

Progress Report on the implementation of the Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2017 - 2020

Date of submission: 2 September 2019

Name of the Region: UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (Cartagena Convention Secretariat)

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Guidance: Please provide any updates since the 18th GMRS held in 2016 up to date

I. Progress in the implementation of the Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2017 -2020 since 2017 up to date

1. Reduce marine pollution of all kinds in line with the SDG Goal 14.1.

No	Action by Regional Seas Secretariat	Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
1.1	Enhance data, information management, monitoring and assessment at national and regional level through development of guidelines, baselines, regional indicators, and monitoring programmes as well as identification of region-specific emerging issues through research	A regional, institutionalized mechanism for assessment and reporting on the State of the Marine Environment and Associated Economies (SOMEE)	<p>The main SOMEE products will be a static report, which will be periodically updated, and a more dynamic, online version.</p> <p>The SOMEE mechanism aims to create awareness, track progress and provide information that will support policy development, decision-making and strategic planning. Target audiences include countries, Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) with a marine mandate and economic sectors that depend on or benefit from healthy marine habitats.</p> <p>The mandate of the CLME+ SAP Interim Coordination Mechanism (ICM) that was established among eight regional IGOs, including UNEP-CEP, includes supporting the development and institutionalization of the SOMEE reporting mechanism.</p>	Launch of the first SOMEE report and portal is expected to take place in early 2020.

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			<p>“CLME+ SAP” is a 10-year Strategic Action Programme for the sustainable management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ region).</p>	
		<p>Addressing the management of the Sargassum influx in the Caribbean</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following a side-event on Sargassum during the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) and the organisation of a technical session at the 69th Annual Meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI), a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Sargasso Sea Commission, alongside the Abidjan Convention in May 2017. - In 2018, the Secretariat partnered with the Universities of South Florida and Texas A&M to further knowledge sharing and management of the effects of the Sargassum influx. The collaboration also addresses recommendations emanating from surveys with Member States, including the development of a Regional Strategy with a warning system to forecast influx/landings in the region. - The Secretariat also prepared a white paper with an overview of the current state of Sargassum across the Wider Caribbean Region, using some quantitative data. 	<p>Ongoing</p>

			<p>The paper was presented to Contracting Parties at the 8th Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in 2018.</p> <p>-Efforts are ongoing to provide research support for projects on the origins of Sargassum, as well as its impacts and control methods. This includes an online forum coordinated by UN Environment Programme -CEP and the Regional Activity Centre (RAC) for the SPAW Protocol, to facilitate the sharing of regional data.</p> <p>- The Secretariat also participated in the High-level International Meeting on Sargassum in the Wider Caribbean held in Quintana Roo, Mexico in June 2019.</p> <p>The meeting facilitated discussions on the development of an international strategy to combat the Sargassum influx in alignment with the agenda for the International Conference on Sargassum, scheduled for late October 2019 in Guadeloupe. The Conference will focus on developing a regional action plan, procuring consistent funding to facilitate ongoing research, identifying appropriate actions based on verified scientific and technical knowledge, and ensuring political support at the highest level.</p>	
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		<p>Support in the establishment of a regional wildlife enforcement network (CaribWEN)</p>	<p>-There has been greater collaboration with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime for the conservation of species in the region.</p> <p>During the UNODC/CITES Second Regional Wildlife Enforcement Workshop in May 2017, contributions were made towards the establishment of a regional wildlife enforcement network (CaribWEN).</p> <p>Proposals were developed with the aim of:</p> <p>1) creating an Action Plan for CaribWEN, with short and long-term goals; 2) assisting countries in the region in the development of national strategies for control of wildlife trafficking, responding to the needs of such countries which lack a formal structure established at the national level; and 3) raising the profile of CaribWEN through technical (and other types of) training, increasing the frequency of regular consultations with countries in the region and mobilizing resources via engaged partners/governments.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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		<p>Completion of the first report on the State of Marine Pollution in the Wider Caribbean Region</p>	<p>The report on the State of the Convention Area (SOCAR) is the first of its kind on marine pollution in the WCR and is intended to assist Contracting Parties to fulfil their reporting obligations under the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol).</p> <p>It provides a new baseline and proposes a harmonized monitoring methodology of the state of the marine environment. This assessment is expected to guide regional and country-level decisions to address land-based sources of pollution, as well as the development of a regional strategy and investment/action plan for nutrient reduction in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR).</p> <p>The report also supports Governments in the Wider Caribbean Region in evaluating their progress towards relevant goals and targets, including the SDGs. It also helps to identify new and emerging issues for research.</p> <p>The report was adopted during the 4th Conference of Parties (COP) to the LBS Protocol and the 18th Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme in Roatan, Honduras (4-6 June 2019).</p>	<p>To be launched in October 2019</p>
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		<p>Integration of the <i>Regional Database of Marine Protected Areas</i> into a regional system for strategic/operational planning for the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) of the WCR, through the <i>Biodiversity for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean through Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) Project (2014-2019)</i> of the SPAW (Biodiversity) Sub-Programme.</p>	<p>The website of the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM) will be migrated from the server of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) and hosted by the Secretariat. The format and structure of CaMPAM’s MPA database will be redesigned /upgraded so as to improve user access and the population of data fields.</p> <p>Ongoing efforts are focused on improving the functionality of and updates to data sets, particularly those of MPAs listed under the SPAW Protocol.</p> <p>The regional MPA database will continue to be a source of information throughout the biennium for relevant initiatives in the region, such as the State of Marine Habitat (SoMH) Report under the CLME+, as well as the “Status of the Caribbean Protected Areas” as part of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature-Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme. The launch of the online portal will be accompanied by training on how to access, use and maintain this valuable tool. The portal will also be disseminated among Contracting Parties and partners, inter alia.</p>	<p>November 2019 in keeping with project extension</p>
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			<p>The Secretariat also provided the dataset “Marine Protected Areas listed under the SPAW Protocol” to UN Environment-World Conservation Monitoring Centre for integration into the World Database on Protected Areas, which includes spatial boundaries and attributes relating to the Wider Caribbean Region.</p>	
		<p>Regional Nutrients Strategy under the ecosystem-based project “<u>Catalysing the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of Shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems</u>”(CLME+)</p>	<p>The development of this strategy began during the 2017-2018 biennium. Its main aim is to present a framework for reducing the impacts from excess nutrient loads on priority marine ecosystems in the Wider Caribbean Region, by defining regional standards and criteria for nutrient discharges into the marine environment.</p> <p>The strategy will further identify priorities to inform the preparation of a feasibility assessment report on the needs and opportunities for investments.</p> <p><i>A Regional Nutrients Strategy Concept Paper</i> was presented at a Technical Workshop on pollution-related matters held in July 2018 in Panama City. It was subsequently endorsed by the 4th STAC Meeting of the Protocol Concerning Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS).</p> <p>The Concept Paper was updated in September 2018 and later endorsed by the 4th LBS COP and the 18th Intergovernmental Meetings held in June 2019 in Roatán, Honduras. This paper will serve as the basis for drafting the Regional Nutrients Strategy which is expected to be</p>	<p>December 2019.</p>

