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WORKPLAN FOR THE SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS AND WILDLIFE (SPA) SUB-PROGRAMME FOR THE 2026 – 2027 BIENNIUM

Prepared by the Secretariat and SPA-RAC based on the SPA STAC10 and SPA COP12 Meetings recommendations and decisions, and on the outcome of activities of the 2023 – 2024 (2025) WorkPlan for SPA and other relevant emerging regional and international issues.

This meeting is being convened hybrid. Delegates are kindly requested to access all meeting documents electronically for download as necessary.

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ACRONYMS

| | |
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| ACS | Association of Caribbean States |
| AMEP | Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution |
| BE-CLME+ | Blue Economy – Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems Project |
| CaMPAM | Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum |
| CARICOM | Caribbean Community |
| CARDIQUE | Regional Autonomous Corporation of the Canal del Dique |
| CARSUCRE | Regional Autonomous Corporation of Sucre |
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| CCAD | Central American Commission on Environment and Development |
| CONABIO | National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (Mexico) |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| CRFM | Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism |
| DEAL | Directorate of Environment, Planning and Housing (Guadeloupe) |
| EU | European Union |
| GCRMN | Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GoM LME | Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem |
| ICRI | International Coral Reef Initiative |
| IUCN | International Union for Conservation of Nature |
| LAC | Latin America and the Caribbean |
| LBS RAC | Regional Activity Centre for Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NBSAP | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| OECS | Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States |
| OECM | Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure |
| OCM | Ocean Coordination Mechanism |
| OFB | French Office for Biodiversity |
| OSPESCA | Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization |
| PA | Marine and Coastal Protected Area |
| PROCARIBE+ | Project on Protecting and Restoring the Ocean’s Natural Capital in the Caribbean |
| RAN | Regional Activity Network |
| RLE | Red List of Ecosystems |
| RSSD | Regional Seas Strategic Directions |
| SIMAR | Marine and Coastal Information System |
| SPAW | Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife |
| SPAW-RAC | Regional Activity Centre for SPAW |
| STAC | Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNOPS | United Nations Office for Project Services |

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|----------|---|
| UNV | United Nations Volunteers |
| WCR | Wider Caribbean Region |
| WECAFC | Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission |
| WIDECAST | Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network |
| WWF | World Wide Fund for Nature |

WORKPLAN FOR THE SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS AND WILDLIFE (SPA) SUB-PROGRAMME FOR THE 2026- 2027 BIENNIUM

1. INTRODUCTION

1. This workplan covers the 2026–2027 biennium and outlines the priorities for the Regional Programme on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPA). During this period, the workplan will focus on activities that support the implementation of the SPA Protocol, the recommendations of the SPA STAC, and the decisions of the SPA COP, as well as its coordination with other regional and global programmes and organizations involved in biodiversity conservation and management — particularly in relation to protected areas and wildlife — that complement and contribute to achieving the objectives of SPA, where appropriate.
2. It reflects ongoing efforts to integrate the SPA and AMEP subprogrammes further, strengthen coordination with the SPA-RAC and align with the Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021 – 2030. The Workplan contributes to the Medium-Term Strategy of the Cartagena Convention (2023–2030), the SPA-RAC Strategic Plan 2023- 2028, the updated Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2026-2029 (RSSD 2026-2029), as well as the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy (2026–2029).
3. The SPA Protocol entered into force on 18 June 2000. With the most recent accession by Saint Kitts and Nevis in 2024, a total of nineteen (19) Governments are currently Contracting Parties to the Protocol: The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, France, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, The Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, and Venezuela.
4. The objectives of the SPA Sub-Programme are to:
 - a) Increase the coverage and strengthen the effective management of marine and coastal protected areas and species under national and regional frameworks across the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR);
 - b) Promote the recovery and long-term conservation of threatened and endangered marine and coastal species, and foster the sustainable use of biodiversity as a strategy to prevent further decline and loss;
 - c) Enhance regional capacity for coordination, information exchange, training, and technical assistance in support of national efforts to conserve marine and coastal biodiversity with full respect for the sovereignty of the Contracting Parties; and
 - d) Foster synergies and cooperation with relevant international biodiversity-related treaties and initiatives, where appropriate, to advance the objectives of the SPA Protocol.

5. This Workplan seeks to ensure the realistic continuation and strategic expansion of initiatives and tasks initiated under the 2023–2024 (2025) SPAW Workplan (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/3 Rev.1), based on the availability of expected human and financial resources. It has been prepared by the Cartagena Convention Secretariat (administered by UNEP) and the SPAW-RAC, taking into account the decisions and recommendations from previous meetings of the SPAW Protocol — including the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) and Scientific and Technical Advisory Committees (STACs) — as well as regionally and globally relevant issues aligned with the objectives of the SPAW Protocol and Programme, and inputs received from partners.
6. In this context, the workplan also aims to promote and integrate the ecosystem-based management (EBM) approach to address the degradation of priority ecosystem services. This will be pursued, in part, through enhanced collaboration with the Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution (AMEP) Sub-Programme of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat, recognizing the interconnected nature of biodiversity loss and pollution-related pressures in coastal and marine environments.
7. The Workplan further seeks to contribute to biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources, while responding to broader sustainable development challenges and acknowledging the interdependence and multidimensional nature of ecological and social systems. The workplan consists of four (4) major thematic areas:
 - a) **Programme Coordination and Strategic Partnerships:** Oversight of the overall implementation of the SPAW Workplan, including coordination with Contracting Parties and partners, reporting, resource mobilization, and communication.
 - b) **Strengthening Protected Areas in the WCR:** Including support for the creation of new protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), the expansion and strengthening of existing areas, and the reinforcement of regional PA networks such as the SPAW-listed PAs Network and CaMPAM, as well as collaboration with other regional and global PA networks. Activities also include training and capacity building for PA management, and the development of regional guidelines to promote effective, science-based, and harmonized protected area practices.
 - c) **Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species:** Including the development and dissemination of species-specific management guidelines, and the implementation of measures to support species recovery, protection, and sustainable use, where applicable.
 - d) **Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems:** Including coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrasses, through the application of an ecosystem-based management (EBM) approach to address ecosystem threats, build resilience, and maintain essential ecosystem services, as well as to address the impacts and management of sargassum influxes.

2. THEMATIC AREAS

8. The following sections provide a summary of the strategic objectives, targets, main activities, expected deliverables and dedicated budget of the four Thematic Areas of the SPAW Subprogramme for the 2026–2027 biennium, including key actions under major projects and cross-cutting coordination efforts.

2.1. Programme Coordination and Strategic Partnerships

9. The Programme Coordination and Strategic Partnerships component is central to the effective implementation of the SPAW Protocol and its associated sub-programme. This theme encompasses the day-to-day operational coordination, strategic engagement with Contracting Parties and partners, resource mobilization, and support to regional and global environmental processes. It also includes oversight of the SPAW Programme's planning, reporting, communications, and stakeholder involvement mechanisms, which are essential for achieving the Protocol's objectives and enhancing its visibility and impact

in the Wider Caribbean Region.

10. For the 2026–2027 biennium, activities under this theme will focus on promoting the ratification of the SPAW Protocol, maintaining strong coordination across all programme components, aligning national biodiversity strategies with the SPAW Protocol, and strengthening collaboration with existing and new regional partners. This includes enhanced cooperation with SPAW-RAC, the AMEP Sub-Programme, SPAW Regional Activity Networks (RANs), civil society, and global biodiversity-related organizations, as well as securing new funding sources to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of SPAW’s operations.

