

SPAW-RAC

2019-2020 Activity Report

Operations and budget



Acronyms

ACP MEA III Multilateral Environmental Agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries – Phase III
ACS Association of Caribbean States
AEC Atomic Energy Commission
AGRRA Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment
AIDA Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense
BEST Initiative The Voluntary Scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European Overseas
BRGM Bureau de Recherche Géologique et Minière (French Geological Survey)
CaMPAM Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum
CARIMAM Caribbean Marine Mammals Preservation Network
CARIB-COAST Caribbean network for coastal risks prevention related with climate change
CARICOM Caribbean Community
CARICOOS Caribbean Regional Association for Coastal Ocean Observing
CARPHA Caribbean Public Health Agency
CCT Caribbean Cooperation Team
CEP Caribbean Environment Programme
CERMES Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies
CFCM Caribbean Fishery Management Council
CITES Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CLME+ Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems
CMS Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CNRS Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (French National Centre for Scientific Research)
COP Conference of Parties
CRC Coral Restoration Consortium
CRFM Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CTF Caribbean Trust Fund
DEAL Direction de l'Environnement, de l'Aménagement et du Logement (Direction of Environment, Planning and Housing in Guadeloupe)
DCNA Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
EEZ Economic Exclusive Zone
FWI French West Indies
GCFI Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute
GCRMN Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network
IAS Alien Invasive Species
IAC Inter-american Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
ICRI International Coral Reef Initiative
IFRECOR French Initiative for Coral Reefs
IFREMER Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer (French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea)
IGM Intergovernmental General Meeting
IGO Inter-Governmental Organization
IMO International Maritime Organization
IOC Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission
IOCARIBE Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission's Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions
IRD Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development)
IUCN International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUU Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing
IWC International Whale Commission
LBS Protocol Concerning Land-Based Sources of Pollution
MEA Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MMA Marine Managed Area
MMAP Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region
MoC Memorandum of Cooperation
MoU Memorandum of Understanding
MPA Marine Protected Area
NFWF National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
NOAA National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
ONF Office National des Forêts (French National Forest Office)
OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
PA Protected Area
PAME Protected Areas Management Effectiveness
RAC Regional Activity Centre
RAN Regional Activity Network
REMPEITC Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre
SCTLD Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease
SDG Sustainable Development Goals
SPAW Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region
STAC Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee
ToR Terms of Reference
ToT Training of Trainers
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UN Environment United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWI University of West Indies
WCMC World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCPA World Commission on Protected Areas
WCR Wider Caribbean Region
WCS Wildlife Conservation Society
WECAFC Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission
WIDECAST Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network

TABLE OF CONTENT :

The SPAW-RAC has for mission to promote regional cooperation within the Wider Caribbean Region. For this purpose, SPAW-RAC implemented actions within the five (5) axis of the SPAW-Subprogramme during this two (2) years work-plan, set up by the Conference of Parties.

1. Background

2. Activities implemented by the SPAW-RAC during the period 2019-2020

Axis 1

Programme Coordination
Settlement of Working Groups

Axis 2

Creation and strengthening of Protected Areas
in the Wider Caribbean Region
PA Working Group

Axis 3

Development of guidelines for the management
of protected areas and species
Workings groups

Axis 4

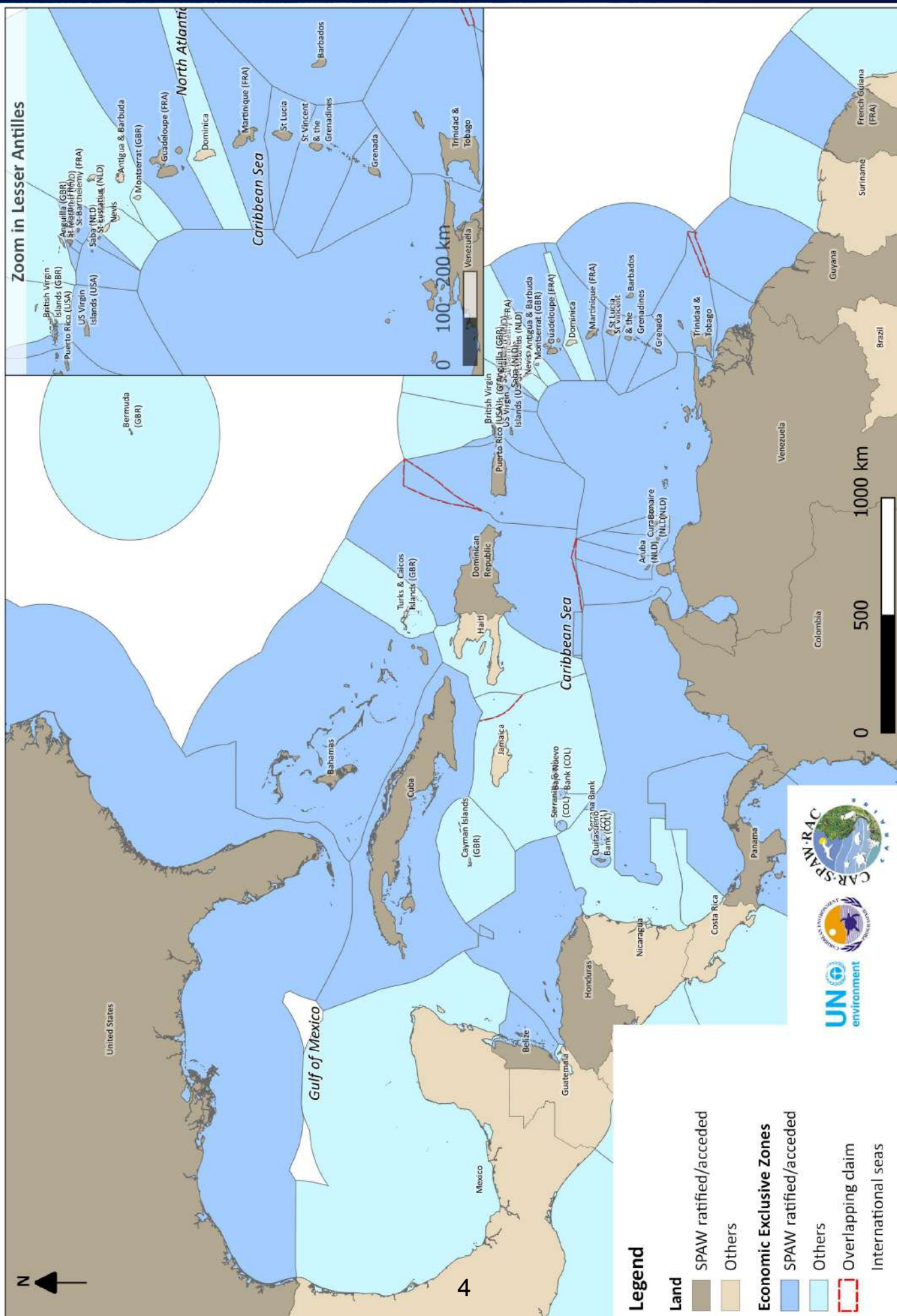
Conservation of threatened and endangered species
Species Working Group
Exemptions Working Group
CARI'MAM

Axis 5

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal
and Marine Ecosystems
Sargassum Working Group
Carib-Coast
GCRMN

3. Call for proposals, BEST funding and Budgets

SPAW PARTIES LAND AND EEZ



BACKGROUND

WHO WE ARE

The Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW-RAC) based in Guadeloupe is the technical center dedicated to contribute to the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention under the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment-CEP), and to help the Signatory Caribbean countries and territories in implementing commitments and actions regarding biodiversity under the Convention. For the last years, the SPAW-RAC was only supported through the contribution from France and projects funded by European Union funds, as well as a few governmental or non-governmental sources (NFWF...).

From 2009 to 2018, the SPAW-RAC was hosted by the National Park of Guadeloupe (one of the 35 SPAW listed sites), with plans for integrated establishment at this location. It is now integrated to the Direction of Environment, Planning and Housing (Direction de l'Environnement, de l'Aménagement et du Logement, DEAL), which is the local representation of the French Ministry in charge of the environment.

The SPAW-RAC team currently consists of three (3) French officers/civil servants: Sandrine Pivard, executive director since September 2016, Fabien Barthelat, programme officer since March 2019 and Marius Dragin, our administrative assistant in the team since 2010. They are supported by short-term staffs dependent on the SPAW-RAC's capacity to secure funding for specific projects. Thus, for the last biennium, the team had also two (2) civic service volunteers as support officers with one-year contracts (first Samuel Henri and Bernardo Sanchez until June 2020, currently Camille Caumette and Elisabeth Fries since september 2020), and three (3) additional two (2) year position via EU funding to work on specific areas of the workplan. Geraldine Conruyt and Claire Pusineri are marine mammals/ CARIMAM project officers since respectively May 2019 and September 2020. Mike Helion was our ecosystems (coral reefs, mangroves & seagrass beds)/CARIB-COAST project officer until November 2019 and so is Marine Didier since December 2020. For the moment staff funding are secured only until end of 2021.

The old ones



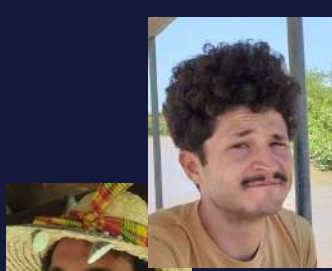
Marius Dragin

Arrived in 2019



Fabien Barthelat

End of contracts in 2020



Bernardo Sanchez
and Samuel Henry



Mike Helion



5

Arrived end of 2020



Camille Caumette
and Elisabeth Fries



Claire Pusineri



Marine Didier



Sandrine Pivard



Geraldine Conruyt

ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE SPAW-RAC DURING THE PERIOD 2019-2020

In June 2019, Honduras, hosted the Conference of the Parties (COPs) under the LBS/SPAW Protocols and Cartagena Convention respectively, and the 18th Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) in Roatan.

The section below provides a summarized overview of the activities implemented by the SPAW-RAC during the period 2019-2020 in compliance with the Decisions of the SPAW COP10 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.40/4). Activities are presented by programme elements (sub-programmes) of the SPAW Workplan for the period 2019-2020 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.42/3). Side-activities or related activities are briefly summarized at the end of each sub-section. This report complements information provided in the Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2019-2020 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40/INF.3) by the SPAW-RAC.



Photos of the COP, Honduras, 2019



The following report is organized by free-standing forms. Each form presents a main objective of the Workplan established in collaboration with the SPAW Secretariat.

THE 5 AXIS OF THE SPAW SUB-PROGRAMMES

AXIS II

Establishment and
strengthening of MPAs

AXIS III

Development of
guidelines for the
development of MPAs
and species

AXIS I

Program coordination

AXIS IV

Preservation of threatened
and endangered species

AXIS V

Preservation and sustainable use
of coastal and marine ecosystems

AXIS I

PROGRAMME COORDINATION

OBJECTIVES

Workplan: Promote the ratification of, accession to, and effective implementation of the SPAW Protocol (2.I.1 a)
Promote the SPAW Protocol and its objectives to assist with further developments as mandated by the Parties,
fundraising and the ratification by non-Parties (2.I.3)

Ensure that the formulation and implementation of programme activities satisfy the requirements and needs of the SPAW
Protocol and its Contracting Parties (2.I.1 b)

STAC8: Governments of the region join the SPAW Protocol as Contracting Parties and further recommends
that the Secretariat continue efforts to secure ratification with Governments which have initiated actions
to join or are in the process of joining the Protocol. (Recommendation I.1)

COP10: Encourage the governments of the region, which have not yet done so, to become Contracting Parties to the SPAW
Protocol in particular the Mesoamerican Region. (Decision 1)

Urge Contracting Parties to respond to the requests of the Secretariat and to participate more actively in the Working
Groups established by the Parties (6)

IGMr8: Efforts to integrate the two sub-programmes through joint STACs, COPs
and/or full representation of all Contracting Parties at meetings of the Protocols

Workplan : Develop coordination, collaboration, and communication mechanisms with other agreements,
organizations and programmes relevant to SPAW objectives (2.I.1 c)

Improve coordination of regional programming for protected areas and wildlife in the Wider Caribbean (2.I.1 d)

COP10: Strengthen and enhance cooperation links with international instruments adopted by the International Maritime
Organisation aiming to promote cooperation and integrality with the SPAW Protocol and the Convention in general,
as well as with maritime issues affecting marine biodiversity [...] (16)

IGMr8: The Secretariat to continue its efforts to strengthen collaboration with regional agencies and relevant Convention
Secretariats to enable more effective implementation of the Caribbean Environment Programme workplan. (I.3) attention
[...] to the new Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) / [...] maritime issues affecting marine biodiversity, including
among others, the transfer of invasive species and diseases as a result of the discharge of ballast water, physical damage to the
coral reefs or threats to marine mammals.

Also Requests the Secretariat to explore with RAC-REMPEITC how Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) and other
potential ballast water borne invasive species or diseases may be addressed through the regional maritime sector and ballast
water regulations. (VI.5)

Workplan: Oversee the day-to-day activities and general coordination of the various projects and activities of the SPAW
Programme (2.I.1 e)

Prepare and disseminate quarterly releases of the SPAW newsletter and regularly update the SPAW-RAC website with
informations on, and the outputs of, the SPAW activities (2.I.3)

Participate in and/or support regional projects of relevance for the SPAW Workplan (2.I.3)

COOPERATION AND REPRESENTATION

Promotion of the ratification of the Protocol

SPAW-RAC (co-)organised many meetings between end of 2018 and March 2020 : CARIMAM workshops in French Antilles and Dominican Republic end of 2018 and 2019, annual steering committees of CARIB-COAST in Jamaica in 2019 and of GCRMN-Caribbean in Bonaire in 2020, NFWF workshops in Jamaica, Sint Marteen and Honduras in 2018 and 2019.

SPAW-RAC also participated to some Sargassum high-level meetings in Mexico and Guadeloupe in 2019, to the GCFI annual conference in Colombia and Dominican Republic end of 2018 and 2019, to WIDECASST General Assembly in Suriname in 2019, to CLME+ meeting in Panama in 2019, to Reef futures and the Coral Restoration Consortium (CRC) in-person meetings in Florida and Costa-Rica end of 2018 and 2020, to ICRI general assembly end of 2019 and to the transatlantic/ocean governance project meetings also end of 2019.

In close relationship with the Secretariat, SPAW-RAC represented and endeavored to promote the SPAW protocol/ Cartagena convention to the best of its ability and when possible to meet governments official. While since march 2020, no in-person meeting was possible, virtual exchanges were maintained though multilateral meetings (see month of CARIMAM) and specific calls. By the end of 2020; the SPAW-RAC also contributed to countries briefs with the concluded and on-going activities, the priorities and the messages to carry on.

Moreover, the redesign of the website (<https://www.car-spaw-rac.org/>) in 2020 was a opportunity to promote the SPAW protocol and its objectives. As well as throught the social media (Facebook, Indeed, LinkedIn...) are also communication tools that the SPAW RAC uses whenever the opportunity arises to communicate on the SPAW activities.

Parties involvement though the STAC working groups

A major governance evolution occured also though the re-endorment/ establishment of the STAC working groups (see next page). From the production of new terms of reference (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.12) to the consequent amount of work produced within the working groups, including the numerous calls and exchanges to motivate experts to join generated a lot of additional multilateral exchanges and work witihin the regiona and in particular officials. It also allowed to develop a real dynamic in the implementation of SPAW protocol and the thematic sub-programs. The working groups chaired by SPAW-RAC according to the STAC decision fulfilled a coordinating role with focal points and experts toward the fulfilment of the STAC8 recommandations (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/8). The working groups were also implemented in the objective to enhance coordination with the EU funded projects, in order to avoid overlapping works.

