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

Gosier, Guadeloupe, France, 2 - 5 July 2008

REPORT OF THE MEETING

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING	2
AGENDA ITEM 2: ELECTION OF OFFICERS	3
AGENDA ITEM 3: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING.....	4
AGENDA ITEM 4: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.....	4
AGENDA ITEM 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPAW PROGRAMME WORKPLAN AND BUDGET FOR THE 2006–2007 BIENNIUM, INCLUDING ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPAW (SPAW RAC) IN GUADELOUPE	4
AGENDA ITEM 6: FINAL GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF PROTECTED AREAS TO BE LISTED UNDER THE SPAW PROTOCOL	12
AGENDA ITEM 7: DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION OF MARINE MAMMALS (MMAP) IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION	13
AGENDA ITEM 8: DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORKPLAN AND BUDGET OF THE SPAW PROGRAMME FOR THE 2008-2009 BIENNIUM.....	15
AGENDA ITEM 9: OTHER BUSINESS.....	20
AGENDA ITEM 10: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING	23
AGENDA ITEM 11: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING.....	23

Annex I:	Agenda
Annex II:	Recommendations of the Meeting
Annex III:	List of Documents
Annex IV:	List of Participants

Acronyms

BMP	Better Management Practices
CaMPAM	Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network and Forum
CAST	Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEP	Caribbean Environment Programme
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CLME	Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem
COP	Conference of Parties
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CTO	Caribbean Tourism Organisation
ECCEA	Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness
FAO/WECAFC	Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic information systems
GCFI	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute
HSI	Humane Society International
IAC	Interamerican Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
IBA	Important Bird Areas
ICRAN	International Coral Reef Action Network
ICRI	International Coral Reef Initiative
IFRECOR	French Coral Reef Initiative
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IOCARIBE	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO Sub- Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions
IRF	Island Resources Foundation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IYOR	International Year of the Reef
MAR	Mesoamerican Reef Alliance
MMAP	Marine Mammal Action Plan
MoC	Memorandum of Cooperation
MPA	Marine Protected Areas
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NOAA	National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
OSPESCA	Organization for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus
PRDNR	Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources
Ramsar	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPAW	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife

SPAW RAC	SPAW Regional Activity Centre
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee
STRAPS	Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plans
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-DTIE	UNEP-Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
UNF	United Nations Foundation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCR	Wider Caribbean Region
WG	Working Group
WHC/UNESCO	World Heritage Convention of the United Nations Environmental and Scientific Committee
WHMSI	Western Hemispheric Migratory Species Initiative
WIDECAST	Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network
WRI	World Resource Institute
WWF	World Wildlife Fund for Nature

INTRODUCTION

1. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPAW), held in Kingston, Jamaica, from 15 to 19 January 1990, adopted the SPAW Protocol to the Cartagena Convention, which came into force on 18 June 2000. Article 20 of the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol) in the Wider Caribbean, 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 Decisions Nos. 4 and 6, of the Third Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 27 September 2004), Decision No. 7 of the Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol (COP4) (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 28 November 2006) and Twelfth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Ninth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (29 November to 2 December 2006), the Fourth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region (STAC4) was convened by UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) in Gosier, Guadeloupe, France, from 2 – 5 July 2008.
3. The Meeting was preceded by a one-day meeting on the Final Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol, in Gosier, Guadeloupe, France, on 1 July 2008.
4. The Meeting had the following objectives:
 - review the implemented activities and outputs of the 2006-2007 Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme, including activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW RAC) in Guadeloupe;
 - approve and agree on further action on the “Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol”;
 - review the Draft Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region, and agree on further action;
 - develop the 2008-2009 Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Programme and the SPAW Protocol for subsequent approval by the Fifth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol and Thirteenth Intergovernmental Meeting of CEP in 2008;
 - take note and decide on further action on issues critical to the biodiversity of the Wider Caribbean, such as coral reefs and the celebration of the International Year of the Reef (IYOR), the status of other important species in the region; and

- identify synergies and opportunities for collaboration with relevant partners to assist with the further development and implementation of the SPAW Protocol and Programme.
5. The representatives of the Contracting Parties invited to the Meeting were nominated by their respective Governments to be part of the STAC in keeping with Article 20 of the Protocol. Other member Governments of the Caribbean Environment Programme, United Nations agencies and non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, were invited to participate as Observers. The list of participants is presented in Annex IV.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

6. The Meeting was opened by Mr. Nelson Andrade Colmenares, Coordinator of the Caribbean Environment Programme of UNEP, and by Mr. Dominique Deviers, Director of DIREN in Guadeloupe, on the behalf of the Government of France, on Wednesday, 2 July at 9:00 a.m., in the Fort Royal Room at the Creole Beach Hotel, in Gosier, Guadeloupe, France. The President of the Association “Plan Mer des Caraïbes” in Guadeloupe, Mrs. Melisse Miroite, was also invited to provide welcoming remarks.
7. In his opening remarks, the Coordinator of the Caribbean Environment Programme welcomed the participants to the Meeting and thanked the Government of France for hosting this important Meeting with generous financial and logistic support. Mr. Andrade noted that the state of the natural resources on the planet continued to deteriorate despite efforts over the last decades, thereby affecting food production and human well-being. He noted the existence of data depicting the impact of climate change on highly vulnerable ecosystems such as coral reefs emphasizing and commending the role of the media in drawing attention to the current state of the environment. He highlighted the importance of increased access to scientific data and technical tools which could be of great assistance in decision making. The Coordinator mentioned that the Marine Protected Areas that had been established in the region thus far have had limited success but on a positive note, their conservation effects had spread beyond their respective territories in some cases. The considerable political commitments being made globally were mentioned, and the state of their progress was reflected in the Millennium Development Goals. He emphasized that there was need to be optimistic in endeavours undertaken as progress had occurred, although at a slow pace and highlighted the fact that progress was being made through events such as the present Meeting, evidenced by the finalization of the Guidelines and criteria for protected area listing to be approved. He further called for increased resources to adequately manage the large number of protected areas in the Region. He concluded by signalling that the time for action was short, as indicators showed the loss of biodiversity was not slowing down and countries were dependent on their natural resources. To this end, the state of the environment directly affected the state of these economies.
8. Mr. Dominique Deviers, Head of the French Delegation, welcomed the participants of the Meeting on behalf of the Prefect of Guadeloupe and the Government of France. He indicated that the Government of France valued highly conservation of the exceptional natural heritage of the Region and had indicated their commitment by being a signatory and an active

member of the Cartagena Convention. The Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW RAC) was supported and hosted by France in Guadeloupe with active assistance from its sister regions, Martinique and Guyana and the territories of Saint Martin and St Barthelemy. Mr. Deviers also thanked Mr. Maurice Anselme for his extensive work within the SPAW RAC, now also part of the Association Plan Mer des Caraibes since December 2005. A number of projects implemented by France in the region were mentioned such as Le Grenelle de l'environnement, IFRECOR- the French Coral Reef Initiative, as well as the extensive work in support of protected areas through a network including areas in Guyana, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. Additional areas highlighted were various projects in support of the protection of the biodiversity of the Region including recovery action plans for turtles and iguanas, conservation of endemic bird species and the marine mammal sanctuary project among others. In concluding, Mr. Deviers stressed the importance and impact that the deliberations would have over the next four days, particularly with regard to the Guidelines and criteria for the listing of protected areas under the SPAW Protocol, to allow for its adoption at the upcoming Conference of Parties (COP) in Antigua in September 2008.

9. The President of the Association Plan Mer des Caraibes, Mrs. Melisse Miroite welcomed the participants to Guadeloupe and indicated that she was indeed pleased that representatives of the Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol and observers were visiting Guadeloupe. She continued by calling on the Governments, economic stakeholders, and citizens of the international community to become mobilized through implementation of policies and participation, and emphasized the need to implement programmes aggressively. Mrs. Meroite noted the vulnerability of the Caribbean particularly with respect to the decreasing numbers of species and the need to stem this trend by utilizing existing support from the European Union and implementing actions in defence of marine mammals such as the West Indian manatee. She continued by thanking Mr. Anselme for his organizational skills and Mr. Deviers for his skilful management of environmental issues in Guadeloupe, and concluded by urging states and citizens to continue to work together under the framework of SPAW for the benefit of the entire Region.

AGENDA ITEM 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	-	Mr. Dominique Deviers, France
Vice Chairperson	-	Mrs. Maritza Garcia Garcia, Cuba,
Rapporteur	-	Mr. Lyndon John, Saint Lucia

AGENDA ITEM 3: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

a) Rules of Procedure

11. The Meeting agreed to apply *mutatis mutandis* the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council of UNEP, as contained in document UNEP/GC/3/Rev.3.

b) Organisation of work

12. 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 WG.31/INF.1, and as Annex III to this report.
13. The Meeting was convened in plenary sessions, with the assistance of a drafting group on the Recommendations of the Meeting comprising the delegates from the Netherlands Antilles, France, Colombia, and the United States. No simultaneous interpretation was available for the working group.

AGENDA ITEM 4: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

14. The Meeting was invited to review the Agenda of the Meeting (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/1) as 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. During the adoption of the agenda several comments were provided. It was clarified that under Agenda Item 8, the SPAW Workplan and Budget for the 2008-2009 biennium would be reviewed for comments and recommendations by the STAC, with the understanding that it would be presented at the COP5 for consideration and final approval. Delegates also requested that a number of presentations be included during Agenda Items 5, 8 and 9, as reflected in the relevant sections of this report. The Agenda as approved by the Meeting, is contained in Annex I.