2.1.1. Strategic objectives, targets, main activities, and expected deliverables

| THEME A. Programme Coordination and Strategic Partnerships | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Strategic objectives: | | | | |
| 1. Promote the ratification of the SPAW Protocol by Non-Contracting Parties | | | | |
| 2. Oversee the day-to-day activities and coordination of projects and activities of the SPAW Sub-Programme. | | | | |
| 3. Strengthen regional and national governance mechanisms, resource availability, and capacity for the implementation of and compliance with the SPAW Protocol, approved national and regional strategies, action plans for marine and coastal biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and the promotion of ocean-based economies and blue economy principles. | | | | |
| 4. Mobilize additional resources for implementation of unfunded SPAW Projects and Activities. | | | | |
| 5. Strengthen synergies and collaboration with SPAW-RAC, the AMEP Sub-Programme, SPAW RANs, and, as appropriate, relevant international and regional partners, and organizations active in the Wider Caribbean Region on coastal and marine biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. | | | | |
| 2026-2027 Targets: | | | | |
| 1. Promote the ratification of the SPAW Protocol of at least one country by conducting targeted outreach and sharing updated information on ratification with all nine non-Contracting Parties by end of 2027. | | | | |
| 2. Ensure effective coordination of the SPAW Sub-Programme by implementing and reporting on at least 80% of the activities outlined in the 2026–2027 Workplan. | | | | |
| 3. Strengthen governance and capacity for SPAW implementation by supporting at least three Contracting Parties in aligning national biodiversity strategies or frameworks with the Protocol. | | | | |
| 4. Mobilize additional resources for unfunded SPAW activities through the development and submission of at least two funding proposals or concept notes in collaboration with partners by 2027. | | | | |
| 5. Enhance collaboration with SPAW-RAC, AMEP, RANs, and, as appropriate, other partners by implementing at least ten joint initiatives that directly support the objectives and implementation of the SPAW Protocol, while promoting stakeholder participation across the Wider Caribbean Region. | | | | |
| Main Activities | Project(s) | Lead | Partners | Expected Deliverables |
| Promote ratification of the SPAW Protocol by Non-Contracting Parties. | Subject to the availability of funding | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | a) At least one new ratification of the SPAW Protocol supported through targeted engagement activities. |
| | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | b) Presented the SPAW Protocol in at least three regional or international forums. |
| | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | c) One outreach package to promote ratification developed, including technical guidance and communication materials, and disseminated to all nine non-Contracting Parties. |
| Continue implementation of the SPAW Protocol and development of its supporting regional subprogramme. | In-person meeting subject to the availability of funding | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | a) 12th SPAW STAC convened (in person) with official reports and recommendations finalized and circulated within the timeframe established prior to the COP. |
| | Trust Fund (subject to countries contributions) | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | a) 14th SPAW COP convened with official reports and decisions finalized and circulated within 6 months post-meeting. |
| | Subject to the | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, Contracting Parties | a) Developed at least four outreach products (e.g., factsheets, short videos) annually targeting decision-makers and civil society. |
| | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | b) Secured at least one new funding partner and submitted two proposals. |
| | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | c) Secretariat’s website updated every month with information on SPAW projects, activities, and their outputs. |

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| | availability of funding | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | d) Depending on member activity, weekly posts maintained on the CaMPAM ListServ throughout the period. | |
| | | | | e) Quarterly issues of the SPAW newsletter prepared and disseminated, and SPAW-RAC's website updated every three months with information on SPAW projects, activities, and their outputs. | |
| Provide Cartagena Convention Secretariat support to the SPAW Working Groups on Protected Areas, Species, Exemptions and Sargassum. | SPAW-RAC operational funds | SPAW-RAC | Contracting Parties, Working Group Members, Cartagena Convention Secretariat | a) At least four working group meetings (per working group) held and minuted. | |
| | | | Working Group Members | b) Reports finalized and circulated within 1 month of each meeting. | |
| | | | Contracting Parties, Working Group Members | c) Working Group evaluation of any PA and species submissions from Contracting Parties | |
| Promote visibility and integration of SPAW priorities within key regional governance frameworks and decision-making bodies (e.g., OECS, CARICOM, ACS, CCAD, LAC, OCM), to strengthen policy alignment as appropriate, leverage technical and financial partnerships, and support the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the SPAW Protocol. | PROCARIBE+ | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, CARICOM, OECS, ACS, CCAD, OCM, National Focal Points | a) Participation in at least three high-level or technical meetings of regional organizations to present SPAW-related priorities. | |
| | | | | b) At least two coordination mechanisms or joint actions explored or formalized (e.g., MoUs, agenda items, joint workplans). | |
| | | | | c) SPAW and Cartagena Convention featured or referenced in policy or outcome documents of at least two regional intergovernmental processes. | |
| Initiate the process for the potential development of a SPAW Compliance Mechanism through intergovernmental consultation. | SPAW | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, Contracting Parties, Legal and Technical Experts | a) Concept note for the potential development of a compliance mechanism that focuses on facilitative, nonpunitive, and cooperative arrangements for promoting implementation and compliance prepared for discussion at SPAW STAC12. | |
| | | | | | |
| Support Contracting Parties (upon request) to update and enhance the implementation of Regional and/or National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), incorporating marine biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. | Subject to the availability of funding | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, SPAW Consortium | a) If requested, support provided to update NBSAPs in at least two countries. | |
| Ensure timely and coordinated project development, implementation, monitoring of progress against targets and indicators, periodic evaluation and reporting. | PROCARIBE+ | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, Partner Executing Agencies | a) UN2UN timely implemented. | |
| | | | | b) Follow-up with national and regional partners conducted. | |
| | | | | c) Quarterly progress narrative and financial reports timely submitted. | |
| | | | | d) Project Coordination Group meetings attended. | |
| | GoM LME | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, Partner Executing Agencies | | a) UN2UN timely implemented. |
| | | | | | b) Follow-up with national and regional partners conducted. |
| | | | | | c) Quarterly progress narrative and financial reports timely submitted. |
| | | | | | d) Project Coordination Group meetings attended. |
| | CAMAC | SPAW-RAC | Regional partners | | a) Project activities involving SPAW-RAC timely implemented. |
| | | | | | b) Follow-up with national and regional partners conducted. |
| | | | | | c) Quarterly progress narrative and financial reports timely submitted. |
| | | | | | d) Project Coordination Group meetings attended. |

