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Sixth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory
Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially
Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean
Region

Cartagena, Colombia, 8 December 2014

REPORT OF THE MEETING

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ACRONYMS

Birds Caribbean	Formerly SCSCB Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds
CABI	CAB International formerly Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau
CaMPAM	Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum
CAR/RCU	Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAD	Central American Commission for Environment and Development
CEP	Caribbean Environment Programme
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CLME	Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystems
CLRT	CaMPAM Leadership and Resource Team
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
COP	Conference of Parties
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CWC	Caribbean Waterbird Census
EBM	Ecosystem Based Management
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas
ECCN	Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Network
GCFI	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute
GCRMN	Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GISP	Global Invasive Species Programme
IAC	Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IBA	Important Bird Area
ICRI	International Coral Reef Initiative
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOCARIBE	Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission's Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IWC	International Whaling Commission
MAIA	Marine Protected Areas in the Atlantic Arc
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MedPAN	Mediterranean Network of Protected Area Managers
MMAP	Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region
MoC	Memorandum of Cooperation
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OECS-ESDU	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States -Environment and Sustainable Development Unit
RAC	Regional Activity Centre
Ramsar	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
RCDR	Reef Check Dominican Republic
RLC	Regional Lionfish Committee
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
SBNMS	Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary
SIDS-POA	Small Islands Developing States-Programme of Action
SPAW	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-DEPI	UNEP-Division of Environmental Policy Implementation

UNEP-DTIE	UNEP-Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas
WCR	Wider Caribbean Region
WDPA	World Database on Protected Areas
WECAFC	Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
WHMSI	Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative
WIDECAST	Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network

INTRODUCTION

1. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region held in Kingston, 15 to 18 January 1990, adopted the SPA Protocol to the Cartagena Convention, which came into force on 18 June 2000. Article 20 of the SPA Protocol establishes the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). This Article provides that each Party shall appoint a scientific expert appropriately qualified in the field covered by the Protocol as its representative on the Committee, who may be accompanied by other experts and advisors appointed by that Party. Article 20 also provides that the Committee may also seek information from scientifically and technically qualified experts and organizations.
2. In light of the above, and in keeping with Decision No. 1 of the First Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) (COP1) (Havana, Cuba, 24-25 September 2001) and Decisions of the Seventh COP, this Meeting was convened by UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP), in Cartagena, Colombia on 8 December 2014.
3. The objectives of the Sixth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC6) to the SPA Protocol are to:
 - **Review** the status of activities of the SPA Subprogramme for 2013-2014, including activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPA (SPA-RAC) in Guadeloupe;
 - **Assess** the reports presented by Parties for listing protected areas under the SPA Protocol and make recommendations on their listing to the SPA COP8;
 - **Review** the shortlist of species proposed for listing under the SPA Protocol by the Ad Hoc Working Group and make recommendations for listing to the SPA COP8;
 - **Review** the draft guidelines for exemptions under Article 11(2) of the SPA Protocol, and make recommendations for adoption to the SPA COP8; and
 - **Develop** the 2015-2016 Workplan and Budget of the SPA Subprogramme for subsequent approval by the Eighth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the SPA Protocol and for subsequent endorsement by the Sixteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan of the Caribbean Environment Programme, and the Thirteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region in Cartagena, Colombia, 9 and 11-13 December 2014, respectively.
4. The Sixteen (16) Contracting Parties to the SPA Protocol were invited to the Meeting to nominate their respective representatives to be part of the SPA STAC6 in keeping with Article 20 of the Protocol. Other member Governments of CEP, United Nations agencies and non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations were invited to participate as Observers. The provisional list of participants was prepared during the Meeting and presented in document UNEP (DEPI)/CARWG.36/INF.2.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. Opening statements were provided by Mr. Nelson Andrade Colmenares, Coordinator of the Caribbean Environment Programme and of the Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention.
6. In his remarks Mr. Nelson Andrade Colmenares thanked the Government of Colombia for its financial and logistical support which made possible the convening of this Meeting in Cartagena as well as three (3) other intergovernmental Meetings of CEP also held in Cartagena during the same week. He highlighted the financial contributions of the GEF and donor Governments, such as Spain and Italy, which although not Member Countries to the CEP or Parties to SPAW, have seen the value in supporting the programme and its activities.
7. Mr. Andrade Colmenares also expressed gratitude to the staff of the SPAW-RAC for their dedication and technical inputs, and the Government of France for its valuable financial contribution to the SPAW Sub-programme and consequently to the goals of the Cartagena Convention and its SPAW Protocol.
8. In closing, he acknowledged the constructive participation of the many partners of SPAW, from the academic, non-governmental and private sectors, which have made possible the implementation of a dynamic and responsive programme for the conservation of fauna, flora and the biodiversity of the Wider Caribbean.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

2.1. Rules of Procedure

9. The Meeting agreed to apply *mutatis mutandis* the Rules of Procedure for the Meetings of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention). (See Reference Document UNEP, 2010)

2.2. Election of Officers

10. The Meeting elected from among the representatives of the Contracting Parties to SPAW, the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, and the Rapporteur for the conduct of the Meeting:

Chairperson: Kim Downes-Agard (Barbados)

Vice-Chairperson: Jenny Sharyne Bowie Wilches (Colombia)

Rapporteur: LaVerne Ragster (U.S.A)

2.3. Organization of Work

11. English, French and Spanish were the working languages of the Meeting and simultaneous interpretation in these languages was provided. The working documents of the Meeting were also available in all the working languages. The Provisional List of Documents of the Meeting was presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.36/INF.1, and as Annex II to this report. The Meeting was convened in plenary session.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

12. The Meeting was invited to adopt the Provisional Agenda of the Meeting, prepared by the Secretariat based on inputs received from the Contracting Parties during preparations for the Meeting, on relevant recommendations and decisions from previous STAC and COP Meetings of the SPAW Protocol, as well as on emerging issues of relevance to the biodiversity of the Wider Caribbean. The Provisional Agenda proposed by the Secretariat was presented in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/1. The Agenda as approved by the Meeting is contained in Annex I.

AGENDA ITEM 4: STATUS OF ACTIVITIES OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR 2013-2014, INCLUDING ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPAW (SPAW-RAC) IN GUADELOUPE

13. The Chairperson invited Ms. Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury of the Secretariat to present “Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2013-2014” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.3), drawing attention to its four (4) Annexes:
- Annex I: Status of Budget for the SPAW Programme for 2013-2014;
 - Annex II: Summary of Funds Provided by the French Government through SPAW-RAC for the Implementation of SPAW Activities;
 - Annex III: Status of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol); and
 - Annex IV: Status of the Decisions of the 7th Conference of Parties (COP7)
14. In her presentation, Ms. Vanzella-Khoury, Programme Officer for SPAW, recalled that the Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Programme for 2013-2014 was approved by the Seventh Meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP7) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region (23 October 2012, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic), and the Fifteenth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Twelfth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 25-27 October 2012).
15. She reiterated that during the period 2013-2014, activities focused on assisting countries with the management of marine protected areas (MPAs) and a number of protected species, as well as coordinating with other environmental agreements and programmes dealing with biodiversity issues of particular relevance to the SPAW Protocol such as CBD, Ramsar, IWC, IAC and ICRI.
16. The day-to-day coordination for implementation of the programme activities continued to be overseen by the SPAW Programme Officer, who is responsible for the overall coordination of the SPAW Programme, with support from the SPAW Programme Assistant and the SPAW-RAC in Guadeloupe. Specific activities for the 2013-2014 Workplan fell under five (5) major programme elements (sub-programmes):
- a) Programme Coordination;
 - b) Strengthening of Protected Areas in the Wider Caribbean Region (including training and capacity building for marine protected areas management) and finalization of the project in support of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative;
 - c) Development of Guidelines for Protected Areas and Species Management;
 - d) Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species; and