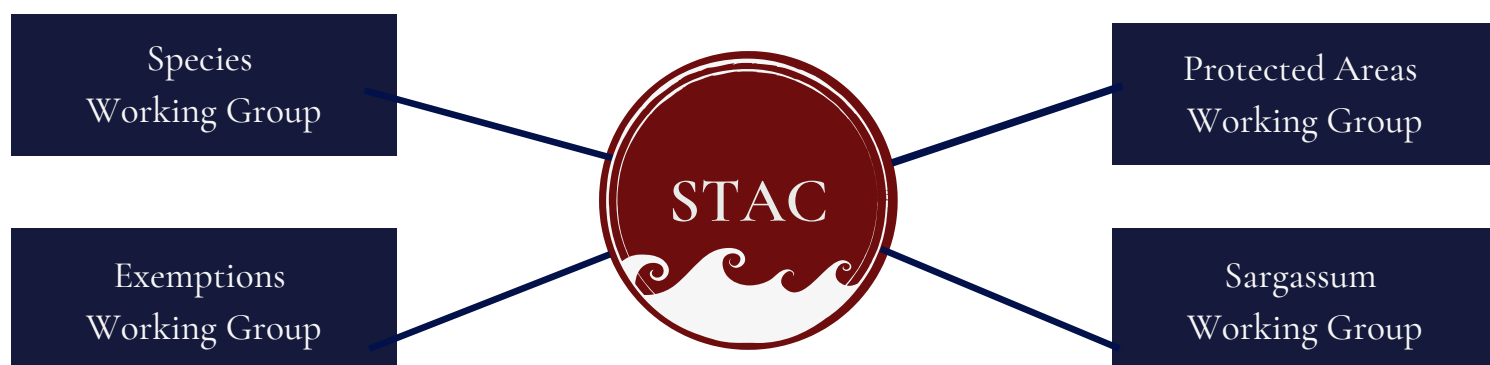
The working groups exclusively realised virtually are a good mean for the Parties to work together during the intersessions.

Moreover, relatively to COPro's decisions and to the recommandations of the STAC8; work with the LBS Protocol was enhanced, particularly in the frame of the Sargassum working Group but also SCDLD and oilspill related questions (see page 11). With the objective to look into potential health risks from heavy metals and liaise with the US Atomic Energy Commission and Caricom building synergies with other national and regional groups or initiatives working on this issue in this area. To this purpose, experts from the LBS protocol are part of the working group.

Gouvernance strengthened by the STAC ...

In order to strengthen the working links and interactivity between the States and the Secretariat, and between the States themselves, SPAW-RAC, on behalf of the STAC assembly has completely overhauled the organization of the STAC WGs by drawing up with a specific working group Terms of Reference on their composition, functioning and missions, which were validated though by the STAC in July 2019.

These terms of reference (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.12) apply henceforth to the 3 existing working groups (Species, Protected areas and Exemptions) and to the 4th one on Sargassum that has been created by the STAC8.



... to better answer Parties needs

During the 1st Semester of 2019 , Terms of Reference were elaborated by a dedicated Working Group composed of delegates of Colombia, France, Netherlands, the United States of America, one observer and SPAW-RAC as chair. It was validated by the STAC though a remote consultation in July 2019. An official calls for experts was issued by the regional coordinator during fall 2019 and recurrently relayed and promoted by SPAW-RAC since.

The 1st meetings of the Working Groups were launched on March 2020 and work progressed all over 2020 thanks to SPAW-RAC and experts strong involvement. Four (4) dedicated Teamwork platforms were set up in order to enhance transparency and communication, allowing people to join in and to catch up with exchanges and previous work.

Alongside with this initiative, another dedicated Teamwork platform was created for the SPAW STAC assembly, as a mean to exchange information, improve discussion and endorse some intersessions decisions.

Additionally, various exchanges were initiated and developped with focal points (messages, calls, meetings..).

PRODUCED DOCUMENT

Terms of reference of the STAC *Ad Hoc* Working Groups (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.12)

Future prospects

- Convince Parties and in particular Signatory Parties to the SPAW protocol to nominate experts in order to diversify skills and expertise, and ensure the most exhaustive geographical and political representation but also as an efficient way to be involved in the SPAW implementation and better voice their needs and wishes in preparation of the next official assemblies
- Improve the working groups fonctionning collectively
- Strengthen direct communication with Parties though the Teamwork platform and bilateral meetings with focal points

DEVELOP COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

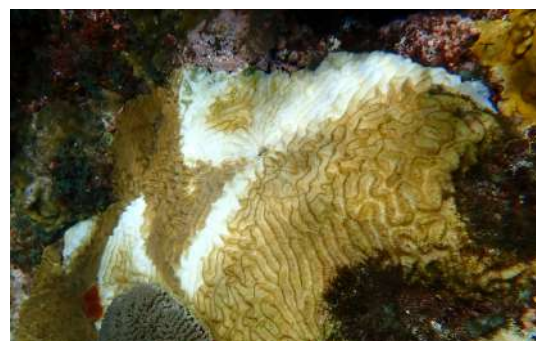
The SPAW-RAC works continuously in cooperation with Parties States, partners and stakeholders. Throughout its different projects and topics of interest, the RAC aims to work in network, focusing on coordination.

Internal coordination

The SPAW-RAC has periodical meetings with the SPAW Programme Officer and regular discussions with the Coordinator of the Cartagena Convention, for exchange of information about programmes, projects and meetings, and messages that could be of cross-interest.

Cooperation with LBS Protocol

The SPAW-RAC has also regular exchanges of information with the LBS Protocol Programme Officer, especially with regard to sargassum management and oil spills. More efforts to be done regarding invasive species, illegal traffic or other threats to be coordinated.



Stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD)

At each events/conference dealing with coral reefs, few words about the disease have been presented as well as the AGRRA website where many information are available. SPAW-RAC has joined the SCTLD Caribbean Cooperation Team in 2020. SPAW-RAC makes the link between the FWI and the regional groups to broadcast information in both ways. In accordance to the SCTLD-CCT work, action plans have been built for each french territory depending on the disease stage they face. Attending two meetings for the FWI, one for Guadeloupe and St-Martin and the second for Martinica. The french Antilles situation has been presented to the SCTLD-CCT. Contacts with Dominica have also been made.

Invasive Alien Species

Few specific actions were carried out on this issue during this biennium. This is due to the importance of the Sargassum influxes, but also of the management of the lionfish by the different countries and territories throughout the WCR.

SPAW-RAC participated in February 2020 to a "Regional workshop on Invasive alien species in the french Antilles" in which it allowed the attendance of the DCNA.



Future prospects

- Strengthen exchanges and actions with LBS Programme Officer and other RACs on various issues in particular on joint concerns (SCTLD, IAS, oilspills...)
- Revigorate Invasive Alien Species' networks and initiatives in the Caribbean

DEVELOP COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

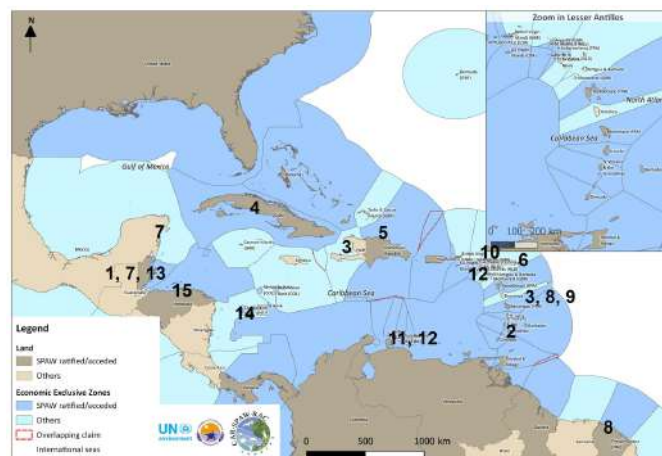
Other SPAW-RAC cooperative actions

In the framework of the Caribbean activities of the GCRMN, new links have been made with organizations from Belize (University of Belize, World Conservation Society), Guatemala (Mundo Azul, FundaEco), Honduras (AMATELA, Bay Islands Conservation Association, Coral Reef Alliance, Roatan Marine Park, Zamorano University) and Mexico (UNAM-BarCoLab).



The BEST initiative (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in the European overseas Territories) has been implemented to its end on December 31 2019. During the various calls for projects of this program funded by the European Union, twenty-eight (28) projects were selected and implemented within the EU's overseas territories of the Caribbean for a total amount of € 3.98 millions.

Within the call for proposals (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.27) launched in 2020, SPAW-RAC has awarded more than fifteen (15) organizations throughout the Caribbean, with french funds .



Through the two (2) main projects implemented by SPAW-RAC, the CARI'MAM and Carib'Coast Projects, the RAC was able to establish new partnerships and enhance collaboration with organizations throughout the Wider Caribbean Region.

SPAW-RAC was involved in the preparation of the International Conference on Sargassum in Guadeloupe that took place in October 2019, especially to help the organization to identify caribbean stakeholders. To revigorate the STAC *ad hoc* working group dedicated to sargassum, SPAW-RAC has involved members from regional organizations such as UNESCO-IOC, CARICOM-CARPHA, UNDP, or AEC.

PRODUCED DOCUMENT

SPAW-RAC 2020 call for proposals (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.27)

Future prospects

- Find funders interested in helping us supporting and up-scaling efficient small grants programmes for the stakeholders of the WCR
- Launch a second small grant call for proposals in the Spring 2021
- Develop more links with fisheries industry

IMPROVE REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

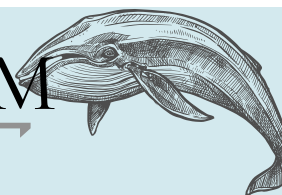
Carib-Coast

The project “Caribbean network for coastal risks prevention related to climate change” (Carib-Coast) is a four (4) year project (2018-2022) funded by the EU (€3,021,890.59, with €482,551.63 allocated to SPAW-RAC).

The project is led by the French Geological Survey (BRGM) which works closely with ten (10) other Caribbean partners. Six (6) Caribbean territories are directly involved in the project. The partners are the BRGM, the French National Forest Office (ONF) and the SPAW-RAC in Guadeloupe, the French Marine Research Institute (IFREMER) in Martinique), the french Development Research Institute (IRD) and the french National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the University from the West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad & Tobago, and its Mona GeoInformatics Institute in Jamaica, the Institut of Marine Affairs and the Coastal Protection Unit both from Trinidad-and-Tobago, the Caribbean Regional Association for Coastal Ocean Observing (CARICOOS) in Porto-Rico, and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) which secretariat is hosted in Trinidad and Tobago.

Carib-Coast aims to pool, co-build and disseminate knowledge about monitoring methods, coastal risks prevention and adaptation to climate change in the Caribbean.

CARI'MAM



The project “Caribbean Marine Mammals Preservation Network” (CARI'MAM) is funded by the EU (€2,903,178.24) and is led by Agoa sanctuary. CARI'MAM is divided into seven (7) work packages. The SPAW-RAC takes the lead in the implementation of three (3) project components which were developed under the framework of the SPAW Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MAMAP, 2008).

CARI'MAM aims to strengthen managerial skills and develop common regional tools for marine mammals management and evaluation purposes. Within this framework the SPAW-RAC works on the review of current regulation, the implementation of the MMAP, the management plan for MPA with “marine mammal” responsibility and supports the development of sustainable and wildlife-friendly commercial whale watching activities.

The CARI'MAM network is composed of managers, scientists and others partners from around the Wider Caribbean Region. We work closely with international organisations or programs such as : ACCOBAMS, the European projects: “Towards a transatlantic partnership of Marine Protected Areas”, “Ocean governance”, and more recently the International Whale Commission (IWC).

ON-LINE COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Website

The redesign of the SPAW-RAC trilingual website (<https://car-spaw-rac.org>) in 2020, with an in-depth revision and update of contents, was an opportunity to promote the SPAW Protocol and to highlight its objectives.

Informations on the SPAW Protocol and programme, activities, and funding opportunities were up-to-date. Several database are widely accessible with informations on PAs.



Social medias

Social medias such as Facebook, Indeed, Twitter or LinkedIn are regularly exploited by the SPAW-RAC whenever the opportunity arises in order to communicate on SPAW-RAC activities.

Newsletter

Two newsletters have been published in 2019, March & September, and two ones have been released in March and December 2020. Informations and updates on the implementation of the SPAW Programme and related activities were disseminated.



REPRESENTATION AND PROMOTION OF THE CARTAGENA CONVENTION AND THE SPAW PROTOCOL

Meetings	Date and Place
1. First Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) - Steering Committee Meeting	- Bangkok, Thailand, May 15-16, 2019
2. IFRECOR	- Saint-Martin, June 3-7 2019
3. SPAW COP10, LBS COP4, Cartagena COP, and IGM	- Roatan, Honduras, June 3-6 2019
4. High level international meeting on Sargassum in the Wider Caribbean	- Cancun, Mexico, June 28 2019
5. Cari'Mam Steering Committee	- Fort-de-France, Martinique, August 21-22 2019
6. Toward a transatlantic MPA network Project meeting	- Portugal, September 10-13 2019
7. Carib-Coast Steering Committee	- Kingston, Jamaica, October 8-10 2019
8. Sargassum International Conference	- Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe, October 23-26 2019
9. Cari'mam project Stakeholders' meeting and workshop	- La Romana, Dominican Republic, October 31-November 3 2019
10. 72th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute meeting (GCFI72)	- Punta Cana, November 4-8 2019
11. Toward a Transatlantic MPA Network project meeting	- Brussels, Belgium, November 16-20 2019
12. Agoa Steering Committee	- Fort-de-France, Martinique, December 3-4 2019
13. ICRI General Meeting (IGRI GM34)	- Townsville, Australia, December 2-7 2019
14. 19th World Marine Mammal Science Conference (WMMC'19)	- Barcelona, Spain, December 7-12 2019
15. GCRMN Workshop: GCRMN-Caribbean Capacity Building Monitoring in the Mesoamerican Reef	- Roatan, Honduras, December 9-13 2019
16. Caribbean node of the Global Coral Reef monitoring Network (GCRMN Steering Committee)	- Bonaire, January 27-31 2020
17. Regional Workshop on Invasive Alien Species in The French Antilles	- Fort-de-France, Martinique, February 10-11 2020
18. Global Coral Reef monitoring Network (GCRMN) Steering Committee Global Analysis Meeting	- Bangkok, Thailand, February 17-18 2020
19. Coral Restoration Consortium Meeting	- San José, Costa-Rica, March 2-7 2020
20. 73th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute meeting (GCFI73)	- Online, November 2-6 2020
21. 4th Meeting of the CFMC/WECAFC/OPESCA/CRFM Working Group on Spawning Aggregations	- Online, November 9-10 2020
22. Carib-Coast Steering Committee	- Online, November 27, 2020
23. Online CARI'MAM meetings	- Online, October 29, November 5, 12, 18 and 26 2020
24. Online WIDECAST meetings	- Online, November and December 2020
25. Four (4) Online MPA WG meetings	- Online, April 23, September 30, October 10 and 15 2020
26. One (1) Online Sargassum WG meeting	- Online, April 20 2020

AXIS 2

CREATION AND STRENGTHENING OF PROTECTED AREAS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

OBJECTIVES

Workplan: Strengthening of MPAs (prioritising MPAs listed under SPAW) [...] (2.2.2.1)

STAC8: The Secretariat and Parties emphasize : (i) the need to secure financial support to the continuation of activities under the CaMPAM network and forum, particularly focusing on the role of MPAs as a vehicle for the application of EBM, DSS and MSP, especially in light of the Project “Effective MPA Development and Implementation for Achievement of SDG 14.5” to be implemented in the Caribbean with the support of the UN Environment (Ecosystem Division).