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| | SARGCOOP | SPAW-RAC | Regional partners | <p>a) Project activities involving SPAW-RAC timely implemented.</p> <p>b) Follow-up with national and regional partners conducted.</p> <p>c) Quarterly progress narrative and financial reports timely submitted.</p> <p>d) Project Coordination Group meetings attended.</p> |
| | SPAW Small Grants Programme - Subject | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | <p>a) At least one new funding contribution to support the SPAW small grants mechanism raised.</p> <p>b) At least one call for proposals launched</p> |
| | to the availability of funding | | | <p>c) Selection and contracting process of at least 4 local or regional projects finalized.</p> <p>d) At least two rounds of technical follow-up with all funded partners during implementation conducted.</p> |
| | Blue Growth through Green Restoration: Cartagena Regional Seas Convention's Capacity Building on Seagrass Ecosystems project | Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) | Regional partners, Contracting parties | <p>a) Project activities timely implemented.</p> <p>b) Follow-up with national and regional partners conducted.</p> <p>c) Project Coordination Group meetings attended.</p> |
| | Regional support program for SPAW-listed protected area managers' network in the Wider Caribbean Region - Subject to the availability of funding | SPAW-RAC | Regional partners | <p>a) Fundraising completed.</p> <p>b) Follow-up with regional, national and local selected partners conducted.</p> <p>c) Progress narrative and financial reports timely submitted.</p> |
| | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC | <p>a) Preparation of new GEF Project Proposals on topics related to specially protected areas and wildlife, including the impacts of Sargassum on such areas and wildlife supported.</p> |
| Provide technical assistance and guidance to Contracting Parties for the implementation of the Cartagena Convention and the SPAW Protocol. | Trust Fund | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW RAC, RANs | <p>a) Quarterly updates submitted to SPAW Bureau summarizing progress on STAC and COP decisions.</p> <p>b) Guidance on the national implementation of the Contracting Parties and the SPAW Protocol provided through briefs and model cabinet papers.</p> |
| Undertake periodic reviews of bilateral cooperation with partner organizations to ensure alignment with SPAW's mandate and to enhance synergies that directly support the implementation of the Protocol at the national and regional levels. | Subject to the availability of funding | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | Global MEAs, Regional Partners, SPAW-RAC | <p>a) At least one joint activity with CRFM and the BE-CLME+ project to advance marine spatial planning and MPA management.</p> <p>b) One annual MoU review conducted, covering at least three cooperation frameworks.</p> |
| Facilitate reporting on relevant marine ecosystems targets and indicators. | PROCARIBE+ | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, Contracting Parties | <p>a) Development of the next State of Convention Areas Report initiated using an Integrated Assessment approach, and at least three Contracting Parties supported to report on marine ecosystems in line with reporting requirements under the Cartagena Convention and SPAW Protocol.</p> |
| Support Contracting Parties, upon request, in integrating marine biodiversity and ecosystem services into national Blue Economy and ocean-based development strategies. | PROCARIBE+, SPAW | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, LBS RACs, OECS, CARICOM, Contracting Parties | <p>a) At least two technical exchanges or workshops conducted on marine biodiversity integration in Blue Economy planning.</p> <p>b) At least one case study or best practice document produced on ecosystem-based approaches supporting ocean-based economies.</p> |
| Facilitate cooperation with relevant projects and coordinating mechanisms relating to marine biodiversity. | PROCARIBE+ | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, Regional Partners | <p>a) Participation in the Ocean Coordination Mechanism (as alternate to the Coordinator) ensured.</p> <p>b) Participation in relevant UNEP HQ committees and working groups on marine biodiversity.</p> |

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| Promote and strengthen cooperation with RANs. | N/A | Cartagena Convention Secretariat and SPAW-RAC | RANs and Regional Partners, SPAW Consortium | a) Consultations supported for the establishment of a Marine Mammal Regional Activity Network (RAN), based on recommendations from STAC10 and decisions from COP13. |
| | | | | b) Possible MOU recognizing WIDECAS as a Regional Activity Network (RAN) for sea turtles, following guidance provided by the COP. |
| Strengthen collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly by promoting continued engagement with the SPAW Consortium. | Subject to the availability of funding | SPAW Consortium | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, SPAW-RAC | a) At least two joint webinars or technical exchanges with CSOs on marine biodiversity themes conducted. |
| | | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, SPAW-RAC, Contracting parties and CBD | b) Analysis on how integrating the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework into NBSAPs supports implementation of the SPAW Protocol for those countries that are Party to both the Convention on Biological Diversity and SPAW Protocol, with results presented at STAC12 and COP14. |
| | | | | c) Desk studies on Assessment of the drivers and economic implications of ecosystem changes in the Caribbean, with results presented at STAC13 and COP15. |

2.1.2. SPAW Programme Personnel

11. During the period 2026–2027, the day-to-day coordination for the implementation of the SPAW Sub-Programme will continue to be overseen by the SPAW Programme Officer, who is responsible for the overall coordination of the SPAW Programme and Protocol Secretariat functions. The Programme Officer will be supported by the SPAW Programme Assistant, Junior Professional Officers (JPOs), United Nations Volunteers (UNVs), and interns, when applicable and available.
12. Additional technical and operational support will continue to be provided by the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW-RAC), located in Guadeloupe and supported by the Government of France. SPAW-RAC operates under the institutional framework of “DEAL” Guadeloupe (*La Direction de l’Environnement, de l’Aménagement et du Logement*), the local representative of the French Ministry in charge of the environment. SPAW-RAC is dedicated to supporting the implementation of the SPAW Protocol. Its full-time staff includes one (1) Executive Director, one (1) Deputy Director, Program Coordinator, and one (1) Administrative Assistant funded by the French Ministry for an Ecological Transition. The team is further supported by project officers whose roles depend on available project funding. In 2025, the team includes three (3) additional contract staff supported through EU, French Ministry funding and UNEP, working on key areas such as marine megafauna, marine ecosystems (coral reefs and Sargassum), and PAs. Details of the division of responsibilities between the SPAW team at the Cartagena Convention Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC team regarding project coordination are outlined in Annex I.

2.1.3. Proposed Budget (indicative)

| Activity | 2026 Budgeted | | | 2027 Budgeted | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| | CTF | Other Contributions | Total cost | CTF | Other Contributions | Total Cost |
| Salary of Programme Officer/ Assistant (SMs) and other supporting costs | 250,860.00 | - | 250,860.00 | 250,860.00 | - | 250,860.00 |
| Salary of Director/Deputy director/ Assistant (SMs) and other supporting costs of the SPAW-RAC | - | 456,500.00 ¹ | 456,500.00 | - | 456,500.00 ¹ | 456,500.00 |
| COP14 and STAC12 meeting preparations | - | | | 79,656.00 | 67,800.00 | 147,456.00 |
| TOTAL (USD) | 250,860.00 | 456,500.00 | 707,360.00 | 330,516.00 | 524,300.00 | 854,816.00 |

¹ Includes funding from France through SPAW-RAC

13. Annex II provides the consolidated budget covering all thematic areas and activities under the SPAW Protocol Workplan, offering an overview of the resources required for implementation. Activities without assigned funding are listed in Annex III, identifying them as priorities for resource mobilization, while also underscoring that funding will be required not only to implement the activities themselves but also to support the short-term staffing needs at the Secretariat and SPAW-RAC essential for their execution.

2.2. Strengthening Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (PAs) in the Wider Caribbean Region

14. The thematic area of Strengthening Protected Areas in the WCR focuses on supporting the creation, management, and effectiveness of Protected Areas (PAs) and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) across the Wider Caribbean Region. These area-based tools are essential for conserving marine biodiversity, maintaining ecosystem services, and supporting sustainable livelihoods. The SPAW Sub-Programme contributes by providing technical assistance, promoting the use of regional guidelines, and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders at local, national, and regional levels.

15. For the 2026–2027 biennium, activities will prioritize the designation and strengthening of PAs and OECMs, including efforts to enhance the effectiveness of existing areas, capacity building for site managers and institutions, and strengthening regional cooperation through exchanges and peer learning. Particular attention will be given to strengthening the activities of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM), and the SPAW-listed PA Network, which play a critical role in facilitating knowledge sharing, training, and technical support throughout the region. Efforts will also support the update of regional guidelines, implementation of site-based planning and restoration projects, and increased engagement with global PA networks to ensure the Caribbean’s active participation in international biodiversity dialogues and platforms.