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			<p>completed (final draft), and adopted intersessionally, by the end of 2019.</p>	
		<p>State of the Habitat Report (SoMH) - developed under the “Catalysing the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of Shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems”(CLME+) Project</p>	<p>The preparation of the State of the Habitat Report (SoMH) and the Regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean 2021-2030 (RSAP) began in September 2018. Both emphasize participatory approaches and an iterative review process to ensure widespread and in-depth stakeholder input into the content of the report and strategy, as well as building ownership for implementation.</p> <p>Two consultation workshops – one in December 2018 and a follow-up workshop in March 2019- were held to develop a draft document for presentation to the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the SPAW Protocol in June 2019 (Roatán, Honduras).</p> <p>The draft SoMH report and RSAP were presented via a meeting document to the 10th SPAW COP and are supported by Decision 14 of the meeting which prompts the Secretariat to continue “<i>progress towards completing the draft State of Habitat and the 2020-2030 Regional Strategy and Action Plan and Investment Plan, ... for consideration at COP11 and further relevant action,</i></p>	<p>December 2019</p>

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			<p><i>taking into account the comments and inputs received by Parties and partners ...”.</i></p> <p>The final SoMH report is expected by the end of December 2019 for presentation to the next Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Meeting of the SPAW Protocol in 2020.</p>	
		<p>Completion of the Report on the Status of Styrofoam and Plastic Bag Bans in the Wider Caribbean Region</p>	<p>This report summarizes the bans and key policies that have been implemented in the Wider Caribbean Region to regulate the use and production of single-use plastics and Styrofoam. This further supports the Caribbean Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, prepared by the Cartagena Convention Secretariat in an effort to identify a comprehensive response to monitoring the influx of marine litter in the region.</p> <p>It provides lessons for policymakers who seek to regulate the use and production of disposable plastics. The report also includes an analysis of the main impacts of pollution from Styrofoam and disposable plastics, as well as, an evaluation of the effects of ongoing regulatory measures and those planned for implementation in the Wider Caribbean Region.</p> <p>The report features an interactive map on the status of bans that can be updated periodically. Through this interactive tool, Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention will be able to monitor their efforts to comply with the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based</p>	<p>Completed June 2019</p>