COP10: Allocate funds or seek funding sources for the management of protected areas listed as SPAW sites. (3)

Workplan: Enhanced network of MPA practitioners by improving communication and the dissemination of Information [CaMPAM/GCFI] (2.2.2.2)

STAC ToRs: The development of a co-operation programme in support of listed protected areas and in keeping with the comments provided by the STAC, with particular attention to the review of gaps and needs, in order to analyse ecological connectivity among sites, and strengthen networking and capacities

COP10: Conduct a comprehensive review to determine impact of CAMPAM activities thus far, envisaged to evaluate effectiveness and guide future work. (5)

Workplan: Continued development, maintenance and promotion of the Regional MPA Database (2.2.2.3)

STAC8: The SPAW-RAC continues to maintain, improve and update the dedicated database to house the national reports on the protected areas listed as well as those recommended by STAC to be listed including the web-based tool for Parties to prepare and submit the protected areas reports on-line (Recommendation II.1)

Workplan: Build synergies with national and international MPA initiatives and efforts (2.2.2.4)

SEEK RESOURCES FOR PA MANAGEMENT



(a) Continue to update and deliver the Training of Trainers (ToT) course on MPA management

Under Carib'Coast and NFWF funded projects, training workshops on coral reef biophysical status and socio-economic dimension monitorings (GCRMN-Caribbean guidelines have been organized (Honduras, December 2019) or were in preparation (Belize and Tobago) before covid stroke. These workshops aim to build local capacities for coral reef and human dimensions monitoring within in the Caribbean. They involve PA managers, conservationists and stakeholders from all the region, e.g. the workshop done in Honduras concerned about 20 people and organizations dealing with the conservation of the Mesoamerican reef.

(b) Ongoing implementation of the Small Grants Programme to address specific MPA needs

Due to the CoViDi9 pandemic, 2020 has seen many conservation projects halted, funding withdrawn, and organizations weakened, more generally non-governmental organizations, In this regard and in order to strengthen the capacities of regional actors and to fund projects for the Caribbean biodiversity, the SPAW-RAC launched a self-funded call for proposals for small short-term grants in 2020 (UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.42/INF.27). In the framework of the SPAW protocol, a particular attention has been paid to projects in countries and territories, preferentially signatories of the SPAW protocol, that do not easily benefit from usual funding sources. A diversity of criteria were taken into account, in particular the innovative aspect of the operation, the convergence of the project with the political topicality of the protocol, the status of the leading structure and its partners or even sometimes the implementation schedule. More than 15 projects have been awarded in 2020, among those several are implemented by PAs' managers and/or in listed PAs.



Workshop on coral reef and human dimensions monitoring within the Mesoamerican reef (Honduras, December 2019)



Call for proposals
Short-term Small Grants
- year 2020 -

Information note
for the SPAW Protocol
Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee

Name of the organization:	BirdsCaribbean
Name of the project:	Conservation of West Indian Whistling-Ducks (<i>Dendrocygna arborea</i>) in Cuba through a Status Assessment
	
Total budget of the project:	\$11,940 USD
SPAW-RAC grant:	€ 7,500
Timeframe for implementation: <small>During the fall, we have been coordinating with our partners. Assuming that colleagues will be able to travel, and it is safe to do so Covid-wise, we plan to conduct surveys during the winter months (Jan-Feb 2021).</small>	

Call for proposal for short terms grants-
BirdsCaribbean - 2020

Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supports
Protected Areas in the Caribbean.

It funded the project entitled *"Using Management Effectiveness to strengthen species conservation in the Caribbean"* which was implemented by an NGO in the 10 Protected Areas of the Dutch Caribbean (including 7 listed under SPAW).

(c) Continuation of the mentorship programme and network to support MPA practitioners.

Throughout the CARI'MAM project, an MPA network for the preservation of marine mammals was developed. SPAW-RAC co-organized two (2) workshops about marine mammal conservation in 2019 and another one in 2020 focusing on whale watching label, tracking tools, bycatch and knowledge acquisition protocols.

SPAW-RAC provides regular inputs into the GCRMN-caribbean Forum (conference, webinar, website, scientific papers, any news dealing with coral reefs (especially SCTLD and other diseases of coral) and marine ecosystems...).

(d) Continue the development of the Cooperation Program of listed protected areas under the SPAW Protocol in the Wider Caribbean Region.

The STAC through the elaboration of the Terms of Reference of its working groups requested from the MPA WG the development of a co-operation programme in support of listed protected areas and in keeping with the comments provided by the STAC, with particular attention to the review of gaps and needs, in order to analyse ecological connectivity among sites, and strengthen networking and capacities. The SPAW-RAC coordinated activities of the MPA working group (see axe 3) and also endeavors to coordinate them with the ones developed by CEP and through the ACP project, in particular in trying to identify overlapping areas in order to avoid double use of resources as well as targeting potential areas for collaboration. Among ideas discussed :

Ecological connectivity is a critical aspect of ecological processes, and connectivity conservation is therefore necessary for biodiversity protection and maintenance of ecosystem integrity.

The cooperation programme should increase the likelihood of producing the desired outcomes and impact (at the level of the protected area, landscape / ecosystem, country, sub-region, and region / by evaluating performance of projects, programmes, protected areas, and ecological and activity networks / by evaluating the impact of national programmes for protected areas and species management, SPAW sub-programmes, and the SPAW programme.

Public engagement is a necessary strategy for improving outcomes and impact through use of shared governance practices (that involve the civil sector and private sector).

The SPAW Cooperation Programme should facilitate mainstreaming of conservation planning at the national level, particularly as Cooperation mechanisms and supported interventions provide context for countries to articulate, design, and implement interventions that achieve multiple national objectives and discharge their international conservation obligations, and Alignment of national and regional projects reduces programme costs, creates synergies, and enhances outcomes and impacts.

The SPAW-RAC also contributed directly to some aspects of the ACP-MEA III, by contributing to gather data for the booklet or contributing to the assessment of CamPam.

ENHANCE NETWORK OF PRACTITIONERS

(a) Improve the effectiveness of the existing CaMPAM internet forum and website.

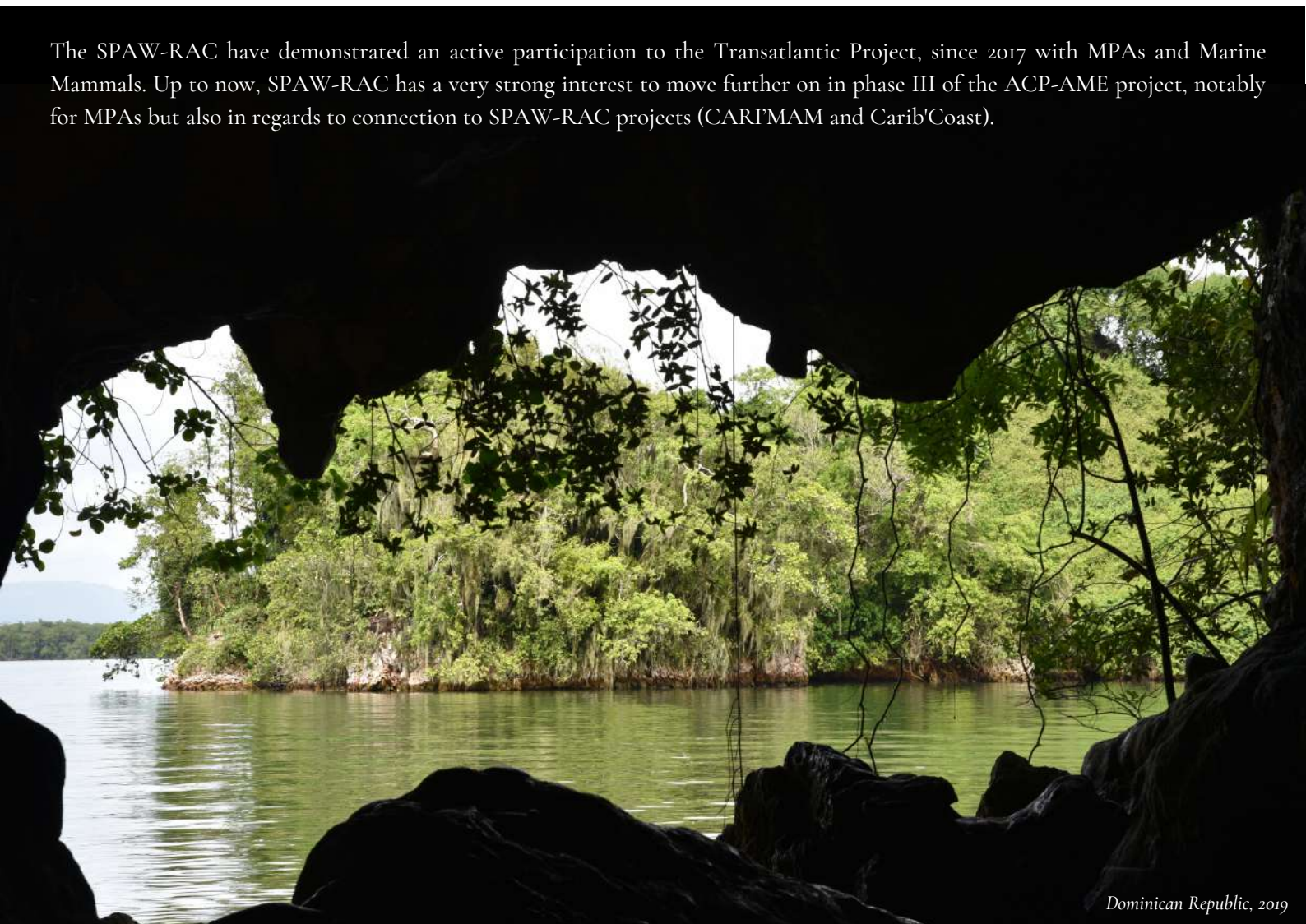
Since the previous coordinator's retirement in 2019th and in parallel of the CaMPAM assessment that was done within the ACP MEA Project, SPAW-RAC is moderating the CaMPAM forum (Listserv) that gathers more than 1,000 people throughout the Wider Caribbean Region. Moreover it provides regular inputs (conference, webinar, website, scientific papers...) into its different fora such as the GCRMN-Caribbean Forum, the "Sargassum: Management & impacts" Forum (<https://www.car-spaw-rac.org/?Sargassum-on-line-forum>) or the CARI'MAM Project collaborative work Forum, in which many PAs' stakeholders participate

(b) Continue to support MPA-related sessions and the participation of MPA practitioners at the annual GCFI conferences (2019 and 2020).

SPAW RAC has sponsored and facilitated a session during the 72th GCFI. Posters on the two main projects (Carib-Coast and CARIMAM) have been presented. Contacts and information from other Caribbean initiatives have been taken to improve each networks.

CREATE SYNERGY BETWEEN INITIATIVES ON PAs

The SPAW-RAC have demonstrated an active participation to the Transatlantic Project, since 2017 with MPAs and Marine Mammals. Up to now, SPAW-RAC has a very strong interest to move further on in phase III of the ACP-AME project, notably for MPAs but also in regards to connection to SPAW-RAC projects (CARIMAM and Carib'Coast).



Dominican Republic, 2019

Future prospects

- Improve RAC involvement in the ACP MEAs project, for a better integration coordination of the MPA actions, possibly support of a small part of the RAC activity and link with the other sub-programs
- Strengthen RAC involvement in the coordination of the "Ocean Governance" project (ex-Transatlantic).
- Involve relevant partners (e.g. the Caribbean Biological Corridor, IUCN, MPA connect...) in Protected Areas networking projects.



AXIS 3.

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS AND SPECIES OBJECTIVES

Workplan: Listing of Protected Areas under the SPAW Protocol and Cooperation Programme (2.3.2.1)

STAC8: The Secretariat through SPAW-RAC with the participation of the Governments of Colombia, France, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United States of America, develops Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Protected Areas Working Group for consideration by the COP10 [...] (Recommendation II.4)

Workplan: Listing of Protected Species under the SPAW Protocol [...] in order to facilitate any additional modifications to the Annex listings, the continued assessment of species by an updated Working group is recommended. (2.3.2.3)

STAC8: The Secretariat through SPAW-RAC with the participation of the Governments of Colombia, France, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United States of America, develops Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Species Working Group for consideration by the COP10 taking into account the suggestions made during the meeting [...] (III.3)

Workplan: Encourage Parties to review The Guidelines to Assess Exemptions under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol and utilize the voluntary reporting format, to facilitate review of such submissions (2.3.2.2 (a))

STAC8: The Secretariat, through SPAW-RAC, develops Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Working Group on Exemptions for consideration by COP10 taking into accounts the suggestions made during the meeting. (IV.1)

COP10: Encourage Parties to report exemptions in a format in which all relevant information be included. [...] 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. (12)

STAC8: An Ad Hoc Working Group on Sargassum be established, including Belize, Colombia, Curacao, the Dominican Republic, France and Grenada, with consideration of its composition regarding (among others), number of members from each Contracting Party, limited to two members per Party: to be nominated by each national Focal Point, as well as a number of seats to be allocated for representation by civil society organizations and independent experts. (V.1)

COP10: Recommend that the SPAW Ad Hoc Working group on Sargassum also include members/experts of the LBS protocol; look into potential health risks from heavy metals and liaise [...] with other national and regional groups or initiatives working on this issue that working in this area. (13)

AXIS 3

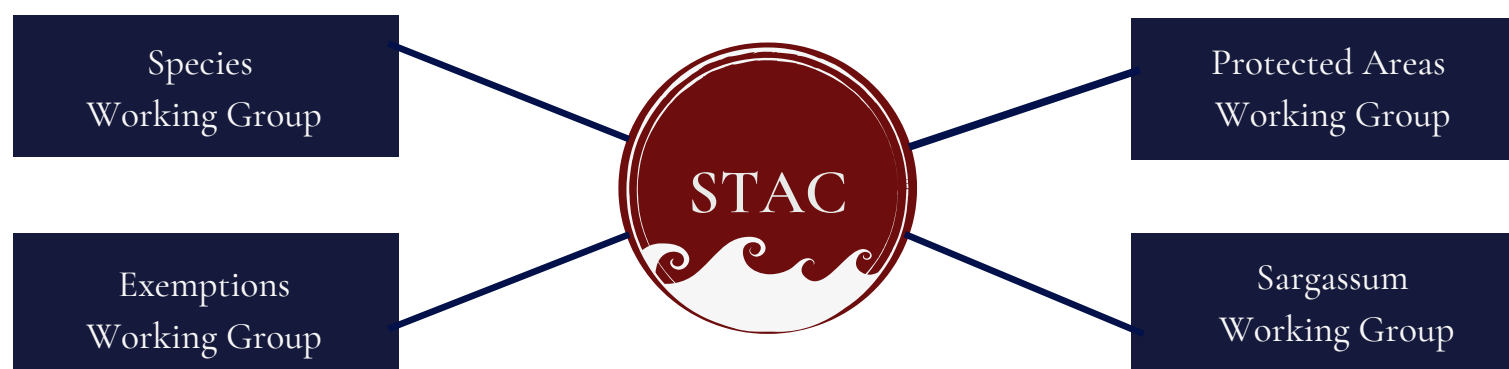
GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

The Secretariat through SPAW-RAC [...] develops Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Protected Areas Working Group [...] (Recommendation II.4), [...] the Species Working Group (III.3), [...] the Working Group on exemptions (IV.1), and [...] establishes an Ad Hoc Working Group on Sargassum (V.1)

SETTLEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STAC AD HOC WORKING GROUPS

Established by the STAC, the Working Groups facilitate ongoing discussions on topics of interest to Contracting Parties and observers, and delivery recommendations on request by the STAC on preparation of the working documents for STAC assemblies.

Since February 2020 the Working groups came in force with terms of reference UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.12). Implemented on the recommendations from the STAC8 and COP10, four (4) working groups were settled, each of them touching upon a SPAW sub-thematic.



Membership: Each Contracting party can designate up to two (2) experts to a working group. Observers (Civil society organizations, non-member States or independent experts) can also nominate an expert to a working group as long as the total number of observer participants does not exceed the number of Parties to the SPAW Protocol (17 as of January 2021). Experts are designated for their acknowledged scientific and technical competence, their availability and readiness to be responsive in the group, and to cover as much as possible the geographical and thematic scope of the working group. Once designated, they participate *intuitu personae*.

