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Twelfth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to
the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas
and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region

3 and 5 October 2023
Oranjestad, Aruba

REPORT OF THE MEETING

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Acronyms

ACP MEA	African, Caribbean and Pacific countries
AMEP	Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution
AWI	Animal Welfare Institute
BIOPAMA	Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme
BEST Initiative	The Voluntary Scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European Overseas
CaMPAM	Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CARI'MAM	Caribbean Marine Mammals Preservation Network
CARIB-COAST	Caribbean Coastal Risks related to climate change for a monitoring and prevention network
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEP	Caribbean Environment Programme
CLME ⁺	Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems
COP	Conference of Parties
CTF	Caribbean Trust Fund
DCNA	Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
DSS	Decision Support System
EBM	Ecosystem Based Management
EU	European Union
FDPI	Foundation for Development Planning, Inc..
GCFI	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute
GCRMN	Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAC	Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
ICRI	International Coral Reef Initiative
IGM	Intergovernmental Meetings
IMA	Institute of Marine Affairs
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INVEMAR	Institute of Marine and Coastal Investigations
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IWC	International Whaling Commission
LBS	Protocol Concerning Land-Based Sources of Pollution
LME	Large Marine Ecosystems
MARFund	Mesoamerican Reef Fund
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement

MMA	Marine Managed Area
MMAP	Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region
MoC	Memorandum of Cooperation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NAMPAN	The North American Marine Protected Areas Network
NFWF	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OAS	Organisation of American States
OFB	French Office for Biodiversity
OSPAR	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
PA	Protected Area
RAC	Regional Activity Centre
RAN	Regional Activity Network
RSAP	Regional Strategy and Action Plan
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
RSP	Regional Seas Programme
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SCTLD	Stony coral tissue loss disease
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SOMEE	State of the Marine Environment and associated Economies
SoMH	The State of Nearshore Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean
SMM	Society for Marine Mammology
SPAW	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOF	The Ocean Foundation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Environment Programme	United Nations Environment Programme
US	United States
WCR	Wider Caribbean Region
WEN	Wildlife Enforcement Network (<i>e.g. CaribWen – Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network</i>)
WIDECAST	Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network

INTRODUCTION

1. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region held in Kingston, 15 to 18 January 1990, adopted the SPAW Protocol to the Cartagena Convention, which came into force on 18 June 2000. Article 23 of the SPAW Protocol provides for the convening and functioning of the Meetings of the Parties and calls for these ordinary meetings to be held in conjunction with the Ordinary Meetings of the Parties to the Cartagena Convention. In light of the above, this Meeting is convened by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Cartagena Convention Secretariat by means of an in person meeting, on October 3rd, 2023 preceding the Twentieth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Seventeenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean, Meeting 3-5 October, 2023.
2. The main objectives of this Twelfth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP12) to the SPAW Protocol were to:
 - **Review** and **adopt** the Recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC10) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region held virtually;
 - **Review** and **approve** the 2023-2024 Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Subprogramme for subsequent approval by the 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;
 - **Review** and **approve** the reports on protected areas presented by Parties for listing under the SPAW Protocol;
 - **Review** and **adopt** the SPAW STAC10 recommendations on the species proposed for listing under the SPAW Protocol;
3. The eighteen (18) Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol were invited to nominate their respective representatives to participate in the Meeting. Representatives of governments that are Non-Contracting Parties and of international, regional, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations were also invited to attend the Meeting as Observers. The Provisional List of Participants is included in [Annex IV](#) of this report.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The Meeting was opened by the Secretariat, Mr. Christopher Corbin, Coordinator, on Tuesday, 3 October 2023, at 8:45 am in Oranjestad, Aruba. Delegates were welcomed to the meeting and appreciation expressed for all in attendance.
5. The Secretariat acknowledged the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Government of Aruba for their generous contribution to the hosting of the meeting. The observers and partner agencies were recognized along with the SPAW RAC for their contribution to the SPAW Protocol. The work of the SPAW Protocol has been enriched by the contribution of several national and regional experts focused on the same objective of protecting our valuable marine resources.
6. Mr. Corbin invited Minister Ursell Arends, Minister of Transport, Integrity, Nature and Elderly Affairs of Aruba, to give the opening remarks on behalf of the host country.
7. Minister Arends welcomed all participants to Aruba and the Meeting. He highlighted that there was

one aspect all meeting participants had in common which was the Caribbean Sea. Aruba is a small island with a large ocean economy and all activities on water and land impacted the ocean both directly and indirectly from source to sea. Therefore, safeguarding the blue economy is crucial as mishandling it would affect their nature and other neighboring countries.

8. The Minister outlined some of the positive work done to protect the marine environment in Aruba. This included increased marine conservation to include a list of locally protected species in 2017. In 2018, introduced a marine park with four multi use protected areas to be expanded in the future. A ban was enforced on single use plastic in 2020 including Styrofoam making Aruba the first country globally to prohibit biobased plastics. In closing, Minister Arends urged the meeting participants to capitalize on their visit to Aruba and explore the beauty of the island.
9. Mr. Corbin thanked the Minister and acknowledged with appreciation the support of the UNEP Ecosystem Division and the United Nations on a whole for their support. He welcomed Mr. Johan Robinson, Head of UNEP's Ecosystems Division to give opening remarks on behalf of Ms. Inger Anderson, Executive Director of UNEP.
10. Mr. Robinson also expressed gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Government of Aruba for their financial support and for hosting this important event here on the beautiful island of Aruba. He acknowledged the work of the Secretariat and the SPAW RAC and expressed appreciation to all the Government Focal Points for their continued support and commitment.
11. Mr. Robinson welcomed the new Programme Management Officer of the SPAW sub-programme, Ms Susana Perera Valderrama, who joined the Secretariat in June 2023. He provided a brief background on her work which included her twelve years' experience at the National Centre for Protected Areas of Cuba, promoting the design and management of marine protected areas. During this time, she was also the focal point for the SPAW Protocol for Cuba, which allowed her to become familiar with the work of the Convention and the Protocol. He wished her every success in her new role.
12. He expressed appreciation for the return to face-to-face meetings, which has not happened since 2017 at the last meetings of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols in Roatan, Honduras. This was due, as we all are aware, to the unfortunate occurrence of the global COVID-19 pandemic, from which we are only beginning to recover. As highlighted at the recent UN General Assembly, the COVID-19 pandemic was a setback for all the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, of which we are currently barely meeting 15%. There was no doubt that we must all work together to address the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, pollution, and climate change, and to drive progress towards the 2030 Agenda.
13. The world was stepping up efforts to conserve marine biodiversity and address the triple planetary crisis. We have the new treaty to conserve biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in which highlights Target 3 to protect 30% of seas and oceans by 2030, the new global treaty to end plastic pollution, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, to name but a few, but much remains to be done to make real progress. The need to intensify cooperation from the global level down to regions and countries is now a necessity that cannot be postponed.
14. Next year, UNEP will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its Regional Seas Programme. For half a decade, the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans have provided an intergovernmental framework to address the degradation of ocean and seas at the regional level, focusing on strengthening regional ocean governance to achieve the Global Ocean Agenda.
15. The Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) was one of 18 existing Regional Seas Programmes and Action Plans and one of five programmes managed by UNEP, along with two action plans. Was

established in 1981, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, in recognition of the importance and value of the fragile and vulnerable coastal and marine ecosystems, including endemic flora and fauna, of the Wider Caribbean region. Then, 40 years ago, in 1983, nations met in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, to adopt the Cartagena Convention and its first Protocol concerning cooperation in Combating Oil Spills. The following 20 years would see the adoption of the remaining two Protocols, SPAW and LBS.

