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

Cayenne, French Guiana, 13 March 2017

## DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

*For reasons of economy and the environment, Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of the Working and Information documents to the Meeting, and not to request additional copies.*

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The Contracting Parties:

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

**Recalling** the adoption by the General Assembly of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, which reaffirmed the commitment contained in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and **welcoming** target 14.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, calling for the conservation, by 2020, of at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas;

**Recognizing** the International Coral Reef Initiative Action Plan 2016 which set a basis for the integrated management of marine biodiversity following the International Coral Reef Initiative's General Meeting in Paris, November 2016;

**Commending** the continuous work and accomplishments of the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) which has been implemented for the last 19 years, having been recognised by the international community as a recipient of the Fred Packard Award in 2016;

**Taking note** of the “Status of Activities of the SPAW Sub-programme for 2015-2016” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.3)” and “Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe: RAC Operations and Budget for the period 2015-2016” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.4);

**Taking note** of the evaluation of CaMPAM activities (2010-2015) and recommendations for improvement (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.6);

**Taking note** of the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region;

**Acknowledging** the work of the Secretariat and SPAW-RAC to address emerging issues such as Sargassum influx, as well as the continued work on conservation of coral reefs and management of invasive species;

**Having reviewed** the “Recommendations of the Seventh Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPAW Protocol”, Miami, United States, 2-4 November 2016 contained in the Report of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/8) ;

**Having reviewed** the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Sub-programme for the 2017-2018 Biennium” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.38/6.Rev1);

**Decide to:**

1. **Encourage** the governments of the region, which have not yet done so, to become Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol;
2. **Urge** Contracting Parties to respond to the requests of the Secretariat and to participate more actively in the Working Groups established by the Parties;

3. **Adopt** the Recommendations of the Seventh Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPAW Protocol as contained in UNEP/(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/7 with the following amendments:

**Recommendation I.4(vi)**

“the collaborative work with relevant partners, including the ACS and CRFM, other Governments and regions on areas of common interest, such as the management and response to the *Sargassum* influx, restoration of coral reefs, and invasive species;”

**Recommendation IV.2**

“The interested members of the Ad hoc Working Group on exemptions also consider the Reporting Format as applied on the Curacao’s exemption case and provide its findings on the format only, prior to the end of the year”. As discussed during the STAC 7, Curacao is encouraged to provide further information on their exemption submission to the Ad Hoc Working Group.

**Recommendation IV.3**

“Having approved the voluntary Reporting Format for Exemptions encourages Parties to use it when reporting such an exemption,”

4. **Amend** the SPAW Protocol species Annexes by adding the following species to Annex II and Annex III respectively:

**Annex II**

*Passerina ciris*, Painted bunting  
*Pristis pectinata*, Smalltooth sawfish

**Annex III**

*Liguus fasciatus*, Florida treesnail  
*Manta birostris*  
*Manta alfredi*  
*Manta sp. cf. birostris*  
*Sphyrna lewini*  
*Sphyrna mokarran*  
*Sphyrna zygaena*  
*Carcharhinus longimanus*, Oceanic whitetip shark  
*Rhincodon typus*, Whale shark  
*Epinephelus striatus*, Nassau grouper

5. **Approve** the submission by the Government of Cuba to list the National Park Cayos de San Felipe under the SPAW Protocol and **welcome** the initiation process of the Government of France presented on the future submission of two (2) protected areas for listing under the SPAW Protocol;
6. **Approve** the voluntary draft Reporting Format for Exemptions Under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol as contained in UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.38/3/Rev.1;
7. **Encourage** Parties to report exemptions in a format in which all relevant information be included. A possibility is the Reporting Format for Exemptions accepted at STAC 7 and **emphasize** that the Reporting of exemptions is a critical component of the SPAW Protocol which enables Parties to confirm their compliance with the obligations they have taken on as Parties to the SPAW Protocol -

- i) **Recognize** that the reporting of exemptions also demonstrates that, in exceptional situations, the obligations of the SPAW Protocol cannot be fully met even after all efforts have been made to do so;
  - ii) Further **recognize**, in general, that Parties, before doing so, should be encouraged to follow what is commonly agreed as being good practice; to try and avoid, when possible, mitigate, and on last resort offset impacts on the environment of the activity concerned;
  - iii) **Acknowledge** the transparency of the Government of Curacao in submitting its exemption report as a case study, for the Reporting Format for Exemptions and **encourage** the continuation of this process;
8. **Approve** the proposed SPAW Workplan and [budget] (FR) for 2017-2018 as revised by STAC7 and with modifications and priorities introduced by the Meeting, and **urges** Parties to support the Secretariat with resources and its fundraising efforts to implement the Workplan; and **further decide** that it be forwarded to the 17<sup>th</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention for final adoption;
  9. **Encourage** the Secretariat and SPAW-RAC to enhance cooperation and coordination with Multilateral Environmental Agreements, regional fisheries organizations, the International Coral Reef Initiative, the International Whaling Commission, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, CariWET, the Sargasso Sea Commission, MARFund, International Fund for Animal Welfare, and other relevant regional and international initiatives and projects, in particular on coral reef monitoring and conservation, marine mammals conservation, the illegal trade of species, ecosystem based management activities, and in the CLME+ project activities;
  10. **Welcome** the designation of 2018 as the International Year of the Reef and **encourages** Parties to actively participate and support the Secretariat in the implementation of activities in this regard, including with fund-raising efforts;
  11. **Welcome** offers from Governments to explore with the Secretariat the possibility of hosting the 8<sup>th</sup> SPAW STAC Meeting in 2018.