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Eleventh Meeting of the Scientific and Technical
Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Protocol
Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife
(SPA W) in the Wider Caribbean Region

Panama City, Panama
30 June – 3 July 2025

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA W) in the Wider Caribbean Region held in Kingston, 15 to 18 January 1990, adopted the SPA W Protocol to the Cartagena Convention, which came into force on 18 June 2000. Article 20 of the SPA W Protocol establishes the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). This Article provides that each Party shall appoint a scientific expert appropriately qualified in the field covered by the Protocol as its representative on the Committee, who may be accompanied by other experts and advisors appointed by that Party. Article 20 also provides that the Committee may also seek information from scientifically and technically qualified experts and organisations.
2. In light of the above, and in keeping with Decision No. 1 of the First Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA W) (COP1) (Havana, Cuba, 24–25 September 2001) and Decisions of COP12 (Oranjestad, Aruba, 3 October 2023), this Meeting is being convened by the Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention in Panama City, Panama, between 30 June and 3 July 2025.
3. The proposed objectives of the Eleventh Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC11) to the SPA W Protocol are to:
 - Review the status of Activities of the SPA W Subprogramme for 2023-2024(2025), including activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPA W (SPA W-RAC) in Guadeloupe;
 - Review the updated submission of Parke Marino Aruba, proposed by the Government of Aruba, to be included in the list of protected areas under the SPA W Protocol and

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

make recommendations to SPAW COP13;

- Review the reports for Exemptions under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol submitted by Contracting Parties and make recommendations for adoption by SPAW COP13; and
 - Review the updated Sargassum Working Group Action Plan
 - Develop the 2026-2027 Workplan of the SPAW Subprogramme for subsequent approval by SPAW COP13 and the Twenty-first Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan of the Caribbean Environment Programme, and Eighteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region in October 2025, respectively.
4. The nineteen Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol are invited to the Meeting to nominate their respective representatives to be part of the SPAW STAC11 in keeping with Article 20 of the Protocol. Other member Governments of CEP, United Nations agencies and non-governmental and intergovernmental organisations are invited to participate as Observers. The provisional list of participants will be prepared during the Meeting and presented in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.2.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. The Meeting will be opened by the Secretariat on Monday, 30 June 2025, at 9:00 a.m. (UTC-5).

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

2.1 Rules of Procedure

6. 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) (UNEP, 2012) will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, for the conduct of the Meeting.

2.2 Election of Officers

7. The Meeting will be invited to elect from among the representatives of the Contracting Parties to SPAW; the President, a first Vice-President, a second Vice-President and the Rapporteur for the conduct of the Meeting.

2.3 Organization of Work

8. English, French and Spanish will be the working languages of the Meeting. Simultaneous interpretation of these languages will be provided for the Meeting, and the Working Documents will be available in all the working languages. The Provisional List of Documents of the Meeting is presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.1.
9. The Secretariat proposes to convene the Meeting in a hybrid format (with participants attending in person and online), in plenary sessions, with the assistance of breakout groups, if necessary, which may be established by the President. No simultaneous interpretation will be available for the breakout groups. Participants will be reminded that, given the length of

the Meeting and possible constraints of the virtual meeting platform, breaking into breakout groups might not be feasible. Participants are therefore expected to come prepared, having reviewed all working documents as appropriate, in order to provide concrete inputs at the time of discussion.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

10. The Meeting will be invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda of the Meeting, prepared by the Secretariat in collaboration with SPAW-RAC, 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. The Provisional Agenda proposed by the Secretariat is presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/1.

AGENDA ITEM 4: STATUS OF ACTIVITIES OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR 2023- 2024(2025), INCLUDING ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPAW (SPAW-RAC) IN GUADELOUPE

11. The Secretariat will present the “Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2023-2024(2025)” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.4). During the presentation, the Secretariat will invite the SPAW-RAC to present their report and major activities and will also briefly refer to the following documents:
 - Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe with regard to RAC operations and budget for the period 2023-2024(2025) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.5);
 - SPAW-RAC 2022 and 2023 Call for proposals: Report (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.6 and UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.6 Addendum 1);
 - Revision of the legal and governance structure for a new Marine Mammals RAN (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.8);
 - Final Report including Guidelines and Recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of Working Groups to the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols including recommendations for effectively engaging the experts nominated by the Contracting Parties (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.9);
 - Report on the SPAW protected area manager network for the period 2023-2024 ((UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.11);
 - The expansion of civil society participation in the Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.17);
 - Report of the GCRMN-Caribbean network activities for the period 2023-2024, project for a new regional and global report (UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.45/INF.28);
 - CAMAC phase 1: final report (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.30);
 - SPAW and the International Whaling Commission: A Strategic Partnership for Marine Mammal Conservation (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.34);

12. The Meeting will be invited to provide any comments on the activities implemented during 2023-2024(5) and to make the necessary recommendations. Parties will also be requested to complement the information provided by the Secretariat and inform the Meeting of their activities in support of SPAW objectives within their countries, including SPAW workplan activities in which they have participated and their impact.