2.2.1. Strategic objectives, targets, main activities, and expected deliverables

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| Strategic objectives: | | | | |
| 1. Support Governments in the creation of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (PAs) and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs), and the strengthening of existing ones in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR), including enhanced communication and cooperation among sites in the region. | | | | |
| 2. Assist Governments and other relevant groups in building and strengthening human capacity to improve the effectiveness of PAs and OECMs, both at individual sites and within national systems. | | | | |
| 3. Support the implementation of the guidelines for the establishment, planning, management, and listing of PAs developed under the SPAW Protocol. | | | | |
| 4. Foster collaboration and knowledge exchange among PA networks at the Caribbean and global levels. | | | | |
| 2026-2027 Targets: | | | | |
| 1. Facilitate the creation or expansion of at least two Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (PAs) and/or Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs), and support capacity-building and cooperation among at least five existing sites in the Wider Caribbean Region by 2027. | | | | |
| 2. Deliver at least two regional training or capacity-building activities for PA/OECM practitioners across the Wider Caribbean Region by 2027. | | | | |
| 3. As appropriate and upon request, support the nomination process of at least two new PAs for inclusion under the SPAW Protocol, providing technical assistance to national authorities throughout the process by 2027. | | | | |
| 4. Facilitate at least two joint initiatives or exchanges between Caribbean and global PA networks by 2027 to promote knowledge sharing, coordination, and visibility of PAs in the Wider Caribbean Region. | | | | |
| Main Activities | Project(s) | Lead | Partners | Expected Deliverables |
| Support the operationalization of the SPAW-listed Protected Area Managers Network, including exchanges, trainings, and peer-to-peer collaboration. | Subject to the availability of | SPAW-RAC | NatureXpairs, SPAW Protected Area Network, Regional | a) At least one companionship program implemented, two regional webinars delivered, and one exchange visit organized for protected area managers. |
| | | | | b) Adaptation methodology tested at least in two SPAW-listed pilot sites, and site-specific coastal erosion management plans developed. |
| | | | | c) Educational protected areas programme deployed and call for micro projects launched. |

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| | funding | | Partners | d) Participation in the dynamics of supra-regional protected area networks ensured. e) Draft post-2030 roadmap developed and preliminary economic model for the long-term sustainability of the network proposed. |
| Deliver capacity building on MPA management through the CaMPAM Training of Trainers (ToT) programme. | GEF PROCARIBE+ / Subject to the availability of funding | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | UNOPS, Reef Check Dominican Republic, SPAW-RAC | a) CaMPAM ToT course curriculum updated and digitized. b) At least five follow-up activities from the 14th CaMPAM ToT edition implemented in English-speaking countries. c) 15th CaMPAM ToT edition for Spanish-speaking countries delivered, with participation from at least eight countries and 20 MPA practitioners. d) At least five follow-up activities from the 15th CaMPAM ToT edition implemented in Spanish-speaking countries. |
| Support the establishment and strengthening of PAs and OECMs, in collaboration with national and local partners. | GEF PROCARIBE+ | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | UNOPS, CARDIQUE, CARSUCRE | a) Two new MPAs established in Colombia. |
| | | | UNOPS, INVEMAR, Colombia National Parks | b) One existing MPA strengthened in Colombia. |
| | | | UNOPS, MENR | c) One existing marine sanctuary strengthened in the Dominican Republic. d) Pilot Fishing Closure or Restoration Zones (OECMs) implemented in the Dominican Republic. |
| | | National Center of Protected Areas of Cuba | UNOPS, Cartagena Convention Secretariat | a) Two new MPAs established in Cuba. |
| | Subject to the availability of funding | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, Contracting Parties | a) Newly created and existing PAs supported to be included in the SPAW list of PAs, as appropriate and upon request from Contracting Parties. |
| Strengthen environmental monitoring and coral reef management within MPAs through standardized indicators, early warning systems, and data sharing platforms. | GEF GoM LME | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | National authorities (Mexico, USA), SPAW-RAC, UNOPS, CONABIO, Kalanbio | a) Coordination mechanisms between national MPAs and MPA networks in Mexico and the USA improved. |
| | | | UNOPS, CONABIO | b) MPA monitoring data integrated into SIMAR, as appropriate. |
| Support national implementation of the SPAW Protocol (PA planning and management at the local level). | SPAW Small Grants Programme - Subject to the availability of funding | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, SPAW Consortium | a) At least one new funding source secured to sustain and expand the small grants mechanism supporting SPAW-listed sites. |
| | | | Local NGOs, community organizations | b) Support the implementation of at least three site-based projects to update or implement management plans in SPAW-listed PAs supported. |
| | | | Local NGOs, community organizations | c) Report on lessons learned and best practices from funded projects compiled and published. |
| Enhance synergies and joint initiatives with other Caribbean and global PA networks to promote shared tools, best practices, and coordinated actions. | Subject to the availability of funding | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, CaMPAM, SPAW-listed MPANetwork, MPACconnect, MARFund, RedParques, DCNA, Sustainable Grenadines, NAMPAM | a) Joint activities and knowledge exchange between regional PA networks facilitated. |
| | | | SPAW-RAC | b) Collaboration with the global network of MPA networks formalized through a joint workplan. |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| | | | SPAW-RAC, MPA-Connect, MARFund, NAMPAM, Red-Parques, Global MPA Network | c) Caribbean representation ensured in at least two international biodiversity events or platforms. |
| Promote sustainable tourism practices to strengthen PA management, support biodiversity conservation, and encourage the sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems in the Wider Caribbean Region. | Subject to the availability of funding | UNEP One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, SPAW-RAC, SPAW Consortium | a) Initial discussions and coordination efforts initiated to develop voluntary Regional Standards on Sustainable Tourism for the Wider Caribbean Region. |
| | | Reef-World Foundation and Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, PA managers | a) Adoption of the Green Fins Code of Conduct promoted in at least two additional PAs. |
| | | | | b) Two regional training sessions on Green Fins standards for tourism operators and PA practitioners conducted. |
| | | | | c) Communication materials linking Green Fins practices with SPAW biodiversity obligations produced. |
| Strengthening initiatives on MPAs and OECMs, including transboundary areas in the region of the Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC). | Subject to the availability of funding | CBC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, Caribbean Biological Corridor, SPAW-RAC, National Agencies of Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica | a) Technical and information support provided to the CBC to advance initiatives on the establishment, management, and strengthening of MPAs and OECMs, including transboundary areas, by contributing relevant SPAW Protocol information, facilitating exchanges of best practices, and supporting coordination among Contracting Parties and partners. |
| | | | SPAW-RAC, MPA-Connect, MARFund, NAMPAM, Red-Parques, Global MPA Network | c) Caribbean representation ensured in at least two international biodiversity events or platforms. |

2.2.2. Proposed budget (indicative)

| Activity | 2026 Budgeted | | | 2027 Budgeted | | |
|---|---------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------|------------------------|------------|
| | CTF | Other Contributions | Total cost | CTF | Other Contributions | Total Cost |
| Support the operationalization of the SPAW- listed Protected Area Managers Network, including exchanges, trainings, and peer-to-peer collaboration. | - | - | 103,400.00 | - | - | - |
| Deliver capacity building on MPA management through the CaMPAM Training of Trainers (ToT) programme. | - | 55,330.00 ¹ | 55,330.00 | - | - | - |
| Support the establishment and strengthening of PAs and OECMs, in collaboration with national and local partners | - | 250,018.50 ¹ | 250,018.50 | - | 45,333.34 ¹ | 45,333.34 |
| Strengthen environmental monitoring and coral reef management within MPAs through standardized indicators, early warning systems, and data sharing platforms. | - | 65,000.00 ² | 65,000.00 | - | - | - |
| Support national implementation of the SPAW Protocol (MPA planning and management at the local level). | - | 40,000.00 ³ | 40,000.00 | - | - | - |
| Enhance synergies and joint initiatives with other Caribbean and global PA networks to promote shared tools, best practices, and coordinated actions. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Promote sustainable tourism practices to strengthen PA management, support biodiversity conservation, and encourage the sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems in the Wider Caribbean Region. | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|-------------------|---|------------------|------------------|
| Strengthening initiatives on MPAs and OECMs, including transboundary areas in the region of the Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| TOTAL (USD) | - | 410,348.50 | 513,748.50 | - | 45,333.34 | 45,333.34 |