16. The SPAW Protocol was adopted in 1990 and entered into force in 2000. To date, eighteen (18) Parties to the Convention have ratified this Protocol, the latest being the Republic of Nicaragua, whom we thank for joining this great regional effort. We also urge nations that have not yet done so to join the only regional legally binding agreement to date on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, which will be much more effective if it includes all Caribbean nations.
17. The Caribbean region was very diverse biologically but also culturally and politically. There are many small island developing states that are both highly dependent on the oceans and highly vulnerable to climate change. New approaches as the Blue Economy, are needed to conserve and sustainably use the Caribbean's biodiversity, as well as new measures to adapt to climate change. Joint action is needed from all the countries of the region you represent, and your presence here today is a sign of your willingness to face these challenges together.
18. At the same time, there were many intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations in the region at various levels, many of them represented here today, which generously support the work of the countries in conserving and sustainable use marine biodiversity. I would especially like to recognise their work while stressing the need for concerted efforts to achieve even more, using increasingly scarce resources appropriately. He acknowledged the work of WWF-NL, CAR-WEN and the SPAW Consortium, who were hosting side events during the week.
19. As you all are aware, the SPAW Protocol has provided the regional framework for the work that all Caribbean nations have been doing for many years through the establishment of marine protected areas and the implementation of management and conservation measures for threatened or endangered species. More recently, new approaches have been adopted, such as implementing other effective area-based conservation measures, which will support the achievement of Target 3 of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The SPAW Protocol was designed to embrace these new approaches under the guidance of the contracting parties, and today and this week, you will be discussing better ways to contribute to support this global biodiversity agenda under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
20. He advised focal points that to contribute to the sustainability of the Wider Caribbean Region, it was crucial to make the most of the support provided by UNEP projects, including those implemented by the Secretariat.
21. Mr. Corbin thanked Mr. Robinson.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

2.1 Rules of Procedure

22. The Rules of Procedure for the Meetings of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention) (UN Environment, 2012) were applied, *mutatis mutandis*, for the conduct of the Meeting (Rule 26 pertaining to quorum). (See Reference Document UNEP, 2012).
23. The Secretariat advised that twelve (12) Contracting Parties were present at the meeting, eleven (11) in person and one online. This represented two-thirds of the eighteen (18) Parties present required for quorum.

2.2 Election of Officers

24. The Meeting was invited to elect from among the representatives of the Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol at the meeting and in accordance with Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure; the President, a first Vice-President, a second Vice-President and the Rapporteur for the conduct of the Meeting. Following consultations with Contracting Parties, nominations were received as follows:

President:	Minister Ursell Arends (Aruba)
1 st Vice-President:	Andres Duque, Head of Delegation (Colombia)
2 nd Vice-President:	Jean Vermot (France)
Rapporteur:	Adrian Bellamy (Barbados)

25. There were no objections to the nominations. The meeting was invited to endorse the Bureau by acclamation with a round of applause.
26. The Secretariat congratulated the Bureau and thanked the meeting.

2.3 Organisation of Work

27. English, French and Spanish were the working languages of the Meeting. Simultaneous interpretation in these languages was provided for the Meeting, and the Working Documents were available in all the working languages. The Provisional List of Documents of the Meeting was presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/INF.1 and is included in [Annex III](#) of this report.
28. The Secretariat proposed to convene the Meeting in plenary sessions, with the assistance of working groups, if necessary, which may be established by the Chairperson. No simultaneous interpretation was available for the working groups. Participants were reminded that, given the length of the Meeting, breaking into working groups might not be feasible. Participants were therefore expected to come prepared, having reviewed all working documents as appropriate, to provide concrete input during the discussions.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

29. The Meeting was invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda, prepared by the Secretariat, based on inputs received from the Contracting Parties during preparations for the Meeting, on relevant recommendations and decisions from previous STAC and COP Meetings of the SPAW Protocol, as well as on emerging issues of relevance to the biodiversity of the Wider Caribbean. The Provisional Agenda proposed by the Secretariat is presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.47/1.
30. Delegates of Colombia and France advised that there were slight inconsistencies in the provisional annotated agenda with regards to Agenda Item 6.
31. The Secretariat advised that the error in agenda item 6 will include all the species covered in the STAC. The provisional annotated agenda will be adjusted to ensure this was reflected.
32. The proposed agenda was adopted with no amendments and is included in [Annex I](#) of this report.

AGENDA ITEM 4: REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF ACTIVITIES OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR 2021-2022, INCLUDING ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPAW (SPAW RAC)

33. Mr. Christopher Corbin, Coordinator, presented the “Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2021-2022” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.5), including a brief presentation by SPAW RAC of the “Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW RAC) in Guadeloupe with regard to RAC operations and budget for the period 2021-2022” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.6). During the presentations the Secretariat also briefly referred to the following documents:
- SPAW RAC strategic plan for the period 2023-2028 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.7);
 - Exploring the feasibility of implementing recommendations identified in CaMPAM effectiveness assessments (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.8)
 - Exploring the feasibility of implementing recommendations identified in the evaluation of the connectivity among MPAs of the Wider Caribbean (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.9)
 - Rationale and Information Paper on CaMPAM and Development of an Ecological Network of SPAW-listed Protected Areas (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.10)
 - Potential costs, benefits, and operational framework of a Marine Mammal Regional Activity Network (RAN) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.32)
 - Presentation of CAMAC project (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.36)
 - Review of Operations, Functioning, and Financing of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks of the Cartagena Convention (UNEP CEP, 2022)
34. The Secretariat acknowledged the work of Ms. Ileana Lopez, former SPAW Programme Officer and Ms. Sarah Wollring for their significant contribution to the SPAW Protocol.
35. The Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Programme for 2021-2022 was approved by COP 11 to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region (Virtual, 27 July 2021) and the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme. A summary of the objectives of the SPAW Programme was provided.
36. The specific activities of the 2021-2022 Workplan under five (5) major programme elements (sub-programmes), implemented in close collaboration and partnership with the SPAW RAC in Guadeloupe, were highlighted:
- a) Programme Coordination
 - b) Strengthening of Protected Areas in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR)
 - c) Development of Guidelines for Protected Areas and Species Management
 - d) Conservation of Threatened and Endangered species
 - e) Conservation and Sustainable use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems
37. Achievements under *Programme Coordination* included working with Contracting Parties on the implementation of the SPAW Protocol and on increasing ratification. We welcomed the ratification by the government of Nicaragua in 2021 and commend countries who have made progress. The

convening of the COP11 meeting in virtually in July 2021 and the support of the working groups coordinated and led by the SPAW RAC. The SPAW Workplan and Budget was also developed, and synergies were created with the AMEP/LBS Protocol. The launch of White Papers on Sargassum and Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease was notable, which was a specific recommendation out of previous STAC meetings.