- e) Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (including coral reefs and Invasive Alien Species activities and implementation of CLME project components).
17. During the presentation the Secretariat also briefly referred to the following on major areas of work:
- Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe with regard to RAC operations and budget for the period 2013-2014 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.4);
 - Update on the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its major activities, including the major outcomes of the Caribbean Challenge Project and the ongoing Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) Project (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.5);
 - Update on the Implementation of Activities in Support of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) including the Government of Spain-UNEP Lifeweb project “Protecting Habitats and Migration Corridors for Marine Mammals in the South and Northeast Pacific and the Wider Caribbean through Marine Protected Area Networks” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.6); and
 - Update on the GEF Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Project and the outcomes of the CLME Reef Biodiversity and Reef Fisheries Pilot Project: Summary Report, Best Practices and Lessons Learnt (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.7)
18. The Meeting was informed that since the SPAW COP7, with the accession of Grenada and The Bahamas in 2012 there are to date, sixteen (16) Governments that are Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol (The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, France, Grenada, Guyana, The Netherlands, Panama, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America and Venezuela).
19. In keeping with the objectives of developing synergies, promoting the Protocol and optimizing resources, the following activities were completed during the biennium:
- Collaboration with UNEP’s Division of Environmental Policy Implementation’s (DEPI) Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Branch for the implementation of the project “Protecting Habitats and Migration Corridors for Marine Mammals in the South and Northeast Pacific and the Wider Caribbean through Marine Protected Area Networks”, with funds provided by the Government of Spain and finalized in April 2014 (USD\$395,000);
 - Collaboration with the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina (CORALINA) for the implementation of activities at the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve, Colombia pilot site under the Management and Conservation of Reef Biodiversity and Reef Fisheries Pilot Project under the Global Environment Facility’s (GEF) Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project, completed in November, 2013 (USD\$260,000);
 - Collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic for the implementation of activities at the Montecristi National Park, pilot site under the Management and Conservation of Reef Biodiversity and Reef Fisheries Pilot Project under the GEF CLME Project, completed in November, 2013 (USD\$200,000);
 - Collaboration with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for the implementation of activities at the Pedro Bank, Jamaica pilot site under the Management and Conservation of Reef Biodiversity

- and Reef Fisheries Pilot Project under the GEF CLME Project, completed in November, 2013 (USD\$336,850);
- Project Cooperation Agreement with The Nature Conservancy, through the SPAW-RAC for implementation of the Project “Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN)” to promote effective marine managed areas, signed 19 November 2013 (Euros 1,176,000.00) (ongoing);
 - Project Cooperation Agreement with the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute for the implementation of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative project, completed in December 2013 (USD\$273,000); and
 - A Memorandum of Cooperation was completed in 2014 with the Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) for implementation of greater collaboration and coordination on sustainable management and conservation of coastal and marine resources within the Mesoamerica reef.
20. Ms. Vanzella-Khoury informed the Meeting about activities undertaken to strengthen marine protected areas in the Region through CaMPAM (see UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.36/INF.5). These were primarily implemented under the project “Regional Support for the Caribbean Challenge Initiative: Networking, consolidation and regional coordination of MPA Management”. The project, funded by the Directorate General for Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (USD 1.25 Million), supports the overarching Caribbean Challenge, which aims to protect 20% of marine and coastal habitats in eight (8) Caribbean countries (The Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts and Nevis) by 2020.
21. The Secretariat reported briefly on the assessment of Protected Areas proposed for listing by Parties, as contained in the document “Report on the Evaluation of Protected Areas Proposed for Listing Under the SPAW Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/3). It was noted that there were currently eighteen (18) Protected Areas listed under the SPAW Protocol with a first meeting of the sites held at the GCFI annual meeting (November 2013) to launch the cooperation programme as per Article 7. This was also followed by a call of proposals from listed sites to provide support to those sites. The Secretariat launched in 2014 another call for Parties to nominate additional sites for listing with an additional thirteen (13) sites proposed by Parties for review by STAC6. (See UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/3 for details) (See Agenda Item 5)
22. Progress regarding the Working Group on the application of Criteria for Listing Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol was provided. In order to finalize the review and refinement of the initial list of species for the inclusion in the Annexes, a short list of species was produced during the biennium by the dedicated Working Group, including additional species or groups of species, in collaboration with the IUCN’s Red List for the Caribbean. (See Report of the UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/4) (See Agenda Item 6)
23. The Secretariat invited Ms. Anne Fontaine, Director of SPAW-RAC since September 2014 in replacement of Ms. Hélène Souan, to present an update on the additional support received from the SPAW-RAC to meet the objectives of this sub-programme.
24. In her presentation, she recalled that the SPAW-RAC was located in Guadeloupe, FWI and has been hosted since 2009 by the National Park of Guadeloupe. The functioning costs of the RAC are covered by the French Government, including salaries for the Director, three (3) project coordinators and an assistant, currently to the order of US\$430,000 per year. Two (2) other project coordinators (full and part time), and another assistant, are funded through specific projects.

25. Ms. Fontaine highlighted that the RAC supported the Secretariat with various activities, especially the coordination of actions mandated by SPAW COP7: the implementation of the listing of protected areas under SPAW with the relevant Working Group; the implementation of priorities within the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region (MMAP); support to activities for the conservation of endangered species; coordination of the activities and strategy for the control of the invasive lionfish; coordination of the Working Group to design criteria and a procedure to assess exemptions under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol, as well as the application of criteria for listing species under the Annexes to the Protocol; and the review and translation of a number of documents. A website is maintained in three (3) languages (English, French and Spanish), and a quarterly newsletter issued with fourteen (14) issues to date (see UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.36/INF.4).
26. She summarized finally, additional activities developed by the RAC upon request and funding from the Government of France that were also complimentary to the objectives and actions of the SPAW Workplan.
27. The Chairperson thanked the Secretariat and SPAW-RAC for their comprehensive and informative presentations, and congratulated the latter for the numerous actions, activities and programmes that were implemented, despite limited funding. He then invited the Meeting to provide any comments on the activities implemented and to make the necessary recommendations.
28. The Government of Colombia thanked the Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC for their comprehensive and complete report and presentation. The delegate highlighted the participation of Colombia in several initiatives, including the GEF-funded Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project, under which the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve was selected as a pilot site. She also drew attention to Colombia's collaboration with CaMPAM, for the organization of a training/capacity building workshop for Marine Protected Areas in which seventy (70) persons participated, and took this opportunity to thank UNEP-CEP for their support.
29. The delegate mentioned that, even if Colombia to date had not participated actively in SPAW's Marine Mammal Action Plan for the Wider Caribbean (MMAP), there was a strong will to commit to this initiative. An internal national process was underway with the objective of developing an action plan for Marine Mammals in Colombia, including a guidelines manual. She stressed the importance of awareness and information sharing and reminded that there were important gaps of information on species in the region, including marine mammals. She was pleased to note the MMAP sought to address those needs and noted that organizations such as NOAA could be instrumental, along with the efforts being carried out regarding capacity building and training.
30. The delegate of Colombia also conveyed her appreciation of the regional efforts on the issue concerning the lionfish invasion, and further informed the Meeting that Colombia was developing a control strategy through an important cooperative effort between the public and the private sectors, e.g., restaurant and fisheries or MPAs managers. She mentioned several awareness tools, and in particular three (3) golden lions received by Colombia during the 2014 Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in the outdoor category. Finally, the delegate of Colombia expressed gratefulness on behalf of her government for other SPAW efforts, especially in the area of coral reef conservation and monitoring.
31. The delegate of Trinidad and Tobago also thanked the Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC for their comprehensive presentation. He expressed Trinidad and Tobago's high concern on the alien invasive species issue, and problems associated with their growing population. He emphasized that

the lionfish invasion was now a problem throughout the entire region, and that it was also the case with many invasive terrestrial species such as the Giant African snail. He stressed the importance of creating synergies among Parties of the SPAW protocol, considering that some countries had stronger regulations than others and could therefore provide support for other territories. The delegate highlighted his wish to have a better overview of the regulation frameworks for the different countries concerning the invasive species issue.