¹ Includes funds from the PROCARIBE+ project

² Includes funds from the GoM LME project

³ Includes funding from SPAW-RAC

2.3. Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species

16. Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species is a core component of the SPAW Protocol, supporting Contracting Parties in strengthening their national and regional efforts to protect species at risk. This thematic area focuses on improving awareness, coordination, and technical support for the conservation and management of threatened, endangered, and migratory species, including those of ecological and economic importance. It also promotes the development and implementation of recovery plans, management guidelines, and conservation measures based on SPAW Protocol provisions and regional priorities.
17. During the 2026–2027 biennium, the SPAW Sub-Programme will prioritize actions that build on existing species conservation networks and partnerships, support field-level implementation, and improve access to information and tools. Particular emphasis will be placed on strengthening cooperation for marine megafauna, including cetaceans, sea turtles, and manatees, as well as advancing awareness-raising campaigns. The Programme will also continue supporting Contracting Parties in aligning their national legislation and species management plans with SPAW provisions and broader regional frameworks.

2.3.1. Strategic objectives, targets, main activities, and expected deliverables

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------|---|--|
| Strategic objectives: | | | | |
| 1. Promote regional awareness and action on priorities related to the management of threatened, endangered, and migratory species, to enhance national and regional protection efforts. | | | | |
| 2. Support Contracting Parties to implement priority actions identified in existing species recovery and management plans, as well as recommendations developed under the SPAW Protocol. | | | | |
| 3. Promote and support Contracting Parties on the development and implementation of species conservation and management guidelines within the framework of the SPAW Protocol. | | | | |
| 4. Support Contracting Parties to develop, where appropriate, effective management plans and programmes for priority species of regional concern, including species of economic significance. | | | | |
| 2026-2027 Targets: | | | | |
| 1. Implement at least three regional awareness-raising initiatives (e.g., communication campaigns, webinars, educational materials) focused on the conservation of threatened, endangered, and migratory species by 2027. | | | | |
| 2. Support at least two Contracting Parties in the implementation of priority actions identified in national or regional species recovery and management plans aligned with SPAW Protocol provisions by 2027. | | | | |
| 3. Finalize and validate one updated or new regional guideline for species conservation and management under the SPAW Protocol, and provide technical support for its application in at least two countries by 2027. | | | | |
| 4. Support the development or update of at least two species management plans for priority species of regional concern, including those of economic importance, with endorsement from national authorities by 2027. | | | | |
| Main Activities | Project(s) | Lead | Partners | Expected Deliverables |
| Support the conservation of marine megafauna (e.g., whale shark, manta ray, hammerhead sharks, sawfish, sea birds). | CAMAC | SPAW-RAC | OFB-Agoa, WWF, local NGO, Cartagena Convention | a) Marine mammal regional stranding network maintained and strengthened through the creation of a focal point list and tools for data sharing. |
| | | | WECAFC, CRFM, Birds Caribbean, Widecast, OFB, Agoa, WWF, Cari'mam Network | b) Socio-economic and environmental assessment on fisheries interactions with marine megafauna developed and in collaboration with at least two fisheries organizations. |

| | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|--|
| | | WIDECAST | SPAW-RAC | c) WIDECAST supported in implementing relevant recommendations identified as a high priority in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.24. |
| Support national implementation of the SPAW Protocol (species monitoring and conservation activities). | SPAW Small Grants Programme - Subject to the availability of funding | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, the SPAW Consortium | a) At least one new funding source secured to sustain and expand the small grants mechanism supporting SPAW-listed species. |
| | | | National/local partners (civil society, NGOs) | b) Implementation of at least three site-based projects to support local initiatives for species monitoring and conservation supported. |
| | | | | c) Report on lessons learned and best practices from funded projects compiled and published. |
| Communication and information on species listed in SPAW Annexes of the SPAW protocol. | CAMAC | SPAW-RAC | CARI'MAM members | a) Active communication maintained through the CARI'MAM network by sharing at least 2 updates or relevant materials per year via WhatsApp and by promoting informal knowledge exchange among members. |
| | | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | b) At least 12 species-related posts or updates published per year on the Cartagena Convention Secretariat and SPAW-RAC websites and social media, including updates, articles, maps, and data (e.g., species distribution models, migratory corridors). |
| | Subject to the availability of funding | | | |
| Promote regional collaboration for the protection of manatee populations. | Subject to the availability of funding | Clearwater Marine Aquarium | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, SPAW-RAC | a) Technical and coordination support provided for the development of a regional manatee conservation alliance, by participating in partner-led initiatives, facilitating knowledge sharing, and supporting the drafting of a joint vision or action outline by providing information relevant to the SPAW Protocol. |
| Strengthening initiatives on megafauna conservation in the region of the Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC). | CBC Ocean 2030 | CBC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, Caribbean Biological Corridor, SPAW-RAC, National Agencies of Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica | a) Technical and information support provided to the CBC for the development of regional initiatives on megafauna conservation (e.g., marine mammals, sea turtles, large pelagic species) within its action region, by contributing relevant SPAW Protocol information, facilitating coordination with Contracting Parties, and supporting knowledge-sharing mechanisms and joint outreach activities. |

2.3.2. Proposed Budget (indicative)

| Activity | 2026 Budgeted | | | 2027 Budgeted | | |
|---|---------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------|
| | CTF | Other Contributions | Total cost | CTF | Other Contributions | Total Cost |
| Support the conservation of marine megafauna (e.g. whale shark, manta ray, hammerhead sharks, sawfish, sea birds) | - | 260,260.00 ¹ | 260,260.00 | - | 202,441.80 ¹ | 202,441.80 |
| Support national implementation of the SPAW Protocol (species monitoring and conservation activities). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Communication and information on species listed in SPAW Annexes of the SPAW Protocol. | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| Promote regional collaboration for the protection of manatee populations. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Strengthening initiatives on megafauna conservation in the region of the Caribbean Biological Corridor (CBC). | | | | | | |
| TOTAL (USD) | - | 260,260.00 | 260,260.00 | - | 202,441.80 | 202,441.80 |

¹ Includes funds from the CAMAC project

2.4. Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems

18. Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems address the urgent need to protect and restore key ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrasses, which provide critical services for biodiversity, ecosystems resilience, and human well-being. This thematic area promotes ecosystem-based management and nature-based solutions as guiding approaches to ensure the long-term health and productivity of coastal and marine habitats across the Wider Caribbean Region. The SPAW Sub-Programme is key in supporting conservation and restoration actions, facilitating regional monitoring systems, and promoting knowledge exchange to inform effective policy and management.

