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Cayenne, French Guiana, 15-17 March 2017

RAC/REMPEITC-CARIBE LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2025

For reasons of economy and the environment, Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of the Working and Information documents to the Meeting, and not to request additional copies.



**REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE / REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY,
INFORMATION AND TRAINING CENTRE - WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION**

EIGHTH ORDINARY MEETING OF THE
RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe STEERING COMMITTEE
Agenda item 4

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Long-term strategic plan

Submitted by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe

*Regional Activity Centre / Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre
Wider Caribbean Region*

*Seru Mahuma z/n, Aviation and Meteorology Building, Curaçao
Phone: 5999-868-4612 / 868-3409; Fax: 5999-868-4996; Email: rempeitc@cep.unep.org*

**RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe
LONG TERM STRATEGIC PLAN
2015-2025**

July 17, 2015

***To be presented to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's next Steering
Committee Meeting for final approval***

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1 Introduction

The Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) comprises all the 28 insular and coastal states and 10 territories bordering the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico. The combined area of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico is approximately 5.3 million square kilometers. Due to an abundance of endemic flora and fauna, the WCR is considered as a ‘biodiversity hotspot’ (Krauss, 2006). In 2000, the WCR’s population (excluding the U.S.) was more than 233 million (Lausche, 2008), some 116 million people of whom live in the Caribbean (Millenium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

The economy of the Wider Caribbean Region is highly dependent upon tourism. In fact, the Caribbean is the region in the world most dependent on tourism for jobs and income with tourism directly and indirectly providing almost 12.0% of total employment and 13.0% of total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2014). Aside from the social and ecological value of these environmental resources, the continued health of the region’s coastal and marine ecosystems, including beaches, coral reefs, mangroves and sea grass beds, are essential to this economic driver.

The economies of the Wider Caribbean Region are similarly dependent upon shipping and the growing near-shore and offshore petroleum industry. Major shipping routes utilize the WCR area and countless commercial vessels provide the food, goods and fuel essential to the lives of the people of the region. Commercial shipping creates jobs and delivers goods, but also generates emissions, garbage, and sewage, and exposes the natural environment to the risks posed by a release of oil or other HNS carried as cargo, oil from bunker tanks, in addition to invasive species carried in ballast water, and toxins found in antifouling paint. It was estimated that each day in 2014 an average of 800,000 barrels of oil transited the Panama Canal alone (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014). As for drilling, Mexico, Columbia, Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname are already drilling for oil in the Wider Caribbean Region, with more countries contemplating the value of exploiting this natural resource. Shipping and offshore oil and gas activities, essential to the continued economic development of the region, present inherent risks that threaten the health of the environment upon which the future of fisheries and tourism depends.

The decade ahead promises to be one of dynamic change for shipping and offshore energy in the Caribbean Region. The expansion of the Panama Canal will significantly change the shipping trends in the region. The project will create a new lane of traffic along the Canal through the construction of a new set of locks, doubling the waterway’s capacity (<http://micanaldepanama.com/expansion/>). Additionally, the development of a new pathway with the construction of the Nicaragua Grand Canal will also change the pattern of regional and international shipping in the Wider Caribbean Region and further contribute to an increase in the traffic intensity. Furthermore, new regulation obligations coming from the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships Annex VI and the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments will create new challenges to the maritime industry. The designation of the US Caribbean Emission Control Area (ECA) within the WCR, for the control of emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOX), sulphur oxides (SOX), and particulate matter, will further enhance the development of the environmental performance of the fleet operating in the region (Johan Algell, 2012).

Given the relative scarcity of resources and close proximity of many of the independent states and dependent territories of the Wider Caribbean Region, regional cooperation required to protect the Caribbean ecosystems from the inherent risks of shipping and offshore oil and gas activities. It is precisely this reason for the adoption of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention) and its Protocol concerning Co-operation in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region in 1983, the adoption of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation in 1990 (OPRC), and the foundation of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre for the Wider Caribbean (RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe) in 1995.

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe was established to strengthen regional preparedness and response capacity and to foster and facilitate co-operation and mutual assistance in the cases of emergency (MOU Establishing RAC REMPEITC, 1996). Though its origins are deeply rooted in the OPRC Convention, the mission of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe has greatly expanded to include assisting countries to implement all major International Maritime Organization (IMO) marine pollution instruments, including the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (OPRC-HNS Protocol), the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (Civil liability and Fund Conventions), the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships (AFS), and the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments and strategic cooperation with related Conventions such as the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter.

For 20 years, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe has been providing training, hosting workshops, serving as a regional hub of marine environmental best practices, and fulfilling its mission, and yet there remain significant gaps in the implementation of international conventions throughout the Wider Caribbean Region. The most frequently cited factors for this low level of implementation is

Given the limited resources and close proximity of states and territories, regional cooperation is required to protect the ecosystems of the Wider Caribbean Region.

limited resources of Caribbean states to implement the conventions. While the Centre has little control over the resources of the independent states of the Caribbean, it does have control over the quality of the service it provides to the region and the efficiency in which it uses its limited resources.

