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

Miami, Florida, 2 - 4 November 2016

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

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.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

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

The Meeting,

RECOMMENDATION I

Having reviewed the “Status of Activities of the SPA Subprogramme for 2015-2016 (including status of STAC6 Recommendations and COP8 Decisions)” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.3) and commending the work undertaken by the Secretariat and the SPA-RAC;

Taking note and welcoming the “Update on the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and its major activities (*including the supplement on the Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) Project*)(UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.5), and the “Evaluation of CaMPAM Activities and Recommendations for Improvement - An analysis of the last 15 years (UNEP(DEPI)CAR WG.38/INF.6);

Recognizing the work and accomplishment of the CaMPAM network for the last 19 years;

Gratefully acknowledging the generous support of the Government of Italy towards ecosystem based and holistic MPA management;

Having reviewed the “Report of the SPA Regional Activity Centre (SPA-RAC) in Guadeloupe: RAC Operations and Budget for the period 2015-2016” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.4); and **gratefully acknowledging** the generous contribution of the Government of France as host of the SPA RAC;

Having reviewed “The GEF Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Project and its joint implementation through the AMEP and SPA Subprogrammes(UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.37/INF.7) and **welcoming** the enhanced integration of workplans between the LBS and SPA Protocols;

Gratefully acknowledging the support received through the CLME+ Project and the US Government for the joint LBS and SPA STACs Meetings convened in Miami, 31 October-4 November 2016;

Having reviewed the “Draft Workplan and Budget of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) Subprogramme for the 2017-2018 Biennium” (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/6) and noting its linkages and contribution to the SDGs, the SAMOA Pathway and Aichi Targets;

Acknowledging the ambitious Workplan of the Secretariat and the limited budget available; **and**

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

Recommends that:

1. Governments of the region join the SPA Protocol as Contracting Parties and **further recommends** that the Secretariat continue efforts to secure ratification with Governments which have initiated actions to join or are in the process of joining the Protocol;
2. The COP9 provides further guidance to the Secretariat regarding the priority actions for the SPA work programme, as well as assistance for accessing increased resources for both activities and the Secretariat;

3. The Secretariat amend the proposed Workplan in accordance with the comments provided by the Meeting and **further recommends** that the Workplan and Budget be presented to COP9 for approval.
4. The Secretariat and Parties emphasize within the proposed Workplan:
 - (i) the integrated activities of CaMPAM within EBM, CLME+ and the SPAW listed protected areas cooperation programme, as proposed in the draft Workplan, including the inputs and recommendations provided to improve CaMPAM's delivery following the evaluation of its last 15 years;
 - (ii) the enhancement of the GCRMN-Caribbean network to support implementation of the biophysical monitoring guidelines and greater engagement from countries of the region;
 - (iii) the continued collaboration with the AMEP and SPAW workplans to enhance integration of activities and synergies to respond more holistically to the sustainable management of coastal and marine resources of Parties;
 - (iv) the activities on marine mammals conservation be supported as outlined in synergy with relevant partners, including the IWC;
 - (v) the need to develop an integrated road map for implementation of the CLME+ activities under the CEP;
 - (vi) the collaborative work with relevant partners, including the ACS and CRFM, other Governments and regions on areas of common interest, such as the management and response to the *Sargassum* influx; and
 - (vii) the need to develop guidelines for evaluation of the impacts of activities due to offshore oil exploration, including seismic surveys, exploration wells, and production on marine mammals, sea turtles and other relevant species, and implementation of relevant mitigation measures.

RECOMMENDATION II

Having reviewed the "Proposals for Protected Areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol" (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/5);

Taking note of the preliminary activities of the cooperation programme for the protected areas listed as per Article 7 of the Protocol developed in 2013 (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.9); **and**

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

Recommends that:

1. The SPAW-RAC continue to maintain and improve the dedicated database to house the national reports on the protected areas to be listed, as well as the web-based tool for Parties to prepare and submit the protected areas reports on-line;
2. The COP9 confirm the Protected Area *National Park Cayos de San Felipe* proposed by the Government of Cuba during the nomination consultative process, on the basis of the review provided by the SPAW-RAC and the Working Group experts;
3. Parties which have not done so consider submitting protected areas to be listed under the Protocol in the upcoming biennium for future listing;

4. The Secretariat continue to work with Parties and managers of the listed sites to further develop the co-operation programme in support of the protected areas listed and in keeping with the comments provided by the Meeting, with particular attention to the review of gaps and needs, in order to analyse ecological connectivity among sites, and strengthen networking and capacities;
5. The Ad hoc group established at the first meeting of the listed sites of the SPAW Protocol in 2013, be reactivated under the leadership of the US Government, to support the further development of the cooperation programme as noted above;
6. The Secretariat continue to reflect the list of Protected Areas in a map, so as to assist with its visual connectivity within the region and seek to have the map linked to Google Earth;
7. Parties seek to facilitate more effective engagement of local fisheries in the establishment and management of MPAs; and
8. In keeping with Article 19 and the para. 25 of the approved Guidelines and Criteria for listing protected areas, the Secretariat prepare a reporting format on the status of the listed sites. In this regard, Parties may learn from the experience in the Mediterranean Barcelona Convention and other relevant treaties, such as the World Heritage Sites Convention of UNESCO.

