



Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol and Programme

Newsletter N°9 - May 2013



New structure of the SPAW-RAC's website

The SPAW-RAC is pleased to inform that our website has been updated, with a new architecture of the sections and articles that allows a more intuitive navigation into the sections.

You can visit our [website to see the latest news](#). You can also browse the [sitemap in English, Spanish and French](#).

Commonly used Acronyms

CaMPAM: Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum

CEP: Caribbean Environment Programme

CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

GCFI: Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute

GCRMN: Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network

LIFEWEB: Partnership under the CDB on supporting biodiversity

Pas: Protected Areas

RLC: Regional Lionfish Committee

SPAW: Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife

SPAW-RAC: Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife – Regional Activity Centre

STENAPA: St Eustatius National Parks Foundation

UNEP-CAR/RCU: United Nations Environment Programme - Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit

WHMSI: Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative

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News of the month

Launching of a Mentoring Programme by the CaMPAM Network and Forum

At the Meeting of the 7th Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol held in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 23th October 2012, SPAW Parties decided to include the development of a mentoring programme as a priority within the CaMPAM Network and Forum activities. The launching of this mentoring programme was included in the SPAW Workplan for 2013-2014. UNEP-CEP and CaMPAM, in collaboration with the SPAW Regional Activity Centre, convened the first “**UNEP-CEP/CaMPAM Regional Mentorship Workshop for Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers**” from 28 April to 4th May 2013 in El Morro Eco Adventure Hotel, Montecristi, Dominican Republic. This Workshop was facilitated by Seatone Consulting, hosted by Reef Check Dominican Republic with funds from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in support of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative.

Eight senior-professionals from MPAs across the region were selected by the first set of “mentors-to-be” and met with the following objectives:

■ Develop a programmatic framework for men-

toring MPAs across the region through the transfer of knowledge, skills and abilities to MPA managers;

■ Build capacity and skill sets that foster mentoring opportunities, particularly in countries participating in the Caribbean Challenge;

■ Enhance use of CaMPAM programme tools (courses, exchanges, etc) to facilitate mentoring and peer exchange;

■ Advance recent insular Caribbean successes to build national level MPA networks and strengthen their capacity to meet the Caribbean Challenge commitments;

■ Develop a 2013-2014 medium-term strategy and Workplan to advance the mentor and peer exchange network; and

■ Secure the commitment of participants to form the core for the growing CaMPAM mentor network launched at this Workshop.

Following the Workshop, mentors have been tasked to identify and support 2-3 apprentices during 2013-2014, notably in Caribbean Challenge countries. Attendance of mentors to the 2013 annual meeting of the Gulf and Fisheries Caribbean Institute in Austin, Texas, USA will also be supported in order to follow-up on this first workshop.

FOCUS ON

Workshop on marine mammal transboundary management (MamaCocoSea Project) in Paramaribo, Suriname, 18-20 March 2013



The workshop participants.

The first Workshop was organized during the 2nd International Conference for Marine Mammals Protected Areas held in Martinique, FWI, in November 2011, to explore possible options towards a regional cooperation project for marine mammals conservation in areas under Amazonian influence. Participants had expressed their renewed interest in pursuing collaborations, a second and follow-up workshop was therefore convened in Paramaribo, Suriname, from 18-20 March 2013. This meeting was coordinated by the SPAW-RAC, the Green Heritage Fund Suriname and the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas, with additional financial support generously provided by WWF Guianas and the Spain Government as part of the LifeWeb Project on marine mammal transboundary management in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific.

The objectives of the Workshop were to exchange information on on-going and projected actions in all the countries of the area (Northern Brazil, French Guiana, Suriname, Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago and ABC Dutch Islands), and to further discuss and delineate an action plan for the coming years in order to reach an agreement on priority actions that should be implemented jointly by all the stakeholders. Approximately thirty representatives from the concerned countries attended the three days of discussions on the conservation of marine mammals in the area, with a transboundary integrated approach being emphasized.

As a first step, a diagnosis on knowledge gaps, training needs, threats, legal framework and priority areas was made country by country. Then, a cooperation network was initiated with the creation of a steering committee co-facilitated by the SPAW-RAC and the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas, in order to, *inter alia*, design an action plan which could be initially focused on the river dolphin (*Sotalia spp.*) as it is a well-known and emblematic species in the region.

