

Memorandum of Cooperation

Between the Mesoamerican Reef Fund

(MAR Fund) and the

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention)

Preamble

The MAR Fund is a four-country alliance (Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico) with the mission to inspire innovative, transnational solutions to critical Mesoamerican reef issues through providing meaningful, long-term financial support and trustworthy reef management advice so that future generations can enjoy and benefit from a thriving reef system. It is uniquely designed to attract and distribute funding at a level that will address the regional issues, enabling the development and financing of solutions which are beyond the mandate or capacity of local governments and NGOs. It furthers the efforts of other organizations to preserve the area's overall ecological integrity.

It operates as a participatory, privately managed fund that raises and allocates funding. It relies on the preexisting technical, administrative, and financial capabilities of its four founding members to operate on the ground: Protected Areas Conservation Trust (Belize), Fundación para la Conservación de los Recursos Naturales y Ambiente en Guatemala, Fundación Biosfera (Honduras), and Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza. The founding funds comprise the MAR Fund's Board of Directors, in addition to a representative of the regional Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), notable conservation experts from each participating country, and international donors and collaborators.

MAR Fund is currently focused on establishing and strengthening a network of 14 priority coastal and marine protected areas distributed among the four countries in the region and on strategic actions directly affecting the integrity and health of the protected areas, including community participation in fisheries co-management and adaptation to climate change.

The Cartagena Convention, adopted in 1983, is a comprehensive, umbrella agreement for the protection and development of the marine environment in the Wider Caribbean Region. In accordance with its mission to "ensure coordinated and comprehensive development without environmental damage," (Preamble, Cartagena Convention) the Cartagena Convention identifies environmental management issues for which regional and international cooperation is necessary. The Convention is supplemented by three Protocols addressing oil spills, specially protected areas and wildlife (SPAW), and pollution from land-based sources and activities (LBS), which together emphasize the need for inclusion of all environmental dimension in the development process in order to minimize threats to the marine environment and to ensure the sound use of marine and coastal resources.



With regard to coastal and marine resources management, the Cartagena Convention and its associated Protocols highlight the interconnectedness of regional ecosystems. Under the SPAW Protocol, Parties recognize "the overwhelming ecological, economic, aesthetic, scientific, cultural, nutritional and recreational value of rare or fragile ecosystems," such as coral reefs and associated ecosystems, and commit to protect and improve the state of such ecosystems. The LBS Protocol pays special attention to the threat to marine and coastal resources, and the entire hydrologic system, posed by land-based pollution sources and activities.

MAR Fund and the Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention recognize the fundamental role played by the region's coastal and marine resources, in supporting maintenance of cultural and biological diversity, in ensuring high ecosystem productivity, and in providing services and benefits for people and the planet.

MAR Fund and the Cartagena Convention, its Protocols and associated Caribbean Environment Programme share similar conservation and management goals. This Memorandum of Cooperation aims to reinforce existing mechanisms, including any specific joint work plans, as well as establish new and specific mechanisms for enhancing synergies and partnerships to achieve common goals, whilst avoiding duplication of efforts.

THEREFORE, MAR Fund and the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention (hereafter referred to as the "Parties"), in the interest of recognising areas of mutual interest, enhancing cooperation and partnership between Governments of the region, and more efficiently and effectively pursuing their respective mandates, agree to the following principles and mechanisms for cooperation:

Article 1. Mechanisms for Programme Cooperation

1. The Parties will develop collaborative actions for sustainable coastal and marine resources conservation and management in the Wider Caribbean by increasing consultation and cooperation between them.
2. The Parties will inform their respective regional and national focal points of identified cooperative activities.
3. The focal points, or their assigned delegates, may meet from time to time to assess the implementation of this Memorandum, exchange documents and review on-going activities.

Article 2. Joint Activities

1. Joint activities undertaken within the parameters of this Memorandum and identified in Annex I to this Memorandum of Cooperation, should relate clearly to the respective Workplans of the Parties and may be reviewed annually or at the request of either party.
2. The Parties will communicate their agreement on common areas of work to their respective focal points and networks.



3. The Parties will provide each other with details of their annual work programmes and strive to ensure harmonisation of activities at the regional and national levels.
4. The implementation of the collaborative programme and the joint conservation activities will depend on the availability of resources.

Article 3. Obligation, Review and Termination

1. This Memorandum of Cooperation constitutes an expression of a shared objective and vision. However, each Party's actions will be considered to be that Party's sole and separate action for all purposes, and neither Party shall claim to be acting on behalf of, or as agent for the other Party to this Memorandum of Cooperation.
2. Nothing in this Memorandum shall constitute a legal or financial obligation of either Party.
3. This Memorandum of Cooperation shall enter into force upon signature of both Parties. The term for this Memorandum of Cooperation is six years. The agreement may be reviewed at the request of either Party (usually annually) and may be terminated by either Party subject to six months notice in writing.



Maria Jose Gonzalez
Executive Director
MAR Fund



Nelson Andrade
Coordinator
Cartagena Convention

Date:

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May 8, 2014

May Date: 2014

ANNEX I

General Objective 1. Sustainable Management and Conservation of Coastal and Marine Resources:

- Where coral reefs and associated ecosystems (mangroves, seagrass beds, marshes, etc.) are recognized as important for both Parties, collaboration will be established on activities related to marine protected areas and coastal tourism and fishing, including sharing and promotion of best practices and guidelines for the sustainable use of the resources.
- The Parties will exchange information and collaborate on their respective activities on assessment, monitoring and restoration of coral reefs, mangroves and related ecosystems.
- The Parties will share information and best practices related to adaptation to climate change.

General Objective 2. Sites of Importance:

- Parties to this Memorandum will coordinate and cooperate when Protected Areas are listed in the SPAW Protocol and for MPAs of mutual interest.

General Objective 3. International Cooperation:

- Efforts will be made by the Parties of this Memorandum of Cooperation to promote the implementation of regulatory mechanisms to protect coastal and marine ecosystems and resources in the region through the international and cooperative schemes that have been set in place by SPAW and the LBS Protocols.
- The Parties of this Memorandum of Cooperation will engage in the exchange of experiences and in the compilation and transfer of best practices in managing marine protected areas, marine managed areas and ecological networks.
- MAR Fund will collaborate with the SPAW Programme in the development of the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) database in order to include MAR Fund sites into the database. The Parties to this Memorandum recognize their shared responsibility in updating this database and engaging in productive dialogue.

General Objective 4. Collaboration for Capacity Building:

- The Parties will collaborate on development and implementation of capacity building activities, particularly by sharing opportunities for training, exchanges and mentoring within CaMPAM.



Small Grants opportunities of MAR Fund and CaMPAM will be coordinated as appropriate in order to maximise resources and avoid duplication.

General Objective 5. Membership:

Recognising that increased participation in the Cartagena Convention and SPAW Protocol furthers the conservation goals of both Parties, MAR Fund will promote ratification of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols among its member countries, as well as active participation in the Convention/Protocol's programmes and activities.