AGENDA ITEM 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPAW PROGRAMME WORKPLAN AND BUDGET FOR THE 2006–2007 BIENNIUM, INCLUDING ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR SPAW (SPAW RAC) IN GUADELOUPE

15. The Chairman invited Mrs. Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury of the secretariat to present the “Status of Implementation of the Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2006-2007 Biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.31/INF.3). The secretariat outlined the process of development of the current Workplan indicating that the Workplan had been developed by the Third STAC in Caracas, Venezuela in October 2005, revised and approved by the Fourth COP in Montego Bay, Jamaica, in November 2006, and adopted by the Twelfth Intergovernmental Meeting and Ninth Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the CEP

and Cartagena Convention, in December 2006. It was indicated that most of the activities outlined in the Workplan had been implemented and others had been incorporated into the “Draft Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2008-2009 Biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/5). Programme Coordination had been carried out by the SPAW Programme Officer with assistance from a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) until January 2007, as well as a Bilingual Secretary. The Director of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre, a Programme Officer for the RAC and a part-time Documentalist in Guadeloupe, as well as the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) Mesoamerican Reef Alliance (MAR) Project Coordinator and Project Assistant in Belize until July 2007, were also major players. Information on the SPAW Programme was promoted via various outlets such as its website, species colouring book in two languages, SPAW fact sheet which is regularly updated and circulated, and at meetings with various organizations, including the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), of which the secretariat is the regional focal point. Ratification had been promoted in numerous Latin American and Caribbean countries. Fundraising for the 2008-2009 biennium amounted to US\$ 1.6 million and included support from the French Government, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project. The Programme Officer for SPAW mentioned that a major action undertaken was the reactivation of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM), comprising a redesign and update of the marine protected areas (MPA) CaMPAM database, an evaluation of the internationally-recognized, Training of Trainers for MPA management (ToT) programme and revision of the MPA Training Manual. The secretariat also addressed the status of the Guidelines for listing Protected Areas (PA) under SPAW and mentioned that they have been successfully reviewed by the SPAW RAC and the Electronic Working Group, highlighting further that a preliminary draft for the Guidelines to prevent species from becoming threatened or endangered had also been prepared. She mentioned that the preliminary Legal Analysis for the Criteria for Article 11 exemptions had also been completed and that working groups for both of these Guidelines were pending as per COP 4. She further noted that all these outputs were made available to the Meeting as information documents.

16. Under the Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species, activities highlighted included refining the five year Priority Plan for the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP), completion of the Priority Actions for marine mammal conservation of the 2005 Barbados Workshop, revision of the Regional Manatee Management Plan, synergies with the Interamerican Sea Turtle Convention and signature of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC), and the support of many activities coordinated by WIDECAS. With regard to the Conservation of Major Ecosystems, the secretariat mentioned the focus primarily on coral reef management and conservation. The funding from the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the amount of US\$3 million over three years had been completed under the Mesoamerican Reef Alliance (see paragraph 22 for additional information), an economic valuation tool for coastal resources with the World Resource Institute (WRI) was created to aid in ascertaining the economic value of coral reefs, and the validation of this tool in St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago was supported.

17. It was mentioned that further support had been provided by the sub- regional coral reef monitoring nodes and that preparations for the International Year of the Reef (IYOR) at the Regional Workshop in the Dominican Republic, November 2006 were also made. The secretariat highlighted its promotion of the Blue Flag Programme and collaboration on the development of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) Regional Policy Framework for Sustainable Tourism as well as coordination with UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics (UNEP-DTIE) on their sustainable tourism activities relevant to the region. The Programme Officer also mentioned that manuals on sustainable tourism practices were being edited in Spanish and will be made available on compact disc for effective distribution. In terms of budgeting, the presenter summarized the funds received and the cost of implementation for 2006-2007. It was emphasized that the majority of funds had been received from sources other than the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF), as the contributions to the CTF remained relatively low since they had not been updated for many years. It was also mentioned that although the funds used during the biennium appeared substantial, the majority was received for a few specific projects, with over half the total amount allocated to one project.
18. The secretariat concluded by reiterating that the reduced staff for SPAW and limited funding had affected delivery and implementation, and that the limited funding provided by the CTF was often compensated by other sources, with key activities remaining underfunded. It was stated that despite efforts by the secretariat during the biennium, no new Parties had joined the SPAW Protocol since 2003. The secretariat would however continue to work to promote the Protocol and suggested that collaboration and assistance from existing Parties might be needed. The Programme Officer also emphasized that alliances and partnerships continued to demonstrate their importance for achieving objectives and that the SPAW RAC continued to provide useful support for implementation of activities. It was also noted that although the inter-sessional work through electronic working groups had not been as productive as initially envisaged, progress, though slow, had been made.
19. The secretariat invited Dr. Georgina Bustamante to present an update on the New Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its major activities, including an update on the status of development of the new marine protected areas (MPA) database as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.9. During 2006-2008, CaMPAM implemented the following activities: Two Regional Training the Trainers (ToT) Courses for MPA managers of the Caribbean (2006 Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Florida; and 2007 in Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Tulum, Mexico), with 12-15 participants each, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and in-kind contributions from numerous local institutions. This resulted in sixteen local follow-up training activities with ca. 200 participants, targeting issues ranging from park rangers/managers training, to nation-wide MPA national systems development, to fostering ecotourism best practices and site co-management scheme development. The ToT Manual was revised, taking into account the evaluation of the ToT programme based on alumni and expert surveys and interviews, incorporating new tools and case studies. The regional MPA database was restructured, and is being populated with data from primary sources (MPA managers) while building interoperability with similar international efforts. The Small Grants Fund and Exchange Programme for Sustainable Fisheries and Alternative Livelihoods for Fishers continued in

cooperation with the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) and five new projects were funded. CaMPAM activities continued to engage a number of institutional partners (The Nature Conservancy, GCFI, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-NOAA, Instituto Universitario Tulúm, and many others) which provided resources and expertise, to the ToT courses. An expansion of CaMPAM activities is expected through additional involvement of partners, diversification of training tools and recruitment of a formal coordinator, as a response to the changing/ increasing needs of its membership and the Caribbean MPA community at large. Additional information will be provided through the CaMPAM list serve.

20. The Director of the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (SPAW RAC), Mr. Maurice Anselme, was invited to present the status of the activities implemented by the SPAW RAC in Guadeloupe (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.4). Mr. Anselme noted that the Government of France was responsible for 69% of the total budget of the Centre. This budget, which amounted to 403,000 euros for 2006-2007, also received funds from UNEP-CEP and the European Union for specific activities of the RAC.
21. He indicated that, in accordance with the recommendations of the COP4, the Centre had carried out its assigned priorities, particularly in relation to the coordination of electronic working groups on the Action Plan for marine mammals, the guidelines for protected areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol and the guidelines to prevent species from becoming endangered or threatened. He also highlighted the work carried out, in collaboration with Birdlife, on publication of the book on important birds of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR), training in wetlands management with the participation of several participants from Haiti and other actions in keeping with the objectives of the SPAW Protocol. Other actions undertaken by the SPAW RAC included translation and revision of documents within the framework of SPAW and the Cartagena Convention, organization of coordinating meetings between the Coordinator of the CEP and the Government of France, as well as other meetings related to the management of the SPAW RAC. Additionally, in response to the various requests received, the SPAW RAC had participated in other meetings and events related to networking and coordination.
22. Mrs. Vanzella-Khoury made a brief presentation on the main achievements of the International Coral Reef Action Network-Mesoamerican Reef Alliance Project (ICRAN/MAR), which was concluded during the biennium (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.10). She outlined the funding and participating organizations of the ICRAN-MAR Alliance, as well as the major activities. She informed the Meeting that it had been designed in 2003 in recognition of the ecological and socio-economic richness and importance of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef region (MAR), the second largest reef after the Great Barrier Reef of Australia, and to complement activities already underway in the relevant countries. She explained that it had been a three year initiative to address threats to the MAR under components known for their potential to strongly impact the coastal and marine ecosystems, i.e. watershed management, sustainable fisheries, and sustainable tourism, a growing economic activity in this region. The strategy of the Alliance include the provision of different tools to promote the voluntary adoption of Better Management Practices (BMP), build partnerships at different levels for capacity building and involve the

private sector as a fundamental objective, as well as encouraging a bottom-up approach to the Alliance's goals.