Tasks: Working Groups address issues or topics clearly identified by the STAC to facilitate continued discussions on topics of interest to the STAC. Specific tasks of the Working Group are mandated by the STAC and the tasks of existing Working Groups may be amended by the STAC.

Way of working: Working Groups accomplish their work in English and virtually. They are overseen by the Chair of the Working Group and assisted by the Secretariat/the SPAW-RAC if the chair is from a contracting Party.

Output: Working Groups always report back to the STAC. The results of the Working Group's work depends on the topic and charge of the group, and may be recommendations on documents submitted to the STAC and the COP, or recommendations on specific issues requested by the STAC.

On March 18th and 24th 2020, two meetings of the members of the working groups have been hold to introduce their terms of reference and their tasks, as well as to plan the working sessions until STAC9.

AXIS 3

GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

Listing of Protected Areas under the SPAW Protocol and Cooperation Programme (2.3.2.1)
The Secretariat through SPAW-RAC [...] develops Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Protected Areas Working Group [...] (Recommendation II.4)

PROTECTED AREAS WORKING GROUP

Number of experts: Fourteen (14)

- 7 experts nominated by 12 members states
- 2 experts nominated by observers

Meetings held: Four (4)

- April 23rd 2020 / Cooperation programme
- September 30th 2020 / MPAs network
- October 10th 2020 / "Ecological" network
- October 15th 2020 / "Management" network

Assigned tasks

Mandatory tasks:

- Review and provide the basis for recommendations on proposals from contracting parties to add new protected areas to the SPAW protocol annexes
- Review when needed the procedure through which contracting parties can propose new protected areas to be listed as SPAW sites

Additional tasks from the priorities discussed during STAC 8 (not limited to):

- The development of a co-operation programme in support of listed protected areas and in keeping with the comments provided by the STAC, with particular attention to the review of gaps and needs, in order to analyse ecological connectivity among sites, and strengthen networking and capacities
- On proposition from the chair and in keeping with Article 19 and the para. 25 of the approved Guidelines and Criteria for listing protected areas, a reporting format on the status of the listed sites to Contracting Parties.

Focus during the biennial

Cotubanama NP

Cooperation
programme

COTUBANAMA NATIONAL PARK PROPOSAL

The proposal of the Dominican Republic for inclusion of the Cotubanamá National Park into the SPAW listing sites was submitted to SPAW secretariat for review on the 24th of May 2019.

The proposal has been submitted to a series of reviews, carried out by the five (5) experts. Final version of the review was translated in Spanish and sent to the Dominican Republic's Government on October 10th, 2020. A final version of the proposal with comments and justifications from the Dominican Republic was submitted on November 3rd, 2020.



The Cotubanamá National Park represents an important coastal-marine ecosystem (land-sea interaction) in the southeast end of the Dominican Republic. The area has the characteristics of a protected area - natural, cultural and social value - and represents one of the oldest national parks of the Dominican Republic.

Keeping in mind some comments relative to the lacks in the implementation of the management, management criteria and monitoring and evaluation of the site, as well as the need to foster the focus on education and climate change, the experts unanimously recommend the inclusion of the National Park into the SPAW list of PAs.

AXIS 3 GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

*Listing of Protected Areas under the SPAW Protocol and Cooperation Programme (2.3.2.1)
The Secretariat through SPAW-RAC [...] develops Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Protected
Areas Working Group [...] (Recommendation II.4)*

COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Based on the discussions of the Working Group on this issue that took place on the meeting of April, 23th 2020, the SPAW RAC shared on June, 5th 2020, a draft rationale that justifies the purpose, scope and objectives of the cooperation programme, using a dedicated collaborating online platform. This rationale received relatively few comments within the timeframe.

Neither the “Framework for Cooperation” proposal shared on January 10 2021, nor the proposal dated June 2020, reaches consensus and can therefore not be retained as a basis for the work of the STAC. As a result, out-of-timeframe discussions took place between the experts and some strong ideas could be retained although not validated by the experts to date.

Group recommendations to STAC:

STAC 9 could request the Working Group to develop a paper outlining options for a cooperation program in support of listing protected areas and listed protected areas. In doing so, the Working Group should take into account the report ecological connectivity and review of CaMPAM presented to STAC9.

The options paper should include a brief overview of current cooperation (i.e., how Article 7(2) is being implemented), identify gaps and needs, and explain how the options proposed would modify the status quo.

STAC9 could request the Secretariat and SPAW-RAC to consider opportunities for increased collaboration with existing MPA networks and capacity building initiatives in the region.

PRODUCED DOCUMENTS

Working Document

- Report of the STAC working group on Protected Areas (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/5)

Information documents

- Review of the Dominican Republic's proposal for listing of Cotubanama National Park under SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.22)
- Proposal of the Cotubanama National Park by the Dominican Republic for listing under the SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.22 Addendum 1)

Future prospects

- Regarding the PA listing process and requirements, recommend that all new applications include a current management plan and performance evaluation report, and streamline the process
- Support a strong focus on capacity development for SPAW sites to help address management effectiveness needs (e.g. CaMPAM...)
- Finalize the framework of the cooperation programme

35 LISTED PROTECTED AREAS UNDER SPAW PROTOCOL IN 2020



- Belize**
- 1 - Hol Chan Marine Reserve
 - 2 - Glover's Reef Marine Reserve in Belize
 - 3 - Port Honduras Marine Reserve
- Cuba**
- 4 - Parque Nacional Guanahacabibes
 - 5 - Parque Nacional Cayos de San Felipe
- Colombia**
- 6 - Regional Seaflower Marine Protected Area
 - 7 - Regional Natural Park of Wetlands between the rivers León and Suriqui
 - 8 - Sanctuary Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta
- Dominican Republic**
- 9 - La Caleta Submarine Park
 - 10 - National Park Jaragua
 - 11 - National Park Haitises
 - 12 - National Park Sierra de Bahoruco
- French West Indies**
- 13 - Réserve naturelle nationale de l'Amana Guyane
 - 14 - Ile du Grand Connétable Guyane
 - 15 - Réserve naturelle nationale de Kaw-Roura Guyane
 - 16 - Étangs des Salines Martinique
 - 17 - Versants Nord de la Montagne Pelée
 - 18 - Parc National de la Guadeloupe
 - 19 - Réserve Naturelle de Petite Terre
 - 20 - Sanctuaire Agoa (ZEE Guadeloupe et Martinique)
 - 21 - Étangs Lagunaires de Saint-Martin
 - 22 - Réserve Naturelle Nationale de Saint-Martin
- Grenada**
- 23 - Molinière-Beauséjour Reserve
- Caribbean Netherlands**
- 24 - Bonaire National Marine Park
 - 25 - The Quill and Boven National Park St. Eustatius
 - 26 - St Eustatius National Marine Park
 - 27 - Saba Bank National Park
 - 28 - Saba National Marine Park
 - 29 - Mt. Scenery National Park Saba
 - 30 - Man O War Shoal Marine Park Sint Maarten
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**
- 31 - Tobago Cays Marine Park
- United States of America**
- 32 - Dry Tortugas National Park
 - 33 - Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
 - 34 - Everglades National Park in Florida
 - 35 - Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in Texas

LISTING PROCESS

GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR THE
EVALUATION OF PROTECTED AREAS
TO BE LISTED UNDER THE SPAW PROTOCOL

ANNOTATED FORMAT FOR PRESENTATION
REPORTS FOR THE AREAS
PROPOSED FOR INCLUSION IN THE SPAW LIST

<http://palisting.car-spaw-rac.org/>

AXIS 3 GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

*Listing of Protected Species under the SPAW Protocol [...] (2.3.2.3)
The Secretariat [...] develops Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Species Working Group
[...] (Recommendation III.3)*

SPECIES WORKING GROUP

Number of experts: Twenty-three (23)

- 13 experts nominated by 8 members states
- 10 experts nominated by observers

Meetings held: Nine (9)

- April 14th & December 15th 2020 / Parrotfish
- May 7th & December 16th 2020 / Sharks & Rays
- April 21st, June 6th & October 8th 2020 / Marine mammals
- April 29th & December 15th 2020 / Regional priorities and Management

Many discussions on the Teamwork dedicated platform and contributions on online documents.

Focus on five (5) species and groups of species:

Parrot Fish

Sharks and Rays

Nassau Grouper

Sea Turtles

Sawfish

Assigned tasks

Mandatory tasks:

- Review, evaluate, and provide recommendations (including the basis for any recommendations) on proposals from contracting parties to add new species to the SPAW Protocol annexes or change the listing status of species.

Additional tasks from the priorities discussed during STAC 8 (not limited to):

- Evaluate the status of parrotfish and other herbivores associated with coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves to determine whether any species or group of species may warrant listing in the SPAW Protocol Annexes, with due consideration to socio-cultural-economic and ecological dimensions, and provide results of reviews to the STAC;
- Address as priority the whale shark *Rhincodon typus* and the giant manta ray *Manta birostris*, as well as other species deemed a priority by the STAC. Part of this assessment could include an evaluation of the current listing of species (evaluate whether they are in the appropriate Annex, identify management needs of the species).
- Develop priorities and strategies for regional collaboration on and implementation of management measures to improve protection of species listed under the Annexes of the Protocol.
- Discuss options for a simplified procedure for the listing of Critically Endangered and Endangered species

STAC8 recommended to revitalize the Working Groups by giving them flexibility to work in sub-groups on specific issues depending on the expertise and availability of experts.

The activities of the Species Working Group done during this biennial can be split into two (2) categories, and the experts were not necessarily the same in each issue.

- Preparation of the addition of new species to the appendices and uplisting of species (Parrotfish, and Sharks and Rays)
- Regionwide management of species protected under the SPAW protocol (Nassau Grouper, Sea Turtles, and Sawfish)



ADDITIONS AND UPLISTING OF SPECIES TO THE ANNEXES

Parrotfish

Following the recommendation of the 28th ICRI General Meeting (Adopted on 17 October 2013) that urged Caribbean nations to protect parrotfish to improve coral reef resilience, STAC8 recommended to address as priority the parrotfish and other herbivores associated with coral reefs, sea grass beds and mangroves.

After a launching meeting in April 2020, the Working Group started to fill a template drafted by Paul Hoetjes. Camilo Thompson (AIDA) has played a crucial role in this work, especially in the regulation section, and WECAFC has brought important data on fisheries and on fisheries management throughout the Caribbean. Most of the experts from the Countries, the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, and the NGOs (GCFI, WCS, REFF, or AGRRA) have completed this proposal.

Overall, the experts reached a full consensus on the need to manage sustainably all the parrotfish by listing them in Annex III, but with some differences however as to the advisability of protecting more strictly the largest targeted species by adding them in Annex II.

AXIS 3 GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

*Listing of Protected Species under the SPAW Protocol [...] (2.3.2.3)
The Secretariat [...] develops Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Species Working Group
[...] (Recommendation III.3)*

Sharks and Rays

During COP9 and 10, two (2) have been added to Annex II, six (6) species of Sharks and three (3) of Rays to Annex III. However some experts wonder about the advisability of protecting some of them more strictly, especially the Great Hammerhead Shark, the Smooth Hammerhead Shark, the Oceanic Whitetip Shark, the Whale Shark and the Giant Manta Ray.

After a launching meeting in May 2020, the Working Group has worked remotely on drafting the documents. Majors contributions were made by experts nominated by Countries such as Paul Hoetjes and Anne-Marie Svoboda (Netherlands), Heins Heins Bent-Hooker (Colombia), or Angela Somma (USA), or by experts nominated by observers such as Twan Stoffers, and Andrea Pauly from the Convention of Migratory Species. Other recognized partners intervened on the document such as the Manta Trust.

While a very large majority of the group consider that the Oceanic Whitetip Shark, the Whale Shark and the Giant Manta Ray should be propose in Annex II (but without consensus) , more divergences persist on the advisability and the effectiveness of listing Hammerheads sharks in Annex II. Despite their inclusion in Appendix III, they have not yet been sustainably managed and the population trend remains poorly documented. All experts recommend to enhance collaboration for regional management of such species.

MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED SPECIES

Based on the fact that certain species listed in the annexes were not the subject of concrete management measures, whether at national or regional level, the Parties had entrusted the Species Working Group with the following task: "Develop priorities and strategies for regional collaboration on and implementation of management measures to improve protection of species listed under the Annexes of the Protocol".

After the launching meeting on April 2020, that allowed to identify active leaders, namely Angela Somma (Nassau Grouper), Olga Koubrak (Sawfish), Julia Horrocks and Olga Koubrak (Sea Turtles), and a large group for sharks and rays, the experts have worked remotely by using a dedicated online platform and have been invited to virtual meeting to complete with this task.

During the biennium 2019-2020, the Species Working Group has elaborated several documents to improve the conservation status of the threatened species of Nassau Grouper, Sea turtles, Sawfish and other Rays and Sharks.

A special sub-group dedicated to marine mammals was entrusted to work on several aspects of these species. They resulted in the collaborative document: "Toolkit for implementing marine mammal watching guidelines in the WCR", drafted collaboratively by experts (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.32). This document presents the various non binding tools that could be developed to encourage the implementation of the UNEP marine mammal watching guidelines, and on the review of 2 documents: the "Scientific and technical analysis of the marine mammal action plan" and the updated list of cetaceans found in the Annex II of SPAW protocol.

PRODUCED DOCUMENTS

Working Document

- Report of the STAC working group on the Listing of Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/4)

Information documents

- Proposal for potential inclusion of all parrotfishes (Perciformes: Scaridae) in Annex III of the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPAW Protocol) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.15)
- Toolkit for implementing marine mammal watching guidelines in the Wider Caribbean region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.32)
- Identify common points needed for effective national legal protection and region wide management of listed species – Nassau grouper (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.38), Sawfish (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.25), other Rays and Sharks (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.24), and turtles (UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.42/INF.39) - Proposals Submitted by Parties of Species for listing under the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol

Future prospects

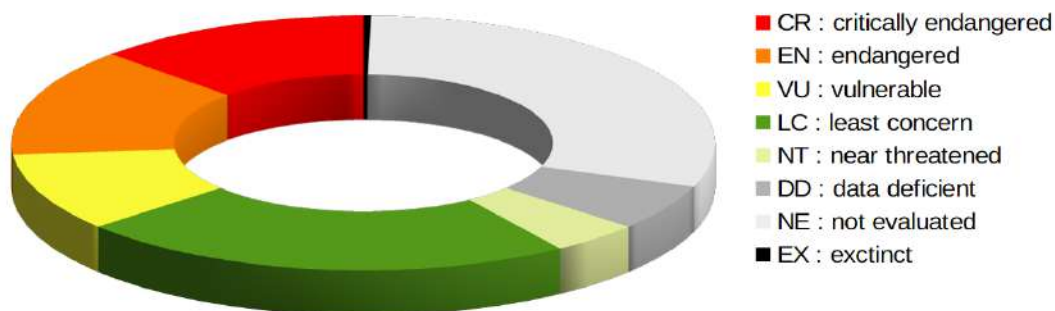
- Increase Countries and stakeholders' participation in nominating more experts
- Develop biodiversity assessments initiatives at the Caribbean level (e.g. Regional Red List of species...)