			<p>Eastern Caribbean States and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS).</p> <p>It provides an assessment of the status and impacts of marine pollution in the Caribbean and provides recommendations to enhance the region’s resilience as it steers toward the Blue Economy.</p> <p>3. Guidelines for the Monitoring and Assessment of Plastic Litter in the Ocean</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations, advice and practical guidance, for the establishment of programmes to monitor and assess the distribution and abundance of plastic litter, also referred to as plastic debris, in the ocean.</p> <p>It is intended to promote a more harmonised approach to the design of sampling programmes, the selection of appropriate indicators (i.e. type of sample), the collection of samples or observations, the characterisation of sampled material, as well as dealing with uncertainties, data analysis and reporting the results. It also seeks to inform the establishment of national and regional field monitoring programmes.</p>	<p>Completed early 2019</p>
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		<p>Feasibility study for the development of a Regional Reception Facility for Ship Generated Wastes among the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Wider Caribbean Region.</p>	<p>The Regional Activity Centre (RAC) for the Protocol on Oil Spills- Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre – Caribe (RAC REMPEITC-Caribe)- based in Willemstad, Curacao, completed a feasibility study for the possible development of a Regional Reception Facility for Ship Generated Wastes among the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR).</p> <p>The study includes a detailed analysis of shipping data, site visits and assessments of ports in 16 UN Member SIDS, and the identification of possible measures to address the inadequacy of port reception facilities (PRFs) throughout the WCR.</p> <p>The outputs of this report complement other strategies for improving management of ship generated wastes (SGW) and cargo residues within the WCR, and contribute to efforts towards improving the ability of WCR States to either effectively fulfil their obligations under the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), or to accede to MARPOL if the State is a Non-Contracting Party.</p>	<p>Completed July 2018</p>
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		<p>Regional Decision Support System (DSS): application and development supported through the Ecosystem-Based Management Project of the Biodiversity (SPAW) Sub-Programme</p>	<p>1)The <u>Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and Decision Support Systems (DSS) in the Wider Caribbean Workshop was held during the 70th Annual GCFI Meeting in Merida, Mexico as a Special Workshop</u>. The session facilitated dialogue among key stakeholders involved in these initiatives within the region with support from the EBM and CLME+ Projects, along with close cooperation with other key regional partners, namely: <u>The Nature Conservancy</u>, <u>World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Guianas</u>, Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) and <u>the Waitt Institute</u>.</p> <p>The workshop provided a better understanding of the past and present MSP/DSS activities and identified potential ways to be more effective. It also facilitated the enhancement of regional coordination and support mechanisms for the application of these activities by Governments and other stakeholders in the region.</p> <p>2)Additionally, a regional workshop on EBM and the application of the DSS in the Wider Caribbean Region was organized as the main workshop under the EBM project. The activity provided basic training on the use of EBM/DSS methods and tools, through the simulation of a case study, to illustrate and obtain feedback on the role of Regional EBM Network Nodes. The session also</p>	<p>November 2017</p>
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			<p>The GCRMN-Caribbean Steering Committee Annual Meeting in Merida, Mexico (9 November 2017): the Rules of Procedure for GCRMN-Caribbean were updated and a draft workplan was prepared for 2018.</p> <p>In 2017, the role of Members-at-large was formalized and approximately 150 members shared experiences and relevant information via the exchange online platform Teamwork for the GCRMN-Caribbean.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two workshops funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation were organized (Jamaica, 2017 and St. Martin, 2018). Both activities focused on an integrated approach to coral reef monitoring which would enhance the ability of countries to monitor and protect coral reef ecosystems. This approach would be done through the use of standardised data collection and reporting methods. As a follow-up, a grant has been allocated for biophysical and socio-economic monitoring site assessments, including photo imaging for each participating training site. - Standardised data analysis and reporting were carried out following recommendations from the International Coral Reef Institute and the establishment of 2 Working Groups (focusing on Data Analysis and Reporting as of February 2017, with voluntary members from the Steering Committee as well as Members-at-large). - Serving as a member of the Steering Committee (and of relevant Working Groups) of the Coral Restoration 	
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			<p>Consortium, since its inception in March 2017, as a community of practice to foster collaboration, technology transfer, as well as facilitate scientific and practical ingenuity in coral reef restoration.</p>	
		<p>The GEF-Funded Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States Project (IWEco)</p>	<p>-The new GEF IWEco Project website (www.iweco.org) includes country specific pages which feature the activities of participating countries, and a dashboard to enable tracking of activities in all project components.</p> <p>The website promotes and disseminates IWEco Project activities, outputs and achievements, and allows exchange of information via related social media (Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram).</p>	<p>Launched on 30 April 2019.</p>
		<p>Resource Valuation Methodology proposed within the GEF-funded project on utilizing an integrated approach to water and wastewater management using innovative solutions and promoting financing mechanisms in the Wider Caribbean Region (GEF CReW+)</p>	<p>The CReW+ is a GEF approved partnership project that will be co-implemented by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and UN Environment in 18 countries of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR). These are Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.</p> <p>This innovative project will build upon its previous phase <i>"The Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater</i></p>	<p>Currently pending approval of the Global Environment Facility</p>

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			<p><i>Management (CREW)“ project 2011-2016, also funded by the GEF, and co-implemented by IDB and UN Environment. Through this earlier project, 13 countries of the Wider Caribbean Region benefitted from capacity building and development of innovative sustainable financing solutions for the wastewater sector.</i></p> <p>Under Component 2 of the GEF CREW Project, UNEP CAR/RCU coordinated Pilot Resource Valuation Studies which were conducted at three sites in two participating countries, Panama and Trinidad and Tobago, by the World Resources Institute (WRI), working with local agencies, between October 2014 and August 2015.</p>	
1.2	Raise the visibility of relevant pollution issues at all levels and facilitate science-policy interactions emphasizing socio-economic impacts and promoting relevant practices, tools, technologies and measures	Development of promotional material and communication products on marine litter	<p>-The Secretariat, through its Communications Sub-Programme, developed several types of promotional material to raise awareness on the impacts of marine pollution on human health and on the marine and coastal ecosystems. These include factsheets, infographics, videos, as well as articles and social media campaigns (the latest being #PlasticFreeJuly in collaboration with the Caribbean Node on Marine Litter). Promotional materials have been developed and disseminated in English, Spanish and French.</p> <p>-Activities (beach cleanups, exhibitions, interactive sessions etc.) were also coordinated over the years to bring awareness to these pollution issues, particularly during key commemorative days such as World</p>	Ongoing

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			<p>Environment Day, World Oceans Day, International Coastal Cleanup Day, World Wetlands Day, etc.</p> <p>-At outreach events, as well as regional meetings such as the annual Caribbean Water and Wastewater Conference, exhibitions are mounted to display the work of the Secretariat, including the progress and/or results of projects and activities related to marine pollution. Target audiences are continually engaged in interactive sessions in an effort to raise public awareness.</p> <p>-Articles continue to be used as engaging communication outputs- the latest on marine pollution was published online and in print media during the 15th COP Meeting of the Cartagena Convention (coinciding with World Environment Week).</p>	
		<p>Caribbean Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML-Caribe)</p>	<p>As co-hosts of the GPML-Caribe, the Cartagena Convention Secretariat and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute initiated activities to promote the issues and challenges relating to marine litter management within the region.</p> <p>Efforts have been ongoing to develop new communication products. During the 2017-2018 biennium, a new website, along with social media accounts, were created. Additionally, four factsheets were published on various marine litter areas including Microplastics in Caribbean Marine Fish, Caribbean Marine Litter Node, Marine Litter in the Wider Caribbean</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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			Region and Sargassum. These factsheets/infographics were translated into Spanish and French and printed for dissemination across the Wider Caribbean region.	
		Manual for Harmonizing Marine Litter Strategies in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR)	This study (<i>see section 1.1</i>) also seeks to raise the visibility of pollution in the region by bringing further awareness to marine litter initiatives, as well as providing data for the development of a monitoring scheme which will serve to guide policymakers in their decision-making.	
		Regional Marine Litter Strategy	At the recent Marine Litter Expert Workshop in March 2019, the co-hosts of the Caribbean Node on Marine Litter coordinated the development of a strategic outline for marine litter management in the Wider Caribbean Region. This Regional Strategy supports the further implementation of the Caribbean Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter (RAPMaLI).	