23. It was mentioned that the results of the project were now established at a strategic point with the potential to leverage major changes in policies and practices at the regional and national levels and that the positive results obtained served to demonstrate that alliances were an effective mechanism for management of marine resources.
24. Leveraged funding from both organizations and the private-sector amounted to over US\$ 1.6 million in support of activities under the three components. . Some of the major outcomes outlined by the secretariat were the MoUs that had been signed with agro-businesses for the implementation and promotion of BMPs, reflecting the willingness of the industry to participate in activities promoting sustainable development, while maintaining economic benefits. Other outcomes included the development of a monitoring protocol for bioaccumulation in marine organisms, as well as regional capacity strengthening, and the development of an Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) methodology for the region. Reef Check ecological and socio economic centres had been selected and established in the MAR countries and coral reef monitoring manuals developed in English and Spanish. Often outcomes included BMPs and conservation initiatives involving local marine recreation providers, as well as the creation of tourism conservation alliances and the conduct of a series of workshops aimed at building capacity in selected pilot sites. It was indicated that the future of the project relied on funding that would allow consolidation of the project's impacts in the MAR region and their dissemination to the Wider Caribbean Region. The presenter also emphasized the fact that current partnerships, both local and international, should continue their capacity-building efforts and that the development of local partnerships and alliances should be encouraged so as to improve sustainable business practices and garner community-wide support for all three components of the project.
25. The Chairman invited Dr. Nathalie Ward of the United States National Marine Sanctuary Program (U.S. NMSP) to make a presentation on the U.S./Dominican Republic (D.R.) Sister Sanctuary Initiative. The Director of the NMSP signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 8 December 2006 with the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources in the Dominican Republic (D.R.) to establish the first sister sanctuary to protect the endangered humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*). The signing of the MOU marked a new chapter for the joint management of the humpback whale and the sister sanctuary initiative is the first international relationship in the world to protect an endangered migratory specie at both ends of its range—in its northern feeding and nursery grounds in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (SBNMS) and its southern mating and calving grounds in Marinos Mammiferos de Sanctuario de Republica Dominicana (SMMRD). The MOU delineates the general terms, objectives and responsibilities of the sister sanctuary relationship, which aims to enhance an ecosystem-based approach to cooperative sanctuary management through capacity building, research, monitoring, and education. Dr. Ward stressed that the sister sanctuary relationship could play a powerful role in protecting endangered humpback whales (trans-boundary species), preserving special marine areas, increasing public awareness and support for marine mammal conservation, and providing sites for research and monitoring. The Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

(SBNMS) /Gulf of Maine feeding grounds represents one of longest contiguous studies of baleen whales worldwide (for more than 30 years. The SBNMS feeding stock hallmarks four generations of humpback whales. Photo identification has demonstrated that the sister sanctuary shares over 900 individuals between the two habitats. In 1986, the D.R. acknowledged this critical breeding area by designating Silver Bank as a Humpback Whale Sanctuary—the first for the WCR. The Silver Bank Humpback Whale Sanctuary—off the northeast coast of the Dominican Republic— represents the largest breeding aggregation of humpback whales in the North Atlantic, with over 3,000 individuals sighted each season.

26. Dr. Ward noted that over the past two decades, awareness of marine mammals and their habitats in the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico had increased and that the SPAW Protocol had highlighted this advancement with all thirty-three species of marine mammals listed for protection in Annex II of SPAW. Recommendations of the draft marine mammal action plan (MMAAP) specifically request (under “actions needed” in section 2.4.7) that countries ... “design marine protected areas and other management regimes that maintain ecological connections between MPAs in order to satisfy species’ requirements, including “sister sanctuary” relationships that promote protection for trans-boundary assets.” The U.S./D.R. sister sanctuary is part of a larger international and global vision of marine mammal MPAs worldwide. As long-living species, marine mammals are sentinels of ocean health affected by all the threats outlined in the draft MMAAP. She indicated that sister sanctuaries could provide stepping-stones of protection for trans-boundary species and that this type of initiative manifests the true spirit of regional cooperation, a key element to ensure the conservation of migratory, endangered species. The sister sanctuary model will serve as a template—for sentinel species (i.e., endangered humpback whale) and sentinel sites (SBNMS and SMMRD)—to increase public, governmental and international awareness of the importance of the two habitats and the need to take a broader management view toward conservation. Through developing an effective model, sister sanctuary initiatives can extend their benefit well beyond their geographically limited boundaries.
27. The Meeting thanked Dr. Ward for her interesting presentation and invited Mrs. Caroline Rinaldi of Evasion Tropicale in Guadeloupe, to present on cetaceans that have been studied in Guadeloupe and neighbouring waters since 1998. Photo identification results on sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*), humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) and different other species have been produced. Eight groups of sperm whales with a high level of fidelity and association have been determined. Movements of groups to the islands of Dominica and Martinique along with supposed movements of individuals between groups have been revealed. The low numbers of humpback whale identification, re-observation from one year to the next, and identification through the north Atlantic catalogue, clearly point out that there is relatively poor knowledge of this species and of its migratory movements in the region. The re-sighting of individuals among other species such as delphinids within one single year or from one year to the next, have also been established. This information stresses the need to complete the existing dataset and widening it to other countries, specifically those countries where the status of cetacean populations remains poorly documented, and to take these facts into consideration with a view to better managing cetacean populations in the Caribbean.

28. The Chairman thanked Dr. Ward and Mrs. Rinaldi for their interesting and inter-related presentations and stressed the importance of conserving these migratory species.
29. He further invited the Meeting to provide any comments on the activities implemented during 2006-2007 and to make the necessary recommendations. The Meeting commended the secretariat on the accomplishments in the workplan of 2006-2007 and recognized the remarkable work conducted by the SPAW secretariat and the SPAW RAC on building capacity during this biennium. With regard to the work on invasive species, the delegate from Venezuela informed the Meeting that his government, in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), is exploring the establishment of a scholarship programme for the region for training in combating marine invasive species introduced by the disposal of ballast water from ships. He also mentioned the opening in the Maritime University of the Caribbean of the graduate programme on Marine Environmental Management, which provides scholarships to the Wider Caribbean Region. The secretariat welcomed this initiative and proposed that additional information be presented to the Thirteenth IGM in September 2008.
30. The delegate from Panama highlighted the need for improved data collection and the need to work toward establishing additional marine mammal sanctuaries. She further highlighted the need to promulgate best practices throughout the region.
31. The delegate from the Netherlands Antilles expressed his concern for the limited human resources available to the secretariat and the SPAW RAC, particularly taking into account the ambitious Workplan covering a wide range of activities. He called for Parties to consider ways in which additional staff, through secondments or JPOs, could assist the secretariat. He also drew attention to the low number of new signatories to the SPAW Protocol and to the need for all current Parties to promote the SPAW Protocol within the region, and the need for biodiversity protection to be transboundary, despite all countries not being signatories. He inquired as to why some of the Parties to SPAW were not present at the Meeting and noted the participation of non-signatories in the SPAW activities. In conclusion, he applauded the Government of France for its critical support to the SPAW RAC in the form of human as well as financial resources. In response, the secretariat highlighted the commitment of the Government of France to incorporating additional staff within the next two years for the SPAW RAC, and expressed the hope that a new JPO could be brought on board through a collaborative agreement with Sida which is being crafted. The potential establishment of a legal framework for SPAW RAC was also expected to improve UNEP-CEP capability for fundraising. The secretariat indicated that regrettably, due to the lengthy nomination process for delegates in some countries, these persons had not been able to obtain visas in time for the Meeting. With regard to the inclusion of non Parties in SPAW activities, the secretariat acknowledged this occurrence but indicated that, in the majority of cases, priority had been given to signatories. The ICRAN/MAR Project was designed in 2003 before the COP mandated the secretariat to focus mainly on signatories, which took place after the project was approved.
32. The delegate from the Netherlands Antilles further noted that no additional governments had become Parties to the SPAW Protocol. The secretariat informed the Meeting that Costa Rica,

Haiti and Mexico had been invited to participate in the Meeting as Observers as these governments have expressed an interest in becoming more active in the SPAW Programme and in ratifying the Protocol. It was noted that the previous Government of Guatemala had expressed a similar interest.

33. The observer from Haiti highlighted its recognition of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols. He acknowledged the efforts of the SPAW Programme to incorporate Haiti in its activities, including the successful participation of one manager in the Training of Trainers Regional Course for MPA Managers, and the implementation of their follow-up training activities. He emphasized Haiti's political will to continue strengthening and building synergies to better manage its marine environment. In encouraging other countries to join the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols, including the SPAW Protocol, he informed the Meeting that his Government had initiated this process and therefore expected that Haiti would be a Party by the end of the year. This was recognized by the secretariat which indicated some of the work that had been undertaken such as promotional workshops to facilitate the accession of Haiti to the Convention and its Protocols.
34. The representative from the Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness (ECCEA) stated that in accordance with the Recommendations of the 2004 STAC Meeting, research efforts had advanced and notable knowledge of marine mammals in the region, as evidenced by the presentations at this Meeting, thereby placing the region in a better position to decide upon and implement actions. She indicated that, furthering initiatives such as sister sanctuaries (Silver Bank, DR. and Stellwagen Bank, U.S.), was a good model for Caribbean countries and within this framework, countries could be assisted with the development of cooperative projects and identification of international partners. The U.S. delegation recognized the importance of collaborative work, but was also concerned about the wide array of activities outlined in the SPAW Programme that might diffuse its strength. She suggested concentrating on achieving the goals of the Protocol and received guidance from Parties on priorities within the Workplan. The secretariat invited the Parties to prioritize, due to the many activities that the Workplan contained. The secretariat also encouraged non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academia to identify areas of interest within the SPAW Programme for potential collaboration, together with the secretariat and the SPAW RAC. The leadership of the French Antilles Regional Council expressed this body's willingness and commitment to work with the SPAW Programme on this issue.
35. The representative of the Humane Society International (HSI) noted that with the approval of the Guidelines and criteria for the listing of protected areas under the SPAW Protocol, a blueprint for a protected areas network was on the cusp of being formed. The workload of the secretariat will increase exponentially as additional work will be required to manage the nomination process. He appealed to the U.S. and NGOs to lend their support to this process.