AXIS 3 GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

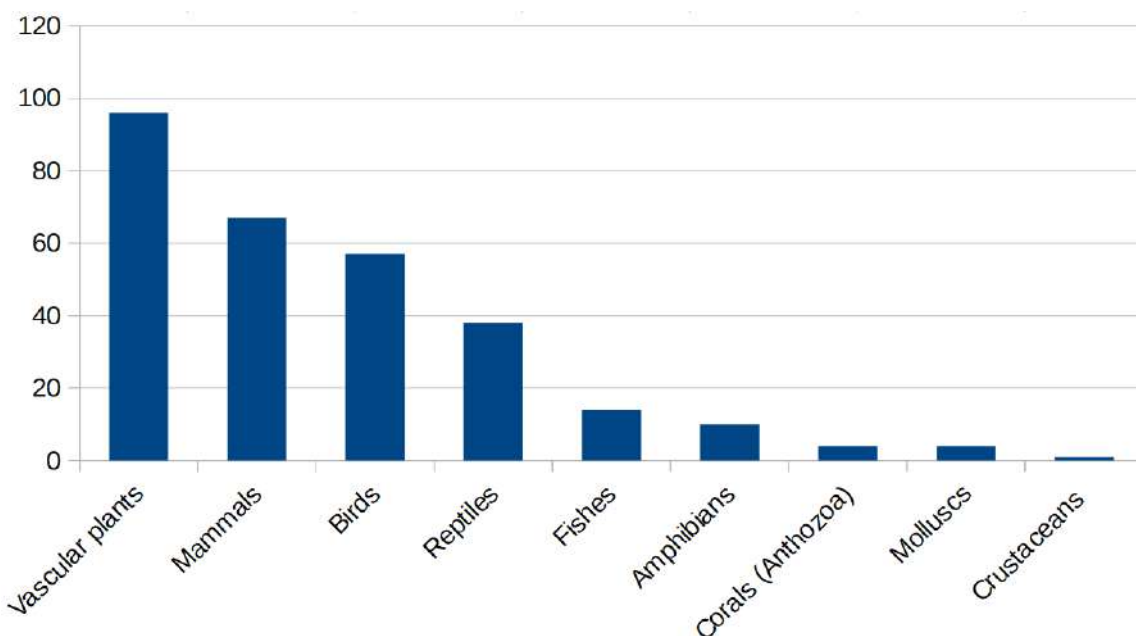
Sharing general data across the Region
and research on Sargassum (2.4.2.5)

LISTED SPECIES UNDER THE SPAW PROTOCOL

Distribution in percentage
of species listed
under the SPAW Protocol
by their IUCN Red List category



NB: Classes Hydrozoa and Anthozoa included in Annex III aren't represented here



Tally of species listed
under the SPAW Protocol
by their class

NB: These statistics doesn't include the species of the following groups Hydrozoa et Anthozoa listed under the SPAW Protocol and mentioned as "all spp"

Future prospects

- Finalize the list of corals species of the Caribbean duly validated by GCRMN-Caribbean experts, and add it to annex III of the SPAW protocol.
- Include the recently updated list of species of Cetacea, Sirenia and Phocidae, currently mentioned as "all spp" into the annexes II and III of the SPAW protocol.

AXIS 3 GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

Encourage Parties to review The Guidelines to Assess Exemptions under Article 11(2) [...] and utilize the voluntary reporting format, to facilitate review of such submissions (2.3.2.2 (a))
The Secretariat, through SPAW-RAC, develops Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Working Group on Exemptions [...] (Recommendation IV.1)
Encourage Parties to report exemptions in a format in which all relevant information be included. [...] (12)

EXEMPTION WORKING GROUPS



Number of experts: Eleven (11)

- 9 experts nominated by 6 members states
- 2 experts nominated by observers

Meeting held

- May 5th 2020 / Encouraging the use of the adopted Reporting Format

- Additional discussions on the Teamwork dedicated platform and contributions on online documents.

Focus

Curaçao Exemption Report

USA Exemption Report

Format

Assigned tasks

Mandatory tasks :

- Review for recommendation the exemptions reports submitted by contracting parties

Additional tasks from the priorities discussed during STAC 8 (not limited to):

- Encouraging the use of the adopted Reporting Format for Exemptions under Article 11(2) of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol (SPAW) (UNEP(DEPI/CAR WG 38/3)
- Review the United States Exemptions Report (2017) and report to the STAC on their findings, as well as the Curacao Exemptions Report (2016) and any additional information that may be provided by the Government of Curacao since the original exemption report submission.

EXEMPTION REPORTS

Curaçao

As the working group was to work on the current version of the exemptions report, the Secretariat requested the Government of Curaçao to obtain an updated report. However, as this had not yet been received by the working group, its analysis was limited to a few comments on the older version.

USA

Experts reviewed the report from the Government of the United States of America and made comments more on the format than on the substance of the report. Those comments were used to feed the discussions on how encouraging the use of the adopted reporting format.

AXIS 3 GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

Encourage Parties to review The Guidelines to Assess Exemptions under Article 11(2) [...] and utilize the voluntary reporting format, to facilitate review of such submissions (2.3.2.2 (a))

The Secretariat, through SPAW-RAC, develops Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Working Group on Exemptions [...] (Recommendation IV.1)

Encourage Parties to report exemptions in a format in which all relevant information be included. [...] (12)

ENCOURAGING THE USE OF THE ADOPTED REPORTING FORMAT

Based on the recommendation the STAC8, the Exemptions Working Group has established a brainstorming session. The core participants were A. Somma, E.F. Salamanca, J. Horrocks, A. M. Gonzalez J. Vermot, C. Vail, and P. Hoetjes. The meeting report was uploaded (20/05/20) on the teamwork platform and the experts had the possibility to review its content.

Experts stated that attention is focused on the listing of species, but there is almost no review of the legislation and protection measures implemented by all the Parties. Moreover, few countries are filling exemptions, partly because they could consider the protocol has no mean of enforcement or because they do not know when they should report. Another problem raised is that reporting format seems to be made by people knowing how protocols and conventions function rather than by the actual technical reports.

Recommendations made are as follows:

- *Use existing information to identify what is implemented by countries to comply with the protocol*
- *Encourage the countries to report more, encourage, reach out, see who are the involved actors, encourage countries to nominate experts or representatives to the working group*
- *Encourage the use of the reporting format but also to report even if they use another format, as long as it provides the necessary information.*
- *Use the US programmatic report as an example of a new reporting format*
- *Provide recommendations on when countries should submit their reports, and the seriousness of the activities to report on*
- *Use networks on the ground level (example WIDECAST) in a collaborative way*



PRODUCED DOCUMENTS

Working Document

- Report of the STAC working group on Exemptions (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/6)

Information documents

- Exemptions Ad Hoc Working Group – Compliance to the SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.21)
- Report about Exemptions to the SPAW Protocol Under Article 11(2): format from the US (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.40 /INF.9)
- Report about Exemptions to the SPAW Protocol Under Article 11(2): format from Curaçao (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/3 Rev.1)

Future prospects

- Streamline the exemption process to make it more commonly used and more efficient
- Support countries, in particular the Government of Curaçao, to finalize their exemption reports.

AXIS 3

GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

*An Ad Hoc Working Group on Sargassum be established [...] (V.1)
Recommend that the SPAW Ad Hoc Working group on Sargassum also include members/experts of
the LBS protocol; look into potential health risks [...] and liaise [...] with other national and
regional groups or initiatives working on this issue that working in this area. (13)*



SARGASSUM WORKING GROUP

Number of experts: Eighteen (18)

- 10 experts nominated by 7 members states
- 8 experts nominated by observers

Meeting held

- April 20th 2020 / Setting objectives and workload

Assigned Tasks:

Mandatory tasks agreed by STAC 8:

- Develop clear objectives and responsibilities for the Working Group
- Establish coordination and collaboration with relevant regional and global initiatives in order to promote maximum impact of synergies and solutions the Sargassum outbreaks.

Focus

Best practices on Sargassum

Improve collaboration
with relevant partners

Liaise with the AEC
and CARICOM



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SUSTAINABLE FINANCING AND WORKPLAN

Due to the breadth of Sargassum influx in the Wider Caribbean Region for the past eight (8) years, this issue took an extent large enough to be discussed at STAC 8. The conclusion of this was the creation of a Sargassum Working Group at the initiative of the STAC.

Therefore, mandatory tasks were proposed, discussed and settled. These objectives, described above, exist through three (3) main guidelines, being:

- Best practices on Sargassum;
- Improve collaboration with relevant partners; and
- Liaise with the AEC and CARICOM.

These objectives are therefore interdependant and are represented through the Working Group's activities.

In this regard, after a launching meeting in April 2020, the Sargassum Working Group has worked upon a workplan that aims at improving regional coordination to effectively manage Sargassum influx and coastal accumulation in the wider Caribbean. This workplan explores four (4) components:

- Governance,
- Research,
- Management, and
- Communication & Awareness.

AXIS 3 GUIDELINES FOR PA AND SPECIES

*An Ad Hoc Working Group on Sargassum be established, [...] (V.1)
Recommend that the SPAW Ad Hoc Working group on Sargassum also include members/experts of
the LBS protocol; look into potential health risks [...] and liaise [...] with other national and
regional groups or initiatives working on this issue that working in this area. (13)*

A set of objectives were aligned with the main components, such as enhancing cooperation between the SPAW Protocol Sub-Programme and regional agencies, coordinating research and identification of good practice models, promoting best management practices and capacity building.

The Working Group has produced and reviewed a draft work plan to improve regional coordination gather some elements on sustainable financing that can be mobilized for managing this issue. It will continue to review relevant document such as the UNEP CEP White Paper on Sargassum once updated. Additionally, the working group has listed potential sources to identify sustainable financing resources for managing sargassum and explore funding opportunities for Contracting Parties to improve research and responses on the ground.

The core participants in this Working Group are Sabine Engel and Samantha Dowdell who have produced most of the documents. However, this Working Group did not have the expected activity for a long time because few experts really took part in the discussions despite the importance of this issue in the Caribbean. Since, the RAC has launched several calls for applications to join Working Group and its workforce has recently diversified with several experts nominated by more countries or proposed by relevant regional and international organizations. Its strengthening with new members other relevant organizations, will guarantee its usefulness and effectiveness, as well as a widening of its political basis.



PRODUCED DOCUMENTS

Working document

- Report of the STAC working group on sargassum (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/7)

Information documents

- Sargassum: Workplan proposal and Sustainable Financing (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.34)

Future prospects

- Further collaboration with LBS Protocol towards a co-lead
- Increase Countries and relevant stakeholders' participation in nominating more experts
- As a scientific and technical Working Group, bring real added value to regional organizations for the management of Sargassum

CONSERVATION OF THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

OBJECTIVES

Workplan: Conservation of Marine Mammals (2.4.2.1)

STAC8: The networking of Marine Mammal Protected Areas in line with the MMAP through the implementation of the CARIMAM Project. (Recommendation I.iv)

COP10: Call upon all Parties to the SPAW Protocol of the Wider Caribbean region in regards to cetaceans to:

- Comply with the Protocol by implementing national legislation prohibiting the hunting of cetaceans and taking enforcement and conservation measures to aid their protection and recovery;
- Report the numbers and species of cetaceans taken in hunts or involved in other prohibited activities;
- Improve collaboration with the Secretariat, Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), other parties and experts to identify research needs and opportunities to collect and share data relating to the distribution and status of cetaceans in the Region;
- Reinstate the experts working group on marine mammals and charge it with overseeing the assessment of populations of exploited small cetacean species in the Wider Caribbean. (9)

STAC8 : Addressing as priority the following species: the parrotfish and other herbivores associated with coral reefs, sea grass beds and mangroves with due consideration to socio-cultural economic dimensions; the whale shark *Rhyncodon typus*; the manta ray *Manta birostris*, as well as other species proposed by Contracting Parties. In this context, enhanced collaboration for regional management strategies should also be considered for listed species under the Annexes of the Protocol. (III.3)

Workplan: Conservation of Sea Turtles (in collaboration with WIDECASST) (2.4.2.2)

COP10: Secretariat work closely with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention (IAC) and call on key countries (Trinidad and Tobago, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname and Canada) to cooperate with the SPAW Protocol and IAC to identify and address the threats to the North-West Atlantic leatherback population. (7)

Workplan: Support to regional invasive alien species efforts in collaboration with relevant partners, particularly with regards to the lionfish invasion. (2.4.2.3)

MARINE MAMMALS



CARIMAM

CARIMAM project manager (leading the Work Packages WP1, WP5 and WP6) has been employed since the 1st of July 2019. A CARIMAM project officer has joined her in march 2019.

Objective

The CARIMAM project, for Caribbean Marine Mammals Preservation Network, aims to reinforce a network of marine protected areas for marine mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR). The four (4) partners work to strengthen managerial skills and develop common regional tools for marine mammals management and evaluation purposes. The CARIMAM network is composed of managers, scientists and others partners from around the Wider Caribbean Region.

Public initiatives

SPAW-RAC has co-organized the 2nd CARIMAM workshops session in Guadeloupe (May 2019), the 3rd session in Dominican Republic (November 2019) and the 4th session with a serie of web sessions (November 2020).

STAC 8

The Secretariat and Parties emphasize within the proposed Workplan:

(iv) the networking of Marine Mammal Protected Areas in line with the MMAP through the implementation of the CARIMAM Project.

Activities

(a) Improve awareness of, collect data on, and mitigate the effects of, ship strikes and entanglements on whale and dolphin species in the Wider Caribbean Region in collaboration with the International Whaling Commission (IWC).

a. Diagnostic study

1- Reviewing legislation

To obtain updated data on the current status of the national legislations on marine mammals protection in the Wider Caribbean Region countries and territories (CARIMAM workpackage 1), the SPAW-RAC has developed and disseminated an online survey sent to the SPAW focal points of the Wider Caribbean Region in January 2020 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29, Addendum 2).

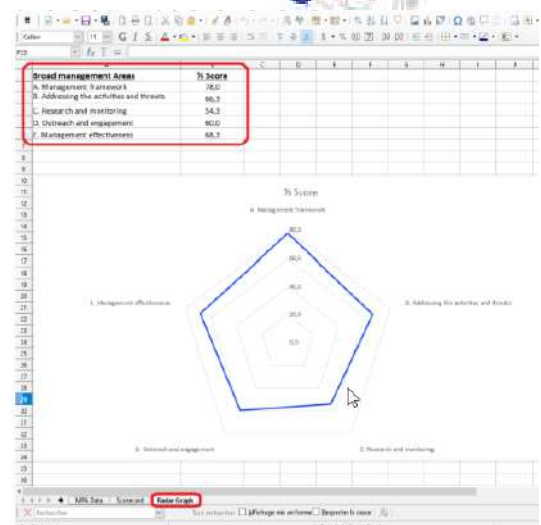
Main focus

Marine Mammals
Preservation Network

Sustainable Whale
Watching

MPA managers tools

Marine Mammals
Actions Plans



The radar Graph: In the red rectangle on the top corner left: the score obtained of the 5 major topics

*2-Identifying key priority areas for marine mammals conservation
(public contract ending at the end of November 2020)*

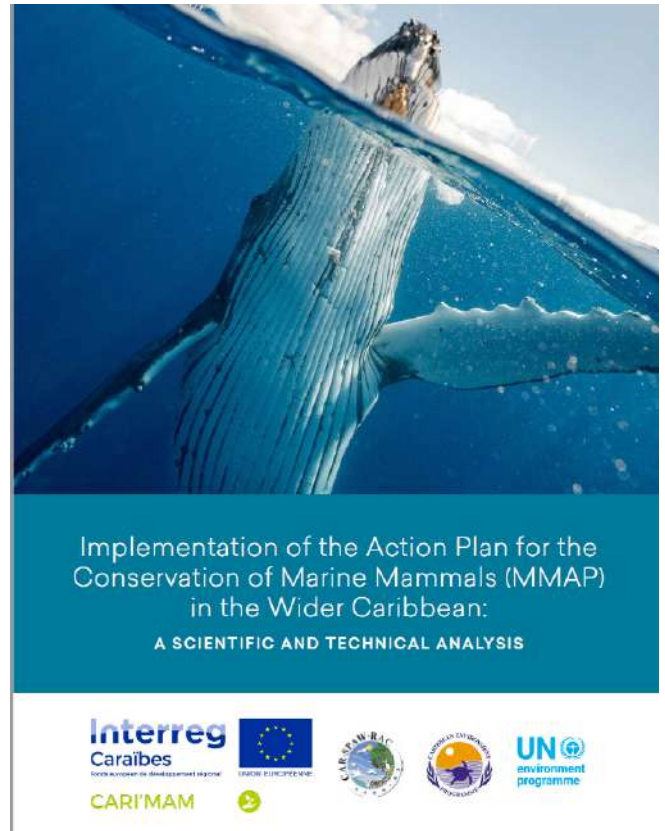
The SPAW-RAC conducted a study about the implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean: A Scientific and Technical Analysis (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29, Addendum 1). A qualitative and quantitative assessment by country was conducted primarily to guide future action for continuing efforts towards the conservation and sound management of marine mammals in the Region. The assessments focused on the eleven (11) primary categories of issues and threat indicators, including: fisheries interactions; habitat degradation and coastal development; pollution and marine mammal health; protected areas and other management regimes; research; whale watch and associated activities; marine mammal strandings; marine mammals in captivity; acoustic disturbance and underwater noise; vessel strikes; and climate change.

b. Strengthening marine spatial planning for marine mammals conservation

The SPAW-RAC analysed the consideration of marine mammals into the MPA management plans of the Wider Caribbean Region and collaborating in the development of a tool (tracking tool) to increase the consideration of marine mammals in MPAs management plan (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.30). Developpement of an application for data acquisition « ObsEnMer » with citizen and profesionnal modes in three (3) languages (spanish still under development).

c. Follow-up to Stranding Workshops

Due to the health crisis (COVID), SPAW-RAC could not organize a stranding workshop in 2020.