Priority actions and opportunities for the collaboration at a regional scale have also been listed, among which the development of tools to facilitate the exchange and sharing of information and knowledge within the region (through dedicated website, common bibliography, etc...), the setting up of a regional stranding network and database, as well as the organization of national Workshops for policy makers in order to develop guidelines focused on corporate social responsibility and seismic surveys.

A concrete output from the Workshop was the compiling of about 400 publications dealing with marine mammals in northeastern Latin America that will be added to the SPAW-RAC regional marine mammals bibliographic database. The participants plan to work on regulatory frameworks for marine mammals conservation during the next workshop that could be held in 2014. The full report of the Workshop will be available on the SPAW-RAC's website later this year.

ON-GOING PROJECTS

Exchange between St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation and St. Kitts and Nevis marine resources stakeholders on lionfish management



Demonstration by Jessica Berkel.

In the first week of November the St Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA) hosted a successful lionfish management Workshop on the neighboring island of Nevis. The Workshop focused on awareness, management and handling of the invasive lionfish.

Like other Caribbean Islands, St. Kitts and Nevis is now faced with the problem of the lionfish and had learnt that St. Eustatius has implemented a successful lionfish action plan.

Staff members of the Statia National Marine Park were trained in Bonaire by representatives of REEF as early as 2009, which is a full year before the first lionfish was recorded here on St. Eustatius.

Two staff members from the Marine Park went to Nevis as exchange lionfish consultants, Marine Park Manager - Jessica Berkel and National Park Ranger - Anna Maitz. The aim was to reach as many persons in the community as possible and this was roundly achieved. Presentations and demonstrations were given to a wide range of stakeholders including policy makers, teachers and students, charter boat crews, fishermen and the general public among others.

Marine Park staff were also interviewed on a popular radio

Additional grants awarded to WHMSI call for proposals

During its meeting in Washington, DC, USA, 28-29 January, 2013, the steering committee of the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI) made a final selection of marine projects to be funded under the Request for Proposals launched in 2012.

Prior to the meeting, Steering Committee members reviewed the 37 proposals received and scored them. The top five scored projects were selected for funding:

- "Shark Identification Workshop for Law Enforcement (Teyeliz A.C./Defenders of Wildlife, Mexico)
- "Acoustic detection and Environmental Education: Two Essential Components for the Conservation of the La Plata Dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*) (Fundación Cethus, Argentina)
- "Identifying Replicable Shark Conservation Strategies to Support Balanced Marine Ecosystems" (MARVIVA Foundation, Panama)
- "A Biogeographic Mapping Network: Development of a Mobile Application for Regional Cetacean Monitoring" (Caribwhale, Dominica)
- "Sharing Best management Practices for Coral Reef and Mangrove Conservation in the Grenadines" (SusGren, St. Vincent and the Grenadines)

■ A sixth project was selected, on condition of the availability of additional funding :

- "Strategies to Strengthen Conservation Actions for a Key Wetland for Migratory Shorebirds: Samborobón Bay, Argentina" (CENPAT/OPDS/DANP, Argentina)

More on these projects and on WHMSI at www.fws.gov/international/wildlife-without-borders/western-hemisphere-migratory-species-initiative.html

call-in talk show and by television and newspaper staff in order to get the information on Lionfish to as wide an audience as possible.

"Interest was so high that on two occasions during the week, an appointment was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances and before we could even begin to make plans to enjoy the free afternoon and tour Nevis, the phone would ring and we would be off to do a talk and a presentation elsewhere" said Jessica Berkel.

The most rewarding parts of the exchange were the opportunity to interact with the Nevis fishermen at the different landing sites around the island. The numbers of fishermen that turned out for the information and demonstration on handling techniques was very impressive on both days. The fishermen showed a genuine interest and asked a lot of questions.

The information and hands on experience provided by Stacia Marine Park staff members should be sufficient for Nevis and St Kitts to implement their own response plan for the lionfish and keep on informing the general public.

As well as start up their own eradication programs, data collection, handling and also selling the product that is of a commercial interest on the island already. Several restaurants have expressed their willingness to put Lionfish on the menu but were worried about the supply of the fish. Hopefully, that will have now changed with the fishermen showing an interest in landing them now instead of throwing them back in the sea when caught.

The exchange was made possible thanks to a Small Grant Fund from the United Nations Environment Programme - Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP) Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM). For more information, contact Jessica Berkel, at research@statiapark.org.

Agoa monitoring campaign : let's get started for a new year!