AGENDA ITEM 6: FINAL GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF PROTECTED AREAS TO BE LISTED UNDER THE SPAW PROTOCOL

36. The Chairman invited the SPAW RAC, to present the document “Final Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol” as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/3, which includes the report of the Working Group (WG) covering the period since the last report was presented to the Parties at the COP4 (Montego Bay, 28 November 2006), and the work of the one-day meeting of experts from the Parties, held prior to this Meeting in Gosier, Guadeloupe, France, on 1 July 2008.
37. The Director of the SPAW RAC and Coordinator of the WG, highlighted that the text that had been revised by the Meeting of experts held one day prior to STAC4 and contained in UNEP (DEPI) CAR WG.31/3 Annex V Rev.1, including all the changes incorporated in the Guidelines, particularly under Section B and new Section D: Procedure for the Nominations and for Listing and Delisting. During the revision of the original document, the number of required Ecological Criteria was discussed and the Meeting agreed that at least one criterion would be sufficient for nomination of a PA, provided that the original criteria were reviewed/redrafted to be made more precise. The delegate from Cuba noted that while in agreement with the decision, her delegation was still of the opinion that two ecological criteria were required.
38. The procedure for nominations was reviewed to indicate the advisory role of the STAC in reviewing the proposals submitted by each Party. The proposals would subsequently be submitted to the COP for consideration for listing. After clarification of the ambiguity in the role of the STAC as an advisory body, it was agreed to replace the term “decide” with “request” in subsection (d), along with other editorial and grammatical changes in the document in the English and Spanish versions. In order to better reflect the legal jurisdiction of the Parties, the phrase “in its territory” was replaced throughout the document by “over which it exercises sovereignty, or sovereign rights or jurisdiction”, in accordance with the terminology used in the SPAW Protocol.
39. With regard to the Glossary and Annotated Format, it was agreed that the Glossary be removed from the original document and that the definitions already contained in the SPAW Protocol and the Cartagena Convention be used. With regard to additional terms, existing definitions from related treaties would be taken into account on a case by case basis, as appropriate. It was proposed that the Annotated Format be used as a guide for the compilation of information on the protected areas nominated. Minor changes were introduced in the document as reflected in UNEP(DEC) CAR WG.29/4 Rev.1.
40. The Meeting highlighted that when a protected area already listed under related Treaties such as the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) is submitted for consideration to be listed under SPAW, the compatibility of the area for

nomination under the SPAW Protocol is not negatively affected, but that this only serves to enhance and highlight the characteristics of the site as a protected area.

41. The procedure for submitting nominations and information for transboundary areas and areas located in biological corridors was also addressed. The Meeting concluded that independent submission by the Party exercising sovereignty, or sovereign rights or jurisdiction of the nominated PA be undertaken.
42. The Meeting was reminded that the geographical coverage of the Cartagena Convention did not extend to the high seas, which evoked changes in the Annotated Format to reflect these clarifications.
43. The French delegation expressed its appreciation for the work accomplished through the participation of experts and delegates from the Parties, as well as observers. The delegate recalled the concerns expressed by France for this document to be definitely validated and approved by the next Conference of Parties. This would enable Member States to quickly implement it and to designate sites in order that the network of protected areas in the Wider Caribbean may finally become a reality. The delegation acknowledged that while the document was not perfect, all Parties would recognize its benefits and if necessary, it should be promoted and improved by the STAC.
44. The Meeting agreed on the final documents as contained in UNEP (DEPI)WG.31/3 Rev.1 and UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG 29/4 Rev.1, and requested that the secretariat submit them to the COP5 for consideration and approval.
45. The Meeting thanked the WG for its hard work, ably coordinated by the SPAW RAC and noted that the approval of the Guidelines had moved the implementation of the Protocol to another level. The SPAW RAC thanked the Meeting and the Parties for their participation and expressed appreciation for the hard work completed.

AGENDA ITEM 7: DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION OF MARINE MAMMALS (MMAP) IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

46. The SPAW RAC presented the “Final Draft Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region: Priority Actions and Five-year Plan”, as well as the Report of the Working Group as contained in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/4. These reports reflect the work undertaken by the Group since its establishment following the STAC2 and COP3 Meetings (3–6 June 2003, and 27 September 2004, respectively), and including the final revisions made by the Group since COP4 (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 28 November 2006).
47. Following the presentation made by the SPAW RAC, the delegation of the United States noted the comprehensive nature of the MMAP and the many important activities that it outlines within various areas. The delegation proposed that activities be prioritized in order to accommodate the resources and capabilities of countries, taking into account that they may have limited capacity. It was further suggested that capacity building be considered a priority

action and that training workshops on stranding response for marine mammals, such as the one previously conducted in Trinidad and Tobago into 2006, be replicated to allow for linguistic expansion to the other official languages of the region.

48. The delegates from Cuba and Colombia requested that the work of the WG be extended to the next COP Meeting to allow for further consultation with specialists in the respective countries as this would ensure that the MMAP would have both achievable and tangible results in these countries. The delegate from the Netherlands Antilles emphasized that the current document was the result of work undertaken over the course of a very long period and pointed out that the previous lack of concrete suggestions on the content and wording of the MMAP, had hindered the process of its adoption. He expressed concern that if the mandate of the WG were to be extended, no substantial changes would be made, and, as such, he encouraged the Meeting to provide specific recommendations directed to the context of the document. Several Parties expressed their satisfaction with the content of the document and their desire for the document to be approved, following a realistic prioritization of activities and a rapid internal consultation prior to COP5 within those countries which had not yet provided comments.
49. The Meeting agreed on a number of priority areas in the MMAP, which included the expansion of workshops on stranding response in other languages, workshops for building capacity and information gathering on whale-watching and pollution / marine mammal health and to continue expanding knowledgebase and information-sharing on management strategies. It was further agreed by the Meeting, that information exchange would occur among all Parties and coordinated through the secretariat, with the assistance of the SPAW RAC. The delegation of the United States reminded the Meeting about a questionnaire previously prepared by the secretariat that had been used to compile information in preparation to the Meeting of Experts on the MMAP, and which could be used again to garner additional information from the countries. The delegate from Cuba noted the willingness of her Government for the use and completion of this form, as appropriate.
50. The French delegation presented its initiative on the reintroduction of the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) to the French Territories and it was noted that this issue not only concerned the French Government but was a general concern for the Caribbean. The French delegation expressed its support for the adoption of the final draft concerning the action plan for marine mammals and recalled two initiatives requested by its administration upon which the Contracting Parties had agreed: the creation of a sanctuary for marine mammals in the French Caribbean, and the reintroduction of the manatee in the Bay of Guadeloupe.
51. Regarding the plan for a sanctuary for marine mammals in the French Caribbean, the French delegation foresees the extension of this initiative to the neighboring countries interested in participating. The delegation insists upon the fact that information regarding the status of the project should be updated regularly to arouse interest in similar initiatives in the countries of the region. As a result, this process could lead to the project being extended internationally. In this regard, three working groups were established around three priority topics: assessment of scientific databases, communication regarding the establishment of the sanctuary and

cetacean issues, and the legal framework of the sanctuary. Dialogue and inter-ministerial consultations will ensure a strong legal foundation for the project and the SPAW RAC will provide technical support in this process. According to the French delegation, actions involving the participation of the local population, bay users and decision makers are essential, in accordance with the objectives of the SPAW Protocol. They must be clearly identified in the MMAP document and the draft regional action plan for the manatee should be updated.

52. The Chairman concluded by thanking the Meeting for its input and for working together to resolve each issue in a timely manner. Mr. Andrade also thanked the Meeting and mentioned that the secretariat and the Parties should commit to submitting their observations on the document, where further national consultation was needed, before the next COP meeting. The final date agreed upon for submission of final concrete amendments to the secretariat was 31 July 2008. With the new date set, the secretariat requested the indulgence of the Parties as it would not be possible to respect the rule of posting working documents in the three languages six weeks prior to the COP.

AGENDA ITEM 8: DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORKPLAN AND BUDGET OF THE SPAW PROGRAMME FOR THE 2008-2009 BIENNIUM

53. The secretariat was invited to present the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2008-2009 Biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/5), developed following Recommendations of previous STAC and COP meetings, addressing existing and emerging global and regional issues and initiatives, and continued development of strategic alliances. Programme Coordination will continue to be carried out by SPAW staff, which currently includes a Programme Officer and a Bilingual Secretary, based in Kingston, with the assistance of the SPAW RAC Director and a Documentalist in Guadeloupe. Efforts will continue to develop and maintain strategic alliances through coordination with relevant organizations and collaborative arrangements with existing and emerging initiatives. During the 2008-2009 biennium, the COP5 will be convened in September 2008. In addition, the secretariat will promote the SPAW Protocol with a view to increasing the number of Parties, and fundraise for activities outlined in the Workplan.
54. Activities under “Strengthening of Protected Areas” include those of the CaMPAM Network and Forum namely: annual meetings for MPA managers at GCFI; small grants for six MPAs focusing on livelihoods and sustainable tourism and fisheries; the Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme and subsequent local training courses; promotion of the MPA database; support the regional network of MPAs and the 2012 target, in synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); as well as linkages with the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, and the Western Hemispheric Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI).
55. With regard to the Guidelines for protected areas and species, the secretariat and SPAW RAC will undertake a pilot activity for listing PA, and develop a network and cooperation programme as per Decision No. 8 of SPAW COP4 (contained in (UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.25/INF.4). Criteria for assessment of exemptions under Article 11(2) will be explored pursuant to Decisions Nos. 9 and 7 of SPAW COP2 and COP3 respectively, and as contained

in UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/INF.5. A working group will be created as soon as possible to initiate the process for listing new species not yet included in the Annexes to the Protocol, based on Decision 2(ii) of the COP4 and information documents UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.31/INF.6, UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.7 and UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/INF.5.

