

SPAW-RAC NEWSLETTER

Inside this issue

- 1 - The network of SPAW Protected Areas is born!
- 2 - Feedback of COP SPAW meeting
- 3 - Recent news on the GCRMN-Caribbean
- 4 - News SPAW Consortium
- 5 - End of CAMAC phase 1
- 6 - Upcoming events

THE NETWORK OF SPAW PROTECTED AREAS IS BORN

As recommended during the **SPAW COP 12**, the SPAW RAC is coordinating a **regional effort to create a network of managers of the SPAW-listed protected areas** with the purpose of understanding and addressing the needs of protected area managers to improve protected area effectiveness.

A first workshop that gathered 25 managers out of the 37 SPAW-listed protected areas was held from the 10th to 12th of October in La Romana (Dominican Republic), that permitted:

- to **establish strong connections** between the SPAW protected area manager,
- to **identify and share the main common challenges**,
- to **state a purpose of the network**,
- to **define the network main objectives and priority actions**.

A post event survey showed that 95% of the participants found the workshop very useful, and all the participants believe that the network will help them manage their protected area.

Objectives of the network

- Educating the communities
- Ensure financial stability
- Ensure the commitment of politicians in action
- Share strategy and results



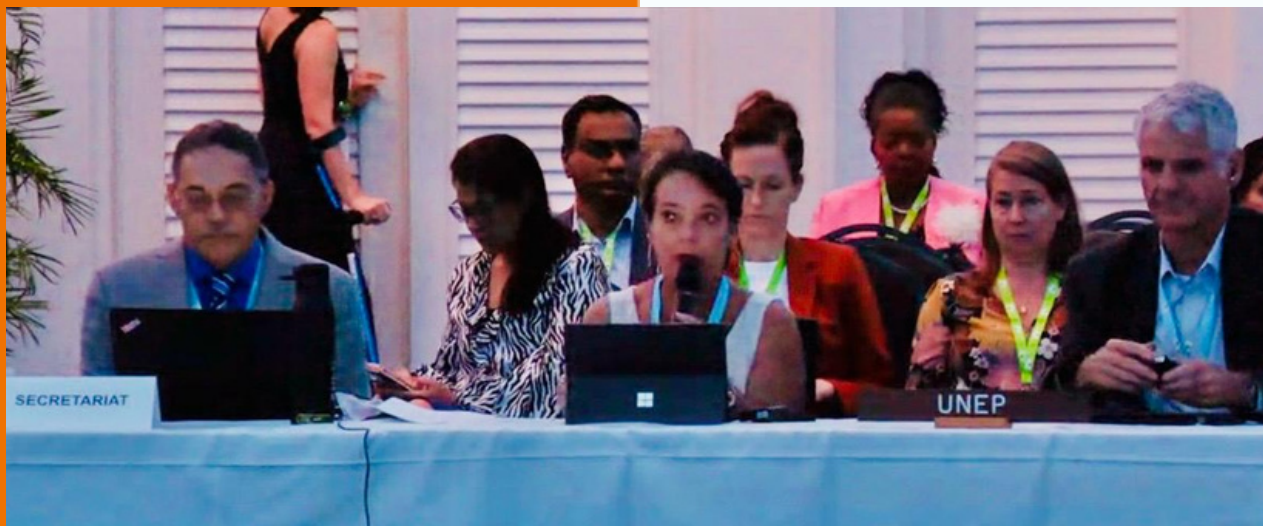
"We are an empowering body committed to finding solutions, through collective intelligence, that address areas of concerns within protected areas"

SPAW protected area manager workshop – Dominican Republic – October 2023

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FEEDBACK OF COP SPAW MEETING

The Twelfth Conference of Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) of the Wider Caribbean Region was held the 3rd October 2023 in Aruba.



The Cop was fructfull and numerous important decisions was made. Including, but not limited to, the SPAW COP decided:

- To **adopt** the Recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the SPAW Protocol,
- Uplist the **Oceanic Whitetip Shark** and **Lesser Antillean Iguana, Whale Shark** and the **Giant Manta Ray** from Annex III to Annex II,
- List all **Parrotfishes** and the **Caribbean reef shark** in Annex III,
- Invite the STAC, through the species working group, to develop conservation and management recommendations for the **Whale Shark, Giant Manta Ray** and **Hammerhead Sharks**,
- Adopt the Action Plan for the **Conservation of Marine Mammals** in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.43/INF.31),
- To approve the inclusion of **Parc Naturel Marin de Martinique**, proposed by the Government of France, in the list of protected areas under the SPAW Protocol,
- To develop a proposal for the **creation of a network for SPAW-listed protected areas** coordinated by the SPAW-RAC,
- To recognize the contribution of **non-governmental organisations** to the implementation of the Cartagena Convention and welcome the establishment of the **SPAW Consortium**.