19. During the 2026–2027 biennium, particular emphasis will be placed on strengthening regional platforms such as GCRMN-Caribbean, expanding medium and small-scale restoration efforts, and enhancing collaboration on vulnerability assessments. These actions will be aligned, as appropriate, with national and regional sustainability commitments, including guiding frameworks such as the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and others that contribute to the implementation of the SPAW Protocol at the national level. Actions will also focus on addressing emerging threats such as Sargassum influxes by promoting regional coordination, supporting field studies, and incorporating biodiversity considerations into action plans. The Sub-Programme will continue to engage with partners at all levels to mobilize resources, share knowledge, and advance integrated, science-based approaches to coastal and marine ecosystem management.

2.4.1. Strategic objectives, targets, main activities, and expected deliverables

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Strategic objectives: | | | | |
| 1. Promote the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coral reefs, mangroves, seagrasses and associated coastal and marine ecosystems through ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions and their integration, as appropriate, into national and regional commitments as a basis for sustainability and resilience. | | | | |
| 2. Strengthen regional monitoring and data-sharing platforms such as GCRMN and SIMAR to support science-based decision-making and adaptive ecosystem management. | | | | |
| 3. Raise awareness and foster regional cooperation on the value of marine ecosystems and the impacts of threats such as sargassum to inform biodiversity planning and actions. | | | | |
| 4. Promote and support ecosystem restoration efforts in coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, and other coastal and marine habitats, fostering, as appropriate, regional collaboration, knowledge sharing, and alignment with global commitments. | | | | |
| 2026-2027 Targets: | | | | |
| 1. Support the implementation of at least four ecosystem-based or nature-based pilot projects for the restoration or sustainable management of coral reefs, mangroves, or seagrasses in the Wider Caribbean Region by 2027, based on national and regional commitments, as appropriate. | | | | |
| 2. Enhance the functionality and content of at least two regional platforms (e.g., GCRMN-Caribbean, SIMAR), that contribute directly to ecosystems monitoring and national reporting under the Cartagena Convention. by integrating updated datasets, publishing one regional status report, and expanding participation from at least five additional national institutions by 2027. | | | | |
| 3. Deliver at least two awareness or cooperation initiatives (e.g., webinars, policy briefs, stakeholder dialogues) on the value of marine ecosystems and the impacts of Sargassum influxes by 2027. | | | | |
| 4. Facilitate at least two regional or national ecosystem restoration initiatives supported or coordinated under SPAW, including knowledge exchange activities, technical assistance, or partnerships to enhance restoration outcomes for priority marine and coastal ecosystems, by 2027. | | | | |
| Main Activities | Project(s) | Lead | Partners | Expected Deliverables |

| | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Continue co-chairing GCRMN Caribbean node and support coral reef conservation. | GEF GoM LME | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, ICRI, GCRMN Global, GCRMN National Experts and institutions | a) At least five thematic coral reef data products or policy briefs shared via GCRMN. b) 2025 GCRMN-Caribbean Coral Reef Status Report finalized and promoted. c) Caribbean contributions submitted to the GCRMN Global Report and participation ensured in at least one review workshop. |
| | | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, UNOPS, Kalanbio, CONABIO, NOAA, CNAP | d) National and regional networks for the assessment, monitoring, and restoration of coral reefs, including those affected by coral bleaching and/or SCLTD strengthened in at least two countries. e) Visibility and policy-level communication of reef monitoring results in the Wider Caribbean enhanced, including dissemination through platforms like SIMAR. |
| Enhance understanding and awareness of Sargassum’s ecological impacts and value, promoting good management practices, and considering biodiversity conservation in the implementation of a Sargassum regional action plan. | Subject to the availability of funding | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, Region Guadeloupe, OECS, AEC, sargassum working group, RAC-IMA, RAC-CIMAB, OEWG-LBS, Abidjan Convention | a) Implementation of at least three actions from Cartagena Convention Action Plan on Sargassum Inundations supported in collaboration with the Cartagena Convention Sargassum working group |
| | | SARGCOOP II- | SPAW-listed MPA network, University of Antilles Geo Blue Planet | a) At least one field study conducted and results published on the biodiversity impacts of sargassum in SPAW-listed MPAs by 2027. b) Development or integration of at least one ecosystem vulnerability forecasting tool into regional data systems supported. |
| Enhance coral reef conservation and resilience in coral reefs of MPAs in the GOM-LME Project area. | GEF GoM LME | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, UNOPS, Kalanbio, CONABIO, NOAA, CNAP | a) A set of at least four common coral reef indicators for MPAs in the GOM-LME Project area agreed upon and published. b) At least one early warning protocol for coral bleaching or coral diseases developed in coordination with national partners of the GEF GOM-LME Project. c) At least two data integration exercises within SIMAR conducted. |
| Promote regional cooperation and knowledge exchange on ecosystem restoration efforts focused on coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds. | Subject to the availability of funding | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | SPAW-RAC, LBS RACs, Regional Fisheries bodies (e.g., CRFM, OSPESCA), ICRI, GCRMN-Caribbean, Saint Lucia Restoration Flagship, Regional Projects | a) At least one regional exchange or webinar organized to showcase restoration guidelines and case studies on coral, mangrove, and seagrass restoration. b) At least one joint activity or proposal developed with AMEP or fisheries organizations linking restoration to pollution reduction and habitat protection. c) Inventory or repository of existing regional and national restoration guidelines and protocols developed and disseminated. |
| Support national implementation of the SPAW Protocol (marine and coastal ecosystems conservation, monitoring and restoration). | SPAW Small Grants Programme - Subject to the availability of funding | SPAW-RAC | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, National/local partners (PAs civil society, NGOs) | a) At least one new funding source secured to sustain and expand the small grants mechanism supporting local initiatives for ecosystem conservation and restoration. b) Implementation of at least three site-based projects to support local initiatives for ecosystem conservation and restoration supported. c) Report on lessons learned and best practices from funded projects compiled and published. |
| Support the sustainable use and conservation of mangroves, seagrasses, and other coastal ecosystems to enhance ecological resilience and | | | | a) Contribution to national capacity-building efforts for the effective management of mangroves and seagrasses through support to at least two technical workshops led by partners such as Pew or national authorities. |

| | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|--|--|
| long-term environmental benefits | PROCARIBE+ | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | , SPAW-RAC, Pew Charitable Trust, national governments | b) Promotion of technical resources and peer exchange to improve valuation, monitoring, and sustainable financing of coastal ecosystems in at least three countries. |
| | Subject to the availability of funding | | | c) Facilitation of regional exchange of experiences and good practices through participation in at least one event or knowledge-sharing initiative on coastal ecosystem management. d) Technical input provided to the development or improvement of at least two national policies or regulations supporting sustainable use and conservation of mangroves, seagrasses, and associated coastal habitats. e) Ecosystem mapping for the identification of priority areas for restoration and conservation, supported in at least 3 countries. |
| Contribute to the development and facilitate expert review of a Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) assessment for Caribbean coral reefs. | IUCN funds | IUCN | Cartagena Convention Secretariat, SPAW-RAC | a) Contribution provided to the Caribbean Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) assessment process for at least two subregions by providing technical inputs and facilitating expert review. |
| | | | | b) Support development of a technical report identifying priority reef areas and recommended conservation actions supported through data sharing, peer review participation, and consultations with partners. |