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		<p>Feasibility Study for the development of a Regional Reception Facility for Ship Generated Wastes (SGW) among the Small Island Developing States of the WCR</p>	<p><i>(see section 1.1)</i> The proposed Regional Reception Facility seeks to address ocean pollution from ship generated waste.</p> <p>The results of this feasibility study indicate that a regional approach to port reception facilities is necessary for the 16 SIDS of the Wider Caribbean Region as there are unique circumstances in these States and throughout the Region that significantly impact the ability of the regional governments to ensure adequate port reception facilities.</p> <p>These circumstances, discussed in detail in Chapter 4.5 to 4.6 and Annexes A-P of the study, are positioned in three primary categories: 1) Administrative and Legal Matters; 2) Enforcement, Control and Monitoring Systems; and 3) Technology, Infrastructure and Alternatives for Collecting, Storing, Treating and Disposing of SGW.</p>	<p>July 2018</p>
<p>1.3</p>	<p>Raise issues at global level and facilitate regionalization of outcomes of the GPA IGR4 and mandated global partnerships</p>	<p>Caribbean Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML-Caribe)</p>	<p>The Caribbean Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) was launched in 2016 as a regional partnership of national and regional organizations, governments, research, and technical agencies and individuals, that work together to reduce the quality and impact of marine litter in coastal zones of the Wider Caribbean Region.</p>	

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			<p>Additional funding has been secured to further develop the Regional Clean Seas Campaign (pilot in Antigua & Barbuda), pilot project activities for upscaling existing marine litter projects in Jamaica, Grenada, Bonaire or Dominican Republic, as well as to implement a pilot project on Abandoned and Lost Fishing Gear, and develop a concept note.</p> <p>-In support of UN Environment’s #CleanSeas Campaign launched in February 2017, 9 Caribbean States have joined the initiative, seven of which are also Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol and have made commitments under the campaign to eliminate marine litter.</p> <p>These LBS Contracting Parties include the Governments of Barbados, Panama, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Saint Lucia, Grenada and France.</p> <p>Funding has been secured to further launch a region-wide campaign to build on the experiences at the global level.</p>	
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4. Create increased resilience of people, marine and coastal ecosystems, and their health and productivity, in line with the SDG Goal 13 and decisions made at the UNFCCC COP21.

No	Action by Regional Seas Secretariat	Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
2.1	Support mainstreaming of climate change into regional and national policies and institutional frameworks			
2.2	Assess the impacts of climate change and the resilience of people, society and ecosystems in marine and coastal areas to propose adaptation strategies			
2.3	Create or support climate research, policy networks and interregional knowledge exchange towards a better understanding of climate impacts on the marine and coastal environment	Development of an MoU with Ocean Foundation	The Secretariat is currently working with The Ocean Foundation via its “International Ocean Acidification Initiative” and in anticipation of the signing of an MoU that will facilitate collaboration on addressing ocean acidification and related issues within the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR). This will include the development and implementation of joint strategies and pilot projects in areas of mutual interest.	To be signed by August 2019

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2.4	Facilitate access to instruments for climate financing at national and regional levels	The Blue Finance project	<p>-This project has been in progress since 2015 (through the SPAW-RAC) and is funded by UN Environment Programme via the Global Coral Reef Partnership.</p> <p>Other partners include GRID-Arendal, the Blue Solutions project, IFRECOR (the French Initiative for Coral Reef) and the Organisation of American States.</p> <p>Blue Finance is dedicated to the development of long-term financing instruments for marine conservation by involving the private sector in co-management and financing arrangements. It has been implemented in varying degrees in Barbados, Dominican Republic, St. Kitts and Nevis, The Bahamas and Antigua and Barbuda.</p> <p>-New activities forecasted include the exploration of potential MPAs in Cuba, Honduras (Roatán), Belize, Guatemala and Mexico. At the regional level, an MoU has been signed between Blue Finance and the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund to develop the approach in Caribbean countries. Blue Finance is also participating in the development of a Blue Economy Facility with UN Environment Programme and investors.</p>	Ongoing
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		<p>Small Scale Funding agreement with the Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MARFund) based on a detailed proposal submitted to International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and UN Environment Small Grants Programme 2017 for the project <i>“Innovative financing and legal mechanisms for reef restoration and emergency response in selected sites of the MAR Region”</i></p> <p>This will be attained through three interrelated specific objectives - 1: To design and establish a parametric insurance model as a financing mechanism to cover the cost of coral reef restoration after damage caused by hurricanes in the MAR region; 2: To promote adequate legislation/recommendations for insurance implementation and immediate response intervention and reef restoration; 3: To establish effective emergency response protocols for rapid response team interventions and reef restoration guidelines, linked with the work conducted by the Coral Restoration Consortium and the GCRMN-Caribbean.</p>	<p>The project aims to contribute to the conservation of the Mesoamerican Reef by enabling innovative financing and legal mechanisms to restore coral reefs after hurricane damage.</p> <p>The activities will contribute to increased knowledge on coastal marine ecosystem restoration initiatives by delivering an innovative financial mechanism and recommending coherent legislation for the insurance to operate and enable rapid response action (<i>i.e.</i> catastrophe derivative insurance).</p> <p>The expected results/outputs include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A financing mechanism to improve emergency response actions and restore key sites in the MAR Region; 2) Strengthened regional and national governance frameworks to facilitate emergency response and coral reef restoration; 3) Participatory science-based, adaptive rapid response interventions, and restoration techniques developed in line with the work conducted by the Coral Restoration Consortium and its monitoring working group. 	<p>November 2019</p>

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5. Develop integrated, ecosystem-based regional ocean policies and strategies for sustainable use of marine and coastal resources, paying close attention to blue growth.