32. The delegate of France expressed gratitude to the Secretariat, the SPAW-RAC and to all the Contracting Parties for the work undertaken under the SPAW Protocol. The delegate informed the meeting that a presentation would be given under subsequent agenda item on the status of the Manatee reintroduction project in Guadeloupe which made progress thanks to other SPAW Parties.
33. The delegate of the Dominican Republic thanked the Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC for their presentation and work. He stressed that the lionfish invasion was a very serious issue throughout the entire region, and therefore it was highly important to work cooperatively. He further asked the Secretariat to focus on this issue.
34. The delegate of the United States of America thanked the Government of Colombia and congratulated the Secretariat on the activities developed during the biennium. He pointed out the significant accomplishments achieved by the SPAW Secretariat and the SPAW-RAC and their valuable contribution to the management of MPAs and species. He encouraged the Secretariat and the Parties to keep this work up and to enhance partnerships with others organizations, as the resources are scarce and it is therefore important to look for synergies.
35. He highlighted the very good work on marine mammals mapping and assessments through the Lifeweb project for which he thanked the Government of Spain and UNEP. He mentioned that his government participated in the Pacific Lifeweb and suggested to compare both initiatives and seek synergies. He congratulated the Government of Panama for its enhanced protection to marine mammals on both sides of the Panama Canal, and recognized WIDECAS^T's excellence and long history.
36. He also commended the important work done on the lionfish issue. He informed the meeting that funding from the United States department was granted to GCFI to develop a new web portal to provide access on accurate and updated information pertaining to the lionfish. Finally, the delegate thanked the Government of France for its effort to make conservation in the region a priority through funding to the RAC, and welcomed the new SPAW-RAC director, Ms. Anne Fontaine.
37. The delegate of The Bahamas also expressed its concern about the lionfish invasion issue. The delegate then mentioned the great concern of his country regarding the smuggling of iguanas, in particular, the recent discovery of thirteen (13) Bahamian rock iguanas at Heathrow airport, United Kingdom. In light of this, he insisted on the need for public education programmes regarding the importance of endemic species. He stressed in particular a current programme of the WWF, with the United Kingdom, for the enforcement of endemic iguanas conservation and management. The delegate of the Bahamas echoed Trinidad and Tobago's request on the need to strengthen enforcement through a regional network.

AGENDA ITEM 5: PROTECTED AREAS PROPOSED BY PARTIES FOR LISTING UNDER THE SPAW PROTOCOL

38. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat and Mr. Franck Gourdin, as coordinator at the SPAW RAC and of the Working Group on the assessment of the Protected Areas proposed for listing, to report on the protected areas presented by Parties, as contained in the document “Report on the Evaluation of Protected Areas Proposed for Listing Under the SPAW Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/3). This report reflects the work undertaken by the Group following the SPAW COP7 (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 23 October 2012).
39. In his report Mr. Gourdin outlined that, with a view to strengthen the Protected Areas listed under the Protocol, the UNEP-CEP with its SPAW Regional Activity Centre launched in 2013, the Cooperation Programme as mandated under Article 7 of the Protocol, as had been included in the SPAW Workplan approved at SPAW COP7.
40. In this context, the Secretariat provided small grants of US\$12,000 (per site) to support needs within the listed Protected Areas, as well as to assist with additional nominations from Parties which expressed a commitment in additional sites for listing. Five (5) grants were awarded in November 2013 and all completed to date. These included activities such as exchanges, training, mentorships and other activities to increase capacity on protected area management and promote the listing of additional Protected Areas:
- “Strengthening Marine Protected Area enforcement capacity at Hol Chan, Glover’s Reef and Port Honduras Marine Reserves, Belize” to the Toledo Institute for Development (TIDE) with the contribution of the Belize Fisheries Dept.;
 - “Invasive alien species management strategies: learning and sharing best practices between northern islands protected areas”, to the National Natural Réserve of Saint-Martin, FWI;
 - “Sharing experiences among the National Park of Guanahacabibes in Cuba and protected areas from México and Belize”, to the Parque Nacional Guanahacabibes with the contribution of the Centro Nacional of Protected Areas (in Cuba) and the Grupo Tortuguero del Caribe AC (Mexico);
 - “Strengthening capacity building of artisanal fishermen by exploring environmentally-friendly alternative livelihoods in Seaflower Marine Protected Area, Colombia” to Blue Dream Ltd with the contribution of CORALINA; and
 - “Nature education exchange program to assist in the development of a Junior Ranger Program in Saba” to the Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF)” with the contribution of STINAPA Bonaire.
41. In his report, Mr. Gourdin mentioned the two (2) new on-line tools that were completed in July 2014 to generate statistics and search through the data contained in the reports of the SPAW-listed protected areas. Both are readily available on the website dedicated to the listing process (www.spaw-palisting.org) with an interactive map.
42. Mr. Gourdin reported on the process for listing Protected Areas under SPAW Protocol, indicating that it has been proceeded by the Working Group established with this purpose, and that this work has enabled the nomination of the following thirteen (13) additional Protected Areas by Member States for listing under the SPAW Protocol :
- Colombia: Regional Natural Park of Wetlands between the rivers León and Suriquí;
 - The Kingdom of the Netherlands: the Saba National Marine Park, the St Eustatius National Marine Park and the Man O War Shoal Marine Park (Sint Maarten);
 - France: the Reserve "Etang des Salines" and the Reserve "Versants Nord de la Montagne Pelée" in Martinique;

- Belize: Port Honduras Marine Reserve;
 - Dominican Republic: La Caleta Submarine Park, the National Park Jaragua, the National Park Haitises and the National Park Sierra de Bahoruco;
 - Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: the Tobago Cay Marine Park; and
 - Grenada: the Molinière-Beauséjour Reserve.
43. The Meeting was invited to review the report and to endorse its recommendations for approval by the SPAW COP8 (Cartagena, Colombia, 9 December 2014).
44. The delegate of Dominican Republic thanked the Technical team for the evaluation. The delegate added that the four (4) Marine Protected Areas proposed by the Dominican Republic for listing under the SPAW protocol are of fundamental importance for biodiversity conservation in the country, especially regarding marine birds conservation.
45. The delegate of France thanked the Secretariat and the RAC for their work. Since the last STAC and COP meetings in 2012, two (2) French areas (in Martinique) have been proposed to be listed considering their strong ecological interest as well as for one of them, its sociocultural interest.
46. The delegate from Guyana thanked the government of Colombia for hosting the STAC and COP Meetings. He requested additional information on the listing of a Protected Area under the SPAW Protocol and its implications for the country. He also asked the Secretariat for details on the criteria for listing a Protected Area under the SPAW Protocol, especially regarding the obligation of effective management versus newly created Protected Areas.
47. The delegate from Trinidad and Tobago also asked about the possibility to propose a site already listed under the Ramsar Convention for listing under the SPAW Protocol.
48. Ms. Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury, SPAW Programme Officer, answered that all Parties are invited to propose for listing Protected Areas under the SPAW Protocol and recalled the process to be followed. One of the criteria for the evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed is indeed the requirement to have a management plan or at least a “management framework” already in place. She confirmed that a site already listed under the Ramsar Convention can also be proposed for listing under the SPAW Protocol. She added that the Secretariat was engaged in a process of collaboration and synergies with other Conventions such as the Ramsar under the framework of Memoranda of Cooperation which already exists between those treaties and the SPAW Protocol.

AGENDA ITEM 6: SPECIES PROPOSED BY THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP FOR LISTING UNDER THE ANNEXES OF THE SPAW PROTOCOL

49. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat and the Coordinator of the *ad hoc* Working Group, Mr. Paul Hoetjes, to present the work undertaken by the Group following SPAW COP7 (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 23 October 2012), as contained in the document “Report of the Working Group on the Application of Criteria for Listing Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.36/4).
50. In his presentation, he outlined the process undertaken by the *ad hoc* Working Group for reviewing the list of 100 species that was presented to SPAW STAC5 (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 22 October 2012). For its work, the Working Group also took into account the list of species presented by Cuba with recommendations for listing, for a total of 123 species altogether.

