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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 to 25 July 2025

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

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 Seventh 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 22 to 25 July 2025;

Taking note of the presentations made by the Secretariat, Regional Activity Centres, the Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment and partner agencies and projects;

Recommends that:

- (A) Prior to the Convening of the 7th Conference of Parties to the Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution Protocol (LBS COP7) and Eighteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention (COP18).**

RECOMMENDATION I

REQUESTS FOR INPUT INTO DRAFT WORK PLAN

1. Contracting Parties **submit** any written comments on the 2025-2026 Draft AMEP and LBS RAC Workplans to the Secretariat no later than **08 August 2025**, to enable an updated draft Work Plan and Budget to be submitted to the 7th LBS COP for further review and approval.
2. The Secretariat convene a virtual Pre-Cartagena Convention COP to **review** and **further revise** the Sargassum Action Plan and RAC/RAN Guidelines for consideration by COP18, as appropriate.

(B) To the 7 LBS COP

RECOMMENDATION II

WORKPLAN

1. Contracting Parties and the Secretariat **continue** to explore capacity development opportunities with various partners including private sector, industry and development banks, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Research Network of Marine-Coastal Stressors in Latin America and the Caribbean (REMARCO) and **encourage** a continued partnership approach to facilitate work plan implementation building on expanding the Regional Activity Network (RAN).
2. Contracting Parties **encourage** continued efforts to integrate activities under the AMEP and SPAW Work Programmes, including the management of Sargassum inundations and the development of an integrated State of Convention Area Reports on Marine Pollution and Marine Habitats in collaboration between RACs and Working Groups, and in the development of new project proposals.
3. The Secretariat **continue to work** with the LBS RACs to provide regional training for ongoing and new projects within their technical areas of competence.

RECOMMENDATION III

LBS PROTOCOL RATIFICATION

1. Contracting Parties **welcome** the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis as the Sixteenth Contracting Party to the LBS Protocol and encourage countries that have not yet done so to become party to the LBS Protocol.
2. Contracting Parties **recognize** efforts by Non-Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol to become Contracting Parties and acknowledge the ongoing efforts by the Secretariat and the RACs to provide support to Non-Contracting Parties to ratify the LBS Protocol.

RECOMMENDATION IV

SOURCES AND IMPACTS OF MARINE POLLUTION

Nutrient and Wastewater Pollution

1. The Secretariat, with support of the LBS RACs and the OEWG and its thematic sub-groups, **continue** to support the implementation of the regional nutrient pollution reduction strategy and action plan in countries of the Wider Caribbean Region at national and regional levels while noting that existing proposed timelines may require adjustment.
2. Contracting Parties are encouraged to **continue** reviewing the proposed nutrient parameters and limits of discharges as outlined in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.44/INF.17 Rev.1, with relevant stakeholders at the national level, as appropriate.
3. Contracting Parties **continue** discussions on the issue of nutrient parameters and limits of discharges as part of the Nutrients and Wastewater Thematic Subgroup of the OEWG which should:
 - i. review and assess proposed parameters and limits for domestic wastewater

- ii. identify different ways of establishing discharge limits for industrial effluent
4. Contracting Parties that have not yet done so, are **encouraged to monitor** and **assess** wastewater discharges to establish baselines and **develop** separate national discharge standards for industrial effluent to facilitate improved management of coastal and marine waters.

Water Classification

1. Contracting Parties **continue discussions** on the proposed guidelines for classifying waters according to the LBS Protocol as defined under UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.44/INF.16 Rev.1 to further inform the classification process for marine, coastal and estuarine waters.
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.
3. Contracting Parties **request** that the Open-Ended Working Group, including LBS RACs, continue discussions on the draft proposed guidelines for the classification of waters and the scope of the types of waters to be studied within the Convention area, and identify best practices for consideration at the LBS STAC8 and COP8.

RECOMMENDATION V MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

1. Contracting Parties **endorse** the revised Terms of Reference of the Open-Ended Working Group for Monitoring and Assessment and Subgroups.
2. Contingent on decisions taken by the LBS COP and Convention COP, Contracting Parties **request the** Cartagena Convention COP invite members of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to contribute to the development of the integrated State of Convention Area Reports on Marine Pollution and Marine Habitats, in collaboration with the SPAW Subprogramme. The Working Group could be responsible for:
 - i. defining the scope and objective of the report;
 - ii. undertaking a review of possible harmonised regional monitoring guidelines and analysis of the primary and optimal pollution parameters to be used in the development of the second State of Convention Area report to allow for data compatibility; and
 - iii. reviewing and providing revisions to draft versions of the report.
3. That the Secretariat **provide** additional information to LBS COP7, SPAW COP 13 and IGM/COP 18 regarding how an integrated State of Convention Area Report (SOCAR) on marine pollution and marine habitats could be developed, including possible engagement with the State of Marine Ecosystems and Economies (SOME) Working Group and other experts, where appropriate and within the scope of the Convention.
4. Contracting Parties **consider** Recommendation V on Sargassum of the SPAW STAC11 Meeting at the LBS COP7 and IGM21/COP7.

5. Contracting Parties **continue to consider** the issue of Sargassum inundations noting its significance in the region.
6. The Secretariat **expand** efforts to share best practices and experiences with Contracting Parties on monitoring frameworks and guidelines within the context of the Cartagena Convention.
7. Contracting Parties, with the support of the Secretariat, **continue to explore** opportunities for the establishment of a consortium of marine laboratories in the Wider Caribbean Region.
8. The Secretariat **encourage** other Contracting Parties that are not members of the Open-Ended Working Group to nominate experts to participate in the OEWG and its Thematic Sub-Groups.
9. The Secretariat and Contracting Parties **consider** the relationship between land- and ocean-based monitoring and surveillance as it relates to ongoing projects, including early warning systems, as well as detection of Sargassum and marine pollutants by promoting partnership agreements to further integrate the AMEP and SPAW subprogrammes of the Cartagena Convention.

RECOMMENDATION VI

ENHANCEMENT OF THE LBS PROTOCOL

1. Contracting Parties are encouraged to **continue** reviewing the technical issues outlined in **UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.46/INF.13** with relevant stakeholders at the national level, as appropriate.
2. Contracting Parties **continue** discussions on technical issues outlined in **UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.46/INF.13** within the OEWG and relevant thematic subgroups. These include but are not limited to:
 - i. emerging pollutants
 - ii. effluent limits in class I and class II waters
 - iii. methodologies for estimating pollutant loads for agricultural non-point sources of pollution
3. Contracting Parties **request** that the Secretariat, in collaboration with LBS RACs, **convene** a technical meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group, to include the Nutrients and Wastewater thematic subgroup, with input from other relevant experts, subject to the availability of resources, to discuss and review:
 - i. the proposed domestic wastewater discharge parameters and limits in the Wider Caribbean Region.
 - ii. effluent limits in class I and class II waters; and
 - iii. other relevant issues as necessary.
4. The Secretariat **seek** legal guidance on the options available for consideration by the Contracting Parties and **provide** an update at LBS STAC8 and/or COP8 regarding any recommendations emanating from the technical discussions, as referenced in paragraphs 2 and 3 above.

RECOMMENDATION VII

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

1. Contracting Parties **request** that the LBS COP consider recommending to the Cartagena Convention COP the establishment of a new working group to further investigate how Integrated Water Resource Management might be addressed within the context of the Cartagena Convention and its protocols.