AGENDA ITEM 5: REPORT OF THE PROTECTED AREAS WORKING GROUP (INCLUDING THE REVIEW OF THE PROPOSALS BY PARTIES FOR LISTING UNDER THE SPAW PROTOCOL)

13. The Secretariat will invite the SPAW-RAC, as Chair of the Protected Areas Working Group on the assessment of the protected areas proposed for listing, to report on the tasks assigned during the SPAW STAC10 held virtually, 30 January – 1 February 2023 and detailed in the updated terms of reference (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42/INF.12/Rev.1) as per information contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.10).
14. The Meeting will be invited to review the reports which include the updated proposal from Aruba, with the requested additional information, to be included in the list of protected areas under the SPAW Protocol:
 - The “Parke Marino Aruba” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.11)
15. The Meeting will be invited to endorse its recommendations for approval by SPAW COP13 in October 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REPORT OF THE SPECIES WORKING GROUP

16. The Secretariat will invite the SPAW-RAC, as Chair of the Species Working Group to report on the tasks assigned during the SPAW STAC10 (virtually 30 January – 1 February 2023) and detailed in the terms of reference (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42/INF.12/Rev.1), as contained in documents UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.14 and UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.45/INF.15; UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.45/INF.16; UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.45/INF.18.
17. The Meeting will be invited to make recommendations to SPAW COP13 in October 2025:
 - Report on the conservation of Nassau Grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.15)
 - Recommendations for the conservation of Sawfishes (Pristidae) in the Wider Caribbean Region - Report (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.16)
 - Conservation and management recommendations for the Whale Shark (Annex II), Giant Manta Ray (Annex II) and Hammerhead Sharks (Annex III) in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.18)
18. The Meeting is expected to be closed on Monday, 30 June 2025, at 4:30 p.m. (UTC-5, virtually) by the President of the Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 7: REPORT OF THE EXEMPTIONS WORKING GROUP, INCLUDING THE REPORTING FORMAT FOR EXEMPTIONS UNDER ARTICLE 11(2) OF THE SPAW PROTOCOL

19. The Meeting will be opened by the President of the Meeting on Tuesday, 1 July 2025, at 9:00 a.m. (UTC-5).
20. The Secretariat will invite the SPAW-RAC, as Chair of the Exemption Working Group to report on the tasks assigned during the SPAW STAC10 (virtually 30 January – 1 February 2023) and detailed in the terms of reference (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42/INF.12/Rev.1), as contained in documents UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.19, UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.45/INF.20, UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.21 and UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.22
21. The Meeting will be invited to review the report presented and provide recommendations for final consideration by SPAW COP13 in October 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 8: REPORT OF THE SARGASSUM WORKING GROUP

22. The Secretariat will invite the Sargassum Working Group to report on the tasks assigned during the SPAW STAC10 (virtually 30 January – 1 February 2023) and detailed in the terms of reference (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.42/INF.12/Rev.1), as contained in documents UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.25, UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.26, UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.27, UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.31.
23. The Meeting will be invited to review the reports presented and provide recommendations for final consideration by SPAW COP13 in October 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 9: DRAFT WORKPLAN OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE 2026-2027 BIENNIUM

24. The Secretariat will present the “Draft Workplan of the SPAW Subprogramme for the 2026-2027 Biennium” (contained in document UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.45/3), 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 2023- 2024(2025) Workplan for SPAW and other relevant emerging regional and international issues.
25. The Meeting will be invited to review the Draft Workplan, prioritize activities, including unfunded activities, and make recommendations to assist with its finalisation prior to being adopted by SPAW COP13, the Twenty-first Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan of the Caribbean Environment Programme, and the Eighteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, in October 2025, respectively.
26. Participants will also be invited to contribute additional input to the proposed SPAW Workplan by recommending synergies with other relevant projects and initiatives, as well as identifying potential sources of funding and support. This may include consideration of:

- The establishment of a Compliance Committee or Mechanism, as outlined in the Briefing Paper: Implementation and Compliance Issues within the SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.7);
- A presentation by the SPAW Consortium on their contributions to the SPAW Workplan for the 2026-2027, The expansion of civil society participation in the Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.17);
- A presentation of the Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network (CAR-WEN) proposal, in response to a request from the Government of The Bahamas;
- A presentation of the recently established Wider Caribbean Manatee Alliance, following a request from the Government of Belize; and
- A presentation by the International Whaling Commission on a Joint Workplan between SPAW and the International Whaling Commission: A Strategic Partnership for Marine Mammal Conservation (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/INF.34), to explore further collaboration on marine mammal conservation efforts.

28. The Meeting is expected to be closed on Tuesday, 1 July 2025, at 4:30 p.m. by the President of the Meeting (UTC-5, virtually).

AGENDA ITEM 10: OTHER BUSINESS

27. The Meeting will be opened by the Secretariat on Wednesday, 2 July 2025, at 9:00 a.m. (UTC-5).
28. Participants will be invited to raise any other issues not covered by the preceding agenda items, but which are relevant to the scope of the Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 11: ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

29. The Rapporteur of the Meeting will present the draft recommendations of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.45/4). The Meeting will be invited to adopt the recommendations, with amendments and corrections to be introduced as appropriate. The recommendations will be made available to SPAW COP13 in October 2025 for adoption.

AGENDA ITEM 12: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

30. The Meeting is expected to be closed on Thursday, 3 July 2025, at noon (UTC-5) by the President of the Meeting and the Secretariat.