Non Contracting Parties and bilateral discussions and outreach took place to identify how best this support could be provided. Workshop Reports and Needs Assessment Matrix available. Letters under preparation to send to all countries to provide updates on ratification status and whether any support is required.	Recommendation brought forward during the 9th OECS Council of Ministers of Environmental Sustainability Meeting to promote ratification as well as meetings of the GEF IWEco Project, RAC REMPEITC Steering Ctee Meeting and the Meeting of Directors of Maritime Administrators organized by the IMO. Suriname have indicated ratification under consideration by Government and Saint Vincent is in process of ratifying the LBS Protocol.						
29. Secretariat send timely reminders to Contracting Parties to submit future biennial reports.	Not Started	This activity will take place from December 2022	Secretariat to send reminders within 3 months, 2 months and 1 month prior to the Cartagena Convention COP. STACs and other preparatory meetings and bilateral discussions to be also used to remind Parties.						
30. Secretariat improve the reporting template's online format considering formats used by other MEAs and Regional Seas Convention Secretariats and Action Plans.	Ongoing	Discussions have taken place with Barcelona Convention Secretariat and with UNEP HQ to identify possible online reporting tools that might be used.							

ANNEX II: Status of Contributions to the Caribbean Trust Fund as at 31 December 2022

States and Territories of the Caribbean Region	Indicative Contributions 2021	Outstanding Contributions (Previous years incl. 2021)	Recd' 2021	Balance as at 31-Dec-2021	Indicative Contributions 2022	Outstanding Contributions (prev yrs. incl. 2022)	Recd' 2022	Balance
ANGUILLA	12,791.00	89,537.00	-	89,537.00	12,791.00	102,328.00	102,328.00	-
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA	12,791.00	127,910.00	-	127,910.00	12,791.00	140,701.00	-	140,701.00
ARUBA	11,663.00	-	11,663.00	-	11,663.00	11,663.00	11,663.00	-
BAHAMAS	12,791.00	25,582.00	-	25,582.00	12,791.00	38,373.00	-	38,373.00
BARBADOS	12,791.00	-	12,791.00	-	12,791.00	12,791.00	12,791.00	-
BELIZE	11,663.00	81,641.00	-	81,641.00	11,663.00	93,304.00	93,304.00	-
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	7,547.00	-	7,547.00	-	7,547.00	7,547.00	7,547.00	-
CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS	6,000.00	-	6,000.00	-	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	-
CAYMAN ISLANDS	7,101.00	56,540.00	-	56,540.00	7,101.00	63,641.00	-	63,641.00
COLOMBIA	22,914.00	22,913.06	160,345.53	22,913.06	22,914.00	45,827.06	45,827.06	-
COSTA RICA	13,917.00	(12,349.30)	19,656.08	(12,349.30)	13,917.00	1,567.70	-	1,567.70
CUBA	24,059.00	469,467.35	ı	469,467.35	24,059.00	493,526.35	-	493,526.35
CURACAO	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	10,000.00	20,000.00	-	20,000.00
DOMINICA - COMMONWEALT H	12,791.00	226,737.39	ı	226,737.39	12,791.00	239,528.39	-	239,528.39
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	15,044.00	346.92	31,105.16	346.92	15,044.00	15,390.92	14,832.41	558.51
FRANCE	291,597.00	-	291,597.00	-	291,597.00	291,597.00	291,597.00	-