56. Under the component “Conservation of Threatened and Endangered Species”, the secretariat proposed to finalize the MMAP priority action plan to be presented for adoption at COP5; update marine mammal compilations to improve information; capacity building workshops on stranding response, and best management practice workshops for whale watching and the compilation of related information; and consider development of standards for MM in captivity. Continued support and promotion of various activities, such as manatee conservation and its regional management plan, Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plans (STRAPs), establishment of new Index Monitoring Sites for hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) through the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST), a hawksbill regional workshop (2008) with the Interamerican Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC), and continued work on the West Indian whistling duck (*Dendrocygna arborea*) through wetlands conservation. Collaborative efforts and synergies will also continue with BirdLife on the management of important bird areas (IBAs), and with the Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO/WECAFC), the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and the Organization for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA) on management of queen conch (*Strombus gigas*) and spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*) fisheries, as well as with CABI on invasive alien species management in the Insular Caribbean.
57. Within the “Conservation of Major Ecosystems” component, the secretariat will participate in the implementation of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project of GEF, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCaribe), taking the lead in the reef biodiversity pilot project. The project will pay particular attention to the strengthening of management frameworks for large marine areas following the multisectoral and ecosystem approach, and enforcing stakeholder participation, launching pilot activities in Colombia, Dominican Republic/Haiti, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The secretariat will also continue to serve as the regional focal point for ICRI and will support and promote IYOR activities in the 2008-2009 biennium. Collaboration and coordination will continue with CTO, Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST), and UNEP-DTIE, on sustainable tourism initiatives, dissemination of CEP and UNEP material on sustainable tourism, continued promotion as appropriate of the Blue Flag Programme, as well as strengthening capacities on sustainable marine recreation practices in other parts of the region based on ICRAN/MAR experiences in Mesoamerica.
58. Key issues on which the secretariat asked the STAC to consider and provide input, included climate change adaptation initiatives in the Wider Caribbean as they relate to biodiversity conservation, activities in support of the 2012 goals of the CBD on national and regional networks of protected areas, the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, and developing the Guidelines to prevent species from becoming threatened or endangered pursuant to Decision

8 of COP4 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/INF.4). The process relating to the Criteria to assess exemptions under Article 11(2) using the preliminary legal review (UNEP(DEC) CAR WG.29/INF.5), further action on the revised Regional Manatee Management Plan (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.5), and analysis of species required for listing in SPAW Annexes (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.6, WG.31/INF.7, IG.25/INF.5) as per COP4 Decisions, were also raised as key issues for STAC consideration..

59. Ms. Nicole Brown, consultant to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), informed the Meeting that IUCN was in the process of developing a Caribbean Initiative in support of conservation and sustainable development in the insular Caribbean. As part of related discussions with IUCN members, partner organisations and selected experts, the opportunity and need for the preparation of a regional Red List of Threatened species has emerged (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG31/INF.6). She indicated that in response, IUCN is developing a proposal to prepare a regional Red List for the insular Caribbean, based on the premise that such a list could help the region. This would be used to determine the conservation status and trends of species; identify species or ecosystems under greatest threat; inform conservation planning and priority setting; and raise awareness of threatened species. She further noted that a regional Red List would provide critical data to inform the formulation of management plans and strategies, including for adaptation to climate change, allow for the expansion of the global list, while providing a list that is better tailored to the needs of the Caribbean. The availability of a Caribbean Red List would complement and support the SPAW Protocol in its mandate, and would inform future revision of its Annexes and Appendix. Ms. Brown invited the STAC to note the IUCN initiative and to consider possibilities for collaboration where it may be beneficial to the work of the secretariat and the mandate of the STAC. She further invited the Meeting to provide informal comments on the proposal which was available for review on request, and to ensure that it meets SPAW objectives and supports SPAW priorities.
60. Ms. Janet Gibson from the Society for the Conservation of Reef Fish Aggregations (SCRFA), made a presentation on Fish Spawning Aggregations in the Wider Caribbean, with Emphasis on the Nassau Grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG31/INF.7). She stressed that evidence existed that reef fish spawning aggregations may be decimated within a few years by heavy fishing, resulting in a decline in fish populations. A good example was the Nassau grouper which is very vulnerable to fishing during spawning aggregations. It was once the most commonly landed reef fish in the Caribbean, but catches are declining in many countries, and the region has experienced more than a 50% loss of all its known aggregations. The Nassau grouper traits of longevity and large size at maturity make this species susceptible to over-fishing. In 1996, the species was listed as endangered on IUCN's Red List, and according to IUCN's reassessment in 2003, the population has declined by 60% over the past 30 years. A similar picture exists globally for many reef fish aggregations. Management of spawning aggregations is required to ensure that these commercially-valuable reef fish maintain healthy populations. As many of the aggregating species travel long distances from their resident reefs to spawning sites, region-wide measures are essential. Multiple measures including protection during spawning, management of fishing outside of aggregations and protection of critical habitats, need to be applied. Spawning aggregations should also be considered in the design process of MPAs.

The lack of understanding of aggregating species and the urgency of the situation need to be addressed. The perception of spawning aggregations needs to change from being viewed as fishing opportunities to vulnerable life-history events needing protection. In addition, the monitoring of aggregation sites is needed to determine whether management is effective. Finally, the case of the Nassau grouper requires urgent attention, and SCRFA recommends that consideration be given to its possible inclusion in Annex II or III of the SPAW Protocol, with a view to raising its protection status and ensuring its sustainable management across the Caribbean region.

61. Mr. Alfonso Lombana of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), made a presentation entitled “Adaptation to Climate Change: Marine Turtles as an Umbrella Species” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG31/INF.19). He informed the Meeting that WWF has begun to study the impacts of climate change and other compounded pressures using marine turtles, especially hawksbills (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), as a focal species since they use both terrestrial and marine environments. Key objectives of this programme include the leverage of a network of climate change and biodiversity specialists from across the Insular Caribbean by the establishment of the working group of climate change and marine turtle experts that will examine what adaptations will be necessary as climate patterns change to safeguard the endangered hawksbill turtle; to make a preliminary assessment of how protected area management, biodiversity protection and conservation policy can adapt to climate change in this region through the extrapolated analysis of the hawksbill turtle, a key indicator species; to use geographic information systems (GIS) to quantify the effect that sea-level rise will have on nesting sites throughout the geographic range of hawksbill turtles in the Caribbean; to assess how climate change-induced changes in sea currents may impact hawksbill turtle migration routes in the Caribbean region; and to evaluate the location and likelihood of climate change-induced coral bleaching events in the Caribbean region and assess the potential impact on hawksbill turtles.

62. Mr. Lyndon John, the delegate from St. Lucia, made a presentation on the Western Hemispheric Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI), a project which encompasses 35 nations and addresses issues from several mandates by the countries in the Western Hemisphere. Under this Initiative, cooperative strategies for conservation of migratory species and broader collaboration on a wider array of wildlife conservation issues have been developed, as well as identification and prioritization of capacity building needs in the Western Hemisphere for conservation of migratory species. An MoC was signed between the SPAW Protocol secretariat and the WHMSI Initiative in 2008, which promotes cooperation in assisting the Contracting Parties to the Convention and the WHMSI partners to identify and strengthen conservation of those sites of international importance which are relevant to both entities. Activities under the statement of work include collaboration in the conservation of migratory species in the Wider Caribbean; exchange of information on the work of the Cartagena Convention and WHMSI which are of mutual interest and benefit; coordination and/or joint development of programmes and projects for strengthening conservation of specific sites or species; identification and mobilization of human and financial resources; promotion of recruitment of additional Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols, as well as the WHMSI partnership and joint participation in areas of mutual interest.

63. Following a request from the delegate of the United States for additional information on biological connectivity research efforts over the last years, the representative of CaMPAM made an interesting presentation entitled “Using research data on biological connectivity to develop MPA systems”, which was well received by the participants. It highlighted the use of existing research data on biological connectivity to develop conservation strategies and coastal management schemes, including marine protected areas systems (national, sub-regional, transboundary, eco-regional).
64. The delegate from the Netherlands Antilles indicated that, following the adoption of the Guidelines by the COP5, his country would submit its PAs for listing.
65. The Chairman invited comments and recommendations on the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2008-2009 Biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/5). The Meeting congratulated the secretariat on the comprehensive and ambitious but necessary Workplan for the upcoming biennium. The secretariat was recognized for its ability to successfully balance numerous projects with a small staff and it was noted that the work of the CEP secretariat is used as an example for other secretariats. The secretariat was commended for their efforts to develop synergies and collaborative arrangements with other initiatives and organizations relevant to the SPAW objectives, as this has proven to be a very useful and cost effective manner in which to deliver the Workplan.
66. A number of delegations agreed that the areas of work addressing species and ecosystem conservation and management, as well as protected areas strengthening, were covered under subsections 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5. The U.S delegate again emphasized the need to prioritize activities within the Workplan and focus the secretariat’s efforts on the SPAW mandate and core competencies. In this regard, the U.S. highlighted areas of greatest importance in the Workplan which included: MPA implementation and strengthening in 2.2; marine mammal strandings and collaboration with IAC and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in 2.4; and the activities in 2.5. The U.S. expressed the opinion that the process of developing the document “Criteria and Guidelines to Prevent Species from Becoming Threatened or Endangered” would not be worthwhile, and would detract from scarce resources. The delegation of the U.S. while welcoming the ecosystem management approach within the Workplan, noted that reference to the developing Ecosystem Management Programme of UNEP in paragraphs 4 and 6, should not be made at this point, as this has not yet been approved at the Governing Council level.
67. The delegation of the Netherlands Antilles announced that in the near future, a large area of the Saba Bank would be declared an MPA, which will include a conch (*Strombus gigas*) reserve. In commenting on the Workplan he stressed the importance of developing the guidelines for exemptions under Article 11 (2), in order to ensure transparency in this regard when conducting activities relating to this Article.
68. Regarding the incorporation of additional species in the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol, it was highlighted that the existing lists of species had been agreed upon over 20 years ago. Since then, due to escalated environmental degradation and over-exploitation of resources,

several species have become vulnerable and should be considered for inclusion in the Annexes.