38. Mr. Corbin expressed appreciation for the collaborations and partners who contributed to the successful implementation of the SPAW projects within and outside of the WCR.
39. *Strengthening of Protected Areas in the WCR* continued through the support of MPAs which the Secretariat continues to work with Contracting Parties to promote. There were recommendations provided on CAMPAM, which produced technical papers presented to STAC 10 for consideration on the future of the network. We hope to get further guidance from Parties during the meeting.
40. The focus of MPAs remained a high priority in collaboration with the SPAW RAC to ensure synergies and coordination. One of the key areas was through the ACP MEA III project and BIOPAMA. Mr. Corbin highlighted the work of GCFI through the small grants programme (ACP MEA III), which funded six projects focused on effective protected areas management as well as hybrid grants on MPA management and marine litter management.
41. The SPAW RAC organized the first online meeting of the SPAW Protected Areas Network and a workshop in October related to the operationalization of the Network.
42. Achievements under *Development of Guidelines for Protected Areas and Species Management* included an update to the TORs for the SPAW STAC Ad Hoc Working Group based on STAC 9 recommendations. The structure, tasks and participation to the species working group were clarified and further validated by the STAC through a remote consultation in January 2022.
43. Each Party was invited to nominate up to two (2) experts in each group and Observers were invited to nominate one (1) expert. The Secretariat thanked Contracting Parties who nominated experts and encouraged the nomination from other Parties. The list of protected areas under the SPAW Protocol was updated to 36. A call to Parties for the listing of additional protected areas was done during the biennium. Two new MPAs were presented following an invitation to list new protected areas.
44. Regarding *Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species* included the update of the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP) and work on Sargassum inundation which included synergies with the AMEP Programme. The SPAW RAC participated in several activities including the launch of the CAMAC project and co-hosting a webinar on the Marine Mammals Management Toolkit.
45. Under the *Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystem Project*, a Regional Mangrove Restoration Manual was produced. There was also the launch of the Coral Reef Restoration Guidelines for Tourism and SCTLD White Paper in collaboration with GCFI.
46. The Secretariat invited the Director of the SPAW RAC, Ms. Lucile Rossin, to present the Report of the SPAW RAC for 2021-2022.
47. Ms. Rossin thanked the Secretariat, the delegates and the observers for the opportunity to present the work of the SPAW RAC done during the last biennium.
48. She outlined the partnerships and activities which were undertaken during the biennium. This included the operation of the Working Groups (species, exemptions and protected areas) and the recommendations of the Marine Mammal RAN Working Group.
49. SPAW RAC would support the implementation of the CAMAC project and would be led by the Agoa Sanctuary. The four-year project was built around CARIMAM outputs and SPAW country recommendations. The project was co-funded by the EU. The main objective was to strengthen knowledge and regional collaboration to provide practical recommendations and tools to reduce the

negative impacts resulting from the interactions between human activities and marine megafauna in the Caribbean Region.

50. Forty-five projects were funded under the small grants programme totaling approximately 300k Euro. Of that total 28 were new projects totaling 200k Euro.
51. The six year (2023-2028) strategic plan was presented. The plan focused on key success factors ‘quality of service’ and ‘visibility/awareness’ of the SPAW protocol.
52. Ms. Rossin outlined the income and expenditure for 2021-2022 which showed that the majority of expenses were for salaries. The forecast for 2023-2024 was also presented.
53. The Secretariat thanked Ms. Rossin for her presentation on the work of the SPAW RAC. Mr. Corbin continued the presentation outlining the SPAW expenditures for 2021-2022. The sub-programmes remained mostly within budget with the exception of programme coordination, which exceeded the budget and guidelines for protected areas management which had no expenditure due to lack of availability of funding.
54. Regarding the Status of Decisions of the COP11 and STAC9 Meetings, a summary was provided on how the programmes supported the decisions taken by Contracting Parties. It showed that the decisions presented were mostly ongoing or completed.
55. The challenges to the implementation of the programmes were also stated. This included financial stability, ratification, involvement of contracting parties, engagement of experts in the working groups, complicated listing process for protected areas and low submission of exemption reports.
56. The Secretariat also outlined elements of possible decisions for SPAW COP12.
57. The President thanked the Secretariat and the SPAW RAC for their presentations on the significant work undertaken during the last biennium.
58. The Meeting was invited to provide comments on the activities implemented during 2021–2022 and to make pertinent recommendations. Contracting Parties were also requested to complement the information provided by the Secretariat and inform the Meeting on the activities within their countries in support of SPAW objectives, including SPAW Workplan activities in which they had participated and their impact.
59. The delegates of the Dominican Republic (DR) and Cuba emphasized the importance of CaMPAM and that its continuity should be considered. The delegate of the DR inquired about the continuation of the CARI’MAM project and advised that they would like to be involved in the next phase of the project. The delegate of Cuba highlighted that they were not included in the scope of the CAMAC project and would like to improve their contribution to the marine mammals of the region.
60. St. Lucia, France and the United States thanked the Government of Aruba for hosting the meeting.
61. St. Lucia commended the work of the Secretariat and SPAW RAC overall. St. Lucia had benefitted from the capacity building work of SPAW RAC on MPA Management through MPA Connect. The delegate stated that the issue of SCTLTD was ongoing which will make the work of the SPAW RAC more difficult.
62. The United States also thanked the Government of France for their continued support of the SPAW-RAC. The United States stated that the presentation on the challenges presented by the Secretariat was enlightening, and they applauded the breadth of work achieved over the last biennium. At the same time, they noted that there were a number of critical elements of the SPAW Protocol and Cartagena Convention where ample work remained, and they urged all those engaged in SPAW to prioritize the work to be implemented based on what was needed to effectively implement existing obligations under the Protocol. They also urged Contracting Parties to submit national reports, which could help the Secretariat and SPAW-RAC assess the needs of Contracting Parties .