The purpose of this long term strategic plan is to provide guidance to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's Steering Committees, Directors, staff and consultants to assist the delivery of an effective and valuable service to the Wider Caribbean Region through the third decade of operations. Specifically, this plan will:

- Ensure alignment with parent organizations of the International Maritime Organization and United Nations Environment Programme;
- Provide specific strategic outcomes for the next decade of operations;
- Provide the long term vision and goals to seconded consultants and temporary consultants utilized for specific training;
- Ensure RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's long term viability and value to the Region.

The ecological, economical, and social value of the Wider Caribbean Region will be both bolstered and threatened by the shipping that is essential to its survival and growth. As they have in the past, the threats posed by shipping will evolve in the years ahead. With this plan and the dedication of its staff and support from government and industry stakeholders, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe will be well positioned to meet these challenges and help improve the resiliency of the Wider Caribbean Region.

2 Mission, Vision and Values

Over the past 20 years, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe has delivered hundreds of national and regional capacity building workshops, developed two regional response plans, and maintained a system of networks to promote the implementation of best practices for preparing for, preventing and recovering from pollution incidents. Through these accomplishments, the Centre has earned a reputation as the leading organization for providing technical assistance and promoting best practices to prevent and respond to pollution of the

marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region. But it is more than just a reputation; this is the mission of the Centre that was designated by the parties of the Cartagena Convention upon its founding.

Like the Caribbean itself, the mission of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe has changed over time. As new maritime environmental conventions were adopted globally, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe became the regional coordinator for providing training and promoting prevention and preparedness in these new conventions. In preparation for developing this long term strategic plan, the Centre's published mission, vision, and values were reviewed and updated to reflect the past and projected future evolution of the Centre. The following mission, vision, and values were established on September 10th, 2014. These foundational principles will guide the operations of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe:

Our Mission

To assist countries of the Wider Caribbean Region to develop sustainable national and regional capabilities for implementing international standards to prevent and respond to threats to the marine environment from ships.

Our Vision

Our vision is of a resilient Wider Caribbean Region where all nations share best practices and resources and have effectively implemented the Cartagena Convention Oil Spill Protocol, 1983, the OPRC Convention, 1990, and other related UNEP and IMO Conventions and Protocols that help to prevent and, when necessary, respond to marine pollution.

Our Values

We are professionals of the highest integrity that build regional capacity and promote cooperation among the diverse nations of the Wider Caribbean Region.

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is the leading organization for providing assistance to prevent and respond to pollution in the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region.

3 Strategic Outcomes

Specific strategic outcomes that are envisioned to further improve the value RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe provides to the countries of the Wider Caribbean Region are summarized below. The practices to achieve the following strategic outcomes may be put into place immediately; in fact many practices are well underway. The outcomes themselves, however, will be realized over a period of time. In general, the more control the staff has over the process, the sooner the strategic outcome will be achieved (*i.e. A. Effective Communications and B. Effective Training*). In contrast, those outcomes that are highly dependent upon others (*i.e. D. Governance and Appropriate Staffing and E. Sufficient Funding*) are likely to take longer to be achieved. And finally, one outcome (*F. Emergency Response Operations Capability*) is entirely dependent upon other outcomes (*D. Governance and Appropriate Staffing and E. Sufficient Funding*) such that it currently cannot be implemented. Periodic reviews of the strategic outcomes will be conducted and any achievements or amendments will be reported to the Steering Committee at their biennial meetings.

3.1 Effective Communications

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's communications have been achieved through our proactive e-mails and newsletters, in addition to our website and public awareness materials such as brochures and booklets. The primary audience has been our national focal points, organizations, and industries with regional interests. If RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is to maintain and improve its objective of being the primary regional source for marine environmental information that supports the work of UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme, our communication system must continue to evolve and improve.

The most information-rich and easily accessible medium will continue to be our website (www.cep.unep.org/racrempeitc). While the information posted on the website has been kept up-to-date,

the website's appearance is dated and lacks the visual appeal and accessibility of the best websites. The exposure and communication of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe would be immediately enhanced by improving our website. This will be achieved by periodically incorporating new website technologies to ensure the website remains fresh in appearance while maintaining the most up-to-date material with broad appeal and utility to the target audience. Material to be posted to the website should include official national and regional documents, reports of projects and activities, applicable scientific papers, and best practices of environmental stewardship as it relates to marine activities.

In order to create a more active communication system, social media platforms that have demonstrated longevity and appeal to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's target audiences should be leveraged. The main objective of this strategy will be to expand awareness of the mission, achievements, and services of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe. RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe has developed and launched a Facebook page and Twitter account. In the future, staff should be aware and utilize emerging technologies that are being used by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's target audiences. Undertaking such awareness activities must be approached strategically and carefully in compliance with existing guidelines and practices of UNEP and IMO.