69. It was noted, for example, that no reef fish were included in the Annexes, and that considering the focus on coral reefs and related ecosystems, such organisms should be considered for inclusion, particularly in light of the vulnerability of spawning aggregations in the region. The secretariat reminded the Meeting that with regard to the addition of species to the Annexes, the STAC had been given a mandate by the COP4 to initiate the process of identifying those threatened and endangered species of the region that are not yet included in the Annexes to the Protocol.
70. Other comments included clarification on the role of the Island Resources Foundation (IRF) as the coordinator of the Working Group, to be established when feasible by the SPAW RAC, for the guidelines to prevent species from becoming threatened or endangered (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG25/INF.4). The secretariat emphasized the need for synergies and collaboration with other organizations so that additional financial and human resources could be obtained for projects and assistance requested from the Parties in this regard.

AGENDA ITEM 9: OTHER BUSINESS

71. Participants were invited to raise any other issue not covered by the preceding agenda items, but which were relevant to the scope of the Meeting.
72. Mr. Paul Hoetjes, the delegate from the Netherlands Antilles presented a report on an exemption under Art. 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol by the Netherlands Antilles, to allow keeping captive dolphins. He informed the Meeting that in May 2007 the Netherlands Antilles decided to extend the existing exemption dating from 2001, to allow the Curaçao Public Aquarium (CPA) to keep dolphins in captivity, by increasing the maximum number of captive dolphins to a total of 24 dolphins of the species *Tursiops truncatus*. As required by Art. 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol, the Netherlands Antilles is reporting this to the STAC. The current exemption is partly based on the STAC's discussion of the original exemption (for 8 dolphins at that time) in 2001, on which no comments were made with regard to the number for which the exemption was adopted. The same very strict conditions as in the original exemption apply to the present exemption in order to ensure the optimal well-being of the dolphins. The present exemption was adopted for the same objectives as in 2001, firstly, to promote an educational programme aimed at increasing public awareness of the needs of wild dolphins and the need to protect them and consequently the marine environment in general; and secondly to increase the knowledge of the wild populations of marine mammals in the waters surrounding Curaçao through research engendered by this exemption. Mr. Hoetjes indicated that better knowledge of the status of marine mammals in the Wider Caribbean would allow for better protection. The increase in the number of dolphins to be held in captivity under the new exemption was deemed necessary to strengthen the CPA economically and to accommodate new captive-born dolphins.

73. Representatives of several organizations expressed their concern on the educational and scientific value of holding animals in captivity. They commented that expansion of the exemption should have been accompanied by a new exemption request, that economic justifications for the exemption were not relevant to the aims of the SPAW Protocol, and that an exemption request should also have been submitted by Cuba, the source of six of the new animals added at the CPA. It was highlighted that SPAW should develop criteria for assessing justifications for exemptions under Article 11 (2), when countries are involved in the capture, transportation and operation of captive animals. It was pointed out that the captivity can be viewed as a conservation tool but it should be monitored, as live capture and transportation of these animals could lead to their illegal trade and exploitation, especially when this involves non-Contracting Parties to SPAW. It was stressed that these situations illustrate why the clarification of criteria for Article 11 (2) should be made priority, and that it was necessary to establish a working group in this regard. The point was made that exemptions can undermine the integrity of the Protocol, if justifications include the economic feasibility of the activity.
74. The delegation of Venezuela informed the Meeting on progress made in the open intercessional working group for the development of the draft “Guidelines for the establishment and operation of the Regional Activity Centers (RAC) and Regional Activity Networks (RAN)” under the Cartagena Convention. The Meeting supported the recommendation for the secretariat to receive additional comments on the Draft with a view of producing a final draft to be presented to the Thirteenth IGM and Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Cartagena Convention for approval. The importance of such guidelines for implementing activities of the SPAW Protocol and the CEP successfully, was highlighted.
75. The U.S. delegate from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico presented an overview of current interventions on marine mammal stranding. This was used to illustrate their support to the SPAW activities through developing and strengthening communication among neighbouring Caribbean countries and providing marine mammal stranding response training to Spanish speaking countries in the region.
76. In 2007, the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources (PRDNR), created the Marine Mammal Program (MMP), an authorized member of NOAA’s Southeast Region Marine Mammal Stranding Network, expanding on their initiative to enhance stranding response and marine mammal conservation in Puerto Rico that had begun in 2005. The MMP is responsible for the coordination, rescue, and research of marine mammals in the island. The MMP recognizes that a rapid response to stranding incidents could make the difference in the success of rehabilitation, data collection and determining the cause of death of the mammals. The Program is designed as a network with the main objective to unite efforts between the agency and NGOs charged with stranding response. In this regard, DNER has entered agreements with the Puerto Rico Zoo (in charge of rehabilitation and stranding response) and the Puerto Rico College of Veterinaries to help develop a network that covers the entire island. DNER has developed the Stranding Training Program (workshop and hands on training) on stranding response and rescue, to improve data collection and capacity building. Activities under the DNER Marine Mammal Program include training to Spanish speaking

Caribbean countries as a contribution to the MMAP on stranding response and data collection.

77. The delegation of the U.S. was also pleased to announce a partnership with the Government of France with regard to marine mammals conservation. They will be working with the Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Network, Evasion Tropicale, and other institutions in the region in this regard. A workshop will be convened in 2009 to provide training in topics such as species identification, stranding response protocols, data collection, necropsies, and conducting and archiving samples. This is considered the next step toward the goal of increasing capacity in all countries in the Wider Caribbean Region on response to marine mammal stranding events. Regarding this proposal of collaborative training by the United States delegation, the Meeting supported the proposals and emphasized that it promotes understanding, cooperation and harmonization within the region.
78. The IUCN representative, Ms. Nicole Brown, delivered a statement on behalf of the Deputy Director General of the IUCN, Dr. William Jackson. She informed the Meeting that the IUCN is currently formulating a new initiative for the insular Caribbean, acting on a mandate given by a Resolution of its members in 2004. The development of a draft programme for this initiative, facilitated by the French and Italian Governments. It was mentioned that the IUCN is keen to offer its expertise and knowledge in support of the work of the CEP and SPAW Protocol, and specific areas of potential collaboration were highlighted. Such areas included the development of synergies between SPAW and the Caribbean Diversity Programme and preparation of a Red List of Threatened Species in the insular Caribbean. A presentation titled "An IUCN Initiative for the Insular Caribbean" was delivered, during which a brief overview of the IUCN was provided, along with the description of the five main programme areas of the IUCN. It was noted that the Caribbean Initiative, intended to be launched at the IUCN Congress in Barcelona, Spain, in October 2008, is structured around the five programme areas and intended to add value to on-going work in the region. The existence of a drafted programme framework, as well as some associated project ideas and proposals being developed, were mentioned. Ms. Brown also invited the STAC to note and provide support to the Red List Process, provide informal comments on the draft proposal for a Red List project, and to provide additional recommendations and ideas on issues and areas where IUCN could support and add value to the work of regional and local actors. It was mentioned that the IUCN also intends to assist in advocacy and lobbying to increase the profile of activities outlined in the Protocol.
79. The Meeting expressed support for the IUCN activities presented and emphasized the importance of IUCN involvement in the SPAW Protocol, noting that a number of IUCN initiatives closely match activities and projects of the Protocol. In this context, delegates suggested that the IUCN could assist in recruiting Parties to the SPAW Protocol and expressed the importance of the Caribbean Red List process as a contribution to SPAW objectives. The secretariat informed the Meeting about ongoing consultations towards the development of synergies with the IUCN. The Meeting was also informed by the secretariat of a visit to the UNEP CEP Kingston office by the IUCN Deputy Director before the end of July 2008, to discuss areas of potential collaboration between the IUCN and SPAW.

80. In observance of ICRI's International Year of the Reef 2008, a global campaign to raise awareness of the value and importance of coral reefs and threats to their sustainability, and to motivate people to take action to protect them, the secretariat made reference to, presented, and made available, a compilation of materials for the promotion of the IYOR that countries could utilize. These materials included several publications, coral reef identification sheets, posters, guidelines, public service announcements, promotional songs and other relevant visual materials such as DVDs developed by UNEP-CEP, international organizations, USNOAA, NGOs and others.

AGENDA ITEM 10: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

81. The Rapporteur of the Meeting presented the draft Report of the Meeting. The Meeting adopted the draft Report, with amendments and corrections as reflected in this Report. The Chair congratulated the Rapporteur and the secretariat, noting that the few changes to the Report showed great quality in transcription, during debates.

AGENDA ITEM 11: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

82. In his closing remarks, the Chairman thanked all delegates, countries and observers for the cooperative spirit and the active involvement shown throughout the Meeting and congratulated the secretariat on the success of the Meeting. The Rapporteur thanked the Meeting for its input and support, and reminded delegates to submit their comments and changes to the Report in writing to the secretariat. The Coordinator expressed his gratitude to the Government of France for hosting the Meeting, as well as for support provided through the SPAW RAC for various activities, and encouraged other countries to consider hosting CEP meetings. He also thanked the Chair, the Rapporteur and the intersessional Working Groups and highlighted that, while there is a lot of work to be accomplished with limited resources, will and optimism could move the process forward in the sustainable use and preservation of the valuable natural resources of the WCR. The Coordinator was pleased to announce that the Government of Belize had joined the SPAW Protocol thereby furthering this process, and indicated that the Government of Colombia, as Depository for the Convention, would formally notify the Parties of this new ratification. He concluded by thanking the interpreters, translators, secretariat, NGO's and organisations for their support, and the Parties for their valuable input and continued confidence in the secretariat.
83. The delegate from Haiti appealed to NGOs and invited them to do work in the country to aid them in their goal to ratify the Cartagena Convention and the SPAW Protocol. HSI noted that the SPAW Protocol secretariat is one of the more professional and collegial among other international treaties and noted the enthusiasm and dedication of the admirable secretariat serving the Protocol. He also thanked the secretariat for the opportunity presented to NGOs to observe these meetings. The representative of the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), Dr. Carole Carlson, thanked the secretariat for the opportunity to participate at the Meeting and reiterated their commitment to continue collaborating with the SPAW Programme, in particular on the further development and implementation of the Marine Mammal Action Plan for the Wider Caribbean region.