2.4.2. Proposed Budget (indicative)

| Activity | 2026 Budgeted | | | 2027 Budgeted | | |
|--|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| | CTF | Other Contributions | Total cost | CTF | Other Contributions | Total Cost |
| Continue co-chairing GCRMN Caribbean node and support coral reef conservation. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Enhance understanding and awareness of Sargassum’s ecological impacts and value, promoting good management practices, and considering biodiversity conservation in the implementation of a Sargassum regional action plan. | - | 388,568.54 ¹ | 388,568.54 | - | 489,084.40 ¹ | 489,084.40 |
| Enhance coral reef conservation and resilience in coral reefs of MPAs in the GOM-LME Project area. | - | 103,192.00 ² | 103,192.00 | - | - | - |
| Promote regional cooperation and knowledge exchange on ecosystem restoration efforts focused on coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Support national implementation of the SPAW Protocol (marine and coastal ecosystems conservation, monitoring and restoration). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Support the sustainable use and conservation of mangroves, seagrasses, and other coastal ecosystems to enhance ecological resilience and long-term environmental benefits | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Contribute to the development and facilitate expert review of a Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) assessment for Caribbean coral reefs. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| TOTAL (USD) | - | 491,760.54 | 491,760.54 | - | 489,084.40 | 489,084.40 |

¹ Includes funds from the EU INTERREG SARGCOOP II project and France

² Includes funds from the GoM LME project

3. CONCLUSION

20. The 2026–2027 Workplan of the SPAW Protocol sets forth a comprehensive and strategic framework to advance marine and coastal biodiversity conservation in the Wider Caribbean Region. It reflects regional priorities while providing support to further national implementation of the SPAW Protocol. Through its thematic areas and activities, the Workplan seeks to strengthen governance, enhance the management of protected areas and species, promote ecosystem restoration and sustainable use, and foster collaboration and partnerships across sectors and stakeholders. This Workplan integrates the activities of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC in support of the SPAW Sub-Programme, as well as contributions from other partners, projects, and initiatives that collectively advance the Protocol's implementation.

21. Successful implementation of the Workplan will depend on sustained cooperation among Contracting Parties, regional partners, and the broader stakeholder community, as well as the mobilization of adequate resources. By working together, leveraging synergies, and building on existing initiatives, the SPAW Protocol aims to maximize its impact, visibility, and contribution to the region's sustainable development and resilience.

ANNEX I: OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS SUPPORTING SPAW PROTOCOL IMPLEMENTATION, OUTLINING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SECRETARIAT AND THE SPAW-RAC

| Project | Deliverables | Information / Endorsement / Approval | Funds | Project Partners | Responsible | Timeline |
|---|--|---|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------|
| GEF PROCARIBE+: Protecting and Restoring the Ocean's Natural Capital, Building Resilience, and Supporting Regionwide Investments for Sustainable Blue Socio-Economic Development in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ region) | a) CaMPAM ToT course curriculum updated and digitized. | Information (endorsed and approved at SPAW COP11) | GEF (via UNDP) | UNDP, UNOPS, SPAW-RAC, National Authorities | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | 2025-2027 |
| | b) Delivery of the 15th ToT edition for Spanish-speaking countries and implementation of follow-up activities from the 14th edition for English-speaking countries. | | | | | |
| | c) In Colombia: establishment of two new MPAs and strengthening of one existing MPA. | | | | | |
| | d) In the Dominican Republic: establishment of pilot OECMs and strengthening of one existing marine sanctuary. | | | | | |
| GEF GoM LME: Implementation of the Strategic Action Program of the Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem | a) Agreement on at least four standardized coral reef indicators for MPAs in the GOM-LME Project area. | Information (endorsed and approved at SPAW COP11) | GEF (via UNEP) | UNEP, UNOPS, SPAW-RAC, National Agencies of Mexico, USA and Cuba | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | 2024-2026 |
| | b) Development of at least one early warning protocol for coral bleaching or coral disease events, in collaboration with national partners. | | | | | |
| | c) Integration of national MPA monitoring data into SIMAR for improved regional data sharing and decision-making. | | | | | |
| | d) Contribution of technical input and data to the 2025 Caribbean Coral Reef Status Report. | | | | | |
| CAMAC Phase II: Caribbean Marine Megafauna and Anthropogenic Activities | a) Marine mammal regional stranding network maintained and strengthened through the creation of a focal point list and tools for data sharing. | Information (endorsed and approved at SPAW COP11) | EU Interreg Caribbean + various from project partners | OFB, SPAW-RAC, WWF-NL, WIDECAS, Birds Caribbean, Other local NGO | SPAW-RAC | 2025-2027 |
| | b) Socio-economic and environmental assessment on fisheries interactions with marine megafauna developed in collaboration with at least two fisheries organizations. | | | | | |
| | c) WIDECAS supported in establishing a regional sea turtle stranding response network in at least five countries. | | | | | |
| | d) Continued contribution to the CARI'MAM network and support to the implementation of the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMA) in the Wider Caribbean Region. | | | | | |
| SARGCOOP II: Strengthening Regional Governance and Environmental Cooperation on Sargassum Management in the Wider Caribbean | a) At least one field study conducted and results published on the biodiversity impacts of sargassum in SPAW-listed MPAs by 2027. | Information (endorsed and approved at SPAW COP11) | EU Interreg Caribbean + various from project partners | Conseil regional de Guadeloupe, University of Antilles, Geo blue Planet, OECs Other local NGO | SPAW-RAC | 2025-2027 |
| | b) Development or integration of at least one ecosystem vulnerability forecasting tool into regional data systems supported. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------|----------------------|---|----------|-----------|
| Regional Support Program for SPAW-listed MPAs | a) Organization of at least one exchange visit, two regional webinars, and a peer mentoring programme among managers of SPAW-listed MPAs. | Information | Funding being sought | NatureXpairs, Reserves Naturelles de France | SPAW-RAC | 2026-2030 |
| | b) Development of a draft strategy to ensure the long-term sustainability and financing of the SPAW-listed MPA Network beyond 2030. | | | | | |
| | c) Implementation of ecosystems adaptation planning in at least two pilot SPAW-listed MPAs, including the development of site-specific coastal erosion risk management plans. | | | | | |
| SPAW Small Grant Program | a) Launch of a call for proposals and selection of at least four civil society-led projects focused on biodiversity conservation by 2027. | Information | Funding being sought | Local NGOs, National Authorities | SPAW-RAC | 2026-2027 |
| | b) Implementation of site-based ecosystem restoration and species conservation activities in SPAW-listed areas. | | | | | |
| | c) Compilation and publication of a regional best practices and lessons learned report based on the outcomes of the funded projects. | | | | | |
| Blue Growth through Green Restoration: Building Capacity on Seagrass Ecosystems under the Cartagena Regional Seas Convention | a) A new document outlining regional standards and guidance for seagrass restoration, identifying ecosystem services and benefits for blue economies and local livelihoods. | Information | UK ODA | Cartagena Convention Secretariat | JNCC | 2025-2026 |
| | b) A technical advice document on appropriate tools and indicators to assess the effectiveness of seagrass restoration projects. | | | | | |
| | c) One case study focused on planning, exploring how seagrass restoration requirements can be integrated into decision-making for development activities. | | | | | |
| | d) Two technical workshops – one in Jamaica (in English) and one in the Dominican Republic (in Spanish) – to discuss the guidance. | | | | | |