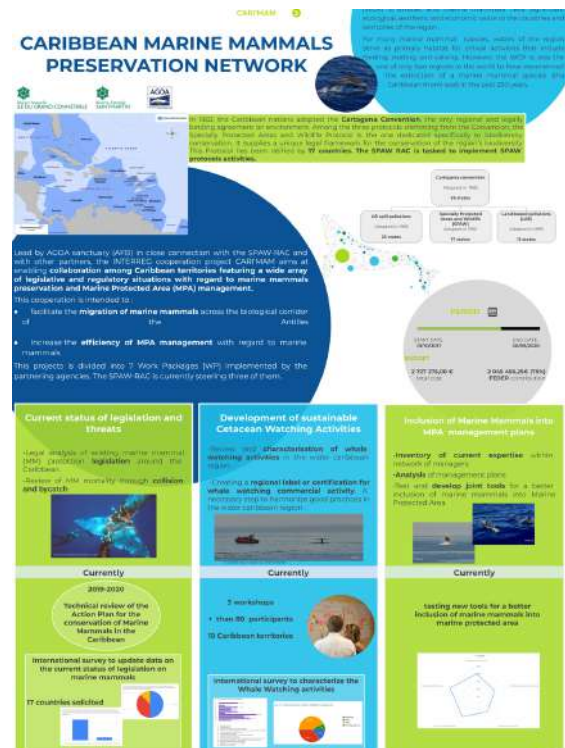
d- Support marine mammal networking among protected sites, education, and awareness

The CARIMAM project aims to reinforce a network of marine protected areas for marine mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region, organize and facilitate workshops on Whale Watching, and to work on legislation related to marine mammal conservation and bycatch (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.28).

e- Support sustainable marine mammal watching in the WCR

Within the framework of the CARIMAM project, the need for updated data on the current status of Whale Watching activities in the Wider Caribbean Region was identified. The RAC proposed to all the participants of the second CARIMAM meeting a survey on the current status of Whale Watching activities in the WCR and produced a report based on the responses.

CARIMAM facilitated three (3) workshops on Sustainable Whale Watching Activities with CARIMAM partners during CARIMAM workshops in Guadeloupe and Dominican Republic in 2019, and also during the month of CARIMAM in 2020. CARIMAM worked on a proposal to develop a regional label/certification to encourage sustainable commercial marine mammal observation activities in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.31, Addendum 1).



Poster published during the GCFL72 Conference



Suriname, 2019



CARIMAM Whale Watching Workshop - Dominican Republic, 2019



CARIMAM Meeting 3 - Dominican Republic, 2019

AXIS 4 CONSERVATION OF THREATENED SPECIES

Conservation of Marine Mammals (2.4.2.1)
The networking of Marine Mammal PA in line with the MMAP
through the implementation of the CARiMAM Project. (Recommendation I.iv)



Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supports the conservation of the other aquatic mammals in the Caribbean.

It funded a Mexican NGO for its transnational project on the conservation of the Neotropical Otter in the Mesoamerican region.

PRODUCED DOCUMENTS

- CARiMAM: an interim report (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.28)
- Implementation highlights of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the WCR and recommendations (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29)
- Implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals: A Scientific and Technical Analysis (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29 addendum 1)
- Current status of national legislation on Marine mammals in countries and territories of the WCR report (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.29 addendum 2)
- Inclusion of marine mammals in the MPA management plans: regional study, tools and recommendations for an improved consideration (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.30)
- Recommendations to support sustainable marine mammal watching in the WCR (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.31)
- Recommendations for a regional label/certificate for a sustainable commercial marine mammals observation activity in the WCR (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.31 Addendum 1)
- Synthesis report of the legal study prior the implementation of a regulation instrument for marine mammal touristic activities in the WCR (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.31 Addendum 2)
- Raising awareness and promoting a natural heritage for the conservation of marine mammals in the Caribbean area through online games, for smartphones and tablets and identity cards (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.33)

In 2019 and 2020, SPAW-RAC supported several actions implemented by the NGO "Mon École Ma Baleine" to raising awareness and promoting the conservation of marine mammals in the Caribbean.

These fundings made possible to develop in french, english and spanish, posters, booklets, card game, and recently a serie of online games for smartphones and tablets.

The 3D game for PCs tab can be downloaded for free on its website



Future Prospects

- Develop regional Red List assessments for migratory species (e.g. marine mammals)
- Implement the MMAP recommendations
 - Finalize the CARiMAM actions in accordance with STAC decisions
- Develop a regional certification to promote sustainable marine mammal watching activity
 - Need to perennize the network and the actions undertaken by CARiMAM members
 - If funding is approved, implement HAMMAC, a new project to work on bycatch assessments (in link with fisheries industry), stranding network and vessel strikes study
 - Develop common initiatives on marine pollution impacts on marine mammals with relevant partners (LBS, RAC REMPEICT, IMO...)

AXIS 4 CONSERVATION OF THREATENED SPECIES

Addressing as priority the following species: the parrotfish and other herbivores [...]; the whale shark, the manta ray, as well as other species proposed by Contracting Parties. In this context, enhanced collaboration for regional management strategies should also be considered for listed species under the Annexes of the Protocol. (III.3)

CONSERVATION OF PARROTFISH

The results of the GCRMN's report entitled "Status and Trends of Caribbean Coral Reefs: 1970-2012" clearly state that:

- Coral reef health requires an ecological balance of corals and algae in which herbivory is a key element;
- Populations of parrotfish are a critical component of that herbivory [...];
- The main causes of mortality [...] are the use of fishing techniques such as spearfishing and, particularly, the use of fish traps.

In 2013, the 28th ICRI General Meeting urged Caribbean nations to protect parrotfish to improve coral reef resilience. STAC8 recommended to address as priority the parrotfish and other herbivores associated with coral reefs, sea grass beds and mangroves.

STAC8 entrusted the Species Working Group to evaluate the status of parrotfish and other herbivores. After a long process of remote work through meetings and online discussions, experts have reached somehow consensus on the following issues of the sixteen (16) species of Caribbean parrotfish' conservation:

- Protection of parrotfish nursery habitats (mangroves, seagrass);
- Maintenance of water quality;
- Improved harvesting measures that are the result of consensus from most fisheries and environmental stakeholders (minimum and maximum size restrictions, closed seasons...);
- Encourage governments to fulfill their commitment to stop investing public money in activities that fund overfishing, produce illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and degrade the ocean.

Furthermore, discussions are underway to recommend whether to list the species in the Annexes II or III of the SPAW Protocol, with some experts advocating the listing of *Scarus coeruleus*, *S. guacamaia* and *S. coelestinus* in Annex II due to their Near Threatened IUCN's status.

Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supports the conservation of the Parrotfish in the Caribbean.

It funded the Government of Anguilla for its project on the parrotfish populations and to inform management decisions.



In collaboration with CEP and SPAW-RAC, Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense (AIDA) elaborated a "Factsheet of herbivorous fish".

AIDA also organized several awareness raising webinars on the role of parrotfish and their importance for coral reef ecosystems (in English and Spanish).



Future prospects

- Encourage data production and gathering, especially on size of population, evidence of decline, range of distribution and population fragmentation.
- Further work on harmful subsidies (subvention of non-specific fuel subsidies, vessel modernization that makes it possible to cross EEZ etc...)
- Regional management

AXIS 4 CONSERVATION OF THREATENED SPECIES

Addressing as priority the following species: the parrotfish and other herbivores [...]; the whale shark, the manta ray, as well as other species proposed by Contracting Parties. In this context, enhanced collaboration for regional management strategies should also be considered for listed species under the Annexes of the Protocol. (III.3)

SHARKS AND RAYS

Based on the recommendation the STAC8, the Species Working Group evaluated priorities as regards Sharks and Rays (especially Oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*), Smooth hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna zygaena*) Great hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*), Giant manta ray (*Manta birostris*) and Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*)). After an elaboration and review process, carried out by the experts through virtual meetings and an online platform, the main proposals that emerge are as follows :

- Great hammerhead shark

- Tailor spatial protection to the biology of large pelagic fishes, including improved protection for aggregation sites and migration corridors.

- Forbid their catch in the US waters, which would protect a large part of their core habitat.

- Smooth hammerhead shark

- List the species on international resource management agreements to improve national and regional management and facilitate collaboration between states

- Improve data collection in view of scientific monitoring

- Oceanic whitetip shark

- Gather basic data needed to understand the life history, habitat utilization and migration patterns

- Alignment of policy between areas to improve the effective management of this species.

- Whale shark

- Gather more data on whale sharks' population trends and contribution to ecosystem processes

- Giant Manta Ray

- Better manage the tourism industry

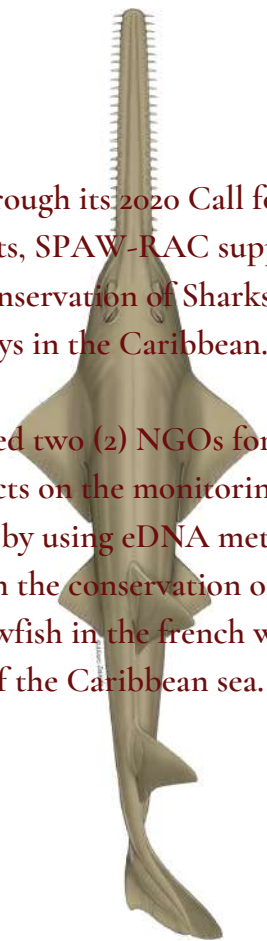
- Regulate extractive activity (fisheries...)

- Conduct further research to quantify the level of directed and undirected fisheries on the species.

Furthermore, discussions are still underway to recommend whether to uplist some species in the Annex II of the SPAW Protocol.

Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supports the conservation of Sharks and Rays in the Caribbean.

It funded two (2) NGOs for their projects on the monitoring of Sharks by using eDNA methods, and on the conservation of the rare sawfish in the french waters of the Caribbean sea.



Future prospects

→ Improve knowledge of species listed or potentially to be listed in the appendices of the SPAW protocol / Gather more data, especially on size of population, evidence of decline, range of distribution and population fragmentation (how?)

→ Develop regional Red List assessments for migratory species

→ Continue developping regional management plans and recommendations for species listed in the appendices of the SPAW protocol

AXIS 4 CONSERVATION OF THREATENED SPECIES

Addressing as priority the following species: the parrotfish and other herbivores [...]; the whale shark, the manta ray, as well as other species proposed by Contracting Parties. In this context, enhanced collaboration for regional management strategies should also be considered for listed species under the Annexes of the Protocol. (III.3)

IMPROVED MANAGEMENT

The STAC8 entrusted the Species Working Group with the following task: "Develop priorities and strategies for regional collaboration on and implementation of management measures to improve protection of species listed under the Annexes of the Protocol".

During the biennium 2019-2020, the Species Working Group has elaborated several documents to improve the conservation status of the threatened species of Nassau Grouper, Sea turtles, Sawfish and other Rays and Sharks. In particular, they have worked on the following aspects of their conservation:

- Develop and implement national actions plans and fisheries management measures, with precautionary catch limits, actions to prevent bycatch, elimination of harmful fisheries subsidies, and accidental ship strikes;
- Coordinate work with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles, CITES and CMS to compile information, and encourage the Parties to report to the COP, and non compliant ones to be compliant with the SPAW Protocol;
- Protect their critical habitats and demonstrate the importance of Marine Protected Areas;
- Improve communication, education and capacity building.

Petite Terre, Guadeloupe, 2018

Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supports the improvement of management measures of threatened and listed species throughout the Caribbean.

In addition to the above supported projects on the management and conservation of Parrotfish, Sharks and Rays, and those relating to Sea Turtles on the next page, SPAW-RAC has funded an Honduran MPA's manager to promote responsible seafood choices by enhancing ecological and social responsibility management of lobsters within the Roatan Marine Park.



Future prospects

- Improve coordination with regional fisheries management organizations (WECAFC, OSPESCA, CRFM, CFMC, ...) and other international organizations involved (CITES, CMS ...)
- Finalize the ongoing evaluation of sawfish status and management in French Guyana and the French Antilles to duplicate it elsewhere

AXIS 4 CONSERVATION OF THREATENED SPECIES

*Conservation of Sea Turtles (in collaboration with WIDECAST) (2.4.2.2)
Secretariat work closely with the IAC and call on key countries to cooperate with
the SPAW Protocol and IAC [...] to identify and address the threats to the North-
West Atlantic leatherback population. (7)*

SEA TURTLES PROTECTION



Suriname, 2019

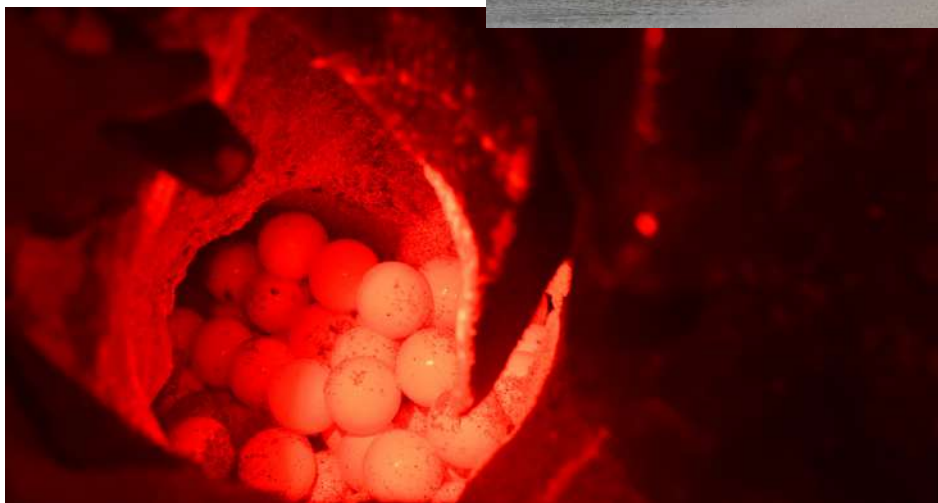
In 2019-2020, WIDECAST, the SPAW Regional Activity Network (RAN) dedicated to marine turtles focused on:

- Atlas of Sea Turtle Nesting Beaches in the Wider Caribbean Region
- Northwest Atlantic Leatherback Sea Turtle Status Assessment
- Consequences of COVID-19
- Oil spills



Trinidad and Tobago, 2018

Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supported three (3) NGO dedicated to Sea Turtles conservation in Belize, Granada and Saint-Vincent-and-the Grenadines.