No	Action by Regional Seas Secretariat	Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
3.1	Promote application of guidelines, rules and regulations for exploitation and exploration of living and non-living resources within Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans and develop such instruments, where necessary, based on the ecosystem approach	CLME+ SAP Interim Coordination Mechanism and proposed Permanent Coordination Mechanism.	<p>The Secretariat is a member of the interim Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism which was finalized during the 2017-2018 biennium. One of the six strategies of the UNDP/GEF CLME+ Project is to establish and operationalize a regional policy coordination mechanism for ocean governance, with initial focus on shared Living Marine Resources.</p> <p>In accordance with Decision IX of the Secretariat's 15th COP Meetings, discussions are underway to establish the proposed Permanent Coordination Mechanism and encourage Contracting Parties to engage in national consultations on the Coordination Mechanism and the development of a Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance.</p>	Discussions on the establishment of the proposed Permanent Coordination Mechanism is ongoing

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		<p>Working Group on Criteria and Procedure to Assess Exemptions under Article 11 (2) of the SPAW Protocol</p>	<p>Under the Biodiversity Sub-Programme, work is ongoing to finalize the steps to apply the voluntary format for presenting exemptions and reporting on their implementation to Contracting Parties.</p> <p>The Secretariat will continue to: 1) encourage Member States to review The Guidelines to Assess Exemptions under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol and utilize the voluntary reporting format to facilitate the review of such submissions; 2) assist Governments to formulate their reports on exemptions under Article 11(2); and 3) provide assistance to Contracting Parties, where possible, in the preparation of their exemption reports using the voluntary reporting format.</p> <p>This will facilitate an improvement in submissions, as well as, in the examination of species proposed for exemptions under the SPAW Protocol.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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		<p>Application of the criteria for listing species in the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol</p>	<p>The status and assessment of species, or groups of species, have continued in collaboration with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Red List for the Caribbean to facilitate any necessary modifications to the list, in the event of changes to the status of species.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>Elaboration and completion of a technical document for the GLISPA network regarding the lessons learned from the EBM and DSS (Decision Support System) application in the Wider Caribbean and the potential for its future use <i>Linked to the EBM project of the Biodiversity Sub-Programme (see 1.1)</i></p>	<p>This will be prepared along with a final project report, specifically in relation to the achievements of the project's regional nodes, their linkages, communications protocol, and the potential for their proposed EBM / DSS applications.</p>	<p>November 2019</p>
		<p>Regional Strategy and Action Plan</p> <p><i>Linked to CLME+ Project under activities for the Biodiversity Sub-Programme (see 1.1)</i></p>	<p>This forms part of the efforts toward the implementation of the 10-year politically endorsed Strategic Action Plan (CLME+ SAP). The focus on the nearshore marine habitats of coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass beds is driven by the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) which was carried out under the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project (2009-2013), largely known as the CLME Project Phase I.</p>	<p>December 2019 (to be submitted for endorsement in 2020)</p>

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	Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)	This was signed in May 2018 for mutual development and implementation of several strategies. These include precautionary and ecosystem-based approaches, marine species and marine protected areas for listing under the Protocol, fisheries management and recovery plans for commercially important marine species, and the control and mitigation of impacts from marine invasive species in the region, which includes monitoring the Sargassum influx, inter alia.	Completed - May 2018
	Ecosystem-based Management of the UNDP/GEF Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Project	The <i>Strengthening Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) Frameworks and Ocean Governance in the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (NBSLME)</i> project was developed by CEP's Pollution and Marine Biodiversity Sub-Programmes. It aims to develop and test various governance arrangements to enable effective ecosystem-based management (EBM) in the mitigation of pollution, restoration and/or rehabilitation of degraded areas and/or preventative actions in four coastal mangroves wetlands within the NBSLME. The project will implement at least one (1) mangrove restoration/rehabilitation/protection and pollution abatement/prevention project in each	On-going

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			<p>of four (4) countries of the NBSLME: Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname and Brazil.</p> <p>As part of the CLME+ Project, the focus on EBM is to demonstrate, through pilot on-the-ground initiatives, innovative and participatory, cross-sectoral approaches to deal in a holistic way with the efforts to protect key habitats and/or address priority pollution issues with the efforts towards more sustainable fisheries management within the NBSLME. In addition, the goal is also to capture and disseminate best practices and lessons learnt, for the replication and up-scaling of the EBM approach.</p>	
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6. Enhance effectiveness of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans as regional platforms for supporting integrated ocean policies and management.