ANNEX II. BUDGET OF THE SPAW SUB-PROGRAMME FOR THE 2026-2027 BIENNIUM

| Thematic Areas | 2026 Budgeted | | | 2027 Budgeted | | | Total |
|--|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | CTF | Other Contributions* | Total cost | CTF | Other Contributions* | Total Cost | |
| Programme Coordination and Strategic Partnership | 250,860.00 | 456,500.00 | 707,360.00 | 330,516.00 | 524,300.00 | 854,816.00 | 1,562,176.01 |
| Strengthening Marine Protected Areas in the WCR | - | 410,348.50 | 410,348.50 | - | 45,333.34 | 45,333.34 | 455,681.84 |
| Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species | - | 260,260.00 | 260,260.00 | - | 202,441.80 | 202,441.80 | 462,701.80 |
| Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems | - | 491,760.54 | 491,760.54 | - | 489,084.40 | 489,084.40 | 980,844.94 |
| TOTAL (USD) | 250,860.00 | 1,618,869.05 | 1,869,729.05 | 330,516.00 | 1,261,159.54 | 1,591,675.54 | 3,461,404.59 |

ANNEX III: LIST OF UNFUNDED ACTIVITIES

| Thematic Area | Proposed Activity | Deliverables | Estimated Budget |
|--|--|--|------------------|
| Programme Coordination and Strategic Partnerships | Promote ratification of the SPAW Protocol by Non-Contracting Parties. | Presented the SPAW Protocol in at least three regional or international forums. | 15,000.00 |
| | | One outreach package to promote ratification developed, including technical guidance and communication materials, and disseminated to all nine non-Contracting Parties. | 5,000.00 |
| | Continue implementation of the SPAW Protocol and development of its supporting regional sub-programme. | Developed at least four outreach products (e.g., factsheets, short videos) annually targeting decision-makers and civil society. | 5,000.00 |
| | Support Contracting Parties (upon request) to update and enhance the implementation of Regional and/or National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), incorporating marine biodiversity conservation, and sustainable use. | If requested, support provided to update NBSAPs in at least two countries. | 60,000.00 |
| | SPAW Small Grants Programme - Subject to the availability of funding | At least one call for proposals launched | 230,000.00 |
| | | At least two rounds of technical follow-up with all funded partners during implementation conducted. | 20,000.00 |
| | Promote visibility and integration of SPAW priorities within key regional governance frameworks and decision-making bodies (e.g., OECS, CARICOM, ACS, CCAD, LAC, OCM), to strengthen policy alignment as appropriate, leverage technical and financial partnerships, and support the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the SPAW Protocol.. | Participation in at least three high-level or technical meetings of regional organizations to present SPAW-related priorities | 15,000.00 |
| | Initiate the process for the potential development of a SPAW Compliance Mechanism through intergovernmental consultation. | Concept note for the potential development of a compliance mechanism that focuses on facilitative, nonpunitive, and cooperative arrangements for promoting implementation and compliance prepared for discussion at SPAW STAC12. | 15,000.00 |
| | | | |
| | Undertake periodic reviews of bilateral cooperation with partner organizations to ensure alignment with SPAW's mandate and to enhance synergies that directly support the implementation of the Protocol at the national and regional levels | At least one joint activity with CRFM and the BE-CLME+ project to advance marine spatial planning and MPA management. | 30,000.00 |
| Provide technical assistance and guidance to Contracting Parties for the implementation of the Cartagena Convention and the SPAW Protocol. | Guidance on the national implementation of the Contracting Parties and the SPAW Protocol provided through briefs and model cabinet papers. | 10,000.00 | |
| Strengthen collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly by promoting continued engagement with the SPAW Consortium. | At least two joint webinars or technical exchanges with CSOs on marine biodiversity themes conducted. | 1,000.00 | |
| | Analysis on how integrating the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework into NBSAPs supports implementation of the SPAW Protocol for those countries that are Party to both the Convention on Biological Diversity and SPAW Protocol, with results presented at STAC12 and COP14. | 1,000.00 | |
| | Desk study on Assessment of the drivers and economic implications of ecosystem changes in the Caribbean, with results presented at STAC12 and COP14. | 1,000.00 | |

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| Strengthening Protected Areas in the WCR | Support the operationalization of the SPAW-listed Protected Area Managers Network, including exchanges, trainings, and peer-to-peer collaboration. | At least one companionship program implemented, two regional webinars delivered, and one exchange visit organized for protected area managers. | 190,000.00 |
| | | Adaptation methodology tested at least in two SPAW-listed pilot sites, and site-specific coastal erosion management plans developed. | 150,000.00 |
| | | Educational protected areas programme deployed and call for micro projects launched. | 100,000.00 |
| | | Participation in the dynamics of supra-regional protected area networks ensured. | 20,000.00 |
| | | Draft post-2030 roadmap developed and preliminary economic model for the long-term sustainability of the network proposed. | 50,000.00 |
| | Deliver capacity building on MPA management through the CaMPAM Training of Trainers (ToT) programme. | 15th CaMPAM ToT edition for Spanish-speaking countries delivered, with participation from at least eight countries and 20 PA practitioners. | 80,000.00 |
| | | At least five follow-up activities from the 15th CaMPAM ToT edition implemented in Spanish-speaking countries. | 50,000.00 |
| | Support the establishment and strengthening of PAs and OECMs, in collaboration with national and local partners. | Newly created and existing PAs supported to be included in the SPAW list of MPAs, as appropriate and upon request from Contracting Parties | 15,000.00 |
| | Enhance synergies and joint initiatives with other Caribbean and global PA networks to promote shared tools, best practices, and coordinated actions. | Joint activities and knowledge exchange between regional PA networks facilitated. | 20,000.00 |
| | | Collaboration with the global network of MPA networks formalized through a joint workplan. | 5,000.00 |
| | | Caribbean representation ensured in at least two international biodiversity events or platforms. | 10,000.00 |
| | Promote sustainable tourism practices to strengthen PA management, support biodiversity conservation, and encourage the sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems in the Wider Caribbean Region. | Initial discussions and coordination efforts initiated to develop voluntary Regional Standards on Sustainable Tourism for the Wider Caribbean Region. | 10,000.00 |
| | | Adoption of the Green Fins Code of Conduct promoted in at least two additional PAs. | 10,000.00 |
| | | Two regional training sessions on Green Fins standards for tourism operators and PA practitioners conducted. | 20,000.00 |
| | | Communication materials linking Green Fins practices with SPAW biodiversity obligations produced. | 5,000.00 |
| | | | |
| Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species | Promote regional collaboration for the protection of manatee populations. | Technical and coordination support provided for the development of a regional manatee conservation alliance, by participating in partner-led initiatives, facilitating knowledge sharing, and supporting the drafting of a joint vision or action outline by providing information relevant to the SPAW Protocol. | 50,000.00 |
| Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems | Support the sustainable use and conservation of mangroves, seagrasses, and other coastal ecosystems to enhance ecological resilience and long-term environmental benefits | Technical input provided the development or improvement of at least two national policies or regulations supporting sustainable use and conservation of mangroves, seagrasses, and associated coastal habitats. | 5,000.00 |
| | | Ecosystem mapping for the identification of priority areas for restoration and conservation, supported in at least 3 countries. | 20,000.00 |

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|--------------|--|--|------------|
| | Promote regional cooperation and knowledge exchange on ecosystem restoration efforts focused on coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds. | a) At least one regional exchange or webinar organized to showcase restoration guidelines and case studies on coral, mangrove, and seagrass restoration. | 2,000.00 |
| | | b) At least one joint activity or proposal developed with AMEP or fisheries organizations linking restoration to pollution reduction and habitat protection. | 200,000.00 |
| | | c) Inventory or repository of existing regional and national restoration guidelines and protocols developed and disseminated. | 5,000.00 |
| Total | | 1,4250,000.00 | |