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Seventh 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, 22 – 25 July 2025

### **Draft Work Plan of RAC Cimab (2026-2027)**

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# WORK PLAN 2026–2027 (including the second half of 2025)

## RAC CIMAB (DRAFT)

### 1. BACKGROUND

The Fifth (5th) Decision of the Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (5th LBS COP) in the Wider Caribbean Region, which took place virtually in July 2021, endorsed the Medium-Term Strategic Plans presented by the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) Cimab and IMA, and requested the development of biennial work plans by the RACs, thereby enabling greater integration of RAC activities into future Work Plans and Budgets of the AMEP (Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution) sub-programme.

This document is the Draft Work Plan of the RAC Cimab for the 2026–2027 biennium, intended to be presented at the 7th Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committee (7th LBS STAC) meeting, to be held virtually from July 22 to 24, 2025.

The Draft Work Plan is aligned with the five strategic objectives outlined in the RAC Cimab Strategic Outlook for the 2021–2030 period. The proposed activities and priorities reflect a combination of ongoing projects from the current biennium, new projects and activities, as well as other potential activities for which resources are not yet available.

The Draft Work Plan of RAC Cimab (2025–2026, including the second half of 2025) will support the implementation of the Cartagena Convention's Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2030) and other regional strategies adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Convention, including the Regional Marine Litter Strategy and the Regional Nutrient Pollution Reduction Strategy. In addition, the strategy reflects the efforts of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat to integrate relevant activities from the SPAW and AMEP Subprogrammes and to promote greater cooperation among the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) and other agencies that are part of the Regional Activity Network (RAN).

The document has been divided into two sections. The first includes general activities, according to the guidelines and strategic objectives of RAC Cimab for the 2021–2030 period and the second section includes the detailed Work Plan with the proposed activities for the 2025–2026 period (including the second half of 2025).

### 2. Lineamientos y objetivos estratégicos del Plan de Trabajo. Actividades generales.

**Guideline:** The prevention, reduction, and control of marine pollution from land-based sources, in order to achieve healthy marine and coastal ecosystems in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR).

**Strategic Objective 1:** Increase the use of innovative tools and solutions for the prevention, reduction, and control of marine pollution from land-based sources.

To achieve this objective, the following general activities will be carried out:

- Programs, projects, and activities will continue to be implemented in countries of the Wider Caribbean Region, in collaboration with the National Focal Points of the LBS Protocol, to prevent, mitigate, and reduce the impact caused by land-based sources of marine pollution. These will include projects and activities related to the inventory, classification, characterization, and management of LBS sources, as well as monitoring and evaluation programs for the environmental quality of coastal marine waters and all types of wastewater.
- Other types of research and/or activities will be carried out on issues relevant to the LBS Protocol, aimed at supporting the ratification process in countries that have not yet become Contracting Parties, or at facilitating compliance with obligations in countries that have already acceded to the Protocol

**Guideline:** Emerging contaminants and nutrients as environmental and health issues in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) affecting living resources in marine coastal ecosystems, including human health.

**Strategic Objective 2:** Build capacities at RAC Cimab (technical, analytical, and human resources) to implement projects on **emerging contaminants** of highest priority for the WCR and strengthen existing capacities for the assessment of **nutrient pollution**.

To achieve this objective, the following general activities will be carried out:

- Actions will be implemented to create or strengthen capacities (in terms of human and technological resources) for research on the presence and impact of microplastics.
- The capacities of RAC Cimab will be strengthened in the assessment of nutrient pollution, including the identification of source contributions and their impact on the environment.
- RAC Cimab, and especially the Testing Laboratory, will continue to be strengthened in determining other environmental quality indicators and contamination parameters in wastewater and coastal marine waters.
- Se continuarán realizando acciones para mantener la condición de Laboratorio Acreditado por la Norma Cubana NC ISO 17025:2017 y ampliar su alcance.

**Guideline:** The ongoing **mobilization of financial resources** necessary for the sustainability of activities related to the prevention, reduction, and control of marine and coastal pollution.

**Strategic Objective 3:** Develop national and regional initiatives to **mobilize financial resources** for projects and activities aligned with the interests of the LBS Protocol.

To achieve this objective, the following general activities will be carried out:

- Support to the Cartagena Convention Secretariat will be strengthened in the search for new financing opportunities.
- Cooperation with the National Focal Points of the LBS Protocol will be promoted to likewise seek (national and international) funding alternatives for projects and activities related to the implementation of the Protocol.

**Guideline:** The necessary **regional cooperation** to achieve compliance with national and regional commitments for the prevention, reduction, and control of marine and coastal pollution from LBS sources.

**Strategic Objective 4:** Continue expanding **regional cooperation among the RACs and the RAN**.

To achieve this objective, the following general activity will be carried out:

- Scientific - technical cooperation will be increased among the institutions that are part of the RAN, with other specialized United Nations agencies, as well as with the other RACs in the region—placing particular emphasis on improving collaboration and communication with the Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA) of Trinidad and Tobago, which is the other Regional Activity Centre for the LBS Protocol. Various mechanisms and collaboration tools will be used to achieve this.