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe communications will be proactive and will share timely information relevant to our international focal points and stakeholders. Special care is to be taken to ensure we are using the most appropriate technology/media to reach our target audiences.

3.2 *Effective Training*

Pre- and post-training measures should be used to identify national, sub-regional and regional needs as well as examine the effectiveness of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's organized activities. RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe provides training and helps to develop national capabilities with the expectation that the developing states of the Caribbean will become more self-sufficient. As a result, it is hoped that states show more rapid progress in implementing the various global shipping, maritime, and marine conventions to prevent and control pollution caused by ships and to mitigate the effects of any damage that may occur as a result of maritime operations and accidents. If training is provided to a country and progress is not made in improving convention implementation or the knowledge gained is not shared within the country or region, then the activity was either poorly planned or failed to meet its ultimate objectives.

There are several opportunities for states and territories of the Wider Caribbean Region to request specific technical assistance. To date, the three most common are:

- Through the country profile questionnaire,
- During the biennial, IMO-sponsored senior maritime administrators meeting, and
- Formal and informal requests directly to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe and/or indirectly through the Secretariat for Cartagena Convention (UNEP CAR-RCU).

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's limited resources should be offered to those motivated countries that demonstrate progress in implementing the various global shipping conventions.

Given the large number of requests received and the limited resources of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, the requests must be prioritized. It is essential to develop a fair and transparent systematic approach for prioritizing these requests. When prioritizing requests, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should take into account the requesting state's or territory's technical and political commitment to implementing conventions as demonstrated by their progress in implementing various global shipping, maritime, and marine conventions in the past, or their determination to develop capacity for implementation.

When a training activity is undertaken, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should be explicit in their expectations that training participants will share the knowledge they gain with subordinates, co-workers, and supervisors,

where possible, this “train the trainer” approach will allow new training activities to build upon previous training rather than simply repeating the same level of training over again. These expectations must be clear and followed through on. This will be accomplished through pre-training country profile questionnaire updates, specific goals for improving convention implementation, and an update of the country profile questionnaire a specified time after the training is completed. If progress is not made, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should determine the reasons why it hasn’t and, if within their purview, take steps to address these barriers to progress.

Since implementation is done on a voluntary basis, the best tool to motivate progress is to prioritize training resources to those countries that demonstrate application of past training and have demonstrated the motivation to progress in implementing the conventions.

A “train the trainer” approach, where appropriate, should be taken with pre- and post activity measures to track the long-term effectiveness of the activity as well as identify those countries that are motivated to implement the various global shipping, maritime, and marine conventions, ensuring the best return on limited training opportunities.

3.3 Building a Self-Supporting Region

Supporting the development of a self-sufficient Caribbean Region, where regional neighbors with shared values and sensibilities also share expertise and resources, should remain a top priority of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe. As discussed above, this will primarily be achieved by “training trainers” that would then be expected to train other nationals. But there are other steps that can be taken by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe to encourage and assist in the development of a self supporting Wider Caribbean Region.

There are many factors that are considered when selecting a contract consultant to assist in the delivery of regional and national activities. The factors include availability, language skills, presentation skills, technical expertise and cost. One factor that needs to be prioritized is country of origin. Providing they have the requisite skills and expertise, emphasis should be placed on those consultants that come from the Wider Caribbean Region.

When selecting consultants to assist with national and regional activities, IMO Consultants will give due consideration and priority of selection to those consultants that originate from the Wider Caribbean Region.

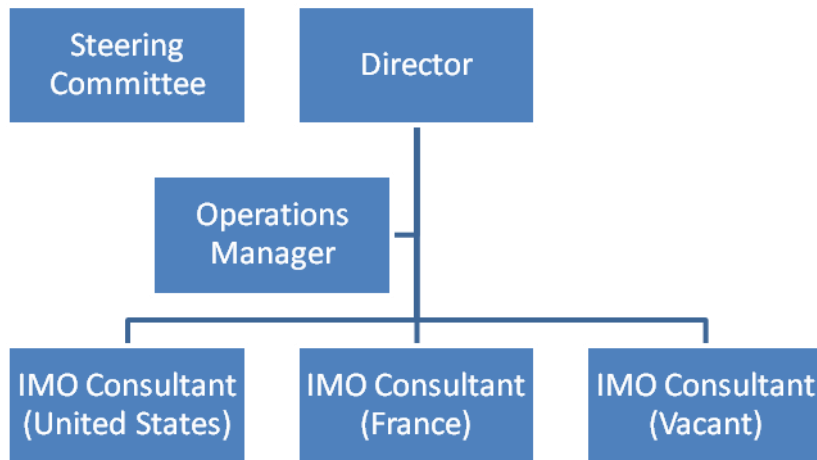
Taking a best practice from the GloBallast Partnerships Project, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should build a formal network of lead partnering countries for all of the Marine Pollution Conventions. This network can be developed with the assistance of the national focal points, who should be solicited to nominate agencies, educational institutions or individuals who can act either as consultants or centres of excellence that would be willing to assist other countries and territories in the WCR. Any experts nominated by the national focal points should be considered as potential facilitators during national and regional activities.