63. Panama thanked the Government of Aruba for their invitation and hospitality commended the efforts of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat for the organisation of the meeting. They acknowledged the work of the SPAW RAC presented which showed the collaborative work in favour of the Region and mainly of the Marine Areas, their ecosystems and resources, and continued to move forward in the face of the challenges and commitments that have us here today.
64. France and the Kingdom of the Netherlands (KNL) congratulated the Secretariat and SPAW RAC for their work despite the human resource challenges. France encouraged the SPAW RAC to widen their scope of activities. The KNL stated that it was important to maintain a good balance in terms of possible implementation of work in accordance with the limited availability of funds. It was the role of the Contracting Parties to help implement the activities.
65. The President invited the Observers to provide additional input.
66. The observer from Rainbow Warriors Core Foundation (Milton Ponson) an international NGO based in Aruba specializing in sustainable development and treaty monitoring emphasized the value of citizen science and open data in supporting SPAW Protocol decision-making. They proposed pilot projects using satellite and sensor data, aligned with the Blue Carbon framework and UNEP GRID-ARENDAL, to enhance mangrove and ecosystem monitoring. The NGO stressed the importance of integrating AI for improved data analysis and predictive monitoring. These efforts, tied to the UN Decade of Ocean Science and Ecosystem Restoration, would foster open science, community participation, and biodiversity conservation.
67. Non-Contracting Party Mexico stated that Sargassum was a topic of high importance in Mexico due to its ecological impacts as well as impacts on tourism. Mexico had a real time monitoring system in place to monitor the movement of Sargassum (<https://simar.conabio.gob.mx/>). They expressed that it was important to align with other countries in the Region and were willing to collaborate with the SPAW Contracting Parties as a Non-Contracting Party.
68. The Secretariat thanked the delegates for their feedback and comments.

AGENDA ITEM 5: WORKPLAN AND BUDGET OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE 2023-2024 BIENNIUM

69. Mr. Corbin presented the Draft Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Subprogramme for the 2023-2024 Biennium” (contained in document UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.43/3), prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of the recommendations of previous STAC and COP Meetings, as well as on the outcome of activities of the 2021-2022 Workplan for SPAW and other relevant emerging regional and international issues.
70. The main aspects under *Programme Coordination* would focus on 1) promoting ratification; 2) satisfaction of the requirements and needs of the SPAW Protocol 3) increased collaboration and communication; 4) improve MPA and PA regional coordination; and 5) coordination as a whole.
71. For the *Strengthening of Protected Areas*, support from projects including the ACP MEAs III, PROCARIBE+ and Gulf of Mexico will focus on strengthening MPAs especially those listed under SPAW, continued development of the regional MPA database and synergies with national and international MPA initiatives. Enhancement of the network of MPA practitioners was subject to the decision of COP12 and funding availability.
72. *Implementation of Guidelines for the Management of Protected Areas and Species* planned activities include listing of protected areas and species under the SPAW Protocol and development of conservation and management plans including criteria for the assessment of exemptions to Article 11(2). Expected outputs for the biennium include an updated procedure for listing protected areas as well as an updated list of protected areas. Dissemination of the format for presenting exemptions and

alignment with the procedure for the submission and approval for the nomination of species for inclusion in or deletion from Annexes I, II or III.

73. Efforts for the *Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species* focus would continue on 1) marine mammals 2) sea turtles and 3) fish species. Additionally, support to regional efforts to address alien invasive species and collaboration with relevant partners along with greater collaboration in management and conservation. The expected outputs include increased preparedness and response to anthropogenic impacts, increased knowledge on megafauna critical habitat areas and increased support for transboundary protection, support for regional repository on marine mammal stranding data and strengthened relations with the IWC. Reference was made to the CAMAC project which would be instrumental under this subprogramme.
74. In regard to *Conservation, Sustainable Use and Restoration of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems*, work would continue under 1) coral reefs; 2) wetlands/mangroves; and 3) seagrass beds. The implementation of ecosystem-based approaches and the sharing of regional data and research on Sargassum will also be implemented.
75. Some of the expected outputs included the reactivation of GCRMN-Caribbean, harmonized data on biophysical and socio-economic coral reef monitoring and the promotion of EBM management approaches throughout the WCR.
76. The 2023-2024 SPAW budget was presented in addition to a list of unfunded activities.
77. The President thanked the Secretariat for the comprehensive presentation on the Workplan and Budget and invited Contracting Parties to approve the draft SPAW Workplan and Budget as revised by SPAW STAC10 and provide specific comments and recommendations as needed.
78. Subsequently, the Workplan and Budget will be presented to the Twentieth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan of 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 as part of the Workplan and Budget for the Caribbean Environment Programme for the 2023-2024 Biennium, for its final adoption.
79. Colombia called on Contracting Parties to analyze new monitoring tools and stated that it was necessary to consider indicators and evaluation mechanisms to assess the implementation of the SPAW Protocol. They commended the Secretariat for their mobilization efforts.
80. St. Lucia commended the Secretariat on an ambitious workplan. They highlighted that there was a lack of clarity with regards to the unfunded activities and urged the Secretariat to look at strengthening collaboration with agencies in project implementation, increased efficiency and reducing duplication of efforts.
81. The delegate also recommended that support be sought from existing networks with expertise. There was room for greater improvement. Although PROCARIBE+ was not discussed, there were strong linkages with SPAW, and the Secretariat should have a discussion with project units on how best to integrate. With regards to the completed CLME + project, the Secretariat was encouraged to strengthen collaboration and build upon this opportunity.
82. The Training of Trainers workshops mentioned in the context of MPA management, occurred when the MPAs were at their strongest. The delegate emphasized the need to revisit this type of programme to build capacity in the region.
83. Regarding Sargassum management, the Secretariat should continue to prioritize as there were several initiatives addressing this issue. These should be reviewed by the Secretariat to avoid duplication of efforts.
84. The KNL supported the intervention of Colombia and St. Lucia. Strengthening linkages and synergies

between organizations and programmes was not always easy to implement. The PROCARIE+ project is important for the execution of the Workplan and budget. It is important to enhance synergies with other protocols and he requested that the Bureau be given a clear mandate to oversee the work of the Cartagena Convention.