The collaboration between the Agoa Sanctuary (managed by the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas) and the SPAW-RAC has proven fruitful!

An increasing number of partners from all the Caribbean expressed their interest in participating in the new marine mammal monitoring campaign, scheduled in March and April 2013.

Launched in 2012, these missions are bi-annual - during the dry (March-April) and wet (October-November) seasons - and cover 3 areas: Guadeloupe, Martinique and the Northern islands (St Martin-St Maarten, St Barthelemy, Anguilla, Saba, Stacia).

Last year, the missions were successful, both on the scientific and on a human aspects level and 2013 seems promising as well. Indeed, the missions in the Northern island and Guadeloupe have been done, and the Humpback whale is the big winner of these first missions. Not a day went by without being honored by its presence, both visually and acoustically.

Also other cetaceans have been seen and heard: Sperm whale, Atlantic & Pantropical spotted dolphin, Pygmy sperm whale, Cuv-

er's beaked whale, Common bottlenose dolphin and Fraser's dolphin.

Several hours of marine mammal sounds were recorded, including unidentified sounds. In-depth analysis of these latter could reveal and/or confirm the presence of other species. To be continued in the next release of the Newsletter!

Regional Strategy for the Control and Mitigation of the Invasive Lionfish in the Wider Caribbean Region

The Regional Lionfish Committee (RLC) is currently finalizing the "Regional Strategy for the Control and Mitigation of the Invasive Lionfish in the Wider Caribbean Region".

The strategy is based on five objectives:

- Facilitate collaboration among governments, reef-reliant industries, civil society, and academia by providing mechanisms for coordination of efforts across political and geographical boundaries;
- Encourage a coordinated research and monitoring agenda;
- Encourage also governments to review and amend relevant legislation and, if necessary, develop new regulations and policies to control lionfish;
- Control invasive lionfish populations using regionally coordinated and effective methods; and
- Provide education, information and outreach mechanisms to generate public support and foster stewardship in invasive lionfish programs.

Each of the above objectives will be supported by strategies and actions with specific stakeholders identified as possible implementers. The RLC will work in partnership with Caribbean governments and other stakeholders to implement many of the actions identified in this strategy. Local government, coastal communities, NGOs and marine industries will play an important role in implementing on-ground actions to reduce lionfish impacts and enhance the resilience of reefs in the Wider Caribbean Region. The document will be translated into Spanish in May by the SPAW-RAC before being presented to Caribbean governments for their endorsement and to the next general meeting of ICRI. Contact: Ricardo Gomez Lozano - CONANP Mexico (rglozano@conanp.gob.mx).

A new website with a dedicated database to compile data on the protected areas (PAs) listed under the SPAW Protocol

Eighteen Caribbean Protected Areas fulfilling the guidelines and criteria adopted by SPAW Parties are now listed under the SPAW Protocol. A dedicated cooperation programme for these Protected Areas will be developed in 2013 by the SPAW Secretariat, in consultation with Parties and interested partners. As a



tool to better disseminate information on these 18 PAs, the website that had been developed by the SPAW-RAC to allow for on-line reporting of the PA to be listed under SPAW has been updated.

The website still allows SPAW focal points and managers (specific access code) to complete the data requested for listing of their protected areas under SPAW, but new sections that present the PAs currently listed under SPAW have been added, where the data contained in the presentation reports such as site description, ecological data, cultural and socio-economic data, management, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholders, and staffing and infrastructure can be consulted on-line and downloaded and where an interactive map illustrates the current status of the SPAW Protected Area network (www.spaw-palisting.org). Appropriate links have been made with [CaMPAM's database](#).

New sections presenting specific statistics and analyses will be made available in June. For further information, please contact Franck GOURDIN: franck.gourdin.carspaw@guadeloupe-parcnational.fr.

Outcomes of the CITES 16th Meeting with respect to rays and sharks conservation



Hammerhead shark (source : CITES website).

The 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Bangkok, Thailand, was held on 3 to 14 March 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand. Countries agreed to increase protection for five commercially-exploited species of sharks and manta rays.

CITES Parties, among which several Wider Caribbean nations, voted in support of listing the oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*), three species of the scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*), the smooth hammerhead (*Sphyrna zygaena*) and the great hammerhead (*Sphyrna mokarran*) sharks, the porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*) and manta rays (*Manta birostris* and *Manta alfredi*) in CITES Appendix II. This listing was proposed by a coalition of countries including Brazil, Colombia, the European Union, Costa Rica, Honduras, Ecuador, Mexico, Comoros, Egypt, and the United States, and supported by other CITES Parties, particularly countries in West Africa.