No	Action by Regional Seas Secretariat	Related action/project	Results	Delivery date
4.1	Support science-policy dialogue, science-based decisions and provision of regional guidelines	Development of Terms of Reference /Working Group activities	<p>- At the request of Contracting Parties during the 8th STAC Meeting of the SPAW Protocol in 2018, discussions were held to facilitate the further development of Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Working Groups on protected areas, species and Sargassum. This is currently underway via a Teamwork platform monitored by the Regional Activity Centre of the SPAW Protocol.</p> <p>- To date, 33 protected area sites have been accepted for listing under the SPAW Protocol through an established process, based on unique natural characteristics, as well as their management and protection status. However, there is no current programme to promote network-type collaboration among these protected areas.</p> <p>- Following an initial discussion with the Secretariat led by the US Government (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration- NOAA), a draft proposal was developed on ways to establish an operational cooperation programme. The proposal recommends the appointment of a regional working group (or steering committee) led by the SPAW Sub-Programme and the NOAA MPA Centre to identify and</p>	Ongoing

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		propose key aspects for developing this network (including connectivity, governance, capacity building, and sister protected area initiatives). The group will be tasked with proposing a basic framework to promote [current and future] SPAW-listed MPAs to work collaboratively and synergistically under common conservation and management goals.	
	Formation of the new Interim Monitoring and Assessment Working Group in support of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities	<p>During the recent biennial meeting of the Secretariat in Roatán, Honduras on 6 June 2019, Contracting Parties recommended that the Secretariat establish the Interim Monitoring and Assessment Working Group as an Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group, with a new mandate, to support the LBS Protocol.</p> <p>The previous group facilitated the first report of the State of the Convention Area <i>as described in 1.1</i>.</p> <p>A request for nominations was made to all Contracting Parties in June 2019 and a Terms of Reference will be developed shortly.</p>	Ongoing
	Support towards the reactivation and work of the Caribbean Coral Reef Monitoring Network and Coral Reef Conservation	<i>As described under 1.1.</i>	Completed

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4.2	Support member states with developing integrated ocean policy and improve relevant national legislation to enhance chronological consistency and coherency across sectors	Development of a Regional Strategy for Sustainable Ocean-based Economy in the Wider Caribbean Region	<p>The Strategy’s expected immediate outcomes include: national and regional blue economy policies that are environmentally sustainable; strategies for implementation; guidance on resource-efficient and circular sector approaches; and enhanced institutional capacity and financing principles, enabling more efficient and sustainable use of marine and coastal ecosystem services.</p> <p>Within a decade, the Strategy is expected to generate behavioural change in the way Caribbean governments, the private sector and civil society engage and invest in sustainable resource use and reduced human impacts on marine and coastal ecosystems in support of climate-resilient, ocean-based sustainable development—ensuring healthy and resilient oceans and coasts as prerequisite for food security and prosperous social and economic development.</p>	June 2019
4.3	Enhance information exchange and interregional cooperation towards common goals	The Secretariat has mobilized the support of the 11 th European Development Fund (EDF) in providing Capacity Building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in ACP Countries – Phase III (ACP MEAs 3)	<p>The project aims to deliver Objective 2 Component on <i>better management of coasts and oceans and effective implementation of the related regional seas conventions</i>.</p> <p>The following outputs are expected to be delivered via the Secretariat:</p>	2020

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strengthened Governance Frameworks for Regional Seas Conventions and associated protocols. -The development of regionally representative networks of Marine Protected Areas . - Measures for reducing the influx of waste (plastics and other forms of human and industrial liquid and solid waste) entering the marine environment in the four regions developed. 	
		<p>The GEF-Funded Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States Project (IWEco) developed and held a series of nine webinars to build communications capacity amongst participating countries and partners. Topics included: Communication and youth engagement; Participatory 3D Modeling; Participatory Video; and Photography and Visual Storytelling. They will all be available on IWEco’s website by end-October 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased communications and stakeholder management capacity amongst participating countries and partners. 	<p>September 2018</p>

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		<p>The GEF IWEco Project's Regional Media Strategy Workshop was organized by the Communications Partnership in May 2019.</p>	<p>-Guidance to project participating countries and partners in the use of both traditional and social media while ensuring consistent and quality messaging.</p> <p>- A Media Toolkit was prepared to guide project participating countries and partners in the use of both traditional and social media while ensuring consistent and quality messaging.</p>	<p>To be distributed in September 2019.</p>
		<p>The GEF IWEco <u>Project</u>'s first Research Partnership Meeting was convened by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) in November 2018.</p>	<p>Support to applied research to assist the execution of National sub-projects. Regional research and/or inventory projects to support fulfilment of the objectives of the Cartagena Convention and ratification of its three Protocols. Identification of key thematic areas where further research is needed.</p>	<p>Ongoing (end of project - mid 2022?)</p>

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		<p>The first Governance Partnership Meeting of the GEF IWeco Project was held in March 2019. It was convened by (CARPHA) in close collaboration with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Several representatives of regional agencies were in attendance.</p>	<p>- Means to provide technical backstopping to assist countries strengthen and mainstream policies and strategies for better management of watersheds, water resources, land use, and biodiversity.</p>	<p>Ongoing (end of project - mid 2022?)</p>
		<p>The GEF IWeco Project provides support (including funding) and participates in the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association's Annual Conference and Exhibition, in particular the High Level Forums (HLFs) of Ministers and senior officials. In particular, support was given in 2018 to the 14th High Level Forum (HLF) of Caribbean Ministers Responsible for Water and in 2019, to the 15th HLF for Water and the 3rd HLF for Waste.</p>	<p>In 2018, support to regional governance mechanisms such as, the Regional Strategic Action Plan (RSAP) for Governance and Building Climate Resilience in the Water Sector in the Caribbean, was discussed. This is to continue in 2019 with ongoing support to the 15th High Level Forum for Water.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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		<p>SPAW/CaMPAM 13th Training of Trainers (ToT) Regional Course on Marine Protected Area Management of the Caribbean</p> <p><i>(Also linked to technical assistance below under EMMAM project)</i></p>	<p>The 13th edition of the Training of Trainers Regional Course was held in Barbados in April 2017 and focused on:</p> <p>1) promoting sustainable financing and alternative livelihoods; 2) evaluating and restoring coastal ecosystem services; 3) the application of the Decision Support System in the coastal environment context; 4) the development of effective communication tools, training on effective enforcement practices; and 5) the involvement of community stakeholders in MPA management.</p>	<p>April 2018</p>
		<p>Exchanges/mentorships and technical assistance for MPA strengthening</p>	<p>- The Biodiversity Sub-Programme’s Caribbean Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) provided funding for MPAs in SPAW listed sites to enhance MPA effectiveness following the successful round of grants disbursed between 2014-2015. This was undertaken in coordination with The Nature Conservancy under the Climate-Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN project).</p> <p>The last payment of the six grants made to Eastern Caribbean countries was issued in 2017 and included support to two SPAW-listed MPAs: Tobago Cays Marine Park (in St. Vincent and the Grenadines) and Moliniere-Beausejour MPA (in Grenada).</p>	<p>Completed</p>