51. Mr. Hoetjes recalled the criteria used to evaluate and score species, and to group them according to the degree of protection considered most appropriate (i.e., Annex I/II, or Annex III). This process resulted in a shortlist of 25 species for which listing on Annex II was recommended, and 12 species for which listing on Annex III was recommended. Taking into account the request from Cuba, after the discussions in the Working Group were concluded, for non-inclusion of some species under Annex II, the Chair suggested their listing under Annex III instead.
52. The Chairperson invited the Meeting to review the draft list of species and to provide comments and make recommendations on the listing to the SPAW COP8 (Cartagena, Colombia, 9 December 2014).
53. The delegate of the United States of America thanked Mr. Hoetjes for the leadership of the Working Group and acknowledged this work as an excellent first step in the process of adding species to the Annexes. According to his government, the whole process requires the following steps: 1) any Party may nominate a species for inclusion under an Annex of the SPAW Protocol and provides the supporting documentation to assess whether the species meets the criteria for listing; 2) SPAW STAC reviews the nomination and the documentation in order to make a recommendation to the COP; and 3) the COP makes a decision about the listing of the species under an Annex. He highlighted that his government used this framework to propose the Nassau grouper for review by SPAW STAC6. Supporting documentation was provided following the guidelines in Art. 19 of the Protocol.
54. Regarding the list of species proposed by the Working Group, the delegate of the United States of America felt that he did not have all the information needed for assessing the proposal and that the next steps should be to prepare the supporting documentation for each species.
55. The delegate of France thanked the Working Group and the Chair for their excellent work. Regarding the inclusion of tuna, she recalled that the sustainable management of these fisheries falls under the competence of the Regional Fisheries Organizations. Thus, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) has competence for the stocks of western bluefin tuna (BFT-W), bigeye tuna and billfishes. She added that the Scientific Committee of ICCAT is in charge of assessing the stocks concerned and is the competent scientific body to assess the population status - any measure of prohibition or restriction on catches should be strictly debated and adopted by ICCAT before additional protection measures are taken by the Cartagena Convention and SPAW. Therefore, the delegate from France asked that tuna managed by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thynnus thynnus*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), blue marlin and white marlin) not be included in Annex II or III, pending a review by ICCAT on population status and action.
56. Regarding the inclusion of sharks, the delegate from France expressed her agreement on the listing under Annex II, of the species proposed by the Working Group with the exception of five (5) species: daggenose shark (*Isogomphodon oxyrinchus*), dusky shark (*Carcharhinus obscurus*), Caribbean electric ray (*Narcine bancroftii*), shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) and longfin mako (*Isurus paucus*). She explained that these five (5) species regularly interact with fisheries and their inclusion in Annex II would be impractical. However, she proposed the inclusion of these five (5) species under Annex III, which would better reflect their status and the assessments made by other international fora - this would make it possible to strengthen the implementation of specific management measures. She also called for complementary studies on catches for these five (5) species by the next COP SPAW. She asked to strengthen exchanges between the Cartagena Convention and particularly the SPAW Protocol and Regional Fisheries Organizations similar to what had already been done in the Mediterranean and North Atlantic.

57. Regarding species whose protection was already established in the framework of other legal arrangements, (*Alopias superciliosus*, *Pristis pectinata*, *Pristis perotteti*, *Carcharhinus longimanus*, *Cetorhinus maximus*, *Rhincodon typus*, *Sphyrna lewini*, *Sphyrna mokarran*, *Manta birostris*, *Sphyrna zygaena*, *Carcharodon carcharias* and *Hippocampus erectus*), the delegate from France supported their inclusion in Annex II.
58. Regarding coral reefs species, the delegate from France agreed with the inclusion of the species *Acropora palmata* and *Acropora cervicornis*, in agreement with the particularly vulnerable status of these species on a regional scale, relayed by the IUCN Red List for the Caribbean currently in preparation. Similarly, she supported the proposal to include the two (2) species *Montastrea annularis* and *Montastrea faveolata* in Annex II which is consistent with the functional importance of these species throughout the region. However, it should be mentioned that these two (2) species are no longer part of the genus *Montastrea* but *Orbicella* (*Orbicella annularis*, *Orbicella faveolata*). Moreover, she expressed her surprise at the proposal to include *Millepora striata* in this Annex, since this species was not considered as threatened in the region.
59. Regarding species of fish proposed for listing under Annex III, the delegate from France reiterated the opposition of her government to list under Annex III, as well as Annex II, species of tuna (Atlantic blue fin tuna, bigeye tuna, blue marlin and white marlin), recalling that ICCAT remained competent on the assessment and management of these species in the area. She expressed the agreement of her government on the U.S proposal to list the Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) under Annex III of the Protocol. She requested that the Goliath grouper (*Epinephelus itajara*) be listed under Annex III and not Annex II.
60. Regarding species of birds, the delegate from France mentioned that the scientific name of Torcaza Cabeciblanca was changed to *Columba leucocephala* instead of *Patagioenas leucocephala*. She expressed the agreement from her government with the proposal to list this species, considered as “near-threatened”, under Annex III.
61. The delegate of Colombia thanked the Working Group for the excellent analysis of species carried out. She expressed the wish of her government to apply the precautionary principle for some species, in particular coral reefs species that are considered as requiring very special protection and therefore expressed her agreement for listing these species under Annex II. Regarding sharks, a better management of these species is sought and she expressed a preference for their inclusion under Annex III instead of Annex II, considering in particular, various incidents involving these species. She noted that the National Fishery Authority in Colombia had already banned the fishing of sharks and that work had been undertaken to mitigate by-catch. Regarding Nassau grouper, she recognized that this species was under greatest threat and agreed to its inclusion under Annex III. Regarding the proposed species of tuna, her government would agree for listing these species under Annex III, but also shared the concern already expressed by other Parties about strengthening the coordination with other international bodies which have the competence for managing these stocks. She also stressed the lack of information regarding these species in the Caribbean region. Finally, the delegate from Colombia agreed to the listing of species of plants and birds as proposed in the report.
62. The delegate of Guyana expressed reservation about the proposed listing of sharks and rays, and asked for more time in order to discuss with the fishery department of Guyana before any decision be taken.
63. The Observer of Humane Society International (HSI) thanked Colombia for hosting the meetings. He recalled that he was a member of the Working Group and expressed his thanks to the Chair of the Working Group for the work accomplished. He expressed his concern regarding species of sharks and rays and wished it would be possible to reach an agreement for listing some of them under

- Annex II. He agreed with the delegate from the United States of America on the fact that it would be better to have a more formal procedure for listing species under the Annexes of the Protocol, and encouraged the Parties to follow in the future, the process suggested by the government of the United States of America. However, from his point of view, he considered that there was no objection for the STAC to review the present proposal and make a recommendation to the COP.
64. The Observer of MAR Fund asked whether it was possible to propose for listing under the SPAW Protocol, a species like the parrot fish whose importance in the functioning of coral reefs was stressed in the recent report entitled “*Status and trends of Caribbean Coral Reefs : 1970- 2012*”.
65. On the question raised by MAR Fund, Ms. Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury, on behalf of the Secretariat, answered that the SPAW Protocol was one of the first agreements to follow the ecosystem approach for conservation issues and as such it was possible to list species whose importance is recognized for the preservation of an ecosystem. Regarding the various and non-consensual interventions on the draft list of species proposed by the Working Group, she asked the Parties to comment on the different proposals, in particular those from the governments of the United States of America, France, Colombia and Guyana, so that a recommendation can be made to the COP.
66. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands, Chair of the Working Group, considered it necessary to recall that listing a species under Annex III did not in any way impede the work of other international bodies. On the contrary, he estimated that it could help the management of fisheries.
67. The delegate from the United States agreed with the statement made by the delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands on the implications of Annex III listing. However, he insisted on the need for a formal procedure for listing species under the Annexes of the Protocol, as detailed previously, which allowed an informed decision by the Parties and the STAC. He considered that the comparative analysis of different regulations undertaken by the Working Group was an important piece of information, but did not feel he was in possession of all the information required for reviewing a proposal for listing species under the Annexes of the Protocol.
68. The Secretariat noted that there was no agreement and that further discussion was needed. He proposed that a Working Group meet to prepare a recommendation that could be submitted to the STAC for the consideration by the COP. The Government of the United States of America chaired the Working Group, whose composition was left open.
69. The delegate of the United States of America, as chair of the ad hoc Working Group established at the Meeting, presented their recommendations:
- *That the STAC6 does not take immediate action on the list of species for possible inclusion in Annexes II and III developed by the ad hoc Working Group*
 - *That the ad hoc Working Group be reestablished in the inter-sessional period to continue its work on this matter*
 - *That the Working Group circulate a short list of species from the preliminary list to which no specific objection has been raised, taking into account input received from Parties during the Working Group correspondence and during the STAC6 meeting*
 - *That the Working Group elaborate guidelines (e.g. checklist) for the nomination of species for listing in the SPAW Annexes using Article 11(4) as a basis*
 - *That draft guidelines (“checklist”) developed and approved by the Working Group, be circulated to SPAW Protocol Parties as soon as available*