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RECENT NEWS ON THE GCRMN-CARIBBEAN

At the occasion of the 76th annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (76GCFI), **the SPAW-RAC organized an important meeting for Coral Reefs Conservation in the Caribbean**. As the Regional Coordinator of the GCRMN-Caribbean, the SPAW-RAC convened its Steering Committee members to define future activities of the network based on three core objectives:

- **To reinvigorate and strengthen collaboration** between the Steering Committee members of the GCRMN-Caribbean
- **To advance the implementation** of the GCRMN-Caribbean workplan.
- **To develop a framework and a timeline** to produce the next GCRMN Caribbean report (2024/2025) and support the production of the next GCRMN Global Report (2025/2026).



A consensus was reached to produce a impactful report with a core focus on the status and trends of key biophysical and socioeconomic coral reef indicators within the region. The report will also propose strategies to manage and reduce threats and stressors to improve reef condition and support sustainable communities.

The meeting reviewed the different datasets and indicators collected throughout the region. Progress was made on ways to improve and optimise coral reef monitoring capacity-sharing efforts within the network, based on a needs assessment and any identified gaps, as well as regional workshops.

Finally, participants identified funding opportunities to finance the sustainable coordination of the Caribbean node, as well as technical activities for the network, including the production of future GCRMN reports.

CONSORTIUM OF CIVIL SOCIETY LAUNCHED IN SUPPORT OF THE SPAW PROGRAMME

The SPAW Consortium, a network of civil society organizations and experts allied to support biodiversity protection in the Wider Caribbean Region, was launched on October 4, 2023, at the 17th Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Convention.

The Coordinator of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat, Mr. Christopher Corbin, highlighted that the SPAW Consortium “is in line with strengthening the long-standing cooperative spirit that has guided the contributions of non-governmental organizations to the work of the Cartagena Convention and in particular the SPAW Protocol.” He also stated that the event was an excellent way of demonstrating a greater integration between the SPAW and LBS Protocols.



Susan Millward, Executive Director of the Animal Welfare Institute, as one of the Consortium’s founding members, introduced its goals as building partnerships to support the SPAW programme, promoting best practices, sharing lessons learned, enhancing synergies and commitments from civil society, and , capacity building.

The launch was attended by over 60 participants from the region, including Contracting Parties, Governments, non-governmental organisations, and other experts.

Organisations and experts committed to conserving the Caribbean Sea and supportive of the SPAW Protocol are welcomed as members of the Consortium. Potential members are asked to sign a statement of commitment to the objectives of the Consortium.

[Download the commitment statement at SPAW Consortium Intent Form of Commitment - Monitor Caribbean.](#)

SPAW CONSORTIUM FOUNDERS

Monica Borobia - **Monitor Caribbean** Susan Millward - **Animal Welfare Institute**
 Karen Eckert - **WIDECAST** Lloyd Gardner - **Foundation for Development Planning Inc.** Courtney Vail - **Lightkeepers Foundation**, Olga Koubrak - **Legal Advisor to Sealife Law**

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ENDING CAMAC PROJECT PHASE 1



Building on SPAW recommendations and the success of the CARI'MAM project, **CAMAC stands for Caribbean Marine Megafauna and Anthropogenic Activities.** The project was officially launched at the beginning of 2023. The project focus on the Lesser Antillies and the Guianas. It is co-piloted by the Agoa Sanctuary and the SPAW RAC and co-funded by INTERREG European Program.

Phase 1 of the project took focused on reviewing available information and data, developing partnerships with and between regional stakeholders and determining protocols and requirements for phase 2. It also saw the implementation of the first actions benefiting the whole region, such as capacity building for marine mammal stranding response, and a regional catalogue for teachers showcasing 79 educational tools on megafauna.



A total of 190 stakeholders, from 117 organisations of 39 territories of the Wider Caribbean Region were involved in this first phase.

Phase 2 has been submitted to the new INTERREG call for project. It will last for 3 years and will be devoted to implementing the workplan determined during phase 1, and developing as well as disseminating awareness raising and decision support tools from the outputs of the project, in collaboration with the partners identified during phase 1.

NEW IN THE TEAM



Auriane Petit - Marine Ecosystems Project Officer

In charge of marine ecosystems. Auriane has been working on integrated approach of conservation and coordinating international network of experts. She is working on key caribbean ecosystems : coral, sargassum, mangroves and seagrass beds.

UP COMING EVENTS

MARCH 2024	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		WIDECAST Costa Rica	WIDECAST Costa Rica	WIDECAST Costa Rica	WIDECAST Costa Rica	WIDECAST Costa Rica	
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
APRIL 2024	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
				OCEAN DECADE Barcelona	OCEAN DECADE Barcelona	OCEAN DECADE Barcelona	
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27