			<p>- Through the extended EBM project, funding is being provided to MPAs towards: 1) strengthening capacities at SPAW-listed sites to improve their management effectiveness with an Ecosystem Management Approach; 2) the development of Systemic Management Plans for the selected pilot areas in Puerta Plata and Montecristi in the Dominican Republic, and other SPAW MPA sites; and 3) further developing the technical skills of relevant institutional staff.</p> <p>- Efforts are being devoted by the Secretariat to revitalize a Cooperation Programme with Parties for an effective network among the MPAs listed under the SPAW Protocol, based on ecological connectivity and common conservation goals to address protection and management of living marine resources, and ecosystems of the WCR.</p> <p>- Cooperation has been established with other regional networks of MPA managers and environmental agreements, namely collaboration between SPAW- through CaMPAM - and the project “Transatlantic MPA Network: Towards a Transatlantic Partnership of Marine Protected Areas” (part of the “Cooperation with Northern and Southern Transatlantic Dimension” initiative of the European Union). This partnership aims to promote cooperation among MPA managers of</p>	<p>November 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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			<p>countries and territories within the boundaries of the Atlantic Ocean and the sharing of best practices for marine area management.</p>	
		<p>Cooperation between Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) and the Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Wider Caribbean Region (CEP) to fulfill SDG14 #OceanAction17198</p>	<p>The work by the Secretariats of the two respective Conventions for these Regional Seas Programmes facilitate sharing of experiences and best practices beneficial to all member states across the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) and the North-East Atlantic. Such cooperation, based on the Ecosystem Approach involving integrated and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources, represents an important regional oceans governance framework. It facilitates the implementation of activities in countries of both regions for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14 on preserving life below water.</p> <p>Areas for cooperation between the Wider Caribbean Region and the North-East Atlantic include marine protected areas, marine litter and nutrient pollution. OSPAR and CEP will partner to provide technical and programmatic support to member states.</p> <p>It is through such partnerships that our oceans will be sustainably managed, healthy and productive.</p>	<p>The OSPAR - CEP voluntary commitment is due for review in June 2020.</p>

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4.4	Encourage multi-stakeholder participation including NGOs and the private sector to promote compliance with Regional Seas instruments, existing guidelines and regulations of ocean management	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Meetings (STACs) and Conferences of the Parties to Convention (COPs) and its Protocols	<p>Participating Governments, NGOs and partners periodically meet to review the outputs of the biennial work plan, identify priorities, and address complex issues. These meetings also provide a fora within which stakeholders can assess the state of the marine environment in the Convention area and recommend/undertake relevant actions to strengthen and/or support the achievement of the mandate governing the Convention and its Protocols.</p> <p>At the recent Conference of Parties (COP15) to the Cartagena Convention, the 4th LBS COP and 10th SPAW COP held in Roatan, Honduras from 3-6 June 2019, more than 80 regional and international experts, including government officials, NGOs and UN Agencies reviewed the achievements of the Cartagena Convention Secretariat over the last two years and agreed on priorities up to 2020.</p>	STAC Meetings scheduled for 2020.
4.5	Ensure the highest standards of Secretariat performance in support in administration of the Conventions and Action Plan	Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme	-This plan led to the establishment of the UNEP- Caribbean Environment Programme in 1981. As a Regional Seas Programme tasked to protect and develop the marine and coastal ecosystem of the Wider Caribbean Region, UNEP -CEP implements its activities through the following three Sub-Programme areas: the Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution (AMEP), Specially Protected Areas	In force

			<p>and Wildlife (SPAW), Communication, Education, Training and Public Awareness (CETA).</p> <p>The principal objectives of the Action Plan are to assist the Governments of the region in minimizing environmental problems in the Wider Caribbean through assessment of the state of the environment and development activities in environmental management. The Action Plan also establishes a framework for activities requiring regional cooperation in order to strengthen the capacity of the States and Territories of the Wider Caribbean region to implement sound environmental management practices, thus achieving a level of sustainable development in the region.</p> <p>-UNEP-CEP's three Sub-Programmes support the work and activities of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols. The AMEP Sub-Programme supports the Protocols on Pollution (LBS) and Oil Spills while the SPAW (Biodiversity) Sub-Programme oversees the implementation of the SPAW Protocol. The CETA Sub-Programme helps to raise the visibility of the Secretariat's work in the region and strengthen communication with the public, focal points, partners, inter alia.</p>	
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			<p>-To strengthen the work of the Sub-Programmes and improve the efficiency of service delivery, the Sub-Programmes engage an extensive network of stakeholders, including national governments, regional and international organizations, institutions/agencies that specialize in areas of work related to the Convention, and organizations in the health, environmental, education, and tourism sectors, inter alia.</p> <p>-UNEP-CEP is also governed by a Bureau and Monitoring Committee which are elected during the biennial sitting of the Convention's COP Meetings. These mechanisms, and by extension the overall body of Contracting Parties, play a role in monitoring the outputs and resource efficiency of the Secretariat throughout each biennium and providing overall policy direction, thereby ensuring that deliverables are maintained at a high standard and in accordance with established principles.</p>	
		Strategy for the Caribbean Environment Programme	<p>The new Regional Strategy for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) is intended to serve as a basis for the further development and implementation of approaches that focus on ocean-based economies and blue economy approaches.</p> <p>It will also provide more integrated support to Contracting Parties for meeting their obligations under the Cartagena</p>	Revision of the strategy to be finalized by December 2019