- *That the Parties be invited to use the draft guidelines and the “short list” of species for the development of nominations of species for inclusion in the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol in time for the consideration by STAC 7*

70. The delegate of Panama thanked the Working Group for its work but proposed that the “short list of species” which received no objection, be approved by STAC6 for final adoption by COP8. She expressed her surprise over the remaining difficulties to find a consensus on the short list of species. She voiced concern about the possibility of postponing yet again, the listing despite the four (4) years of work by a dedicated Working Group. She recommended that only species for which there were objections should be submitted for further examination.
71. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands supported this proposal and added that in his view it was the best compromise to move forward with the process. He then proposed that the Government of the United States of America could take over the chair of the Working Group following STAC6.
72. The delegate of the Dominican Republic supported Panama's proposal. He reminded the Meeting of Cuba's proposal during the last COP, noting that some species discussed did not raise objections. He added that the four (4) years of work by the Working Group had to be considered. The delegate of Aruba supported the proposition of Panama and Dominican Republic.
73. The delegate of the United States of America pointed out that many objections to listing specific species were raised during and after the meeting of the Working Group meeting. It was highlighted that it might be difficult to find a consensus on a short list of “non-objected” species during the session. He recalled that any Party had the possibility to nominate a species for listing following the guidelines.
74. The delegate of St Lucia agreed that the revised short list be circulated to the Parties and added that more discussion may be needed in each country.
75. The observer from Humane Society International (HSI) noted there was no consensus on listing species and that an agreement on the procedure for listing species would be useful.
76. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands invited the Parties to propose species for listing and advised them to use NGOs expertise to compile the required documentation. He reminded that there had been no updates of the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol since late 1980's.
77. The delegate of Colombia noted that the documentation supporting the nomination of species for listing in the Annexes should be available to Parties and sought clarification about the information used by the *ad hoc* Working Group.
78. Mr Paul Hoetjes, delegate from the Netherlands and chair of the Working Group, explained that the process that resulted in the proposed list was based on input from experts nominated by Parties and a number of NGOs. It was also based on information from the IUCN Red List, as the Red List status of each species was one of the criteria to guide the listing, and to complement with the status of protection under other international agreements. He concluded by saying that the current stumbling blocks for listing new species was not due to a lack of information, but due to the fact that some countries considered the current amount of information as insufficient.

79. The delegate of Colombia noted that as there was no consensus and as a number of Parties were in favor to approve some species for listing, she proposed to submit the revised “short list” to voting.
80. Delegates requested clarification about the rules of procedure for voting. The Secretariat reminded the meeting of the provisions on voting according to the Rules of Procedure of the Cartagena Convention.
81. In the effort to avoid voting and reach a consensus, the delegate of Panama suggested an amendment to the proposal of the meeting’s Working Group. She proposed to remove in the third bullet “*to which no specific objection has been raised*”, in order to refer to the initial list of species proposed in the report of the Working Group (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.36/4)
82. The delegate of France expressed her concern about moving to voting and specified that France did not consider it as appropriate. She also mentioned France's regrets about the possibility of postponing the listing of new species in the Annexes and expressed France’s support to Panama's proposal for an amendment. The delegate of Trinidad and Tobago also supported Panama's proposal for this amendment.
83. The delegate of the United States of America suggested removing the entire third bullet (*as presented to the Meeting by the Working Group*), since any species could be proposed following STAC6, regardless if they are already on the short list or not.
84. A number of delegations requested additional information on the process of the development of the proposed species list. Mr. Hoetjes clarified that the initial short list proposed by the *ad hoc* Working Group included 37 species, with 25 in Annex II, and 12 in Annex III but that, following Cuba’s comments on this proposal, he, as Chair of the Working Group, suggested to include some species under Annex III instead of Annex II. The revised proposal finally consisted of 14 species for Annex II and 23 species for Annex III. He also reiterated that the experts who worked on the listing considered the available information to be sufficient but that apparently, it was not enough for some Parties. He reminded that this list was originally requested by the Parties during COP7. He considered that the concept of “non-objected list of species” was still vague since the delegate of the United States cited comments which were still received after the Working Group session at the Meeting.
85. The delegate of the United States suggested to amend the proposal made by the Working Group such that the concept of “shortlist” refers to the list of species proposed in the report UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/4.
86. The final recommendation on this issue as approved by the STAC is included in Annex to this Report.
87. The delegate from the United States asked to present formally the nomination made by his government on the Nassau grouper for listing under Annex III of the Protocol. He recalled that the life history of this species and its migratory patterns required coordinated regulations as well as threats were widely recognized. The documentation on this species was provided as information documents of the meeting.
88. Subsequently, he asked for comments from the STAC on the listing on the Nassau grouper as proposed by his government.

89. The delegate from The Bahamas opposed the inclusion of the Nassau grouper under Annex III. The US delegate inquired about the scientific justification for this opposition.
90. The delegate from Netherlands asked whether the underlying reason for not listing the Nassau Grouper is that the Bahamian government considered that the species does not require management or protection measures, which is all that is required for species listed under Annex III.
91. The delegate from Bahamas mentioned that there was already a management plan for the Nassau grouper in the Bahamas and that the competent authority was the Fisheries Department.
92. The delegate from Colombia expressed her support for the listing of the Nassau grouper, as well as other species that did not raise objections

AGENDA ITEM 7: GUIDELINES FOR EXEMPTIONS UNDER ARTICLE 11(2) OF THE SPAW PROTOCOL PROPOSED BY THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP

93. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat and Ms. Anne Fontaine, Director, SPAW-RAC, as coordinator of the Working Group to present the document “Report of the Working Group to Develop Criteria and Process to Assess Exemptions Under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.36/5). This report reflects the work undertaken by the Group following the SPAW COP7 (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 23 October 2012) and includes a draft “Guidance Document” to assess exemptions.
94. Ms. Fontaine recalled the background of the Working Group which was established following SPAW COP6 (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 5 October 2010). She highlighted the differences between the draft Guidance document proposed by the Working Group at SPAW COP7 (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 23 October 2012) and the version proposed by the United States of America following different exchanges with the Secretariat further to SPAW COP7. The proposal from the United States of America was submitted to the Working Group and comments made were integrated in a revised version of the draft Guidance document. She presented this revised version of the U.S proposal (Annex III of the document) for review by the SPAW STAC6.
95. In light of delays in approval of the guidance document (see above), Ms. Anne Fontaine noted that the development of the formats for reporting on an exemption was still pending but expected to be implemented during the 2015-2016 biennium.
96. The Chairperson invited the Meeting to review the report and Guidance Document and to provide recommendations for approval by SPAW COP8 (Cartagena, Colombia, 9 December 2014).
97. The delegate of the United States of America expressed his regret about the late proposal from his government after the important work that had been done by the Working Group prior and following SPAW COP7. However, he considered that the previous draft Guidance document proposed at SPAW COP7 was not entirely consistent with the Protocol’s mandate. His government now agrees to adopt the revised version of the Guidance Document as presented in Annex III of the document. Regarding the comment made by several NGOs that the document should be provisional, he recalled that the COP might decide at any time to revise a document and that his government would be supportive of that.
98. The delegate from France expressed her concern that the internal review period (60 days) decided by SPAW COP7 had not been respected and felt that it was not desirable that the decisions of a COP

were not followed. However, she indicated that her government agreed with the new proposal of Guidance document for adoption with opportunity to comment within a time limit. She noted that this new proposal was in accordance with the Protocol's requirements.