85. The DR supported the intervention of the Contracting Parties. With regards to Sargassum, it was important for the SPAW Protocol to focus on the aspects of the study of biodiversity related to this phenomenon. They believed that there was sufficient expertise that could study the biodiversity related to Sargassum as an ecosystem condition. In this regard, there would be precise effort of resources and a definitive line of work, which would reduce duplication of efforts. Among the different platforms on Sargassum management, this was also included in the IOCARIBE regional plan, as well. Therefore, everything related to the IOC was also included in these efforts.
86. The DR emphasized the importance of synergies and how to approach this with different platforms. It was noted the focus on developments in the biodiversity convention, biological diversity in relation to marine areas and the conceptualization in differentiating and grouping different forms of management for conservation. Among these were area-based management, area-based conservation management, special areas for conservation. This broadened the focus in terms of various marine protected areas.
87. This aspect could also be taken into account in terms of management effectiveness of these areas, the approach could be very different and in that sense, the DR mentioned that the form of management, both of these areas that could be small in size and definitely not with the profile of strict management categories of marine protected areas, but with a very specialized management for ecosystem conservation and also for management and unification of resource exploitation activities.
88. With regards to co-management, the DR mentioned that one of the large category four (4) protected areas in the Dominican Republic was the Southeastern Reefs Sanctuary, which within its territory included, for example, national parks, coastal marine parks, Cotubamana Park, recently included in the SPAW protected areas. However, the management aspect used in recent years was precisely co-management, which included the private sector, tourism, maritime, Ministry of Environment and other non-profit organizations.
89. Forming this type of directive, the one that raised and developed the action plans to manage this area, it seemed quite important to analyze precisely the potential synergies. With regards to bilateral agreements on marine protected areas that could be binational, the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Colombia are in the process of developing practically two related areas for the protection of marine areas, which is Cordillera Beata. Important to mention was another aspect of biodiversity conservation, which is their research on pelagic and abyssal fauna, because they are areas of different depths, which are very little known.
90. Patrick Debels, Regional Project Coordinator of PROCARIBE+ project provided clarification on the project and connection to the workplan. The project was committed to work with the Secretariat to define how the project could support the SPAW Workplan. There were efforts made to enhance coordination with other regional organisations and mechanisms.
91. The United States commended the Secretariat and SPAW RAC on their work and welcomed the revised document and acknowledged it was uploaded to the SPAW COP website. The US supported capacity building (e.g. ToT for MPA Managers, online Exemptions Workshops). Like the intervention of St. Lucia, the US noted with concern that the CTF was only expected to cover partial costs related to supporting programme coordination/operational activities.
92. The US also welcomed the CAMAC and Blue Corridors projects however they advised that the Secretariat should be careful on how they were referenced in the Workplan as they were not SPAW specific endorsed projects.

93. The US requested additional information on the “Strengthening Regional Ocean governance through enhanced area-based management and marine protected areas including in areas beyond national jurisdiction” project that was being prepared and was expected to be funded by the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and asked about the involvement of the SPAW RAC in the project.
94. The US also recognized Sargassum inundation was a big issue. They noted the importance of looking at such emerging issues through the lens of the SPAW Protocol and were pleased to see the recommendation from STAC10 for the Sargassum Working Group to survey Contracting Parties.
95. The US noted with appreciation the inclusion of Contracting Parties for input on the Workplan and budget and hoped that in the future this request would be earlier.
96. The observer from FDPI (Lloyd Gardner), commented on the estimated budget for the training of trainers’ workshops. He encouraged Contracting Parties to increase their financial contributions to this activity to allow for updating the design and materials for the workshops. The current design enabled training of participants in aspects of marine protected areas management but would benefit from increased focus on training participants on how to design and deliver training activities in-country. A re-focus could address some of the capacity constraints and knowledge gaps in MPA management at local levels.
97. The Secretariat thanked the delegates for their comments and highlighted some key points. These included the relevance and importance of projects and how they supported the work of the Secretariat and responded directly to the mandate set by Contracting Parties. The support for Sargassum was welcomed, specifically the assessment of existing platforms, including early warning systems.
98. The focus would be on filling gaps and providing complimentary support. Reference was made to the potential expanded role of the Bureau was an important point to continue to strengthen the governance arrangements for the Convention as a whole. Finally, it was important to note the emphasis on the value of the traditional activities, for example, the Training of Trainers programs to the work of the Secretariat.
99. France stated that it was an ambitious support Workplan and highlighted the major projects and activities (CAMAC, Procaribe +) GCRMN-Caribbean, critical species (sharks) and Sargassum. France believed that greater focus must be placed on the issue of Sargassum. It was also important to avoid duplication of efforts.
100. The Secretariat acknowledged the comments of Colombia with regards to developing a suite of indicators and targets which showcased the impact of action and requested the mandate be given by Contracting Parties.
101. The President thanked the Secretariat and invited the meeting to approve the Workplan and Budget.
102. The observer from the Caribbean Biological Corridor stated the importance of developing a sub-regional framework to continue to promote and enhance the importance of the SPAW protocol.
103. The Secretariat thanked the observer and referred to interventions from the DR and Cuba which stated that the CBC could be used as an existing platform to enhance the work of the SPAW sub programme in the region.

AGENDA ITEM 6: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TENTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC10) TO THE SPAW PROTOCOL

104. The Secretariat presented the recommendations of the SPAW STAC10 for review and approval

(virtual meetings 30 January – 1 February 2023) contained in documents UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/4. The Secretariat called to the attention of the Meeting the relevant documents, as follows, in support of the STAC10 Recommendations:

- Review of the Aruba’s proposal for listing of “Parke Marino Aruba” under the SPAW Protocol UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.13UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.13 regarding STAC10 Recommendation V(6) and Recommendation IV(7). UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/2
 - The “SPAW Regional Activity Centre Strategic Plan 2023-2028” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.7) regarding STAC10 Recommendation I (3);
 - Update of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.43/INF.31)) regarding STAC10 Recommendation I (6) and Recommendation IX(11);
 - SPAW Consortium Concept Brief (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/CRP.1) regarding STAC10 Recommendation II (1);
 - Information Paper on Protecting Blue Corridors (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/CRP.1) regarding STAC10 Recommendation II (2).
 - The Caribbean Megafauna and Anthropogenic Activities (CAMAC) project (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.36) STAC10 Recommendation III (1 and 2).
 - Report of the Exemptions Working Group (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.33) regarding STAC10 Recommendation V (1 and 2).
 - Recommendations for preventing Sawfish extinction (Pristidae) in the Wider Caribbean Region in UNEP (DEPI) CAR WG.43/INF.25 regarding STAC10 Recommendation IX (2),
 - Recommendations for conserving Nassau Grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) in the Wider Caribbean Region in UNEP (DEPI) CAR WG.43/INF.26 regarding STAC10 Recommendation IX (4),
 - Recommendations for the protection and recovery of sea turtles in UNEP (DEPI) CAR WG.43/INF.24 regarding STAC10 Recommendation IX (6),
 - Proposal by the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Netherlands for the uplisting of Oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) from Annex III to Annex II of the SPAW protocol, proposal by the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Netherlands for the inclusion of all Parrotfishes (Perciformes: Scaridae) and Proposal by the Kingdom of Netherlands for the inclusion of the Caribbean reef shark (*Carcharhinus perezi*) in Appendix III of the SPAW Protocol regarding STAC10 Recommendation IX (8),
 - Potential costs, benefits and operational framework for the establishment of a Marine Mammal Regional Activity Network (RAN) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.32) regarding STAC10 Recommendation IX (10).
105. The Contracting Parties approved the adoption of the SPAW STAC10 recommendations noting that only the substantive recommendations were presented during the COP12 meeting and following further debate on the species, which had no consensus at STAC10 i.e. Whale Shark, Giant Manta Ray and Hammerhead sharks. These species were further deliberated during a side meeting with interested Contracting Parties and addressed in the decisions of the meeting.
106. With regards to recommendation V (6), *Review of Aruba’s proposal for listing of “Parke Marino*

Aruba under the SPAW Protocol. Aruba will resubmit a proposal to STAC11 in the required timeframe. Additionally, they requested that the date of the STAC be communicated on time.

