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**AN OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CARIBBEAN NODE OF THE
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP ON MARINE LITTER**



An Overview of the Implementation of the Caribbean Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter

Introduction

In 2015, the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) through the Global Programme of Action (GPA) based in Nairobi, Kenya and the Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention based in Kingston, Jamaica partnered with the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) to implement the Caribbean Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML). The goal of the node is to achieve the objectives of the GPML and the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAPMaLi) that was endorsed by the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention. This factsheet provides an overview of the activities in year one and describes the road ahead as the node continues to develop and strengthen while working towards reducing marine plastic debris and microplastics, and other solid waste pollution.

An Overview of Year One Accomplishments

The first year of the node focused on implementing the Caribbean node of the GPML and included:

- Two regional planning workshops/meetings (Panama and Jamaica) for review of the RAPMaLi and to assist with priority setting for the Caribbean Node of the GPML;
- Developing five concept notes which shaped GPML priorities into well-developed project prospect uses;
- Implementing two projects in the Caribbean region from the concept notes;
- Leveraging an existing relationship with the Caribbean and Brazilian Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem project (CLME+) to identify Caribbean-wide perspectives on marine pollution issues within a workshop format at the annual conference of the GCFI;
- Conducting a technical session on marine debris at the annual conference of the GCFI *'Identifying, Understanding, and Reducing Marine Debris in the Gulf and Caribbean'* co-sponsored by the Marine Debris Division of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- Implementation of an email distribution list (GPML-Carib@listserv.gcfi.org), and;
- Development of a GPML regional Stakeholder Database.



The five concept notes: these were developed in consultation with UNEP/GPA/GPML and UNEP CAR/RCU (Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention) and included the following:

Concept note	Proponent	Brief Overview
Grenada Microplastics	St. George' University, Grenada (Dr. Clare Morrall)	This concept note outlined a small project related to microplastic ingestion by commercially important species of fish in the Caribbean region.
Piloting marine litter reduction strategies for major Caribbean cultural/musical/sporting events- Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago	IAMovement (Ms. Nakita Poon Kong)	This concept note outlined a small project related to the reduction of marine litter associated with a major Caribbean cultural event – Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago.
Links between marine litter and the prevalence of mosquito-borne public health concerns	All Points Geospatial Consulting (Seann D. Regan)	This concept note outlines a small project related to marine litter and the incidence of mosquito-borne public health concerns such as Chikungunya virus/Chik V in the Caribbean region.
Innovations and cost analysis of options for marine litter action	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, Inc.	The proposed project addressed the need identified in the RAPMaLi, in particular the recommendation that “More research needs to be conducted to determine the various impacts of marine litter on the coastal ecosystems and other indicators. The economic impacts need to be assessed in order to help develop and prioritise response centers for businesses, industries and the public. Social impacts such as health issues should also be assessed in order to inform policymakers and the public of the need for effective management. Furthermore, there is a lack of corrective measures in dealing with the impacts of marine debris.”
Regional assessment of marine litter initiatives in the Caribbean	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, Inc.	This concept note outlines a small project to conduct an analysis of existing initiatives related to marine litter reduction in the Caribbean region.

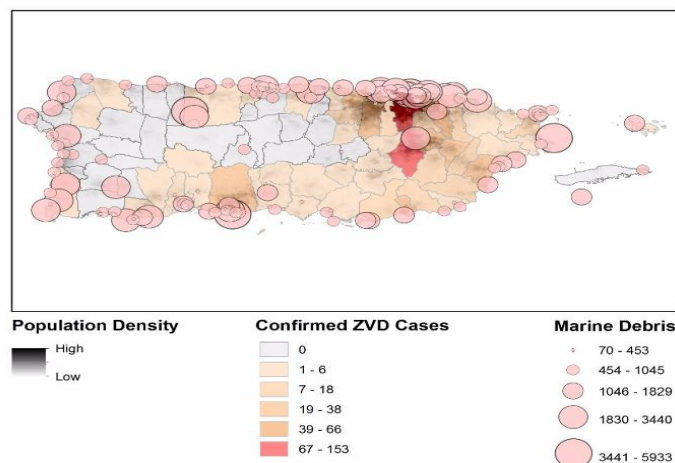
The Two Implemented Projects

The projects that were funded were identified from the list of Concept Notes. These included

1. Fish Microplastics Project in Grenada: commercially important Red Snapper (n=6), Red Hind (n=6), Mutton Snapper (n=6), Barracuda (n=6), Blue Runner (n=5), Mahi Mahi (n=4), and Yellowfin Tuna (n=1) were sampled for microplastics. Plastic fibres predominated followed by microplastic film. Plastics were ubiquitous and found in every fish sample.



2. Marine Litter as habitat for Mosquitos in the context of Zika Virus Disease (ZVD): The incidence of Zika was examined in relation to the amount of marine plastics collected in the environment around Puerto Rico.



Joint Workshop between the Caribbean Node of the GPML and CLME+: The GCFI convened a workshop at the annual meeting in Grand Cayman in November 2016 entitled: *'Workshop on Identifying Research Needs on LBS Pollution in Caribbean Region.'* The workshop focused primarily on:

- **Governance:** This could include institutional, policy, legislative and regulatory on all aspects of Pollution. And on the effectiveness of these including enforcement and engagement of private sector.
- **Pollution:** Types, Sources and Impacts on Economic Sectors, Human Health and the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems. This would include any Environmental variables which exacerbate polluting impacts.



- **Communication:** Focusing on research needed to bridge the sciences involved in Pollution research and then communicating this to general public and decision makers.
- **Monitoring:** Monitoring all aspects of pollution including social, economic, legislative, enforcement, climate change, and all other previous topics.

The Way Forward: As the node gains traction, the focus will be on implementing those activities that were prioritized within the RAPMaLi. The node will seek out and build partnerships and attempt to achieve synergies when possible drawing on the regional stakeholder database. The node will also develop communications tools to ensure effective information exchange with partners and stakeholders. Projects will focus on priorities identified within the GPML and among regional constituencies.