99. The delegate from Bahamas noted that it would be more accurate to speak of “exemptions to article 11(1)” rather than “exemptions under article 11(2)”. He also expressed caution regarding exemptions which facilitate and/or result in commercial/trade activities. In this context, he highlighted the need for Parties to retain possession of specimens as there was cause for concern in regard to the survival of these specimens once they were held in a different environment or outside of their country of origin. He therefore viewed this situation as a regional challenge which could be improved (considering that SPAW provides a legal framework for addressing this situation) through 1) the development of a regional enforcement network, and 2) the use of an established contact group which could provide support when needed.
100. Following the comments made by the Meeting, it was decided to forward the Guidance document as contained in Annex III of the report to SPAW COP8 for final adoption.

AGENDA ITEM 8: WORKPLAN AND BUDGET OF THE SPAW SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE 2015-2016 BIENNIUM

101. The Chairperson invited Ms. Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury, SPAW Programme Officer from the Secretariat to present the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Subprogramme for the 2015-2016 Biennium” (contained in document UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.36/6), prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of the recommendations of the previous STAC and COP Meetings, as well as on the outcome of activities of the 2013-2014 Workplan for SPAW.
102. In her presentation, Ms. Vanzella-Khoury recalled the objectives of the SPAW Sub-programme, including its Coordination component and each Sub-programme element of SPAW. She highlighted continued work and support in areas such as the application of EBM principles (in coordination with Caribbean Biodiversity EBM Project), the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) under the CLME⁺ project, the Coral Reef Partnership with other Regional Seas Programmes, and the reactivation of linkages with the tourism private sector (e.g. cruise ship industry) in close cooperation with SPAW-RAC.
103. The main coordination will continue to be provided by the Programme Officer along with an Assistant with support from the SPAW-RAC in Guadeloupe. The Secretariat will also continue to seek support through cost-effective means such as the use of interns. The Programme elements will remain the same as the previous biennium; however prioritization of the elements will need to be undertaken based on emerging needs and the human and financial resources available. She also indicated that the SPAW Programme will continue to promote the activities relevant to the development of guidelines for protected areas and species and continue to promote protected areas for listing under the SPAW Protocol to complement the eighteen (18) already listed and the thirteen (13) newly proposed for the consideration of the SPAW COP8, as well as supporting the cooperation programme for the listed areas.
104. The Programme Officer further stated that the Working Group established for the development of the Guidance Document on exemptions under Article 11 (2) of the Protocol was expected to continue its work in order to finalize draft reporting formats for subsequent consideration by the Parties. She highlighted that the process of review of species to be listed under the SPAW Protocol was also planned to continue.

105. She noted that species conservation priorities will continue based on the MMAP priorities (see UNEP(DEPI)/CARWG.36/INF.6), and noted that as a result of the Inter-regional Workshop (Panama, 2012), two (2) sub-regional areas were selected for the scenario work in the Wider Caribbean.
106. The Meeting was invited to review the draft Workplan and provide relevant recommendations to assist with its finalisation prior to being adopted by the Eighth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to SPAW, the Sixteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme, and the Thirteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, in Cartagena, Colombia, 9 December 2014 and 11-13 December 2014, respectively.

AGENDA ITEM 9: OTHER BUSINESS

107. The Chairperson invited participants to raise any other issues not covered by the preceding agenda items, but which were relevant to the scope of the Meeting.
108. The delegate of Colombia presented the Health Index of Oceans, a tool for sustainable management of resources and ecosystems developed by more than sixty five (65) experts and funded in particular by TNC and the National Geographic Society. For the last two (2) years, this tool has been used in Colombia to assess the status of each coast. More than sixty (60) actors were included in the process under the coordination of the Colombian Ocean Agency and University of Santa Barbara in California. She mentioned that 2014 was a very positive year with several new partnerships being developed which included endorsement from the President of Colombia and Prince Charles of the United Kingdom.
109. The delegate indicated Colombia's willingness to continue this work in 2015 with international partners, and to build in particular a regional Caribbean platform of indicators for 2018 in order to strengthen the regional vision and improve coastal and marine management. The delegate therefore encouraged the Parties to join Colombia in this effort and build necessary synergies. She invited interested Parties to contact her government and participate in the National Seminar on Marine Science and Technology (SENALMAR) and the Latin American Congress of Marine Science (COLACMAR) to be held in October 2015, in Santa Marta, Colombia
110. The delegate of the Caribbean Netherlands addressed the topic of the conservation and status of sea turtles. He mentioned several events where this subject was discussed, such as recent meetings of CITES, ICRI, and in particular the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) of which the Caribbean Netherlands is a contracting party. He made reference to a report recently commissioned by the IAC, which highlights that several species are still hunted and legally taken in the Caribbean region, in particular in the Eastern Caribbean zone. He reminded that some of the concerned islands were Parties to the SPAW Protocol, which requires full protection of sea turtles, and therefore were not in compliance. He suggested a recommendation to be made from the STAC to encourage the concerned Parties to go through the exemption process and submit a report to the STAC in case sea turtle hunting is legally taking place, or alternatively cease all legal capture.
111. The delegate of The Bahamas informed the STAC of an exemption under Article 11 (2) requested for two (2) species listed in the Protocol, the Bahama Parrot (*Amazona leucocephala bahamensis*) and the Bahamian Rock Iguana (*Cyclura cychlura*) for display on the property of Baha Mar for

educational purposes. He noted that the government of Bahamas required retention of ownership of these animals and their progeny.

112. The delegate of the Government of Bahamas also reported the smuggling incident involving iguanas discovered at Heathrow airport, United Kingdom. The smugglers were prosecuted and found guilty and the iguanas were released in the Bahamas. The delegate expressed his concern about this issue, other shipments not being intercepted, and the population being very low. He stressed the need of more resources to control the illegal shipping and smuggling of wild animals. He recommended the development of an enforcement regional network, and invited interested Parties to join a contact group towards this goal. He stressed that the problem of illegal trade was general and suggested a closer contact between the SPAW and the CITES secretariats.
113. The observer from Humane Society International (HSI) supported the recommendations of The Bahamas regarding the illegal trade of species which affects other countries and thanked them for being proactive on this issue. He echoed the importance of the SPAW Secretariat to make the connection with other international agreements to improve synergies for effective protection of species.
114. The Observer of Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) thanked the government of The Bahamas for reporting an exemption under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol. She suggested that similar actions were needed for other species, dolphins in particular.
115. The delegate of the Dominican Republic presented the initiative of the Caribbean Biological Corridor, launched seven (7) years ago with Haiti and Cuba. He explained that the first phase on terrestrial aspects was now completed, and the next phase would target coastal management. He mentioned that the terrestrial work was already having a positive impact on the coastal zones. He suggested the SPAW Secretariat to develop synergies with this initiative where appropriate.
116. The Secretariat invited Mr. Robbie Bovino, the representative of the Nature Conservancy (TNC), to provide a snapshot on the activities of TNC in the Caribbean region, and the potential links with SPAW activities. Mr. Bovino mentioned in particular the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI), the Caribbean Coral Restoration Strategy, the CaribNode platform and TNC activities on sea turtles. He listed several opportunities to explore for partnerships with SPAW, including the strengthening of protected areas, the linkages to explore between databases (GCRMN, CaribNode, CaMPAM), a proposal for UNEP-CEP/SPAW-RAC to participate in CCI donor roundtable, and the coordination to be made for coral reef and invasive species management initiatives.
117. Mr. Lloyd Gardner acting in the capacity of IUCN observer, made the following recommendations on behalf of the WCPA:
 - *The Secretariat should request state parties to share their information and data generated by current national monitoring and assessment programmes including the marine laboratories.*
 - *The Secretariat should collaborate with its multilateral and bilateral partner institutions to harmonize criteria and methodology for MPA effectiveness and assessments, especially in the areas of Management Effectiveness and Ecological Performance.*
 - *The Secretariat should convene the Working Group on Protected Areas listing to produce guidance on the application and assessment of the criteria “resilience” and “connectivity”.*
 - *The Secretariat should explore the possibility of obtaining funding from the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre for the establishment and operation of a data management system for spatial databases on coastal resources.*

AGENDA ITEM 10: ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

118. The Rapporteur of the Meeting presented the draft recommendations of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/7). The Meeting was invited to approve the recommendations, with amendments and corrections introduced as appropriate. After considerable discussion relating to Recommendation III, the recommendations were approved as contained in Annex III and forwarded for approval by the SPAW COP8.

