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Seventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (CoP) to  
the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-  
Based Sources and Activities (LBS) in the Wider  
Caribbean Region

Kingston, Jamaica

13 and 16 October 2025

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONDUCTING FURTHER STUDIES ON THE  
EFFECTIVENESS OF REGULATORY IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL  
MARINE, COASTAL AND ESTUARINE WATER CLASSIFICATION SCHEMES AND  
DELINEATION OF WATER BODIES ALIGNED TO THE LBS PROTOCOL**

*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.*



## **Description of Activities – Water Classification (Part 2, Recommendation IV, LBS STAC7)**

### **1.0 Background:**

This information document is being presented to the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties to the Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution Protocol (LBS COP 7) in response to the following Recommendation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Scientific Technical and Advisory Committee Meeting to the LBS Protocol (LBS STAC 7).

The Recommendation was (IV) Water Classification (2):

*“Contracting Parties request that the LBS RACs, with support of the Secretariat and LBS OEWG, develop recommendation(s) for consideration by the Contracting Parties at the LBS COP7 to conduct further studies on the effectiveness of regulatory implementation of national marine, coastal and estuarine water classification schemes, including gathering information as to how such water bodies are delineated and aligned to the LBS Protocol, subject to the availability of funding”.*

### **2.0 Proposed Recommendation:**

Following the completion of the regional desktop study on water classification in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.44/INF.16 Rev.1), and the review of the document during the 7 LBS STAC, the 7 LBS Conference of Parties is being asked to approaches for continuing the work advanced by the LBS STACs and OEWG. The continuation of activities related to the issue of water classification as requested by the LBS Protocol is dependent on the availability of resources. Noting the foregoing, the proposed studies could assess and document the effectiveness of national marine, coastal, and estuarine water classification schemes, with a focus on their regulatory implementation and alignment with the LBS Protocol. Where possible it is further recommended that the work is advanced through the LBS RACs with the assistance of the Open-Ended Working Group, particularly the Nutrients and Wastewater subgroup.

The proposed studies could consider the following:

#### **2.0.1 Objective**

Generate a detailed, practice-oriented understanding of how selected Contracting Parties delineate and manage classified water bodies, identify barriers to implementation, and extract replicable best practices to guide the preparation of draft regional guidelines for water classification.

#### **2.0.2 Planned Activities**

##### **1. Selection of Target Countries**

- Using findings from the 2025 desktop study (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.44/INF.16 Rev.1), identify countries with notable advances in water classification.
- Consider a representation of Contracting Parties across the Cartagena Convention ensuring diversity in legal frameworks.

## 2. **Bilateral Consultations**

- Conduct structured virtual meetings with focal points and technical experts from four to six selected countries to:
  - Review national classification methodologies and criteria.
  - Understand institutional arrangements for implementing classification schemes.
  - Document barriers encountered (e.g. gaps in legislation, resource limitations, lack of data, or enforcement challenges).
  - Identify examples of integration with wastewater regulations and marine protected area zoning.

## 3. **Methodology Documentation**

- Compile and analyse documentation on how classification zones are delineated in practice (e.g. GIS-based mapping, ecosystem inventories, stakeholder consultations, legal designation processes).
- Cross-reference national categories with LBS Protocol Classes I and II to assess alignment and identify inconsistencies.

## 4. **Field Missions (2-3 countries)**

- Undertake in-country visits to observe classification in practice, engage with local enforcement agencies, and validate desk- and interview-based findings.
- Collect case study material, including maps, regulatory instruments, and photographic evidence.

## 5. **Synthesis and Best Practices**

- Analyse collected data to extract transferable lessons for regional application, considering technical, legal, and governance dimensions.
- Develop a set of recommended procedural steps for classification that address delineation, stakeholder engagement, monitoring, and enforcement.

### **3.0 Expected Output**

A consolidated technical report presenting:

- Country case studies of effective classification systems.
- Analysis of barriers and enabling factors.
- Documented methodologies for delineation and classification.
- Practical recommendations feeding into the **Draft Guidelines for the Classification of Waters** (Part 3, Recommendation IV) for consideration at LBS STAC8 and COP8.