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should develop a formal network of regional experts and lead partnering countries that would either assist in delivering activities or share best practices with other nations and territories of the WCR.

3.4 Governance and Appropriate Staffing

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe’s most important resource is its personnel. This is not unlike many organizations, but is especially true for an information and training centre. The personnels’ expertise, proficiency in sharing best practices, and ability to build regional self-sufficiency are the value RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe provides to the Wider Caribbean Region. At present, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is staffed with four personnel: a Director, an Operations Manager, and two seconded IMO consultants. The Director is a part-time position and usually filled by the Director of Curacao’s Maritime Administration. The Operations Manager is a full-time position and is currently filled by a knowledgeable professional who has filled the

position since the establishment of the Centre. The IMO consultant positions are filled by secondees from the states signatory to the Cartagena Convention. Current secondments are from the U.S. (U.S. Coast Guard) and France (with the support of the oil company, Total S.A.) for periods of two years and 18 months (may be extended to two years) respectively. In the past secondees were also provided by the Governments of Venezuela and the Netherlands.



3.4.1 Steering Committee

Robust participation at the biennial meeting of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe’s Steering Committee is critical to the short and long term efficiency of the Centre. During these meetings, staff members of the Centre gain a better appreciation for the challenges faced by each country in implementing various conventions as well as specific national priority needs. They are able to discuss the needs of each country and develop a regional training plan that will best serve as many countries as possible. Finally, and most importantly, they receive direction and approval of proposals made to improve the Centre and its ability to continue to provide support and services to the countries of the Wider Caribbean Region.

As funding for hosting Steering Committee meetings is limited, participation by resource-constrained states is similarly limited. In many cases, the countries who can finance their own participation and attend Steering Committee meetings are the ones that least require the expertise and technical assistance offered by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe. Every effort must be made by the staff to find ways to increase participation in each meeting of the Steering Committee. Methods to increase participation should include finding alternate sources of funding for travel, seeking to coordinate with other meetings and training workshops, such as the IMO’s Senior Maritime Administrators’ Meeting, and enhance the use of virtual meetings and technologies such as Skype.

Every effort should be made to generate increased participation in RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe Steering Committee meetings through funding, coordination with other meetings, and enhancing the use of virtual meeting technologies.

3.4.2 Director

The Director is appointed by the Ministry of Traffic, Transport, and Urban Planning of Curacao and has the overall responsibility for the operations and administration of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe and will serve as the official representative of the Centre.

It is imperative that the appointments be made with an emphasis on stability, pre-existing knowledge of the missions and history of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, and the ability to travel to various activities throughout the Wider Caribbean and beyond.

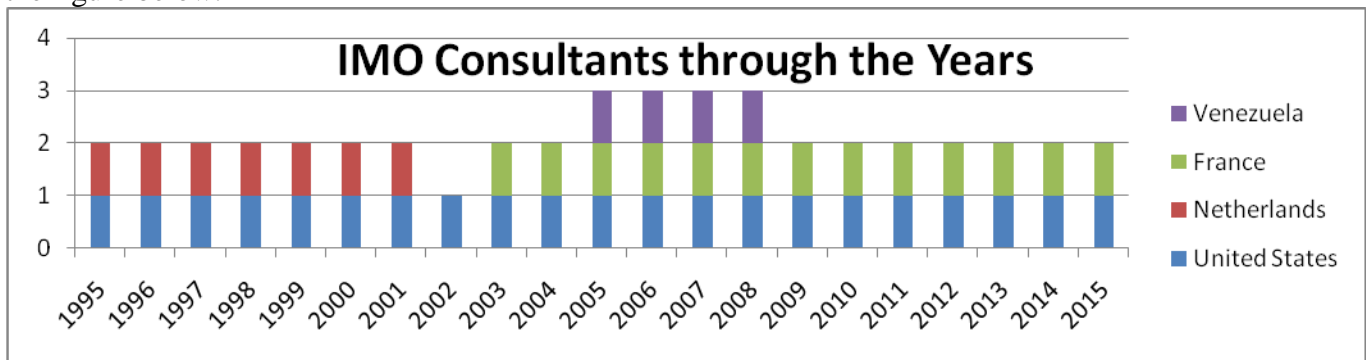
3.4.3 Operations Manager

Responsible for the administration, accounting, travel arrangements, office management and more, this position is arguably the most critical for the effective operations of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe. This position has been filled by a public administrator from Curacao, who has served in this position since the establishment of the Centre. The Operations Manager is key to maintaining the long-term corporate knowledge that is critical to understanding the needs of the Wider Caribbean Region and establishing trust with focal points and sponsoring organizations alike. As this position is seconded by the Government of Curacao, the Operations Manager also holds the responsibility of facilitating the frequent transitions of the IMO Consultants as well as maintaining the local contacts required to ensure the smooth operations of the office. Conscious of the critical role that the Operations Manager plays in the operation of the Centre all appropriate measures should be taken to ensure a seamless succession, should this be necessary. Additionally, some further steps should be taken to limit the disruptive effect arising from non-availability of an Operations Manager for a significant period. This risk could be reduced by a procedures or reference manual where all relevant processes and procedures are documented, allowing the corporate memory of the Centre to be committed to paper.