107. France reminded the meeting that they submitted a proposal for a protected area in Martinique which required a COP decision.
108. With regards to recommendations IX (2) for *preventing Sawfish extinction (Pristidae) in the Wider Caribbean Region* Aruba will investigate whether Sawfish was still in the waters and would reach out to other countries/ territories that have this species as they would like to engage in repopulation of the species in their waters.
109. The observer from Sea Life Law (Olga Koubrak) stated that they are also eager to hear about related progress in national protections for the Critically Endangered rays and remained hopeful that the Secretariat could facilitate implementation of the Annex II listings, as a matter of priority. They took the opportunity to advise the meeting that they were currently updating their regional sawfish policy analysis and would welcome any sawfish-specific information that country delegates might wish to provide.
110. With regards to STAC10 Recommendation IX (2), IX (4), and IX (6) on the *conservation of sawfishes, conservation of Nassau grouper, and protection and recovery of sea turtles, respectively*, the US thanked the species working group for the relevant recommendations. The working group's recommendations were concrete and useful and the US supported future work in this vein in the species working group.
111. KNL supported the recommendation and emphasized the work of the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention and encouraged the Secretariat to collaborate with them.
112. St. Lucia supported the adoption of the recommendation and highlighted the work of WIDECAST.
113. The observer from Shark Advocate International and SeaLife Law (Sonja Fordham and Olga Kobrauk) strongly supported Recommendation IX (8) for the uplisting of the Oceanic Whitetip Shark. This Critically Endangered species was clearly and urgently in need of stricter protection, from fishing, in particular. They noted that a SPAW Annex II listing was in line with several other commitments agreed under both environmental and fisheries agreements. They urged Parties to prioritize Oceanic Whitetip protections and integrate related activities across domestic environment and fisheries agencies.
114. Regarding Recommendation IX (9) on Parrotfishes the DR recommended including the concept of bans as a form of effective control for each country. They had 7 years' experience of developing regulations. They emphasized that effective monitoring was lacking to achieve this goal and possible evaluation of the changes made. It was not easy to detect changes.
115. France proposed that the Species Working Group develop conservation recommendations for the on whale shark, giant manta ray, and hammerhead sharks had not reached consensus at STAC10. The US supported France's proposal and suggested text for a decision to be added to the Decisions of the Meeting .
116. Regarding Recommendation IX (10), the observer from Lightkeepers Foundation (Courtney Vail) encouraged the advancement of a MM RAN to support marine mammal focused initiatives and support the SPAW RAC and the Convention with enhanced implementation of their workplans and support for Parties as they seek to develop national marine mammal action or recovery plans. We thank the Parties for their interest in this important initiative.
117. Given the focus on updating the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP), the decision to advance

the marine mammal RAN in the next biennium was timely. Coordinated action to conserve and manage marine mammals in the WCR was needed now more than ever given the myriad of threats facing marine mammals. A network could support such coordination and implementation of the MMAP at the national level.

118. They supported projects and approaches spearheaded by the SPAW RAC, including Cari'Mam and CAMAC that work to create networks around marine mammals and their integration into existing national and regional governance mechanisms, including MPA or fisheries management plans. The foundations of a marine mammal RAN were already present in the Region.
119. As noted by the esteemed delegate from the DR who noted that continuity was very important when funding discrete projects that are limited in duration, like CAMAC, to connect, synthesize and share these data with Parties to encourage implementation of protection measures, increase coordination, reduce redundancy of efforts as more generally noted earlier by the esteemed delegate from St. Lucia. These were all concerns that a MMRAN can help to address.
120. Protecting large taxa or keystone species and their habitats was one important approach to ensuring entire ecosystems, and all their components, are also protected. They believed that RAN governance concerns could be addressed in a fully articulated MOU between the independent entity or Party and the Secretariat or SPAW RAC. As marine mammal experts and enduring partners to the SPAW programme, they stood ready to assist the Secretariat and Parties as work to develop the MMRAN commences.
121. The observer from Caribbean Cetacean Society (Jeffrey Bernus) expressed an interest in helping to guide and lead the development of a RAN.
122. The observer from Sustainable Innovation Initiatives (SII) (Mark Gibson) shared information on CAR WEN and requested the contracting parties to make a specific recommendation on wildlife crime considering the CAR WEN initiative.

AGENDA ITEM 7: OTHER BUSINESS

123. Participants were invited to raise any other issues not covered by the preceding Agenda items, but relevant to the scope of the Meeting.
124. Regarding the Aruba proposal, Colombia recommended a continued strengthening of the park and welcomed the inclusion in the list of SPAW Protected Areas following the recommendations of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
125. Costa Rica commented that the language be more explicit to address it in a clearer way.
126. The United States proposed decisions on emerging issues not covered, specifically engagement of the ocean acidification community and CAR WEN. Other Contracting Parties expressed concern regarding limited time for discussion on CAR WEN. The United States acknowledged this was a challenge and withdrew their proposed decision on CAR WEN accordingly.
127. France inquired about the recommendation for the inclusion of Martinique. The Secretariat acknowledged the omission of the recommendation and requested insight from Contracting Parties for the Secretariat to have a broader vision and recommendation in the decision making across the different protocols of the Cartagena Convention.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

128. The Rapporteur presented the draft [Decisions of the Meeting](#) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/3). The Meeting was invited to adopt the decisions, with amendments and corrections to be introduced, as appropriate.
129. The decisions would be made available to the 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 (COP17) for endorsement.

AGENDA ITEM 9: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

130. The Rapporteur presented a summary of the Meeting.
131. The Secretariat expressed appreciation to the Contracting Parties, Experts, Non-Contracting Parties and Observers for their support and commitment.
132. The Meeting was closed on Thursday, 5 October 2023 at 1:00 pm by the Secretariat.