Future prospects

- Work more closely with WIDECAST to strengthen ties with the SPAW program and to improve the national and regional managements of these threatened and protected species
- Contribute to the subregional action plan on leatherback
- If funding is approved, implement HAMMAC, a new project to work on bycatch assessments (in link with fisheries industry) and stranding network

AXIS 4 CONSERVATION OF THREATENED SPECIES

Parties are invited to identify and propose new species for listing [...] (III.4)
The SPAW RAC identify all species listed as entire groups under the Protocol [...] (III.2)

OTHER TAXONOMIC GROUPS OF THREATENED SPECIES

In order to diversify its activities under the SPAW protocol, SPAW-RAC has made new and hopeful linkages with BirdsCaribbean, PlantOfTheAntilles, and, through the 2020 Call for Proposals, with many other stakeholders throughout the Caribbean.

Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supports actions on threatened species, sometimes listed in the appendices of the protocol, and for which few actions are currently carried out.

These are for example:

- *Leptocercus aff. grantianus* (Appendix I) in Antigua and Barbuda
- Bicknell's Thrush (Appendix II) in Dominican republic
- West Indian Whistling-Duck (Appendix III) in Cuba
- Caribbean spiny lobster (Appendix III) in Honduras
- Neotropical otter (Appendix III) in Mexico and Belize



SPAW-RAC also funded with other donors the production of an Endemic Birds of the West Indies Colouring Book in Spanish and French, edited by BirdsCaribbean, and intended to be used by teachers of the whole Caribbean as a support for school education and to raise awareness.

Future prospects

→ Encourage and support conservations projects which aim to improve the state of conservation of threatened species listed under the SPAW protocol and for which few actions are currently carried out (plants, fish, birds, reptiles, mammals...).

AXIS 5 CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF COASTAL AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

OBJECTIVES

Workplan: Conservation of Coral Reef and Caribbean GCMRN-Caribbean) (2.5.2.1)

Workplan: Conservation of wetlands / mangroves (2.5.2.5)

Workplan: Co-chair the GCRMN-Caribbean to develop and implement activities through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) funding, as well as participate as member of the steering committee of the Coral Restoration Consortium

Workplan: Implement activities in the EU funded “Caribbean Coastal Risks related to climate change for a monitoring and prevention network” project (CARIB-COAST)

STAC8: The opportunities presented through the implementation of the Carib-Coast Project in support of the conservation and management of mangroves and coral reefs to address coastal resilience. (Recommendation I.v)

Sharing general data across the Region and research on Sargassum (2.4.2.5)

Workplan: Implementation of the BEST Initiative (2.5.2.4)



AXIS 5 SUSTAINABLE USE OF ECOSYSTEMS

Conservation of Coral Reefs (2.5.2.1) [...], of wetlands and mangroves (2.5.2.5)
The opportunities presented through Carib-Coast Project in support of the conservation
and management of mangroves and coral reefs to address coastal resilience.
(Recommendation I.v)

COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS



CARIB-COAST UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.37)

SPAW-RAC Carib'Coast project officer has been employed from the 1st July 2019 to November 2020 and a new project officer joined SPAW-RAC since December 1st 2020.

Financing

Launched in November 2018, Carib'Coast is funded by the EU Interreg Caribbean programme for a three (3) years period, with a one more year extension due to the sanitary world crisis. The total amount is 3 021 890, 59 € among which 482 551, 63 € are allocated for the SPAW-RAC. The project is led by the French Geological Survey (BRGM) which works closely with ten (10) other Caribbean partners.

Objectives

It aims to pool, co-build and disseminate knowledge about monitoring methods, coastal risks prevention and adaptation to climate change in the Caribbean. SPAW-RAC is a key partner involved in the tasks dealing with marine and coastal ecosystems as well as training and communication actions.

Carib-Coast targets three (3) ecosystems:



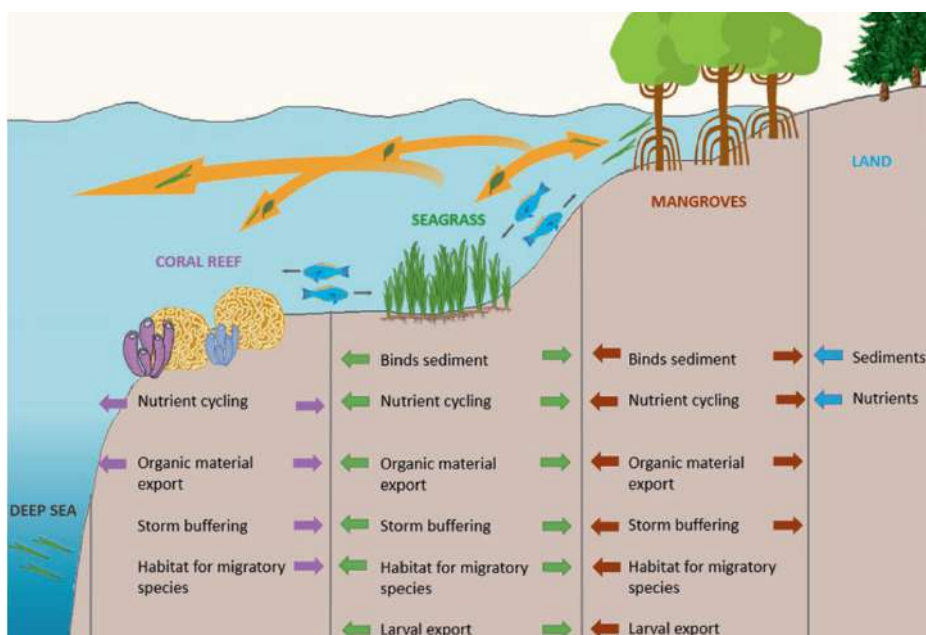
Coral reefs

Seagrass beds

Mangroves

Future prospects

- Select and implement projects on each ecosystems in three new "pilot" sites in the Caribbean in order to protect them, restaure them, develop trainings and monitoring
- Finalize educative videos ; with a key video on the Parrotfish.



Link between the four (4) ecosystems (Jugblut et al., 2018)



AXIS 5 SUSTAINABLE USE OF ECOSYSTEMS

*Conservation of Coral Reefs (2.5.2.1) [...], of wetlands and mangroves (2.5.2.5)
The opportunities presented through Carib-Coast Project in support of the conservation
and management of mangroves and coral reefs to address coastal resilience.
(Recommendation I.v)*

Partnership

The partners are the BRGM, the French National Forest Office (ONF) and the SPAW-RAC in Guadeloupe, the French Marine Research Institute (IFREMER) in Martinique, the French Development Research Institute (IRD) and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad & Tobago, and its Mona GeoInformatics Institute in Jamaica, the Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA) and the Coastal Protection Unit both from Trinidad-and-Tobago, the Caribbean Regional Association for Coastal Ocean Observing (CARICOOS) in Porto-Rico, and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) which secretariat is hosted in Trinidad and Tobago.

Syntheses about each ecosystem have been drafted. Each synthesis gathers a description of the ecosystem in the Caribbean context, the main services provided toward coastal protection and/or erosion mitigation, major threats, various solutions to tackle these threats and a list of regional initiatives. This is still an ongoing work since there are always new information to incorporate. The review and comment made for the CLME+ "Status of Nearshore Habitats" were mainly from what have been gathered for the syntheses.

OTHER CORAL ACTIVITIES

Concerning Caribbean coral species listed in Appendix III, in parallel with the activities carried out within the framework of the Carib-Coast project, SPAW-RAC started the preparation of an exhaustive list of identified species of coral which now contains more than 205 entries, but this work is still ongoing.

Through its 2020 Call for Projects, SPAW-RAC supports the conservation of corals species and associated ecosystems in the Caribbean.

It has already funded two (2) NGOs for their restoration actions of coral reef in Belize and Colombia, and is currently searching funding for operations in Tobago and Bonaire.

SPAW-RAC also supports the organization of a regional training workshop for mangrove restoration which was initially planned in 2020, and has been postponed to 2021.



Actions implemented

- trainings and workshops
- synthesis
- communication actions (17 short videos, posters)
- ecological restoration of pilot sites
- active participation and information sharing during meetings and conferences



Future prospects

- Fundraise for coral and associated ecosystems protection, improvement and restoration
- Pursue the listing work of coral species (but not limited to) by associating GCRMN-Caribbean with the aim of assessing their status (IUCN Red List...)

AXIS 5 SUSTAINABLE USE OF ECOSYSTEMS

Conservation of Coral Reefs (2.5.2.1) [...], of wetlands and mangroves (2.5.2.5)
The opportunities presented through Carib-Coast Project in support of the conservation
and management of mangroves and coral reefs to address coastal resilience.
(Recommendation I.v)

GCRMN-CARIBBEAN

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.26



Main tasks

Training workshops

Data collection

Communication

GCRMN-Caribbean promotes the regional guidelines for coral reef survey and monitoring.

The objectives of the Caribbean node of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN-Caribbean) are to revitalize and strengthen coral reef monitoring, to ensure the collection of useful, comparable, and accessible data that can effectively reveal the status and trends of the coral reefs in the region, for regular, robust and strategic reporting to influence coastal management decision-making at the regional level.

The GCRMN-Caribbean is structured around a Steering Committee, chaired by the SPAW-RAC/UN Environment-CEP, with the assistance from members at large (experts, scientists, marine resource managers).

In 2020 SPAW-RAC organised and funded with the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands, and the support of the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA), a steering committee of the GCRMN-Caribbean for the first time since 2017.

It resulted in the following resolutions :

- Securing the composition and functioning of the group
- Developing communication and events: presenting activities report in front of assemblies, developing a technical session "Coral reef" at next GCFI conferences...
- Creating partnerships and setting up advocacy activities: liaise with ICRI, UNEP Coral Reef Unit, Coral Restoration Consortium, AGGRA, Post Hurricane effort (NOAA), etc.
- Developing activities such as data collection: developing training sessions on biophysical and socio-economic monitorings on coral reefs and associated habitats, by using GCRMN-Caribbean guidelines, implementing pilot sites...
- Developing activities such as data analysis and reporting: helping contributors to add data in a regional database to be hosted by AGGRA, having a short communication to reaffirm the purpose of the GCRMN Biophysical Guidelines v.2.0
- Exploring fundraising opportunities



GCRMN-Caribbean Steering Committee (Bonaire, January 2020)

SPAW-RAC continued its effort to develop and fund coral reefs activities, also to liaise with the main global and regional other organisations. SPAW-RAC participated to two meetings of the Global GCRMN's Steering Committee (Thailand, May 2019 & February 2020).

SPAW-RAC contribute to the 2020 GCRMN Status of Coral Reefs of the World report - Caribbean chapter by reaching out to all Caribbean data providers, pre-writing of the regional summary, sharing the draft for review.

SPAW-RAC is participating to ICRI as it chairs the GCRMN-Caribbean which is member of ICRI.

SPAW-RAC is part of the Coral Restoration Consortium steering committee and participate every two (2) months to the meetings including when its governance was completely organised in 2019. It also contributed to an in-person leadership team committee dedicated to the next priorities and for the organization of Reef futures 2021.

SPAW-RAC is also involved into the SCTLD Response Caribbean Cooperation Team coordinated by NOAA, making linkages with french speaking countries.

AXIS 5 SUSTAINABLE USE OF ECOSYSTEMS

Conservation of Coral Reefs (2.5.2.1) [...], of wetlands and mangroves (2.5.2.5)
The opportunities presented through Carib-Coast Project in support of the conservation
and management of mangroves and coral reefs to address coastal resilience.
(Recommendation I.v)

GCRMN-CARIBBEAN

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.26

Under the auspices of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network in the Caribbean Region (GCRMN-Caribbean) and funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) - Coral Reef Conservation Fund, SPAW-RAC has organized the 1st Assessment Workshop on Coral Reef and Human Dimensions Monitoring in the Mesoamerican Reef.

This five-day (5) training workshop was held on December 9th-13th 2019 on the Bay Island of Roatán, Honduras, and aimed to increase capacity for effective integrated coral reef monitoring among Caribbean countries through the use of socio-economic (SocMon) data in coral reef monitoring for improved standardized and strategic reporting at the Caribbean level. It enabled 15 resource managers and practitioners from Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico to implement the GCRMN-Caribbean socio-economic guidelines in MPAs in their home countries.



Workshop on coral reef and human dimensions (Honduras, December 2019)

This workshop was organized within a 2-years project funded by the NFWF which provided for the organization of 2 training workshops in Mesoamerican countries. Due to covid stroke, and the impossibility of organizing other in-person meetings in due time, NFWF has rescinded the award, and the continuation of such as actions had to be postponed.



Future prospects

- Continue GCRMN-Caribbean coordination, link with the main regional and international initiatives on coral reefs (GCRMN- global, ICRI,CRC...)
- Organize of an in-person annual meeting of the GCRMN-Caribbean Steering Committee
- Continue to organizing workshops and training sessions on biophysical and socio-economic monitorings of coral reefs and associated ecosystems, by using and disseminating GCRMN-Caribbean guidelines
- Help to structure, bank and promote data on coral reefs at the regional level with strategical partners
- Explore fundraising opportunities for coral reefs related activities both internally as for regional stakeholders

AXIS 4 CONSERVATION OF THREATENED SPECIES

Sharing general data across the Region
and research on Sargassum (2.4.2.5)



WORK ON SARGASSUM

SPAW-RAC represented CEP at the Sargasso Sea Commission meeting in April 2019 and focused her presentation to some Cartagena convention and SPAW protocol actions related to Sargassum.

SPAW-RAC contributed to the organisation of the International Conference on Sargassum organized in Guadeloupe in October 23th-26th 2019 through participation to the Steering Committee.

Also participated to the High-Level Meeting on the Proliferation of Sargassum in organized by the Government of Quintana-Roo, Mexico in June 2019.



Mexico, 2019

Future prospects

→ Develop partnership with GEO-BluePlanet in order to participate to the Sargassum Information Hub by compiling existing best management practices and guidelines, providing information and support to policy makers to implement regulations consistent with SPAW Protocol, seeking west-african stakeholders and organizations to collaborate with (e.g., the Abidjan Convention), and promoting their work around the Caribbean. Additionally update/summarize what has been already done and to identify potential research gaps and needs.

→ Coordinate information in order to consolidate a common platform for sargassum based on Sargassum : Management & impacts, SargNET...

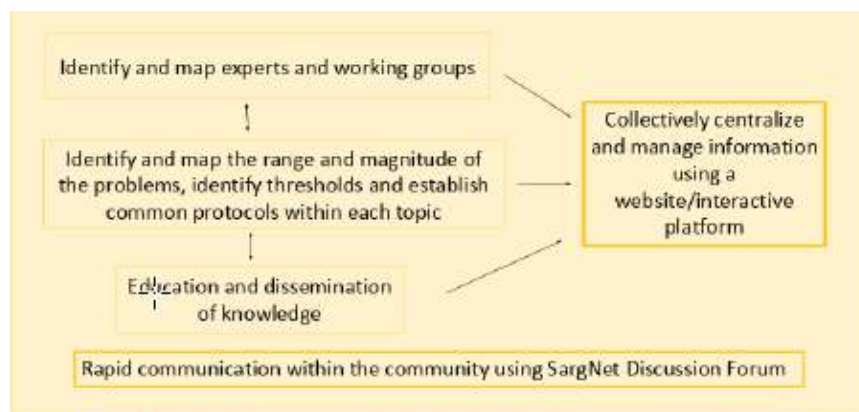


Figure 1: The 4 main priorities identified by the groups during the Sargasso networking session. These priorities need to be implemented into a platform that should also integrate the various levels of knowledge.

With the CEP, SPAW-RAC drafted a project to the representative of the Republic of Ireland regarding Irish aid towards Caribbean SIDS (October 2019).