84. Mr. Milton Kaufmann, President of Monitor Caribbean regretted that, while having attended all SPAW STAC Meetings since the inception of SPAW, this would be his last regular attendance as an observer at STAC Meetings as the work of Monitor International would be assumed by the Animal Welfare Institute. He thanked the STAC and the secretariat for welcoming the participation of NGOs in the STAC and wished them all well.
85. The Meeting was closed at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, 5 July 2008, by the Chairman and the secretariat.

ANNEX I: AGENDA

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of Officers
3. Organization of the Meeting
 - a) Rules of Procedure
 - b) Organization of work
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Implementation of the SPAW Programme Workplan and Budget for the 2006–2007 biennium, including activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW RAC) in Guadeloupe
6. Final Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol
7. Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region
8. Development of the Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Programme for the 2008-2009 biennium
9. Other Business
10. Adoption of the Report of the Meeting
11. Closure of the Meeting

ANNEX II: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

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

The Meeting,

RECOMMENDATION I

Having reviewed the “Status of Implementation of the Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2006-2007 biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.3);

Recognizing that since 2003 no new Governments have become Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol;

Recognizing the developing, broad and growing work programme of the SPAW Protocol, necessitates the setting of priorities and increased capacity of the secretariat and the SPAW RAC; and

Welcoming the announcement made by the Government of Haiti regarding its intention to become a Party to the Cartagena Convention and its three Protocols;

Recommends that:

1. The secretariat continue to secure ratification of the Government of Haiti to the SPAW Protocol as well as other governments of the region which have initiated or are in the process of joining;
2. The secretariat, in coordination with the Regional Activity Centre (SPAW RAC), continue to encourage the Governments of the region to become Contracting Parties to the Protocol;
3. The COP5 invite all Contracting Parties to the Protocol to similarly encourage other governments in the region to become Contracting Parties to the Protocol;
4. The COP5 engage in discussions in order to provide further guidance regarding the need for increased resources of both the secretariat and the SPAW RAC;
5. The COP5 engage in discussions in order to provide further guidance to the secretariat regarding the priority actions for the work programme; and
6. In developing and implementing programme activities, the secretariat continue to give priority to Contracting Parties to the SPAW Protocol unless there is an urgent conservation need of concern to the region in a country that is not a Party.

RECOMMENDATION II

Having reviewed the “Final Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/3) and the “Revised Draft Annotated Format for Presentation Reports for the Areas proposed for inclusion in the SPAW List” (UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/4);

Taking note of the report of the working group contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/3;

Complementing the leadership of the SPAW RAC in facilitating the discussions of the electronic working group; and

Recognizing the contribution from the experts participating in the review of the “Final Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol”;

Recommends that:

1. The COP5 adopt the “Final Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol” with the amendments introduced by the Meeting and reflected in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/3 Rev.1.
2. The Contracting Parties use the Annotated Format as reviewed and agreed by the STAC, as a guide for the submission of proposals for listing protected areas under the SPAW Protocol.
3. The COP5 consider a future evaluation of the annotated format and its revision, as appropriate.
4. The Contracting Parties reference definitions found in the text of the SPAW Protocol and the Cartagena Convention when using the Guidelines and Criteria.

RECOMMENDATION III

Having reviewed the “Final Draft Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/4);

Taking note of the draft compilations and information documents in support of the draft MMAP as contained in UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.12 to INF.16;

Recommends that:

1. Contracting Parties provide further specific amendments to the text of the Final Draft Action Plan, and make them available to the secretariat no later than 31 July 2008, for their compilation and insertion as appropriate.
2. The final version of the text be circulated to the Contracting Parties as soon as possible, and prior to the COP5, for consideration and approval.
3. The COP5 endorse the following priority actions from the MMAP:
 - that the exchange of information on marine mammals continue through the use of the existing electronic work group;
 - that Contracting Parties update, as appropriate, the information on marine mammals they provided for the Barbados Expert Workshop on the Marine Mammal Action Plan by way of the existing format to be provided by the secretariat;
 - that capacity-building workshops on response to marine mammal strandings continue, in order to provide training in all three working languages of the Convention;

- that subject to availability of funding, organize a workshop on criteria for whale watching and/or effects of contaminants on marine mammals be organized;
- that the secretariat work towards developing working relationships with fisheries authorities and stakeholders in the Wider Caribbean Region on information exchange and feasibility of data collection;
- that the secretariat establish a Memorandum of Cooperation with the IWC focusing, but not limited to, information exchange (e.g. ship strikes); and
- that the secretariat identify a roster of marine mammal experts as advisors to the MMAP process.

RECOMMENDATION IV

Having reviewed the “Draft Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2008-2009 biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/5);

Acknowledging the large workload of the secretariat and the limited budget available; and

Pursuant to Decision 2(ii) of COP4, requesting that the STAC initiate discussion and provide a preliminary analysis of the process required for identification of those threatened and endangered species of the region that are not yet included in the Annexes to the Protocol;

Taking note of the fact that marine fish are not represented in the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol;

Recognizing the urgent need for conservation of the Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*), which has experienced drastic declines in numbers and spawning sites throughout the region mainly as a result of spawning aggregation fishing (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.7); and **further recognizing** the need for regional cooperation for the management of aggregating species;

Taking note and welcoming the IUCN initiative towards the development of a regional red list of threatened species for the Insular Caribbean (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.6);

Taking note and welcoming the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI) and its activities;

Taking note and welcoming the work of WWF and its regional response to climate change adaptation through the conservation of biodiversity (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.19);

Recognizing the importance of developing strategies to help species and ecosystems adapt to climate change;

Recommends that:

1. the secretariat undertake activities towards implementation of the “Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol” and that Parties implement these Guidelines following their adoption.
2. the secretariat adapts the Workplan in accordance with the discussions of the Meeting, streamlining activities, removing outdated projects and providing greater focus and prioritization on strategic and achievable activities and **further recommends** that the revised Workplan and Budget be presented to COP5 for consideration and approval.
3. the IUCN Caribbean Red List initiative be used as a tool of great benefit to the process of identifying species not yet listed on the SPAW Annexes in order to focus cooperative action on their conservation and management, and **invites** the IUCN to help promote the SPAW Protocol in other countries of the region in order to stimulate their ratification of the Protocol.
4. the secretariat continue to collaborate, to the extent possible with WHMSI, in particular in the area of strengthening capacity in the region towards the conservation of migratory species.
5. the secretariat and Contracting Parties collaborate with the Society for the Conservation of Reef Fish Aggregations (SCRFA), on the conservation and management of reef fish species and their spawning aggregation sites, with a view to possibly consider the Nassau grouper as one of the species to be included in the SPAW Annexes in the future;
6. Parties, other Governments and all other relevant stakeholders participate in activities undertaken in the context of the International Year of the Reef 2008 and promote the value of coral reefs for the people of the region.
7. WWF continue its work in partnership with other key organisations in the region (such as WIDECAST) to test marine turtle adaptation strategies to climate change in the field, advocate for reduction of threats, and disseminate results through existing expert networks with the goal of identifying methods that can be used widely throughout the Caribbean and spread from single species focus (e.g. marine turtles/hawksbills) to ecosystem approaches, and **further recommends** that WWF link this work to the SPAW Programme as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION V

Having reviewed the “Final Draft Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/4);

Taking note of the revised “Regional Management Plan for the West Indian Manatee” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.5);

Taking note of the initiatives brought forward by the delegation of the U.S. with regard to strengthening capacities and networking on marine mammals stranding response;

Noting the critical situation of many marine mammals and the disappearance of three species over a number of years;

Taking into account the advice of the experts consulted on the project for the re-introduction of the manatee in Guadeloupe, France; and

Conscious of the importance of increasing the viable populations of manatee to ensure their long-term survival in their habitat;

Recommends that:

1. the issue of the re-introduction of the manatee in the Small Island Caribbean States from where it had disappeared be considered in the Draft MMAP.
2. the initiative by the Parc National de Guadeloupe for the re-introduction of the manatee in the Grand Cul de Sac be pursued and encouraged and serve as an original experience for the management of endangered populations in the Caribbean
3. the secretariat request that experts finalize the revised regional plan for the West Indian manatee, by taking into account the problematics of its re-introduction.
4. the offer of the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources, to train personnel from neighbouring Spanish-speaking countries on marine mammal rescue and response be endorsed; and
5. the announcement by the U.S. and France to hold a marine mammal stranding response workshop in the fall of 2009 be endorsed. The workshop will be developed in partnership with Evasion Tropicale, ECCEA, and others, on stranding response protocols, data collection and necropsies, species identification, and taking and archiving of samples.