Should a change of personnel filling the Operations Manager position ever be anticipated, all possible steps should be taken to accommodate the longest possible handover of responsibility. This needs to be supported by the documentation of activities and procedures in a manual and with an apprenticeship period of possibly 6 month to 1 year under the current Operations Manager.

3.4.4 IMO Consultants

The demand for RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe’s services exceeds the capacity of the current staffing level of IMO Consultants. The number of consultants and contributing countries has varied over time, as reflected in the figure below.



A review of historical records, indicates a general correlation between the number of consultants and the number of activities accomplished by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe. For instance, for the years when there were two consultants, RAC/REMPEITC averaged 14 activities per year, 18 activities per year during the time when there were three consultants, and only 4 activities when there was one consultant (2002). It is also valuable to note that the period of 2005 through 2008 saw significant progress in the maintenance of the Centre and advancement of initiatives like development of the Centre’s website, an acclaimed entry into the 2008 International Oil Spill Conference, and the distribution of comprehensive country profile surveys.

Given the demand for trainings and workshops, the desire to represent the Centre at regional activities, the need to advance strategic goals (such as improving communications, updating foundational MOUs, and developing this strategic plan), and the goal of being able to staff an emergency communications protocol, the Centre would be optimally staffed with three consultants. Efforts should be made, in coordination with IMO and UNEP to solicit countries for a third seconded consultant to the Centre.

At present the consultants serve for a maximum of two years, which is viewed by many in the Region to be too short to establish the levels of understanding and trust required to be efficient in directing and organizing activities for the Region. Unfortunately, there is little opportunity to change the length of secondments of the consultants from the United States or France due to career management and contractual issues, respectively. If, however, a country is found that will provide a third consultant, then their term of service to the Centre should be for a period of at least three years. This will provide the benefits of continuity by reducing number of times all consultants will rotate out during the same biennium period.

Efforts will be focused on soliciting countries to provide a third consultant to meet regional training needs and advance initiatives critical to improving the service provided by the Centre to the Region.

Even if a third consultant is provided to the Centre, there are certain best practices that have been used in the years past to mitigate the loss of corporate knowledge due to frequent turnover of consultants:

- Provide at least a two-week overlap of personnel to allow an adequate handoff of responsibilities as well as the proper orientation of the new consultant;
- If there are only two consultants, avoid having both of them start their tenure at the same time;
- Divide the workload by assigning certain Conventions and long term initiatives to each of the consultants. In the beginning of each new secondment, a meeting should be conducted under the chairmanship of the Centre's Director to divide the workload by assigning certain Conventions and long term initiatives to each of the consultants, taking into account their strengths and experiences in the subjects. This provides the opportunity for the consultants to specialize in certain areas as well as provides a clear point of contact to the focal points of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe.
- Update and provide to incoming consultants a thorough pass-down log outlining standard procedures, focal points, resources available to the new consultant.

3.4.5 Contracted consultants

The IMO Consultants frequently require assistance to conduct activities in the Region. For years, external consultants with specific technical expertise have been contracted to assist RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe in delivering training and workshops. A formal system has been developed to catalogue specific skills or track efficacy of these consultants, and yet it is incomplete and is not regularly used by current IMO consultants. Some of these consultants are provided as "in-kind support" from organizations like ARPEL, ITOPI, and IMO, while other consultants receive a standard U.N. consultant fee. External consultants are evaluated by each participant of every workshop or training conducted by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe and the results of these evaluations are recorded in activity reports. This evaluation data will be one factor that will be tracked in the future system. Other data that should be recorded includes contact information, specific area of expertise, experience in each state or territory of the WCR, the languages they are most proficient in, and whether they require a consultant fee.

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is to update and improve the system used to manage external consultants to ensure the most effective consultants are selected for each workshop or training activity.

3.5 Sufficient Funding

The economic sustainability of the Centre is maintained through four fundamentals pillars:

- Financial and staffing support by the Government of Curacao.
- Financial support from Countries providing Consultants, experts and instructors, as well as in-kind support for workshops.
- Contributions for activities by IMO UNEP and other UN bodies.

- Contribution by NGO's and industry (in kind support by providing experts / instructors and direct funding for specific activities).