ANNEX I

AGENDA

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Organisation of the Meeting
 - 2.1. Rules of Procedure
 - 2.2. Election of Officers
 - 2.3. Organisation of Work
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2023-2024, including activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW RAC) in Guadeloupe
5. Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Subprogramme for the 2023-2024 Biennium
6. Recommendations of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC10) to the SPAW Protocol (30 January – 1 February 2023)
7. Other Business
8. Adoption of the Decisions of the Meeting
9. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX II

DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

The Contracting Parties:

Having convened the Twelfth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region;

Taking note of the “Status of Activities of the SPA Sub-programme for 2021-2022” (*includes status of STAC9 Recommendations and COP11 Decisions*)” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.5) and “Report of the SPA Regional Activity Centre (SPA RAC) in Guadeloupe: Operations and Budget for the period 2021-2022” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.6);

Having reviewed the “Recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region”, Virtual, 30 January - 1 February, contained in the Report of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/4) and included as an Annex to these decisions;

Having reviewed the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Sub-programme for the 2023-2024 Biennium” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.43/3 Rev.1);

Decide to:

DECISION I Workplan and Budget

1. **Adopt** the Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Sub-programme for the 2023-2024 Biennium (UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.43/3 Rev.1) as presented to the meeting.
2. **Request** the Secretariat and SPA RAC, as appropriate, with guidance from the Bureau, in the implementation of the Workplan and Budget, to prioritize activities that provide direct support to strengthen implementation of the Protocol.
3. **Urge** the Secretariat to identify and strengthen synergies with other relevant developments in the Wider Caribbean Region to the benefit of the implementation of the Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Sub-programme for the 2023-2024 Biennium (UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.43/3 Rev.1).
4. **Urge** Contracting Parties to contribute through their relevant institutions to the extent possible for the implementation of the Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Sub-programme for the 2023-2024 Biennium (UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.43/3 Rev.1).

DECISION II Protected Areas and Species

1. **Adopt** the Recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the SPA Protocol including:
 - i. To approve the inclusion of Parc Naturel Marin de Martinique, proposed by the Government of France, in the list of protected areas under the SPA Protocol.

2. **Uplist** the Oceanic Whitetip Shark and Lesser Antillean Iguana, Whale Shark and the Giant Manta Ray from Annex III to Annex II.
3. **List** all Parrotfishes and the Caribbean Reef Shark in Annex III.
4. **Invite** the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee, through the species working group, to develop conservation and management recommendations for the Whale Shark, Giant Manta Ray and Hammerhead Sharks to be presented to the 11th meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee.

DECISION III

Adoption of Documents

1. **Adopt** the SPAW Regional Activity Centre Strategic Plan 2023-2028 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.7).
2. **Adopt** the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.31).

DECISION IV

Ratification

1. **Encourage** increased ratification of the SPAW Protocol and implementation of its obligations.

DECISION V

Working Groups

1. **Encourage** Contracting Parties to designate experts with scientific and/or technical competence to the SPAW STAC *Ad Hoc* Working Groups, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the SPAW STAC *Ad Hoc* Working Groups (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42 INF.12/Rev.1).
2. **Request** the Secretariat/and or SPAW RAC perform an assessment on the functioning of the Working Groups with the participation of the Contracting Parties and identify possible mechanisms for strengthening the technical and scientific basis on which the STAC can make recommendations.
3. **Request** the Secretariat and the RACs to strengthen the integration between the AMEP and SPAW subprogrammes in the 2023-2024 biennium, including integration of thematic linkages on issues such as eutrophication, Sargassum inundation, and the impacts of nutrient pollution on marine biodiversity, as well as coordination between RACs and RANs and cross-representation of experts between Working Groups, as appropriate, and in accordance with the relevant Terms of Reference.

DECISION VI

Programme Coordination and Management

1. **Recognize** the contribution of non-governmental organisations to the implementation of the Cartagena Convention, in particular to the SPAW Protocol and welcome the establishment of the SPAW Consortium.

DECISION VII
Governance

1. **Request** that the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat and SPAW RAC if needed, conduct active outreach to Contracting Parties on the contents and decision-making of Bureau meetings, with the aim to reflect the positions of all Contracting Parties in meetings of the Bureau. The Bureau should, in its first meeting, decide on the manner in which it will decide to inform and include other Contracting Parties, taking into account the Terms of Reference of the Bureau.
2. **Urge** the Secretariat to facilitate the collaboration of the SPAW COP, LBS COP and the Cartagena Convention COP Bureaus to work efficiently to the benefit of the implementation of the subprogrammes.

DECISION VIII
Sargassum

1. **Encourage** the Secretariat and the SPAW RAC to improve knowledge and support Contracting Parties to tackle the consequences of Sargassum inundation and the issues related to it in collaboration with Contracting Parties, RACs and other UN conventions and agencies, as appropriate and as proposed in the relevant Recommendation VI of the STAC.

ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
<u>Working Documents</u>		
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/1	Provisional Agenda	3
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/2	Provisional Annotated Agenda	3
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/3 Rev.1	Draft Workplan of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Sub-programme for the 2023-2024 Biennium	5
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/4	Recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/5	Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region	5,6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/3	<i>Decisions of the Twelfth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, (to be prepared during the meeting)</i>	8
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/4	<i>Report of the Meeting (to be prepared after the meeting)</i>	
Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
<u>Information Documents</u>		
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/INF.1	Provisional List of Documents	2
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/INF.2	Provisional List of Participants <i>(to be finalised during the meeting)</i>	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/INF.3	The Establishment and Operation of a Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network (CAR-WEN) Briefing Paper	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.46/INF.4	SPAW Consortium Concept Brief	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.3	Status of Ratification of the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.4	Overview of Procedural Deadlines under the SPAW Protocol	

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.5	Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2021- 2022 (includes status of STAC9 Recommendations and COP11 Decisions)	4
Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.6	Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW RAC) in Guadeloupe: operations and budget for the period 2021-2022	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.7	SPAW Regional Activity Centre Strategic Plan	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.8	Exploring the feasibility of implementing recommendations identified in CaMPAM effectiveness assessments	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.9	Exploring the feasibility of implementing recommendations identified in the evaluation of the connectivity among MPAs of the Wider Caribbean	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.10	Rationale and Information Paper on CaMPAM and Development of an Ecological Network of SPAW-listed Protected Areas	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.11	Report on WIDECAST Activities: 2021-2022	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.12	Report of the STAC Marine Protected Areas Working Group	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.13	Review of Aruba's proposal for listing of "Parke Marino Aruba" under the SPAW Protocol	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.13 Add.1	Review Of the Response Of Aruba Representing The Kingdom Of The Netherlands On Three Key Points In Their Nomination Of Parke Marino Aruba For Listing Under the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.14	Review of France's proposal for listing of the "Parc Naturel Marin de Martinique" under the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.15	Proposal of the "Parc Naturel Marin de Martinique" for listing under the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.16	Report of the STAC Working Group on the Listing of Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.17	Proposal by the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Netherlands for the inclusion of all Parrotfishes (Perciformes: Scaridae) in Annex III of the SPAW Protocol	6