**Guideline:** Effective **knowledge management** as a fundamental tool for the identification, acquisition, exchange, and dissemination of information.

**Strategic Objective 5:** Increase the number of actions aimed at **knowledge management**.

To achieve this objective, the following general activities will be carried out:

- The provision of technical and scientific assistance (experts, consultancies, trainings) to governments and institutions in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) will be facilitated through courses, seminars, and workshops.
- Meetings, symposia, and field missions useful for fulfilling the objectives and obligations of the LBS Protocol will continue to be organized, in accordance with RAC responsibilities.
- The dissemination of successful experiences in the management of Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution will be increased, including results from national and regional programs and projects related to this topic.
- Public awareness actions on related issues aimed at target audiences or stakeholders will be further strengthened.
- Promotional activities for the LBS Protocol will continue, emphasizing the advantages and benefits of its ratification, as well as compliance with its stipulated obligations.

Other activities to be carried out in support of the Secretariat regarding the **coordination and management of the AMEP** Subprogramme include:

- Collaborating in the organization of and participating in the 7th LBS STAC and the 7th LBS COP, as well as in other meetings and/or workshops convened by the Secretariat.
- Supporting and participating in meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group and its technical subgroups.
- Facilitating exchanges with relevant projects in the region, other regional seas programmes, secretariats of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), and other cooperation mechanisms and partnerships related to the control, reduction, and prevention of marine pollution.

**3. DETAILED RAC CIMAB WORK PLAN 2026–2027  
(including the second half of 2025).**

The detailed RAC Cimab Work Plan for the 2026–2027 period is based on the implementation of activities financed by regional and national projects:

1. Regional Project: GEF CReW+
2. National Project: “Environmental quality monitoring of the ecosystems of the bays of Santiago de Cuba, Cayo Moa, Nipe, Puerto Padre, Cienfuegos, Mariel, Varadero–Cárdenas, Guantánamo, Matanzas, Nuevitas, and Sagua”
3. Territorial Project: “Comprehensive Environmental Surveillance Plan for Havana Bay and the adjacent coastline”
4. Regional Project: PROCARIBE+
5. Regional Project: GEF LAC Cities

Below are the specific activities already defined for the 2026–2027 period under the framework of the first three projects listed above. During the course of 2025 and early 2026, additional specific activities are expected to be defined and approved under projects 4 and 5.

Name of the Project and code	Activity	Date & Country-location	Objectives	Financing source	Budget USD: for international projects CUP: Cuban pesos for national projects	Recipients / Participants	Products/ outputs
<b><u>SSFA:</u> “Cooperation between UNEP and CIMAB regarding the GEF CReW+, ACP MEAs III projects/programs and SIDA funds (UNEP HQ) in the Wider Caribbean Region”</b>							
4.- Develop recommendations for amendments to the LBS Protocol to facilitate the increased reuse of domestic wastewater, including the adoption of new criteria or standards for domestic wastewater discharges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present a draft report with recommendations for amendments to the LBS Protocol at the 7th Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the LBS Protocol in July 2025.</li> <li>Incorporate comments/recommendations into the report for approval at the 7th LBS COP in October 2025.</li> </ul>	September 2025	Present recommendations for amendments to the LBS Protocol, particularly in its technical annexes	Regional Project GEF CReW+	17 000.00 USD	<i>Participants:</i> Researchers and specialists from RAC Cimab <i>Recipients:</i> National Focal Points of the LBS Protocol	Technical Report with Recommendations for Amendments to the LBS Protocol
5.- Review, analyze, and develop a strategy or protocol for freshwater resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present a draft report with a regional strategy for Spanish-speaking countries at the 7th Meeting of the Technical</li> </ul>	September 2025	Review recent studies on regional strategies for freshwater	Regional Project GEF CReW+	8 000.00 USD	<i>Participants:</i> Researchers and	A report with the proposed strategy or protocol for freshwater

management within the framework of the Cartagena Convention with a regional approach	<p>Advisory Committee (STAC) of the LBS Protocol in July 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate comments/recommendations into the report for approval at the 7th LBS COP in October 2025</li> </ul>		management, identify gaps, and adapt them to Spanish-speaking countries. 4.1-mini			specialists from RAC Cimab <i>Recipients:</i> Environmental authorities and water resource management agencies of the Spanish-speaking countries in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR)	management within the framework of the Cartagena Convention, adapted to Spanish-speaking countries
6-. Promote the ratification of the LBS Protocol among Non-Contracting Parties (in Spanish-speaking countries), including the development of promotional materials for ratification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National workshops to promote the LBS Protocol (in at least four Spanish-speaking countries).</li> <li>Design and develop promotional materials related to the ratification of the LBS Protocol</li> </ul>	September 2025	Increase the number of countries that are Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol	Regional Project GEF CReW+	26 208.00 USD	<i>Participants:</i> RAC Cimab and RAC IMA <i>Recipients:</i> National Focal Points of the LBS Protocol and the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention	National workshops conducted (especially in Non-Contracting Parties) Promotional materials
7-. Implement training on integrated and innovative wastewater management, such as webinars, massive open online courses (MOOCs), and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical training on innovative low-cost topics related to integrated water and wastewater management (countries to be determined based on training needs).</li> <li>Technical workshops or training sessions on thematic areas according to needs (modalities: online, virtual, or in-person to be determined)</li> </ul>	September 2025	Strengthen human resources in Spanish-speaking countries regarding integrated and innovative wastewater management	Regional Project GEF CReW+	16 829.00 USD	<i>Participants:</i> RAC Cimab and RAC IMA <i>Recipients:</i> National Focal Points of the LBS Protocol and the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention	Technical workshops and/or training sessions conducted