RECOMMENDATION III

Having reviewed the “Report of the Working Group on the Listing of Species under the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol”, (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/4); the proposals for listing and supporting documents on status of species of sharks, rays and the Nassau grouper (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/INF.7 inclusive of Addendums 1 and 2; and UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/INF.12); **and**

Further recognizing the alarming population trends or threatened status of the species of sharks and rays and the Nassau grouper proposed for listing and thus the urgent need to raise awareness and promote their protection;

Recommends that:

1. The following proposed species be added to the Annexes of the SPAW Protocol:

Annex II

Passerina ciris, Painted bunting

Pristis pectinata, Smalltooth sawfish

Annex III

Liguus fasciatus, Florida tree snail

Manta birostris

Manta alfredi

Manta sp. cf. birostris

Sphyrna lewini,

Sphyrna mokarran

Sphyrna zygaena

Carcharhinus longimanus, Oceanic whitetip shark

Rhin codon typus, Whale shark

Epinephelus striatus, Nassau grouper

2. The SPAW RAC identifies all species listed as entire groups under the Protocol and includes the species individually in the list, such as the species included under the group of corals and marine mammals;
3. The Ad hoc Working Group for the listing of species be extended during the upcoming biennium under the leadership of the SPAW RAC to further assess new species proposals to be presented by Parties in preparation for the STAC meetings.

4. Parties are invited to identify and propose new species to list for adoption, to be assessed by the next STAC; and
5. The species submitted by the Government of Cuba for STAC7, which require additional information, be taken into account in the future by the Working Group once the additional information has been provided.

RECOMMENDATION IV

Having reviewed the "Draft Reporting Format for Exemptions under Article 11(2) of the Specially Protected Areas And Wildlife Protocol (SPAW)"(UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.38/3); **and**

Recalling the approved Guidance document contained in Annex III of the "Report of the Working Group to Develop the Criteria and Process to Assess Exemptions Under Article 11(2) of the SPAW Protocol" (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.36/5); and the draft guidance document contained in the Report of the Working Group, as well as the "Exemptions to the SPAW Protocol Under Article 11(2): A Legal Review" (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.29/INF.5);

Recommends that:

1. The COP9 consider approval of the format for reporting exemptions with the inputs provided by the STAC7, following an intersessional review by the extended Ad hoc Working Group on Exemptions with the additional members who joined during the STAC7 including the review of the concepts of possible impacts and mitigation and/or corrective measures, among others;
2. The interested members of the Ad hoc Working Group on exemptions, also considers the Curacao's exemption case and provide its findings prior to the end of the year;
3. Parties initiate the process to report their exemptions utilizing the format once approved, following the COP9;
4. The Working Group assist with preliminary analysis of exemptions which according to the Protocol, should be reported to the STAC, and its term be extended to assist the Secretariat with the collection and review of exemptions reports from Parties; and
5. The Working Group also initiates discussion on the reporting and process to follow up on the implementation of exemptions as per the Guidance document

RECOMMENDATION V

Taking note of the "GEF UNDP Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Project and its joint implementation through the AMEP and SPAW Subprogrammes" (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.37/INF.7) and the "Agreement CLME+: Catalysing Implementation of Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.37/INF.10);

Welcoming the presentation by the CLME+ Project Coordinator at the Third Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Land-Based Sources and Activities of Marine Pollution (Miami, 31 October-2 November 2016) which preceded this SPAW STAC7 Meeting;

Recommends that:

1. Additional joint LBS-SPAW STACs be convened in the future to continue to enhance integration between the respective subprogrammes activities both at the Secretariat and Contracting Parties level;

2. The progressive integration of efforts and activities under AMEP and SPAW subprogramme continues, in particular with the development of the Ecosystem Based Management projects in both the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf, as well as other relevant pilot activities; and
3. An integrated approach be developed for the reporting mechanism on the *State of the Marine Environment of the Convention Area* under the Cartagena Convention in which the habitats, protected areas and species reporting under SPAW Article 19 will be incorporated, and consider using the CLME+ SOME outline as the basis.