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.18	Proposal by the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Netherlands for the uplisting of Oceanic whitetip shark (<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>) from annex III to annex II of the SPAW protocol	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.19	Proposal of the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Netherlands for the inclusion of the whale shark <i>Rhincodon typus</i> in Appendix II of SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.20	Proposal of the Republic of France and the Kingdom of Netherlands for the inclusion of 3 hammerhead shark <i>Sphyrna mokarran</i> in Appendix II of the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.21	Proposal by the Kingdom of Netherlands for the listing of the Lesser Antillean Iguana (<i>Iguana delicatissima</i>) from Appendix III to Appendix II of the SPAW Protocol.	6

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.22	Proposal by the Kingdom of Netherlands for the inclusion of the Caribbean reef shark (<i>Carcharhinus perezi</i>) in Appendix III of the SPAW Protocol	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.23	Co-Proposal by the Kingdom of Netherlands and the Republic of France for the inclusion of the Giant manta ray species <i>Manta birostris</i> in Appendix II of the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.24	Recommendations for the protection and recovery of the Caribbean Sea turtles	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.25	Recommendations for preventing sawfish extinction in the Wider Caribbean Region	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.26	Recommendations for conserving Nassau Grouper in the Wider Caribbean Region	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.27	Report of GCRMN – Caribbean network activities for the period 2021-2022	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.28	SPAW RAC 2021 Call for proposals report	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.28 Add1	SPAW RAC 2021 Call for proposals all reports	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.29	Cari'Mam: a final report	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.30	Carib-coast: final report	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.31	Update on the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean and recommendations	6

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.32	Potential costs, benefits, and operational framework of a Marine Mammal Regional Activity Network (RAN)	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.33	Report of the STAC Exemptions Working Group	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.34	United States Exemptions Report to the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol of the Cartagena Convention for 2021	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.35	Recommendations for STAC10 to facilitate the reporting of exemptions	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.36	Project under development: Caribbean Marine Megafauna and Anthropogenic Activities (CAMAC)	4,6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.37	Proposal of the French Republic on Sargassum	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.38	Review of Operations, Functioning, and Financing of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks of the Cartagena Convention Workplan	

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.39	Project Proposal: Implementation of the Strategic Action Program of the Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.40	Progress Report: ACP MEA III Small Scale Funding Agreement with the Gulf and Caribbean	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.41	Half Yearly Report of the ACP MEAs III Programme January 2021 to June 2022	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.42	Information Paper on "Protecting Blue Corridors" An international collaborative project co-designing marine connectivity conservation strategies and solutions for whales with opportunities for the Wider Caribbean Region	
UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.42/INF.7 Add.1	Assessment of the Impact and Effectiveness of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Network and Forum (CaMPAM)	
UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.42/INF.10	Developing an Ecological Network between the SPAW-listed MPAs of the Wider Caribbean	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.11	Proposal of the "Parke Marino Aruba" for listing under the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.12/Rev.1	Terms of Reference for the SPAW STAC Ad Hoc Working Groups	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.35	Sargassum White Paper 2021	

- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/4
Recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region (to be prepared during the meeting)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/9
Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/8
Recommendations of the Ninth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region
- UNEP (DEPI)/CAR IG.43/INF.3
Protecting and Restoring the Ocean's natural Capital, building Resilience and supporting region-wide Investments for sustainable Blue Socio-Economic development (PROCARIBE+) PIF
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.44/3
Decisions of the Eleventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean

Reference Documents

- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/6
Report of the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting of the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.45/5
Decisions of the Nineteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Sixteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.8
Strategic Directions and Plan for CaMPAM
- Rev1
- UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.42/INF.19
Protected Areas Management Effectiveness (PAME) of SPAW Sites

UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.42/INF.20	"The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Efforts to Address Ocean Acidification in the Caribbean."
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.24 Add.2	Proposal for the inclusion of the whale shark <i>Rhincodon typus</i> in Appendix II of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.24 Add.3	Proposal for the inclusion of the Giant manta ray species <i>Manta birostris</i> in Appendix II of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.24 Add.4	Proposal for the Uplisting of the Great Hammerhead Shark <i>Sphyrna Mokarran</i> from Annex III to Annex II of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.24 Add.5	Proposal for the Uplisting of the Smooth Hammerhead Shark <i>Sphyrna Zygaena</i> from Annex III to Annex II of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol)
UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.42/INF.24 Add.1	Proposal for the inclusion of the Oceanic whitetip shark <i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i> in Appendix II of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol)

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.25	Recommendations for preventing sawfish extinction	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29	Implementation highlights of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean and recommendations	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29 Add.1	Implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP): A Scientific and Technical Analysis	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.38	Recommendations for conserving the Nassau Grouper	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.39	Recommendations for the protection and recovery of the Caribbean Sea turtles	
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.10	Updating CaMPAM MPA Database - Product of a consultant agreement with GCFI	

UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.38/INF.6	Evaluation of CaMPAM Activities and Recommendations for Improvement - An analysis of the last 15 years
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/CRP.1	SPAW Consortium Brief
UNEP CEP, 2022	Review of Operations, Functioning, and Financing of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks of the Cartagena Convention
UNEP CEP, 2022	Harmful Marine Extractives: Understanding the risks & impacts of financing non-renewable extractive industries Deep-Sea Mining
UNEP CEP, 2021	How to Conduct a Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Assessment
UNEP CEP, 2021	Manual for the ecological restoration of mangroves in the Mesoamerican Reef System and the Wider Caribbean
UNEP CEP, 2021	White Paper on Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
UNEP CEP, 2020	SPAW Protected Areas of the Wider Caribbean: A comprehensive Booklet	
UNEP CEP, 2020	UNEP CEP Technical Report No. 1: The State of Nearshore Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean	
UNEP CEP, 2020	UNEP CEP Technical Report No. 2: Regional Strategy Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021–2030	
UNEP CEP, 2012	Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills, Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife and the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities	
UNEP CEP, 2010	Rules of Procedure for the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)	

UNEP CEP, 2010		Financial Rules for the Cartagena Convention, its Caribbean Environment Programme and Terms of Reference for the Caribbean Trust Fund
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.36 CRP.1		Amendment to the Financial Rules for the Cartagena Convention
UNEP CEP, 2010		Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks for the Cartagena Convention
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR Rev.1	WG.41/INF.25	Revised Template for National Reporting on the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols
UNEP CEP, 2008		Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region. United Nations Environment Programme – Caribbean Environment Programme, Kingston, Jamaica. 2008. (English and Spanish)
UNEP, 1991		Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries for the Adoption of the Annexes to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region
UNEP, 1990		Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Caribbean Region

ANNEX IV

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