8-. Develop and update a data and information distribution mechanism on small- and large-scale wastewater treatment technologies, as well as on wastewater management policies and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the capacities of RAC Cimab as an information distribution center related to wastewater treatment technologies and policies.</li> <li>Improve the RAC Cimab website to provide available information and links about the LBS Protocol, the Secretariat of the Convention, the GEF CReW+ Project, and the academic sector.</li> </ul>	September 2025	Strengthen the capacities of RAC Cimab as a distributor of data and information related to wastewater treatment technologies	Regional Project GEF CReW+	15 000.00	<i>Participants:</i> RAC Cimab and RAC IMA <i>Recipients:</i> National Focal Points of the LBS Protocol, Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention, and the general public	Strengthened the capacities of RAC Cimab as an information distribution center related to wastewater treatment technologies and policies
9-. Strategy and a national action plan for nutrient pollution reduction in one (1) Spanish-speaking country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the Nutrient Reduction Strategy in the Demonstration Area “<i>Tributary Basin to Havana Bay, Cuba</i>”</li> <li>Conducting a workshop to share/socialize the strategy</li> </ul>	Septembre 2025	Develop the Nutrient Reduction Strategy in the Demonstration Area “ <i>Tributary Basin to Havana Bay, Cuba.</i> ”	Regional Project ACP MEA II	4 500 USD	<i>Participants:</i> RAC Cimab <i>Recipients:</i> Environmental Authorities of the State Working Group for Havana Bay	Final report with the nutrient reduction strategy in the Demonstration Area: “ <i>Tributary Basin to Havana Bay.</i> ”
<b>National Project:</b> “Monitoring of the Environmental Quality of the Ecosystem in the Bays of Santiago de Cuba, Cayo Moa, Nipe, Puerto Padre, Cienfuegos, Mariel, Varadero – Cárdenas, Guantánamo, Matanzas, Nuevitas, and Sagua”	1.- Collection of information and bibliographic research 2.- Updating the inventory of land-based sources of contamination (FTCM) to the ecosystem. 3.- Evaluation of the main physical-chemical (nutrients, organic matter), bacteriological, biological, and organic toxic indicators in the waters of the bays. 4.- Analysis and comparison of the obtained results with historical records. 5.- Analysis of the effectiveness of mitigation measures for the FTCM proposed in previous studies	January 2025 / December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the inventory of FTCM for each bay.</li> <li>Assess the hydrochemical and sanitary quality of the waters, the levels of organic contaminants, and the degree of deterioration of the biological communities in the bays during the rainy and dry seasons.</li> <li>Evaluate the effectiveness of the corrective measures proposed for each FTCM</li> </ul>	Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment (CITMA) of Cuba	2026 To be defined (CUP) 2027: To be defined (CUP)	<i>Participants:</i> Researchers and Technicians from CAR Cimab <i>Recipients:</i> Provincial Delegations of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment of Cuba (CITMA)	Result 1: Report with the updated inventory of Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution (FTCM) for each bay, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the proposed measures for controlling and mitigating impacts on the studied coastal area. Result 2: Report on the evolution and control of the environmental quality of the marine

							ecosystem of each bay. Executive Summary
<b>Territorial Project:</b> “Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plan for Havana Bay and the Adjacent Coastline”	1.- Monitoreo de la calidad ambiental de las 1.- Monitoring of the environmental quality of the waters and sediments of the bay through monthly sampling at an established network of stations. 2.- Determination of the pollutant load contributed by the main surface currents (Luyanó River, Martín Pérez River, and Tadeo Stream) through monthly sampling. 3.- Determination of the pollutant load contributed by stormwater drainage systems directly affecting the water quality of the bay (Agua Dulce, Matadero, and San Nicolás), through monthly sampling. 4.- Annual monitoring of selected industrial pollution sources affecting Havana Bay.	January 2025 / December 2026	Implement the Integrated Environmental Surveillance System in the bay’s watershed to ensure compliance with the recommendations established in the GEF Project RLA-93/G-41 for the improvement of the environmental status of the bay and its tributary basin.	State Working Group for the Bay of Havana	2026 To be defined (CUP) 2027 To be defined (CUP)	<i>Participants:</i> Researchers and Technicians from CAR Cimab <i>Recipients:</i> 1.- State Working Group for Havana Bay 2.- Government of Havana Province 3.- Industrial pollution sources affecting Havana Bay 4.- National Institute of Hydraulic Resources	1.- Annual report on the evolution of the environmental quality of the waters and sediments of Havana Bay. 2.- Annual report on the pollutant load contributed by the main surface currents, stormwater drains, and industrial pollution sources.