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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

DECISIONS OF THE MEETING

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The Contracting Parties:

Having convened the Seventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region;

Taking note of the “Status of Activities of the SPA Subprogramme for 2010-2012” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/INF.3)” and **commending** the work of the Secretariat and the SPA-RAC;

Taking note of the “Report of the SPA Regional Activity Centre (SPA-RAC) in Guadeloupe: RAC Operations and Budget for the period 2010-2012” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/INF.4) ;

Having reviewed the “Report of the Working Group on the Evaluation of Protected Areas Proposed for Listing Under the SPA Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/3) and the “Annotated Format for Presentation Reports for the Areas Proposed for Inclusion in the SPA List” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/INF.10);

Having reviewed the “Report of the Working Group on the Application of Criteria for Listing Species Under the Annexes to the SPA Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/4);

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.34/INF.6);

Taking note of the “Report of the Regional Workshop on Marine Mammal Watching in the Wider Caribbean Region” (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.34/INF.9), which includes the Overarching Principles and Protection Guidelines for Marine Mammal Watching in the Wider Caribbean Region;

Having reviewed the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Subprogramme for the 2013-2014 Biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/6);

Recognizing that important progress has been made towards more on-the-ground implementation of the Protocol as opposed to paper exercises; and

Having reviewed the “Recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPA Protocol”, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 22 October 2012.

Decide to:

1. **Urge** the governments of the region, which have not yet done so, to become Contracting Parties to the SPA Protocol.
2. **Approve** the eighteen (18) protected areas presented by STAC5 for listing under the SPA Protocol and **welcome** the Secretariat’s initiative to provide SPA – designated signage to the Protected Areas listed under the Protocol.
3. **Urge** Contracting Parties to respond to the requests of the Secretariat to join and participate more actively in the Working Groups established by the Parties, in particular

in those needed to deliver the approved Workplan namely the Working Group on the species review and those to address priority topics under designated subgroups within the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP).

4. **Acknowledge** the progress made with the implementation of the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP) and **request** that the Secretariat, in collaboration with the SPAW-RAC, continue to fundraise and develop strategic partnerships for its further implementation, in particular the development of activities proposed as follow-up to the LifeWeb Project on marine corridors and marine mammal conservation for the Wider Caribbean, and the implementation of key priorities of the Manatee Regional Management Plan.
5. **Recognize and encourage** the efforts of France towards the reintroduction project of the Antillean manatee in Guadeloupe.
6. **Welcome and endorse** the recommendations of the “Report of the Regional Workshop on Marine Mammal Watching in the Wider Caribbean Region”, including the Overarching Principles and Protection Guidelines for Marine Mammal Watching in the Caribbean Region.
7. **Adopt** the Recommendations of the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to the SPAW Protocol as contained in UNEP/(DEPI)/CAR WG.34/7 with the following comments:

Recommendation I.3(i)

“The activities of CaMPAM as proposed in the Workplan and explore collaboration with the USA and the Gulf Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) on MPA capacity building efforts that are in support of CaMPAM”.

Recommendation I.5

“The Secretariat amend the proposed Workplan in accordance with the editorial comments provided by the Meeting, maintaining the budget to the same level of 2010-2012, recognizing that additional funding sources may be identified, with priority accorded to those activities and initiatives that contribute more effectively to the work of the Working Groups”.

Recommendation II.4

- The financial connectivity perspective will also be taken into consideration.

Recommendation III.1

- The Working Group for listing species under the Protocol report to the STAC6 and COP8 on the progress made during the 2013-2014 biennium.

Recommendation III.6

“The Secretariat will explore, with the Contracting Parties, the possibility of making the work of the Working Group on the listing of species more effective through face-to-face meetings, taking into consideration in the first instance the offer made by some countries to support this work”.

8. **Approve** the proposed SPAW Workplan and budget for 2013-2014 as revised by STAC5 and with modifications and priorities introduced by the Meeting and **further decide** that it be forwarded to the 15th Intergovernmental Meeting for final adoption.
9. **Encourage** the Secretariat and SPAW-RAC to strengthen ongoing linkages with relevant regional fisheries organizations in the Wider Caribbean, through the conclusion

of Memoranda of Cooperation, in the context of the listing of species in the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol.

10. **Welcome** the offer of the Government of the Netherlands to explore with the Secretariat the possible hosting of the Sixth SPAW STAC meeting in 2013.