Although this situation seems to ensure the continuity of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's work and activities, possible budget restrictions and unpredicted events can change the stream of revenues. The Centre must always look for ways to maximize the benefit for each expenditure of its limited resources. When deciding what activities to conduct and where to conduct them, the following must be considered:

- Efficacy of past activities
- Progress demonstrated by each state or territory that received training in the past
- IMO priorities and High Level Action Plan
- UNEP Regional Seas Strategic Directions
- This Long-Term Strategic Plan

Increased cooperation and exchange of information would mobilize resources for specific needs and bring possible funding for specific activities. Finally, it is important to take advantage of existing and future agreements between countries and IMO on the provision of in-kind support for the Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (i.e. Agreement between France and IMO's TCD, 2013).

Given limited funding always look for opportunities to enhance co-operation with existing partners, develop new partnerships and identify mechanisms for facilitating greater in-kind support and mobilization of new sources of funds for the implementation of activities.

3.6 Emergency Response Capability

One of the objectives of establishing RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe was to:

- Develop and maintain a communications/information system appropriate to the needs of the region being served by the Centre, including channeling of communications (POLREPS). (MOU Establishing RAC REMPEITC, 1996)

Pollution Reports (POLREPS) were a format for emergency notifications of pollution incidents that could be easily distributed to appropriate parties within and outside the Wider Caribbean Region that might be affected by the incident or might be called upon to assist in the response to the incident. These notifications were at the heart of improving regional response capacity and facilitating cooperation and mutual assistance and RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe was to serve as the hub to receive and distribute these notifications. While more rapid and efficient means of communication have been developed during the past 20 years and POLREPS are no longer the initial method for rapidly distributing critical communications, the objective of serving as the regional hub of emergency response information remains. The most effective way for the Centre to meet this objective is to create the capabilities to receive and distribute emergency response information.

Despite this stated objective, the limited staffing of the Centre has not enabled the development of an emergency notification or response capability. As a result, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe staff often learn of environmental pollution incidents from less timely sources, losing the opportunity to distribute time-critical information, and perhaps worse, not able to share their expertise with affected states.

For the most part, establishing procedures for 24 hour notifications is relatively easy and the only equipment required is a duty mobile phone and permanent phone number. The major restriction has been the lack of sufficient personnel. RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is currently staffed with only an operations manager, and two seconded consultants that are often on simultaneous foreign missions. There are simply not enough personnel to reliably staff a 24 hour emergency phone number. It is anticipated that if there was a third seconded consultant, at least one consultant would be available to monitor a dedicated emergency communication system.

As soon as a third seconded consultant or other staff member is recruited to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, it is a priority to establish formal emergency response capabilities including the creation and distribution of emergency notification procedures.

It is difficult, but imperative to develop measures that will indicate if the Centre is successful in fulfilling its missions.

4 Evaluating Mission Achievement

Given the preventative nature of the mission of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, it is a perennial challenge to measure effectiveness and progress in achieving its vision. While each of the following measures have their strengths and weaknesses, the proposed indicators will be collected and used to determine if the Centre is successful in fulfilling its mission and making progress toward its vision.

To fulfill a founding objective of the Centre, it is critical to create the capabilities to receive and distribute emergency response information

4.1 Ratification of Marine Pollution Conventions

For years, the status of ratification of selected conventions within the Wider Caribbean Region has been used as a measure of success. While this is certainly a useful measurement for which it is easy to obtain data, becoming signatory to a convention is primarily a political process. The fact that a country is party to a convention does not indicate that it is giving full and proper effect to its provisions which requires incorporating legislation, and adequately trained persons to discharge the flag, port, and coastal state obligations. While the most effective measure of the Centre's success will be the rate at which countries implement the various conventions, ratification will continue to be measured and tracked.

Status of Ratification of Conventions, although not an ideal measure of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe's success, will remain a reportable measure for the Wider Caribbean Region.

4.2 Measures of Implementation

The most effective measures of the Centre's success will be the rate at which countries develop the capacities and instruments required to implement each convention. Effective implementation of these conventions is would be the best indicator that RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is fulfilling its mission. The primary tool for measuring success in implementing the various conventions will be the country profiles developed and maintained by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe through periodic questionnaires. Various forms of the questionnaire have been developed over the past two decades. In general, the questionnaire has been distributed Region-wide every four years, with varying degrees of respondent return. The data has been seen as a relatively static measure, a snapshot in time, and little attention appears to be given to the trends from one survey return to the next.

Progress in implementing conventions can be determined by analyzing the changes in the country profiles, either on a national basis or on a collective, regional basis. It is for this reason that the questionnaires must

be distributed at a minimum frequency of once every four years. When the results are gathered, special attention should be given to any changes in data between successive country profile questionnaires. Further, to ensure the data is accurate and up to date, states should be encouraged to review and update the survey results prior to receiving RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe organized training.