BEST INITIATIVE



BEST (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in European Overseas Territories) is a grant program, funded by the European Commission within the framework of the B4Life initiative, designed to support stakeholders in the overseas territories of the European Union working in conservation. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was in charge of the general coordination of this European program and SPAW-RAC was the Caribbean node.

The Caribbean region benefited from three (3) call for proposals:

- 1 for Medium Grant (from € 100,000 to € 400,000)
- 2 for Small Grant (from € 50,000 to € 100,000)

During the various calls for projects, 28 projects were selected and implemented in the Caribbean region for a total amount of € 3.98 million since 2014.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.42/INF.27

In 2020, the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife launched a call for proposals for small short-term grants on its own funds and with french governmental funds.

In order to strengthen the capacities of regional actors and to fund projects for the Caribbean biodiversity, the Regional Activity Center for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife launched a call for proposals for small short-term grants (up to 10,000 euros / 4 months to 1 year). The call has been launched on 22th June with a deadline for submission on July 31st.

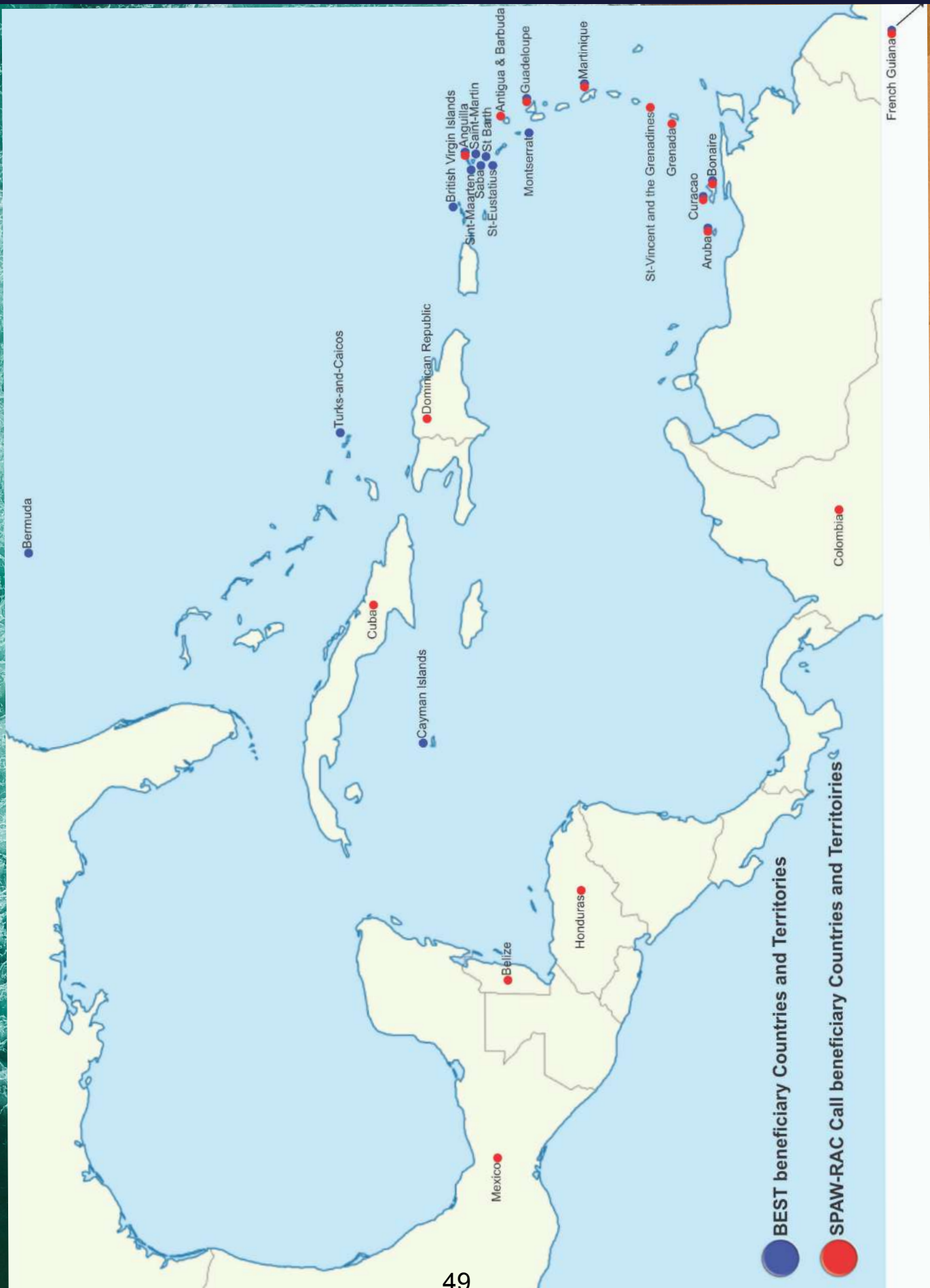
In the framework of the SPAW protocol, a particular attention has been paid to projects in countries and territories, preferentially signatories of the SPAW protocol, that do not easily benefit from traditional funding sources. The proposals concerning plants, birds, fishes, including elasmobranchs, and sea turtles annexed to the SPAW protocol has been appreciated, but did not ruled out other proposals. A diversity of criteria were taken into account, in particular the innovative aspect of the operation, the convergence of the project with the political topicality of the protocol, the status of the leading structure and its partners or even sometimes the implementation schedule.

Thirty eight (38) proposals have been received, several of which are of high quality, and 15 have been accepted in 2020 for a total amount of about 115,000 euros.

Future prospects

→ The success of this call highlights the need of Caribbean organizations for funding to implement small projects or to supplement budget for larger operations. It has made it possible to support operations on quite varied subjects, some of which are strongly linked with the current issues of the SPAW sub-programme, other definitively constitute the base of future topics and emerging issues.

BEST AND CALL FOR PROPOSAL BENEFICIARIES



PAST AND PROVISIONAL BUDGETS

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2019-2020 WORKPLAN BY THE SPAW-RAC (Staff not included)

Programme component	2019				2020			
	Gov. of France	CTF / CEP	External funds (EU...)	TOTAL	Gov. of France	CTF	External funds (EU...)	TOTAL
1. Programme coordination				31 018				14 741
Preparation STAC / COP, translations, communication...	31 018	0	0	31 018	14 741	0	0	14 741
2. Strengthening of protected areas				7 402				6 500
CaMPAM / GCFI	7 402	0	0	7 402	0	0	0	0
PA Management effectiveness	0	0	0	0	6 500	0	0	6 500
3. Development of guidelines for management of PA and species				0				39 000
Marine resources management	0	0	0	0	15 500	0	0	15 500
Restoration of ecosystem / Nature based solutions	0	0	0	0	23 500	0	0	23 500
4. Conservation of threatened and endangered species				37 901				136 610
Marine mammals	26 191	0	8 213	34 405	33 719	0	37 391	71 110
Sea turtles	3 497	0	0	3 497	20 000	0	0	20 000
Sharks and rays	0	0	0	0	20 000	0	0	20 000
Birds	0	0	0	0	18 500	0	0	18 500
Plants	0	0	0	0	7 000	0	0	7 000
5. Conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems				45 347				32 734
Coral reef	39 362	0	3 430	42 792	10 680	0	21 726	32 406
Sargassum	1 687	0	0	1 687	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous (IAS, CLME+, Lion fish...)	868	0	0	868	328	0	0	328
TOTAL	110 025	0	11 643	121 668	170 468	0	59 117	229 586

GLOBAL SPAW-RAC BUDGET BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORIES (staff included)

	2019				2020			
	Gov. of France	CTF / CEP	External funds (EU...)	TOTAL	Gov. of France	CTF / CEP	External funds (EU...)	TOTAL
<u>Running costs</u>	39 030	0	3 649	42 679	27 625	0	3 692	31 317
<u>Benefiting to the Parties</u>	48 994	0	3 955	52 949	135 400	0	11 005	146 405
<u>External expenses</u>	22 000	0	4 040	26 040	7 443	0	44 421	51 864
<u>Salaries and staff costs</u>	320 618	0	104 699	425 317	347 968	0	160 165	508 133
TOTAL	430 643	0	116 343	546 985	518 436	0	219 282	737 719

Running costs includes purchases, rentals, travels, communication, overhead costs... / Benefiting to the Parties includes grants, sponsorships... / External expenses includes consultancies, meetings organization... / Salaries and staff costs corresponds to 3 french civil servants and 2 volunteers supported by the French Government, and 2-3 project officers and 0-2 interns covered by external funds.

PROVISIONAL FUNDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2021-2022 WORKPLAN BY THE SPAW-RAC

Programme component	2021				2022			
	Gov. of France	CTF / CEP	External funds (EU...)	TOTAL	Gov. of France	CTF	External funds (EU...)	TOTAL
1. Programme coordination				30 000				30 000
Preparation STAC / COP, translations, communication...	30 000	0	0	30 000	30 000	0	0	30 000
2. Strengthening of protected areas				30 000				30 000
RAC actions for PA strengthening (call for proposals, PAME...)	24 000	0	0	24 000	24 000	0	0	24 000
RAC support MPA Sessions Conferences (2019 and 2020)	6 000	0	0	6 000	6 000	0	0	6 000
3. Development of guidelines for management of PA and species				0				0
4. Conservation of threatened and endangered species				220 000				120 000
RAC actions for species conservation (Call for proposals...)	50 000	0	0	50 000	50 000	0	0	50 000
Marine mammals (Cari'Mam)	0	0	170 000	170 000	0	0	0	0
Megafauna (Hammac)*	0	0	0	0	0	0	70 000	70 000
5. Conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine ecosystems				130 000				110 000
RAC actions for Ecosystems conservation (Call for proposals, restoration...)	30 000	0	0	30 000	30 000	0	0	30 000
Coral reef and associated habitats (Carib-Coast)	0	0	100 000	100 000	0	0	80 000	80 000
TOTAL	140 000	0	270 000	410 000	140 000	0	150 000	290 000

RAC salaries	2021				2022			
	Gov. of France	CTF / CEP	External funds (EU...)	TOTAL	Gov. of France	CTF	External funds (EU...)*	TOTAL
	340 000	0	170 000	510 000	340 000	0	70 000	410 000

→ Some external funds for 2022 and thus part of the team and some of the actions are not secured. How to secure a sufficient task force with the fundings already obtained by SPAW remains to be discussed.



WHAT COULD BE NEXT?

(depending on the STAC decisions (WGs), on the recommendations to the COP, and on the final Contracting Parties decisions)

AXIS 1 – PROGRAMME COORDINATION

- Convince Parties and in particular Signatory Parties to the SPAW protocol to nominate experts to the WGs in order to diversify skills and expertise, and ensure the most exhaustive geographical and political representation but also as an efficient way to be involved in the SPAW implementation and better voice their needs and wishes in preparation of the next official assemblies
- Improve the WGs functioning collectively
- Strengthen direct communication with Parties through the Teamwork platform and bilateral meetings with focal points
- Strengthen exchanges and actions with LBS Programme Officer and other RACs on various issues in particular on joint concerns (SCTLD, IAS, oilspills...)/ revitalize Invasive Alien Species' networks and initiatives in the Caribbean
- Find funders interested in helping SPAW-RAC to supporting and up-scaling efficient small grants programmes for the stakeholders of the WCR/ Launch a second small grant call for proposals in 2021
- Develop more links with fisheries industry and regional fisheries management organisations

AXIS 2 – STRENGTHENING OF PROTECTED AREAS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

- Improve RAC involvement in the ACP MEAs III project, for a better integration coordination of the MPA actions, possibly support of a part of the RAC activity and link with the other axis and sub-programs (working groups, guidelines, species, ecosystems,...)
- Strengthen RAC involvement in the coordination of the "Ocean Governance" project (ex-Transatlantic project)
- Involve relevant partners in Protected Areas networking projects

AXIS 3 – DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS AND SPECIES

- Increase Countries and stakeholders' participation in nominating more experts
- Regarding the PA listing process and requirements, recommend that all new applications include a current management plan and performance evaluation report, and streamline the process
- Support a strong focus on capacity development for SPAW sites to help address management effectiveness needs (e.g. CaMPAM...)
- Finalize the framework of the cooperation programme
- Develop management plans and recommendations
- Streamline the exemption process to make it more commonly used and more efficient
- Promote successful experiences and promising initiatives/ Bring together information dissemination systems around Sargassum
- As a scientific and technical Working Group, bring real added value to regional organizations for the management of Sargassum
- Develop partnership with GEO-BluePlanet in order to compile existing best management practices and guidelines and promote their work. Additionally update/summarize what has been already done and to identify potential research gaps and needs.
- Cooperation & coordination with agencies and partners in West Africa, e.g., the Abidjan Convention.

AXIS 4 – CONSERVATION OF THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

- Perennize the network and the actions undertaken through Cari'mam/ develop a RAN
- Implement the MMAP recommendations/ update the MMAP
- Implement HAMMAC, a new project on bycatch assessments (in link with fisheries) and vessel strikes study, if funds approved
- Develop common initiatives on marine pollution impacts on marine mammals with relevant partners (LBS, RAC REMPEICT, IMO...)
- Improve the knowledge of species
- Develop biodiversity assessments initiatives at the Caribbean level (e.g. Regional Red List of species, migratory species...)
- Continue developing regional management plans and recommendations for species listed in the appendices of the SPAW protocol
- Improve coordination with regional fisheries management organizations (WECAFC, OSPESCA, CRFM, CFMC, ...) and other international organizations involved (CITES, CMS ...)
- Encourage and support conservation projects which aim to improve the state of conservation of threatened species listed under the SPAW protocol and for which few actions are currently carried out (plants, fish, birds, reptiles, mammals...).

AXIS 5 – CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF COASTAL AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

- Go-on with the implementation of Carib-coast/ Selection and implementation of three new "pilot" sites in order to market projects and allocate funding, trainings and monitoring to enhance conservation on each ecosystem
- Finish the educational film series, with a video about the parrot fish
- Co-chair of GCRMN-Caribbean, link with the main regional and international initiatives on coral reefs (GCRMN-global, ICRI, CRC...)
- Finalize the list of coral species associating the GCRMN-Caribbean in order to assess their status (IUCN Red List ...)
- Continue to organizing workshops and training sessions on biophysical and socio-economic monitorings of coral reefs and associated habitats, by using and disseminating GCRMN-Caribbean guidelines
- Help to structure, bank and promote data on coral reefs at the regional level with strategic partners
- Explore fundraising opportunities for coral reefs related activities both internally as for regional stakeholders

The 2020 SPAW-RAC call for proposals for small short-term grants (5,000 to 10,000 euros / 4 months to 1 year) was a real success and allowed to support operations on quite varied subjects, some of which are strongly linked with the current issues of the SPAW sub-programme, other definitively constitute the base of future topics and emerging issues.

SPAW-RAC is looking for co-funders to replicate or in possible upscale the initiative.



Sandrine Pivard



Fabien Barthelat



Marius Dragin



Geraldine Conruyt



Claire Pusineri

End of this 2019- 2020 journey. I hope you enjoyed reading it as we made a special effort to make it. Of course this would not have been possible without the commitment of so many of you, whether from the WCR governments and institutions, IGOs, NGOs, regional and global networks.... A special thank to the working groups experts with whom we did a considerable amount of work, our colleagues from UNEP/CEP, all the SPAW focal points and observers, and the french administrations hosting us.

A huge thank to my team with whom nothing would be possible including that report. Nobody can work alone, and especially not in the Caribbean.

Keep up the good work!

Sandrine



Camille Caumette and Elisabeth Fries



Marine Didier



Bernardo Sanchez and Samuel Henry



Mike Helion



To Paul Hoetjes, one real super heroes of the Carribean, who helped us so much, contributed to many of the activities of the report and left us, the Biodiversity conservation community, far too soon. RIP



SPAW-RAC

2019-2020 ACTIVITY REPORT

OPERATIONS AND BUDGET



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