CITES is now ratified by 178 countries all over the world. Species listed in CITES Appendix II are not necessarily now threatened with extinction but may become so unless trade is closely controlled. In order to protect them from over-exploitation and unsustainable trade, international trade in specimens of Appendix-II

species may be authorized by the granting of an export permit or re-export certificate. Sharks are over-harvested in many parts of the world, primarily for their fins.

Due to their low productivity and high economic value, populations of these shark species have suffered severe declines. These listings mark a milestone in the involvement of CITES in marine species and a great step forward for rays and sharks conservation and sustainable exploitation and trade.

For more information on CITES functioning and the decisions of COP 16, visit: www.cites.org.



Manta Ray (source : CITES website).

First ciguatoxic risk assessment in lionfish (*Pterois volitans*) in the Guadeloupien archipelago

A new project led by the Fisheries Committee of Guadeloupe, FWI, titled "**Control of and struggle against the lionfish through the fisheries sector in the Guadeloupien archipelago**" with support from the SPAW-RAC started a few months ago with four objectives:

- (a) security of fishermen,
- (b) statistics of lionfish catches,
- (c) Ciguatera toxicity analyses (required before human consumption can be authorized and promoted) and
- (d) knowledge transfer.

Preliminary results of the manatee by-catch Pilot Project

As reported in the SPAW Newsletters #6 & 7, in keeping with the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP, 2008) and the Regional Management Plan for the West Indian Manatee (CEP Technical Report 48, 2010), the SPAW-RAC has launched a study to assess the threats to West Indian manatees from by-catch and vessel strikes in five countries (Belize, Colombia, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Haiti).

The study is based on in-person questionnaires, implemented by networks of trained local volunteers, targeting small artisanal fishers in each country. As an initial step, the pilot project aims to assess the effectiveness and relevance of the survey questionnaire approach to obtain data on manatee by-catch and vessel strikes. The field study in Dominican Republic conducted by Haydee Dominguez-Tejo (from the Duke University), is now completed: 14 local interviewers from the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo and the CEBSE (a local NGO in Samana) were trained and a total of 101 interviews were completed including several locations along the southern coast of Samana Peninsula.

Although data will only be definitely analysed once all the national studies are completed, the results from the Dominican Republic show already that fishermen still catch accidentally or intentionally manatees and that caught manatees are not always released. The complete processing of the data from the pilot project will be available in the course of 2013.

This is in order to promote the involvement of the fisheries sector in the control of lionfish. However before encouraging its sale, the risk of contamination with ciguatera must be first evaluated with some analyses of the fish flesh and a survey on a selected number of volunteer consumers.

The study focuses on 120 fishes with a minimum 17 cm standard length spread throughout the whole archipelago that are analysed by cytotoxicity assay performed in the IRTA laboratory (Spain). The biggest five lionfishes for each area were confirmed by the bioassay mouse test in another laboratory. An epidemiological survey was also conducted to detect possible symptoms and to get consumers familiar with this new product.

Until now, no symptoms were detected on the first 100 volunteers and the epidemiological investigation keeps going. Furthermore, the five bioassay samples and the twenty first cell tests (*including four from St Martin*) are negative. The final results are due in June and should be presented at the next GCFI meeting. For more information, please contact Anthony Pautonnier (pautonniera@yahoo.fr).

Strengthening enforcement for Caribbean marine protected areas (MPAs)



Marine national park enforcement in Mexico (Photo: JC. Huitron).

Training Workshop on law enforcement in St George's, Grenada on 2 April 2013 attracts marine protected area staff from Grenada and participants from around the Caribbean region.

An initiative of the Grenada Fund for Conservation in collaboration with the Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, the training was primarily supported by the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to strengthen marine protected area enforcement capacity in Grenada.

The training addressed essential elements of law enforcement, from officer safety to interview techniques, from first aid and CPR to navigation, as well as evidence gathering and case preparation.

"This training activity is remarkable for the outstanding spirit of cooperation between law enforcement and coastal agencies in Grenada", commented lead instructor Captain Jayson Horadam of MPA Enforcement International. "Professionals from all the relevant agencies are coming together to strengthen marine enforcement, which bodes well for assuring protection of the marine and coastal resources upon which communities and future livelihoods depend."