In 2012, the IMO developed their Global Integrated Shipping Information System, or GISIS. This is but one system developed to collect and share country profile data. In order to avoid repetition or “questionnaire fatigue”, it is imperative that RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe develop, maintain, and share their country profiles in coordination with IMO, UNEP, and other organizations such as ITOPI and ARPEL. IMO member states will still be responsible for keeping their GISIS profiles up to date.

Country profiles should be reviewed and updated prior to a country receiving capacity building national RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe activities.

The data collected from the Region in the country profile should be analyzed for trends in progress, or lack thereof, and reported to each Steering Committee meeting. The Steering Committee members can then set goals for the Centre given those areas of particular interest to the members or those areas where progress is most needed

The country profiles established through the questionnaires and other sources will be analyzed for national and regional progress in implementing international shipping and marine pollution conventions. This analysis will be reported to each Steering Committee. Data should include trends in status of ratification and implementation of conventions, NCPs drafted, updated, and approved, as well as country participation rates in RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe activities.

4.3 National Contingency Plans

One of the primary pollution response preparedness tools is a National Contingency Plan, which is also a requirement of implementing the OPRC Convention and OPRC/HNS Protocol. While primarily concerned with OPRC and OPRC/HNS, the development of a National Contingency Plan also presents the opportunity to identify a national competent authority for responding to most marine pollution incidents, and requires a certain level of national marine pollution laws and regulations, in addition to outlining an incident response system that can be utilized for most incidents, pollution or otherwise.

Further, RETOS™ is a readily accessible tool to assist states in developing and improving their national contingency plan. By encouraging the completion of the RETOS tool prior to conducting an OPRC-related activity, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe can custom tailor the activity to meet the specific needs of the country and ensure they are best utilizing their limited resources.

The status of each country’s National Contingency Plan will continue to be tracked during quadrennial country profile surveys and prior to any OPRC-related national activities coordinated by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe.

4.4 Activity Evaluation Questionnaires

A common measure that has been used in the past to evaluate the quality of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe’s primary product training activities and workshops, is the results of activity evaluation questionnaires. While not a measure of the preparedness of the region, it is an effective means of collecting quantitative data over a long term and which can be shared as required by the IMO following completion of sponsored activities. These questionnaires are useful for evaluating the quality of the delivery of specific training and workshops, which is an important measure for selecting the best qualified consultants for future activities as well as identifying improvements for activity logistic processes and training delivery.

Following each activity (regardless of funding source), questionnaires will continue to be compiled and evaluated for specific improvements in logistics and/or activity delivery.

5 Conclusion

In order for RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe to ensure it continues to improve its value to the Wider Caribbean Region during its third decade of operations and beyond, it is imperative to share this long term strategic vision with the many staff, consultants, sponsors, cooperative states, and non-governmental organizations affiliated with RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe. RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe has been given the noble and valuable mission of strengthening national capacities and regional co-operation in the Wider Caribbean Region to prevent and respond to marine pollution. With the guidance of this plan and the best efforts of the dedicated staff, Steering Committee, and all the cooperative nations of the Region, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe will succeed in meeting its mission and realizing its vision.

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7 Recommended Reading

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Solange Montillaud-Joyel, UNEP: [http://web.undp.org/comtoolkit/why-](http://web.undp.org/comtoolkit/why-communicate/docs/Tools/CommunicatingSustainabilityHowtoProduceEffectivePublicCampaignsUNEPHandbook.pdf)

[communicate/docs/Tools/CommunicatingSustainabilityHowtoProduceEffectivePublicCampaignsUNEPHandbook.pdf](http://web.undp.org/comtoolkit/why-communicate/docs/Tools/CommunicatingSustainabilityHowtoProduceEffectivePublicCampaignsUNEPHandbook.pdf)

Financing for sustainable development in the global partnership beyond 2015, UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN development agenda:

http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/thinkpieces/21_thinkpiece_financing_development.pdf

International Maritime Organization, Strategic and High-level Action Plans and procedures:

<http://www.imo.org/About/strategy/Pages/default.aspx>

International Maritime Organization Strategic Plan for the Organization (for the 6 year period 2014-2019) (2013) <http://www.imo.org/About/strategy/Documents/1060.pdf>

United Nations Environment Programme Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017 (2012)

http://www.unep.org/about/funding/portals/50199/documents/MTS_draft_29Nov2012_clean%20copy.doc

United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2013-2016:

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8 Acknowledgements

This long term strategic plan was developed by a working group proposed by the Seventh Ordinary Steering Committee held in Curacao on the 20th and 21st of May 2014. The Terms of Reference for the working group were signed the 26th of August 2014. The Centre's Mission, Vision and Values, foundational to this effort, were updated and promulgated on the 10th of September 2014 and the working group held its first official meeting via Skype on January 14th, 2015 and worked through several drafts of this plan prior to its presentation to the Eighth Ordinary Steering Committee. Each volunteer member of the working group gave selflessly of their time and expertise to contribute to the future of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe and for the betterment of the Wider Caribbean Region. The members of the working group were:

Bertrand Smith (*Chairman*) *Director Legal Affairs, Maritime Authority of Jamaica*

Harvey Bijnaar, *Health Safety and Environmental Security Officer, Kosmos Energy Suriname*

Klaus Essig, *President, Marine Pollution, Prevention and Preparation, S.A.*

Hugues Desgranges, *International Direction of the Port Authority of Haiti*

Myriam Desrosier-Senatus, *Director of Cooperation and Maritime Affairs, Maritime Authority of Haiti*

Ivonne Holliday, *Programme Officer, International Maritime Organization*

Roxanne Jensen, *U.S. Coast Guard Office of Marine Environmental Response Policy*

Patrick Keane, *Exercise Planner, U.S. Coast Guard 7th District; Former Consultant to RAC REMPEITC*

Paul Lattanzi, *IMO Consultant to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe*

Scott Lundgren, *Deputy, U.S. Coast Guard Office of Marine Environmental Response Policy*

Colleen O'Hagan, *Technical Officer, International Maritime Organization*

Vassilis Tsigourakos, *IMO Consultant to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe*

Brent Williamson, *Marine Consultant, Bahamas Ministry of Transport and Aviation*

Appendix 1: Proposed Goals and Targets

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES			
Reference	Title	Planned Activity	
III. A.	Effective Communications	RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe communications will be proactive and will share timely information relevant to our international focal points and stakeholders. Special care is to be taken to ensure we are using the most appropriate technology/media to reach our target audiences.	
III. B.	Effective Training	A “train the trainer” approach should be taken with pre- and post activity measures to track the long-term effectiveness of the activity as well as identify those countries motivated to implement the various global shipping, maritime, and marine conventions, ensuring the best return on limited training opportunities.	
III. C.	Building a Self-Supporting Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When selecting consultants to assist with national and regional activities, IMO Consultants will give due consideration and priority of selection to those consultants that originate from the Wider Caribbean Region. - RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should develop a formal network of regional experts and lead partnering countries that would either assist in delivering activities or share best practices with other nations and territories of the WCR. 	
III. D.	Governance and Adequate and Appropriate Staffing		
	III. D. 1.	Steering Committee	Every effort should be made to generate increased participation in RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe Steering Committee meetings through creative funding, coordination with other meetings, and enhancing the use of virtual meeting technologies.
	III. D. 2.	Director	It is imperative that the appointments be made with an emphasis on stability, pre-existing knowledge of the missions and history of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, and the ability to travel to various activities throughout the Wider Caribbean and beyond.
	III. D. 3.	Operations Manager	Should a change of personnel filling the Operations Manager position ever be anticipated, all possible steps should be taken to permit the longest possible handover of responsibility. This goes with the documentation of activities and procedures in a manual and with an apprenticeship period of possibly 6 month to 1 year under the current Operations Manager.
	III. D. 4.	Consultants	Efforts will be focused on soliciting countries to provide a third consultant to meet regional training needs and advance initiatives critical to improving service to the Region.
	III. D. 5.	Contracted consultants	RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is to update and improve the system used to manage outside consultants to ensure the most effective consultants are selected for each workshop or training activity.
III. E.	Sufficient Funding	Given limited funding, always look for opportunities to enhance co-operation within existing partners, develop new partnerships and identify mechanisms for facilitating greater in-kind support and mobilization of new sources of funds for the implementation of activities.	
III. F.	Emergency Response Capability	As soon as a third seconded consultant or other staff member is added to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, it is a priority to establish formal emergency response capabilities through the purchase of a duty phone and the creation and distribution of emergency notification procedures.	

EVALUATING MISSION ACHIEVEMENT		
Reference	Title	Planned Activity
IV. A.	Ratification of Marine Pollution Conventions	Status of Ratification of Conventions, although not an ideal measure of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe’s success, will remain a reportable measure for the Wider Caribbean Region.
IV. B.	Measures of Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country profiles should be reviewed and updated prior to a country receiving capacity building national RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe activities. - The country profiles established through the questionnaires and other sources will be analyzed for national and regional progress in implementing international shipping and marine pollution conventions. This analysis will be reported to each Steering Committee. Data should include

		trends in status of ratification and implementation of conventions, NCPs drafted, updated, and approved, as well as country participation rates in RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe activities.
IV. C.	National Contingency Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When selecting consultants to assist with national and regional activities, IMO Consultants will give due consideration and priority of selection to those consultants that originate from the Wider Caribbean Region. - RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should develop a formal network of regional experts and lead partnering countries that would either assist in delivering activities or share best practices with other nations and territories of the WCR.
IV. D.	Activity Evaluation Questionnaires	Following each activity (regardless of funding source), questionnaires will continue to be compiled and evaluated for specific improvements in logistics and/or activity delivery.