RECOMMENDATION VI

Taking note of the report of the Netherlands Antilles on the expansion of its existing exemption under the Protocol for the keeping in captivity of bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), a species listed in Annex 2 of the Protocol;

Noting that the Netherlands Antilles has complied with the reporting requirement set out in Art. 11(2) of the Protocol; and

Noting further however, that the text of Article 11(2) provides no details as to the content of reports, the need for further reports if circumstances change, the manner of assessment to be performed by the STAC of such reports ;

Recommends that:

1. a working group on the issue of the urgent need for criteria and guidelines for exemptions be established as soon as feasible in accordance with Article 11 of the Protocol;
2. in cases where the number of specimens to be held in captivity is to be increased, other than from the natural increase from captive-born specimens, these cases be considered as new exemptions rather than expansions;
3. careful consideration be given by the Netherlands Antilles to the education and research objectives relevant to the exemption, and that they be consistent with and supportive of ongoing efforts in this regard under the Protocol.

RECOMMENDATION VII

Taking note of:

- i. the statement made at the Meeting by the Venezuelan Delegation on progress made by the Open Intersessional Working Group to develop the draft “Guidelines for Establishment and Operation of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks for the Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.24/CRP.9/Rev.1);
- ii. the importance of these Guidelines in relation to the implementation of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol) and the support they will provide to the projects of the Caribbean Environment Programme;
- iii. the importance of implementation by the governments of the Protocol Concerning Contamination from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS/ISTAC); and
- iv. the support anticipated from the RACs and RANs in the implementation of SPAW STAC and SPAW RAC activities, in accordance with SPAW STAC responsibilities as outlined in Article 20, paragraph 3 of the Protocol;

Recommends that:

1. The Secretariat, in coordination with the Working Group, receive comments on the current draft Guidelines and continue its work to produce the final draft for review and possible approval by the Thirteenth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Tenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region.

ANNEX III: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Working Documents

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/1	Provisional Agenda
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/2	Provisional Annotated Agenda
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/3	Final Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol (includes report of the Working Group)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG 31/4	Final Draft Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP) in the Wider Caribbean Region (includes report of the Working Group)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/5	Draft Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2008-2009 biennium
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/6	Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region

Conference Room Documents

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR CRP.1	Proposal by the Government of Venezuela
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR CRP.2	Report to the Fourth SPAW-STAC Meeting by the Netherlands Antilles

Information Documents

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.1	Provisional list of documents
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.2	Provisional list of participants
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.3	Status of Implementation of the Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2006 – 2007 biennium
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.4	Report on the Activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW/RAC) in Guadeloupe for the period 2006-2007
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.5	Regional Management Plan for the West Indian Manatee (revised). (English and Spanish)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.6	IUCN Caribbean Red List of Threatened Species – A Proposal
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.7	Fish Spawning Aggregations in the Wider Caribbean, with Emphasis on the Nassau Grouper (English and Spanish)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.8	Directory of Members of SPAW Protocol listserv (English only) <i>(to be prepared during the Meeting)</i>

- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.9 Update on the new Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its major activities
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.10 The Mesoamerican Reef Alliance (MAR) of the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN): Major Achievements (English and Spanish)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.11 *Now replaced by Assessment of the Implementation of the Protocol to the Cartagena Convention Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA W), with a Special Focus on Sea Turtles listed in Annex II (English only). SEE IG.25/INF.6 (Page 3)*
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.12 Draft Compilation of Protocols and Techniques for responding to Marine Mammal Strandings (English only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.13 Draft Compilation of Conservation, Education and Public Awareness Materials on Marine Mammals (English only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.14 Draft Compilation of Capacities for Marine Mammals (English only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.15 Draft Compilation of Research Protocols for Marine Mammals (English only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.16 Sister Sanctuaries to Protect Endangered Whales at Both Ends of Annual Migration – United States and Dominican Republic partner in Historic Conservation Effort – Press Release NOAA (English only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.17 Final Report of the Planning Meeting on the IYOR Wider Caribbean Campaign (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 10-11 November 2007) (English only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.18 National and Regional Capacities and Experiences on Marine Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Management Programmes in the Wider Caribbean, including ballast waters (English only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.19 A Regional Response to Climate Change in the Wider Caribbean Region by WWF for Latin America and the Caribbean (English and Spanish)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.20 Marine Mammal Bibliographic Compilation for the Wider Caribbean Region. (English only) (on line only)
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.21 The Caribbean Challenge: Building Political Support and Ensuring Long-Term Financing to Protect the Natural Treasures of the Caribbean (English only)
- UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/4 Revised Draft Annotated Format for Presentation Reports for the Areas Proposed for inclusion in the SPA W List
- UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/INF.5 Exemptions to the SPA W Protocol under Article 11 (2): A Legal Review
- UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/INF.4 Guidelines to Prevent Species from becoming Endangered or Threatened (English only)

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/INF.5	A Proposal for bird species to be added to Annexes II and III of the SPAW Protocol (English only)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/INF.6	Assessment of the implementation of the Protocol to the Cartagena Convention Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW), with a Special Focus on Sea Turtles listed in Annex II (English only)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/INF.8	Guidelines and Criteria Associated with Marine Mammal Captivity (<i>prepared by WDCS as a contribution to the work of SPAW/RAC and the secretariat</i>). (English only)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.24/CRP.9/Rev.1	Guidelines for Establishment and Operation of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks for the Caribbean Environment Programme
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/6	Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 28 November 2006)
UNEP/CBD/COP/9/14/Rev.1	Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Strategic Plan and Progress towards the 2010 Target (English only) (with addendum)

Reference Documents

Bariloche Declaration 2007	Latin American Congress on National Parks and other Protected Areas, Bariloche, Argentina, 30 September to 6 October 2007, (English and Spanish)
WHMSI, 2007	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean region and the Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (English only)
TNC–MAR, March 2006	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean region and The Nature Conservancy (English only)
Inter-American Convention, Nov. 2006	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean region and the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) (English and Spanish)
UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.26/4	Report of the Twelfth Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Ninth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 29 November to 2 December 2006)

UNEP-CMS, November 2005	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean region and the Convention of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (English only)
UNEP-WCMC, Sept. 2004	Towards the harmonization of national reporting to biodiversity-related treaties: Workshop Report (English only)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/6	Report of the Third Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region (Caracas, Venezuela, 4 – 8 October 2005)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/INF.3	Status of Implementation of the Workplan and Budget for the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2004 – 2005 Biennium
UNEP-WCMC	Feasibility Study for a Harmonized Information Management Infrastructure for Biodiversity-related Treaties (English only)
CITES	Guidelines for National Reports
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/INF.9	Harmonizing Reports on International Biodiversity related Conventions: Pilot Project, Panama (English only)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/INF.6	Monitoring and Reporting on Species listed in relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.27/3	Report of the Regional Workshop of Experts on the Development of the Marine Mammal Action Plan for the Wider Caribbean Region (Bridgetown, Barbados, 18-21 July 2005)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.27/INF.3	Distribution and Status of Marine Mammals of the Wider Caribbean Region: An Update of UNEP Documents (English only)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.27/INF.4	Major Threats to Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region: A Summary Report (English only)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.27/INF.5	A Review of Fisheries By-Catch of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region (English only)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.27/INF.6	Socio-Economic Assessment of Marine Mammal Utilization in the Wider Caribbean Region: Captivity, Viewing and Hunting (English and Spanish)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.27/INF.8	Insights on Marine Mammals of the Wider Caribbean Sea Region (including the Gulf of Mexico). Derived from Whaling History Documents (English only)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.26/4	Draft Grid for the Objective Evaluation of Proposals for inclusion in the SPAW Protected Areas List
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.25/6	Report of the Second Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean Region (Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, 3-6 June 2003)

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR IG.25/5	Revised Draft Workplan and Budget of the SPAW Regional Programme for the 2006 – 2007 Biennium
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.24/5	Report of the Eleventh Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and Seventh Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region. (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 28 September -2 October 2004)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.23/INF.3	Decisions of the SPAW COP2 and Recommendations of the First and Second Meetings of STAC and Status of their Implementation (English and Spanish)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.21/INF.3	Report of the Second Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region. (Montego Bay, Jamaica, 6 May 2002)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.22/9.Rev.1	Concept Paper for Establishing and Coordinating Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks of the Caribbean Environment Programme
UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.23/6	Report of the First Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region, (Havana, Cuba, 27-29 September 2001)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/7	Report of the First Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region. (Havana, Cuba, 24-25 September 2001)
UNEP/Ramsar, 2005	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean (Cartagena, 1983) and the Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/6.Rev.1	Priorities for Implementation following the entry into force of the Protocol: responsibilities for the Contracting Parties, for the STAC and for the Secretariat (as revised by the First Meeting of the SPAW Contracting Parties (COP), (Havana, 24-25 September 2001)
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/INF.3	Elements for the Development of a Marine Mammal Action Plan for the Wider Caribbean: A Review of Marine Mammal Distribution
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/INF.4	Report to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) from the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena 1983) and its Protocols, including the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) (February 2001)

UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/4	Scope and Structure of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the SPAW Protocol
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.20/5	Relationship between the SPAW Protocol, the STAC and the work undertaken by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
UNEP(OCA)/CAR IG.11/7	Proposed legal framework for the administrative, technical and financial operations of RACs and RANs
UNEP(DEC)/CAR IG.17/INF.6	International Trade in Species Listed in Both the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) (English only)
UNEP/GC/3/Rev.3, 1988	Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council of UNEP
UNEP(WATER)/CAR WG.11/INF.6	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Convention of the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena, 1983) and its Protocols, including the protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (Nairobi, 1992)
UNEP, 1991	Conference of Plenipotentiaries for the Adoption of the Annexes to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region. Final Act
UNEP, 1990	Conference of Plenipotentiaries Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region. Final Act
UNEP, 1983	Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention) and Protocols

ANNEX IV: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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