AGENDA ITEM 11: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

119. The SPAW STAC6 Meeting was closed on Monday, 8 December 2014 at 8:00 p.m. by the Chairperson of the Meeting and the Secretariat.
120. On behalf of the Secretariat and UNEP, the Coordinator, Mr. Andrade Colmenares, thanked the Chairperson and the Rapporteur for their dedication and efforts during the Meeting. He equally thanked the valuable contribution of Member Governments, partners and observers. In closing, Mr. Andrade Colmenares expressed his gratitude to the personnel servicing the Meeting from Colombia, as the host Government.

ANNEX I AGENDA

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Organisation of the Meeting
 - 2.1. Rules of Procedure
 - 2.2. Election of Officers
 - 2.3. Organisation of Work
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2013-2014, including activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe
5. Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Subprogramme for the 2015-2016 Biennium
6. Recommendations of the Sixth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the SPAW Protocol (Cartagena, Colombia, 8 December, 2014)
7. Other Business
8. Adoption of the Decisions of the Meeting
9. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX II LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Title	Agenda Item
<u>Working Documents</u>		
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/1	Provisional Agenda	1-3
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/2	Provisional Annotated Agenda	3
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/3	Report on the Evaluation of Protected Areas Proposed for Listing Under the SPAW Protocol	5
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/4	Report of the Working Group on the Application of Criteria for Listing Species Under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol (<i>includes shortlist of species proposed for listing into the Annexes</i>)	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/5	Report of the Working Group to Develop the Criteria and Process to Assess Exemptions Under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol (<i>includes draft guidance document</i>)	7
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/6	Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Subprogramme for the 2015-2016 Biennium	8
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/7	Recommendations of the Sixth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Cartagena, Colombia, 8 December 2014(<i>to be prepared during the meeting</i>)	10
<u>Information Documents</u>		
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.1	Provisional List of Documents	1
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.2	Provisional List of Participants (<i>to be prepared during the meeting</i>)	1
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.3	Status of Activities of the SPAW Subprogramme for 2013-2014	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.4	Report of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe: operations and budget for the period 2013-2014	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.5	Update on the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its major activities (<i>includes supplement on the completed Caribbean Challenge Project and the ongoing Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) Project</i>)	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.6	Update on the Implementation of Activities in Support of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP), including the Government of Spain-UNEP Lifeweb project “ <i>Protecting Habitats and Migration Corridors for Marine Mammals in the South and Northeast Pacific and the Wider Caribbean through Marine Protected Area Networks</i> ”	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.7	The GEF Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) and the outcomes of the Reef Biodiversity and Reef Fisheries Pilot Project: Summary Report, Best Practices and Lessons Learnt	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.8	Report on the LifeWeb-Spain UNEP-CEP Meeting on Scenarios for Transboundary Marine Mammal Management in the Wider Caribbean, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 23 - 24 April 2014	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.9	Report of the First Meeting of Managers of the Protected Areas Listed under the SPAW Protocol of the Cartagena Convention at the 66 th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) Conference,	4

Corpus Christi, Texas, USA, November 5, 2013

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.10	Report on the Workshop of Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) for the Wider Caribbean: Review, improve and revitalize the network and the nodes for more effective coral reef monitoring and data management, Curacao, 6-8 August 2014	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.11	Status of Development of the Regional Strategy for the Control of the Lionfish Invasion in the Wider Caribbean Region	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.12	Proposal of the United States of America for the inclusion of the Nassau Grouper (<i>Epinephelusstriatus</i>) 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	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.13	Nassau Grouper, <i>Epinephelusstriatus</i> (Bloch 1792) Biological Report	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.14	Report of the First Meeting of the CFMC/WECAFC/OSPESCA/CRFM Working Group on Spawning Aggregations, Miami, United States of America, 29–31 October 2013	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.29/INF.5	Exemptions to the SPAW Protocol Under Article 11(2): A Legal Review	7
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.36/INF.7	Report on the Ratification of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region and its Protocols (Cartagena Convention)	4-8
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.31/3	Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 23 October 2012.	4-8
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/8	Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 22 October 2012	4-8

Reference Documents

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.6	IUCN Caribbean Red List of Threatened Species – A Proposal	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.33/5	Report of the Fifteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Twelfth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 25-27 October 2012	4, 8
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/6	Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2013-2014 Biennium	4
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/INF.5	A Proposal for Bird Species to be Added to Annexes II and III of the SPAW Protocol (<i>English only</i>)	6
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.29/5	Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Montego Bay, Jamaica, 5 October 2010	4-8
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.26/4	Draft Grid for the Objective Evaluation of Proposals for Inclusion in the SPAW Protected Areas List	5
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/4	Structure and Scope of the Scientific and Technical Advisory	1-3

	Committee (STAC) of the SPAW Protocol	
UNEP(OCA)/CAR IG.11/7	Proposed Legal Framework for the Administrative Technical and Financial Operations of RACs and RANs	4
CEP Technical Report 48	Regional Management Plan for the West Indian Manatee (English and Spanish)	4
UNEP, 2010	Rules of Procedure for the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)	2.1
UNEP, 2008	Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region. United Nations Environment Programme – Caribbean Environment Programme, Kingston, Jamaica. 2008. (English and Spanish).	5-7
UNEP, 1991	Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries for the Adoption of the Annexes to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region	5-7
UNEP, 1990	Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Caribbean Region	5-7
UNEP, 2012	Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills, Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife and the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities	5-7

ANNEX III RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

Having convened the Sixth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region;

The Meeting,

RECOMMENDATION I

Having reviewed the “Status of Activities of the SPA Subprogramme for 2013-2014” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.3) and commending the work undertaken by the Secretariat and the SPA-RAC;

Taking note and welcoming the “Update on the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its Major Activities” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.5), and **gratefully acknowledging** the generous support of the Government of Italy for the project recently concluded in support of Caribbean MPAs, the Caribbean Challenge Project and the on-going Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) Project;

Having reviewed the “Report of the SPA Regional Activity Centre (SPA-RAC) in Guadeloupe: operations and budget for the period 2013-2014” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.4); and **gratefully acknowledging** the generous contribution of the Government of France for SPA activities through the SPA RAC;

Having reviewed the “Report on the Implementation of Activities in Support of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP)” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.6);

Recognizing the contributions of the LifeWeb Government of Spain/UNEP Project “Broad-scale marine spatial planning of marine mammal corridors and protected areas in the Wider Caribbean and Northeast and Southeast Pacific” in generating new regional perspectives through mapping and building of management scenarios, furthering the goals of the MMAP in the Wider Caribbean region;

Taking note of the Report on the LifeWeb-Spain UNEP CEP Meeting on Scenarios for Transboundary Marine Mammal Management in the Wider Caribbean (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR.WG.36/INF.8);

Noting the Report on the Workshop of Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) for the Wider Caribbean (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.10);

Further noting the Report of the Status of Development of the Regional Strategy for the Control of the Lionfish Invasion in the Wider Caribbean Region (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR.WG.36/INF.11);

Having reviewed the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Subprogramme for the 2015-2016 Biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/6);

Acknowledging the ambitious Workplan of the Secretariat and the limited budget available, and **commending** the Secretariat for the creative and resourceful manner in which it has developed synergies and collaboration with partners;

Further recognizing that the developing, broad and growing work programme of the SPA Protocol necessitates the setting of priorities and increased capacity of the Secretariat and the SPA-RAC;

Recommends that:

1. 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 or are in the process of joining;
2. The COP8 provide further guidance to the Secretariat regarding the priority actions for the work programme, as well as accessing increased resources for both activities and the Secretariat;
3. The Secretariat amend the proposed Workplan in accordance with the comments provided by the Meeting as noted below and **further recommend** that the Workplan and Budget be presented to COP8 for approval, and that the workplan include these elements:
 - i. continue activities in support of the Marine Mammal Action Plan, including follow-up to the work and recommendations emanated from implementation of the LifeWeb Project.
 - ii. support activities for the monitoring and conservation of coral reefs, as proposed in the Workplan draft, including support to the Caribbean GCRMN Steering Committee and its regional coordination through the SPAW-RAC.
 - iii. continue working with governments and relevant partners in the further development and implementation of the CLME+ Project through the inclusion of the relevant activities in the 2015-2016 Workplan with the required financial support from the Project.
 - iv. support more research on origins, impacts and ways to control brown algae, as well as to improve the development of models in response to the increasing incidence of such events which affect the marine environment, biodiversity and health in the region.
 - v. further collaborate with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention on STRAP development and other sea turtle activities in the workplan to ensure that work is not duplicated.
 - vi. collaborate with existing knowledge centres such as the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute for laboratory and socio-economic analysis to maximize available resources.
 - vii. consider developing strict whale watching practices and continue to work on the MOU with IWC in particular to address information gaps on take of marine mammals (direct and bycatch) and development of a regional database.
 - viii. consider assessment of the impact on the ground of CaMPAM activities in particular on MPAs management effectiveness and proceed with updating the strategic plan and work plan for CaMPAM, as was agreed at the 2013 CaMPAM Executive Committee meeting.
 - ix. encourage Parties to share their information and data generated by current national monitoring and assessment programmes including the marine laboratories.
 - x. the working group on Protected Areas listing should consider producing guidance on the application and assessment of the criteria "Resilience and Connectivity".
 - xi. explore the possibility of obtaining funding from the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre for the establishment and operation of a data management system for spatial databases on coastal resources.
 - xii. The SPAW Secretariat should work with SPAW Parties and CITES to develop a regional wildlife enforcement network.
 - xiii. Countries that are Parties to CITES should join the CITES Standing Committee contact group discussing the Bahamas report and recommendations on the iguana poaching incident. SPAW Parties and NGOs should support recommendations emanating from the contact group.
 - xiv. Parties and NGOs should work within their respective spheres of influence, such as the EU, CARICOM and CITES to urge the other Parties to regulate within their national legal systems the ownership, possession, sale and advertising of CITES-listed living species endemic to the Caribbean, to keep illegally acquired specimens, and their progeny, from entering domestic or international markets.

- xv. Recommend that Parties considering exemptions under Article 11.2, take appropriate measures under their national laws and policies to ensure that these specimens or their offspring do not unintentionally end up being commercially traded in the future.
 - xvi. Encourage the Parties to initiate processes to calculate the Ocean Health Index (OHI) in their respective territories as a useful tool to strengthen national information systems on the status and use of the oceans, aimed at improving the management of marine environment in the Caribbean region.
4. The Secretariat continue to collaborate and to identify synergies with relevant partners and MEAs, in particular regional fisheries bodies such as FAO/WECAFC in the context of the regional management plan for queen conch.

RECOMMENDATION II

Having reviewed the “Report on the Evaluation of Protected Areas Proposed for Listing Under the SPAW Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/3;

Taking note and welcoming the preliminary activities of the cooperation programme for the protected areas listed as per Article 7 of the Protocol, and the interactive map listed;

Recognizing the valuable work from the SPAW-RAC and the experts participating in the working group;

Recommends that:

1. The COP8 adopt the listing of the 13 Protected Areas proposed by Parties, on the basis of the review provided by the SPAW–RAC and the Working Group experts.
2. The SPAW-RAC continue to maintain and improve the dedicated database to house the national reports on the protected areas to be listed, as well as the web-based tool for Parties to prepare and submit the protected areas reports on-line.
3. Parties which have not done so consider submitting protected areas as per the approved criteria to be listed under the Protocol in the upcoming biennium for future listing.
4. The Secretariat continue to work with Parties to further develop the cooperation programme in support of the protected areas listed.
5. The Secretariat continue to reflect the list of Protected Areas in a map, so as to assist with its visual connectivity within the region.

RECOMMENDATION III

Having reviewed the “Report of the Working Group on the Application of Criteria for Listing Species Under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol”, including its recommendations (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/4);

Taking note of the species reviewed by the Working Group as presented in the Report;

Taking note of the Report of the Proposal of the United States of America for the inclusion of the Nassau Grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) in Annex III of the SPAW Protocol (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.12), Nassau Grouper, *Epinephelus striatus* (Bloch 1792) Biological Report (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.13) and the Report of the First Meeting of the CFMC/WECAFC/OPESCA/CRFM Working Group on Spawning Aggregations (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.14);

Recognizing the challenge in time and resources for thoroughly and scientifically assessing the most threatened and endangered species to be listed under the Annexes of the Protocol; and **recognizing** the need to define a process for this process;

Further recognizing the alarming population trends or threatened status of several species in the region and thus the urgent need to raise awareness and promote their protection;

Recommends that:

The following next steps be taken on the nomination of species for inclusion in the SPAW annexes:

1. the *ad hoc* working group be reestablished in the intersessional period to continue its work on this matter
2. the Secretariat circulate to Parties the “short list” of 37 species proposed for listing (as reflected in UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.36/4).
3. the working group elaborate guidelines (e.g. a checklist) for the nomination of species for listing in the SPAW Annexes using Article 11(4) as a basis.
4. the draft guidelines developed and approved by the working group be circulated to SPAW Protocol Parties as soon as it is available.
5. Parties be invited to use the draft guidelines and the “short list” of species for the development of nominations of species for inclusion in the SPAW annexes in time for consideration by STAC7.
6. the draft guidelines be forwarded to STAC7 for its consideration.

RECOMMENDATION IV

Having reviewed the “Report of the Working Group to Develop the Criteria and Process to Assess Exemptions Under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/5);

Recommends that:

1. The COP8 approves revised version of the Guidance document as presented in Annex III of the Report.
2. The duration of the Working Group be extended to develop the formats for both requesting exemptions and for reporting on exemptions granted.

RECOMMENDATION V

Noting increasing lionfish activities undertaken under SPAW subprogramme 2013-2014 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.11);

Acknowledging the new Terms of Reference ICRI Ad-Hoc Committee on Caribbean Regional Response to Lionfish Invasion adopted by the participants on October 23, 2014 at the 29th ICRI General Meeting (Okinawa, Japan); and

Recognizing that the information available on lionfish would need to be compiled and shared among fishermen, resource managers and decision makers, **and** that the GCFI event is one of the main Caribbean platforms to bring together scientists, fishermen and managers.

Recommends that:

1. Parties and relevant organizations take further action to control the lionfish invasion, in collaboration with other international and regional partners and initiatives, in particular the following:
 - (i) implement the "Regional Strategy for the Control of Invasive Lionfish in the Wider Caribbean" prepared by the Regional Lionfish Committee
 - (ii) consider supporting and strengthening the Regional Lionfish Committee to enhance coordinated regional actions to control the invasive lionfish, and in particular the implementation of sub-strategies and local action plans;
 - (iii) consider supporting a "lionfish management session" at the 68th GCFI (November, 2015) to promote best management strategies and tools and main lessons learnt; and
 - (iv) raise public awareness about the lionfish invasion across Wider Caribbean, especially in coastal communities, through outreach, education and capacity building.

RECOMMENDATION VI

Noting the findings and concerns of the recent study by the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention on the conservation status of Hawksbill turtles in the Wider Caribbean about the legal take of sea turtles including Hawksbill sea turtles in some countries in the Eastern Caribbean, including some countries that are Party to SPAW Protocol;

Recommends that:

1. The SPAW COP **remind** all SPAW Parties of the requirements of the Protocol and **call on** Parties that are allowing legal take of sea turtles, that this is not in compliance with the Protocol and should either be stopped or only allowed under the criteria for exemptions provided in the Protocol, in which case they should enter into the process of reporting such an exemption to the STAC in order for the STAC to assess its pertinence.

ANNEX IV LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
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