States and Territories of the Caribbean Region	Indicative Contributions 2021	Outstanding Contributions (Previous years incl. 2021)	Recd' 2021	Balance as at 31-Dec-2021	Indicative Contributions 2022	Outstanding Contributions (prev yrs. incl. 2022)	Recd' 2022	Balance
GRENADA	12,791.00	306,358.00	-	306,358.00	12,791.00	319,149.00	-	319,149.00
GUATEMALA	13,917.00	-	84,365.56	-	13,917.00	13,917.00	13,917.00	•
CO-OP REPUBLIC OF GUYANA	12,791.00	12,757.06	12,824.94	12,757.06	12,791.00	25,548.06	-	25,548.06
HAITI	12,791.00	12,791.00	12,791.00	12,791.00	12,791.00	25,582.00	-	25,582.00
HONDURAS	12,791.00	(6,419.00)	15,114.00	(6,419.00)	12,791.00	6,372.00	-	6,372.00
JAMAICA	18,514.00	37,378.57	14,842.43	37,378.57	18,514.00	55,892.57	16,654.40	39,238.17
MEXICO	40,000.00	-	40,000.00	-	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	-
MONTSERRAT	3,430.00	3,430.00	6,860.00	3,430.00	3,430.00	6,860.00	3,430.00	3,430.00
NICARAGUA	12,791.00	306,470.00	-	306,470.00	12,791.00	319,261.00	-	319,261.00
PANAMA	13,917.00	68,489.00	-	68,489.00	13,917.00	82,406.00	-	82,406.00
ST KITTS-NEVIS	3,430.00	-	10,290.00	-	3,430.00	3,430.00	3,430.00	-
ST LUCIA	11,663.00	53,334.80	11,663.00	53,334.80	11,663.00	64,997.80	11,638.00	53,359.80
ST VINCENT & THE GRENADINES	11,663.00	139,839.34	-	139,839.34	11,663.00	151,502.34	-	151,502.34
SURINAME	12,791.00	115,119.00	-	115,119.00	12,791.00	127,910.00	-	127,910.00
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	15,044.00	-	30,088.00	-	15,044.00	15,044.00	15,044.00	-
TURK & CAICOS ISLANDS	6,174.00	6,174.00	6,174.00	6,174.00	6,174.00	12,348.00	12,348.00	-
USA	393,975.00	-	400,000.00	-	393,975.00	393,975.00	400,000.00	(6,025.00)
VENEZUELA	170,375.00	1,703,750.00		1,703,750.00	170,375.00	1,874,125.00	-	1,874,125.00
TOTAL	1,264,308.00	3,857,797.19	1,185,717.7	3,857,797.19	1,264,308.00	5,122,105.19	1,102,350.87	4,019,754.32

ANNEX III: Organizational chart of the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat as of 31 December 2022



ANNEX IV: Status of pledges and expenditure (US\$)

YEAR	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Pledged (a)	1,264,308.00	1,264,308.00	1,264,308.00	1,264,308.00	
Pledges Received (b)	636,682.46	1,248,581.73	1,185,717.70	1,102,350.87	
Shortfall in pledges $(a-b=c)$	(627,625.54.)	(15,726.27)	(78,590.30)	(161,957.13)	
Actual Expenditure (d)	1,106,118.28	1,009,129.22	1,124,526.18	865,126.99	
Diff. pledges vs					
Expenditure $(b-d=e)$	(469,435.82)	239,452.51	61,191.52	237,223.88	

ANNEX V: Budget and Expenditure by Commitment Class (US\$)

Budget Component	2019 Actual Budget	2019 Exp.	2020 Actual Budget	2020 Exp.	2021 Actual Budget	2021 Exp.	2022 Actual Budget	2022 Exp.
Travel	164,371	79,789.65	51,750	2,941	30,000	0	30,000	1,109.48
Staff Personnel	925,000	831,538.43	910,000	810,379	910,000	855,927.62	930,000	661,519.77
Contractual Services	13,500	2,486.01	10,125	9,292	15,000	48,894.06	15,000	20,371.66
Supplies & Material	1,500	790.90	1,125	22.06	2,000	2,008.79	2,000	0
Operational Costs	76,500	60,623.00	75,000	45,023.38	75,000	67,282.60	135,000	82,239.67
Equipment & Furniture	3,500	3,600.34	9,000	5,636.11	7,000	2,852.72	7,000	358.53
Sub-Total	1,184,371	978,873.94	1,057,000	873,294	1,039,000	976,965.79	1,119,000	765,599.11
PSC (13%)	144,218	127,253.61	104,625.00	135,835.04	135,070	147,560.39	145,470	99,527.88
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,328,589	<u>1,106,127.55</u>	<u>1,161,625.00</u>	949,674.03	<u>1,174,070</u>	1,124,526.18	<u>1,264,470</u>	865,126.99