Additional sponsorship from the Organization of American States, via the Reef Fix Project, and from AusAid under Australian-Caribbean Coral Reef Collaboration, enabled participants from St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia, Dominica, Mexico and Belize to also attend the training.

These marine protected area colleagues face many common challenges and the activity will enable them to share best practices in MPA enforcement.

Belizean participant Mr. Shane Young, Manager of the Blue Hole and Half Moon Caye Natural Monuments explains "There is no school or set career path to become a park ranger. Yet so many different skills are required and rangers fulfill a very serious role in environmental protection and in ensuring public safety."

In conjunction with the training, Grenada is putting in place new ranger uniforms, surveillance equipment and new equipment and practices to enhance safety in marine protected areas.

Mr. Young comments "In Belize we're focused on standard operating procedures for surveillance and law enforcement, and we will help our colleagues as well all focus on enforcing marine protected area regulations."

This training course follows up on the first Caribbean regional marine protected areas enforcement training held last year in the Florida Keys with support from GCFI and NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program. For more information please contact Emma Doyle at emma.doyle@gcfi.org.

Training on maritime traffic and options to reduce marine mammal vessel strikes



On 29 March 2013, training on "commercial shipping and cetaceans" took place in Marseille, France, within the marine mammal sanctuary "Pelagos". The main issue discussed was identifying how relations between conservation and human activities could be improved. Maritime officers, NGO's, staff of the Maritime Administration, students from the Maritime Academy and many others responded favourably to the invitation launched by "Souffleurs d'Ecume", the NGO in charge of this training (website : www.souffleursdecume.com/english/index_EN.html).

The marine mammal coordinator of the SPAW-RAC also attended this event.

Collisions between large cetaceans and commercial vessels are very common in the Mediterranean. The scientific community and some companies expressed concern about these accidents. Hence since 2005, this NGO has been developing a training course for watch-keeping personnel (active or in training) operating in the Mediterranean.

The SPAW-RAC attended this meeting and has a better understanding of the situation in France learnt of solutions implemented in the Mediterranean sea, and was able to make comparisons with the situation in the Caribbean. With more than 12 years of experience, stakeholders, scientists and NGO's from Pelagos could provide great assistance to their colleagues from the Caribbean.

All the information related to the training is available on the following web page :

www.souffleursdecume.com/english/formation_collisions_EN.html.

If you want to learn more about this topic in the Caribbean, do not hesitate to contact the SPAW-RAC.

USEFUL LINKS

- www.mangrovesgy.org: Build local and regional capacity in mangrove restoration and management.
- www.rsmas.miami.edu : The Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, academic oceanographic and atmospheric research.
- <http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php> : Outputs and achievements of the UNEP-CEP/CaMPAM project in support to the Caribbean Challenge Initiative.
- <https://sites.google.com/site/caribbeanmpaenforcement>
Latest news on enforcement in Marine Protected Areas.

PUBLICATIONS



- Report of [GCRMN](http://www.gcrmn.org) on Caribbean coral reefs.



- [New article](#) on the use of ecosystems service economic valuation for decision-making.



- Results of the project in support to the Caribbean Challenge Initiative on CaMPAM's website:
<http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php>

2013

Guide to Conferences, Workshops,
Events and Training Opportunities
in
Island and Coastal Conservation

- [2013 Guide](#) on meetings, conferences, workshops and trainings.



UPCOMING AND RECENT EVENTS

- 17 – 18 May 2013** [Caribbean Political and Business Leaders Summit](#) & 2nd Senior Officials Meeting for the Caribbean Challenge: Tortola, British Virgin Islands.
- 12 - 14 June 2013** Workshop on tourism and MPAs, St Martin, FWI.
- 8 - 12 July 2013** [8th Congress on Protected Areas](#), Havana, Cuba.
- 27 - 31 July 2013** [19th Regional Meeting](#) of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds, Grenada.
- 16 - 20 Sept. 2013** [XVII Congress of Mesoamerican Society](#) for the Biology and Conservation, Cuba.
- 14-17 October 2013** [ICRI General meeting](#) and Caribbean meeting of GCRMN members, Belize City, Belize.
- 6 - 10 October 2013** [3rd International Whale shark conference](#), Atlanta, USA.
- 4 - 8 November** [66th GCFI annual meeting](#), Corpus Christi, Texas, USA.

Visit our "[Events](#)" section.

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