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		<p>Convention, its Protocols and related regional and global commitments.</p> <p>The mission is to facilitate integrated ecosystem-based management through the control, reduction and prevention of marine pollution and the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of coastal and marine resources and habitats.</p> <p>Through greater multi-stakeholder partnerships, as well as linkages with regional and global frameworks, CEP will more effectively respond to the challenges facing the marine and coastal environment in the Wider Caribbean Region and enhance the delivery of results under its biennial work plans.</p> <p>Based on feedback at country level, the strategy is expected to be revised by December 2019 for formal adoption at the latest February 2020.</p>	

II. Challenges with the implementation of the Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2017 – 2020

- Limited human resources at the Secretariat due to higher than usual turnover rate. Addressing the high demand of small scale or country-specific issues relating to Contracting Parties has also been impacted by this limitation and has proven to be difficult. In this context, enhanced UNEP coordination in the region would increase both regional and national impact.*

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- *Insufficient funding, particularly for some activities (e.g. convening of biennial meetings and undertaking communication and outreach activities).*
- *Lack of awareness of the work of Regional Seas by other branches of UNEP including the Regional Offices.*
- *Challenges regarding the cooperation of partners to fulfil their role and carry out objectives, in accordance with their respective mandates, to enable greater synergies and reduce overlap and the duplication of efforts.*
- *Umoja 2: there has been inconsistent support from Headquarters to empower the Secretariat to be more self-sufficient, particularly in the use of the UMOJA 2 application, which would consequently reduce reliance on HQ.*
- *Inadequate recognition/acknowledgment of the relevant projects being executed by the Secretariat and by extension, a lack of understanding of the regional context (geographically and otherwise) within which the Cartagena Convention functions.*

III. Lessons learnt (2017 – up to date)

- *The importance of establishing mechanisms for direct communication and exchanges with national and technical focal points, and finding out any concerns they might have about the work of the Secretariat, including projects and activities, was noted as a key lesson for continued application. This included the use of more frequent communication, the dissemination of newsletters etc.*
- *Implementing as many of the decisions taken by Member States during the Conference of Parties and Intergovernmental Meeting assisted greatly in developing credibility among the Contracting Parties, as well as among partners and donors.*
- *Reporting to Contracting Parties on the implementation of the decisions and how they were accomplished, as well as highlighting shortcomings in executing these decisions, was also important. This process helped to build the confidence of Contracting Parties in the work of the Secretariat, which translated into additional support for the Secretariat both politically and financially.*
- *It was also important to develop and source funding for new projects that address priority environmental issues on the ground in each country.*
- *The increased use of social media in highlighting and promoting ideas and actions, as well as, participating in national and regional activities spurred significant interest and support for national and regional efforts.*
- *The continued dissemination of quarterly newsletters to Contracting Parties and Regional Activity Centres supported the sharing of information on the activities of the Secretariat.*
- *The increased awareness of CEP's website, along with the improvements made to its layout, contributed to greater online traffic and further interest among external organizations to feature their blogpost content related to subject areas under the purview of the Secretariat.*

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- *Frequent engagement with the public created opportunities to highlight the many ways in which they can contribute to promoting good environmental practices and to encourage them to discard preconceived ideas that this task is solely the responsibility of designated organizations. These interactions also helped target audiences to identify sustainable practices at home, in businesses and communities especially in areas where projects have been implemented or have ended.*

IV. Any other issues / decisions / case studies / experiences to be shared

- *A policy will be established to identify the role of inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) as partners in the development of future SOCAR reports and in the overall implementation of the LBS Protocol.*
- *Discussions will continue, through the Working Group and the STAC, on additional monitoring parameters to ensure that focal areas within the LBS Protocol are addressed and all types of pollution are adequately considered.*

V Emerging issues that have not been covered in the RSSD 2017-2020 but are proposed to be covered during the next RSSD

- *Work with Contracting Parties and partner agencies to better monitor and document the effects of pollutants in the coastal and marine environment on human health, including through the collection of epidemiological data and application of the International Health Regulations (IHR).*
- *Work with the Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks to facilitate training in GIS, and data management and analysis to ensure that Parties are equipped with the necessary capacity to assess environmental risks resulting from coastal and marine pollution.*
- *Increased opportunities for training, professional exchanges, coordination of quality assurance activities, serving as reference laboratories, and in the design and implementation of national and/or regional monitoring programmes.*
- *The establishment of a policy that identifies the role of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) as partners in the development of future SOCAR reports and in the overall implementation of the LBS Protocol (as noted in IV).*
- *Continued discussions, through the Working Group and the STAC, on additional monitoring parameters to ensure that focal areas within the LBS protocol are addressed and all types of pollution are adequately considered (as noted in IV).*

*Please submit this report to Nancy Soi at Nancy.soi@un.org by **30 August 2019**