

UNEP Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit (CAR-RCU)

Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) & Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention.

Contribution to the Report of the Secretary General on Oceans and the Law of the Sea

The United Nations Environment Programme - Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP) was established by the Caribbean states in 1986. Its mission is to promote regional co-operation for the protection and sustainable development of the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR). This is achieved through the development and implementation of programmes, projects and activities that support the implementation of country obligations to the Cartagena Convention and its three Protocols on Oil Spills, Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) and Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution (LBS).

Contributions of Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Sub-Programme (SPAW):

The Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) was established to conserve and sustainably use the marine biodiversity of the WCR through the protection of threatened and endangered species and their habitats and related ecosystems. This objective is met by working with governments to establish and manage protected areas, and to manage and use species and the coastal ecosystems sustainably.

Strengthening of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

As the marine biodiversity found within the WCR faced new and existing threats such as invasive species and climate change, the SPAW Protocol continued to develop and implement specific measures to promote their conservation. Direct assistance continued to be provided to countries to: strengthen MPAs and build their capacity through provision of grants to address MPA management needs and priorities; develop sustainable fisheries and alternative livelihoods; promote best management practices; and develop a regional MPA database. A “Train the Trainers” programme also continues to provide comprehensive and targeted training for MPA personnel through the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM). Partnership sharing and collaboration among MPAs continues to be promoted through dissemination of lessons learnt and exchanges among sites, bringing together MPA researchers, managers, educators and scientists, as well as the private sector.

The SPAW Project in support of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, which began in March 2010 and expected to end in May 2013, has been successful in supporting the management of Protected Areas (PAs) projects in eight (8) small island developing states (SIDS) namely *Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines*. This has been achieved through the production of a compilation of MPA best practices and MPA Regional Database updates and factsheet. This USD 1.5M funded initiative was facilitated through the Italian Cooperation, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented in partnership with UNEP-CEP, CaMPAM, Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Initiative, Reef Check Dominican Republic, SPAW-Regional Activity Center and The Nature Conservancy.

In 2012, eighteen (18) Protected Areas for the Wider Caribbean Region were listed under the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) as meeting regional criteria of special significance (see link: <http://www.car-spaw-rac.org/?Presentation-of-the-18-PAs-listed,412>). The list of protected areas is expected to grow as a regional cooperative programme developed for their support. The eighteen PAs included so far are:

- **Belize:** Hol Chan Marine Reserve and Glover's Reef Marine Reserve;
- **Colombia:** Sanctuary Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta and the Regional Seaflower Marine Protected Area in San Andrés and Providencia Archipelago;
- **Cuba:** National Park of Guanahacabibes, in Pinar del Río;
- **France:** Grand Connétable Island Nature Reserve (French Guiana), the National Park of Guadeloupe, the Réserve Naturelle Nationale of Saint-Martin, the Lagoon Ponds of St. Martin, the National Reserve of "Petite-Terre" (Guadeloupe), and the Agoa Sanctuary ;
- **The Caribbean Netherlands:** Bonaire National Marine Park, the national park the Quill and Boven on St. Eustatius, the Saba Marine Park; and
- **United States of America:** Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the Dry Tortugas National Park (www.nps.gov/dрто), the Everglades National Park in Florida, and the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (www.flowergarden.noaa.gov) in Texas (Gulf of Mexico)

Coral Reef Management

SPAW continued to support coral reef monitoring and assessments in the Wider Caribbean coordination with the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GRMN) and the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI).

Ecosystem-Based Approach (EBA) to Large Marine Ecosystems (<http://www.clmeproject.org/pilotprojects.html>)

SPAW continues to participate with other UN agencies in the implementation of the GEF, UNDP, IOC/UNESCO Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project aimed at assisting Caribbean countries to improve the management of their shared living marine resources through an ecosystem based approach (EBA). The EBA is utilised for the conservation and effective management of coral reef ecosystems and their resources in order to maintain their functional and structural integrity and biodiversity, and to ensure economic and social benefits for local communities and the region as a whole. The GEF CLME pilot project began in 2010 and is slated to end in April 2013.

UNEP-CEP continues to be responsible for the implementation of this project and has utilized sub-agreements to partners operating in the CLME selected Pilot Target Sites. The targeted sites are the Montecristi National Park in the Dominican Republic; Caracol Bay in Haiti; Pedro Bank in Jamaica; and the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve in Colombia.

Marine Mammal Action Plans Additional marine biodiversity activities included national recovery plans for species such as sea turtles, a regional conservation plan for marine mammals, and management initiatives for economically important species such as lobster and conch. For additional information, please visit (<http://www.cep.unep.org/meetings-events/vi-spaw-copzz/6th-spaw-cop/mmap.pdf/view>)

Lionfish - Invasive Species

UNEP-CEP along with the SPAW Regional Activity Center (SPAW-RAC) in Guadeloupe partnered with the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and other numerous Caribbean counterparts to address the lionfish issue in the Caribbean through preparation of a manual. The manual titled “*Invasive Lionfish: A Guide to Control and Management*” was developed in 2012 in English and is being translated in Spanish. This guide will serve as a crucial tool for managers in assisting with the control of the lionfish invasion and its impacts by providing practical solutions and recommendations. For more information, please visit (<http://lionfish.gcfi.org/manual/#?page=0>)

Contributions of the Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution Sub-Programme (AMEP):

Land-based Sources of Pollution

The Protocol concerning Pollution from Land -based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) of the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention) entered into Force in August 2010 .With the ratification of this Protocol by the Government of Grenada in 2012, ten (10) countries of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) are now contracting parties to this Protocol.

Support continues to be provided through UNEP CEP to member countries of the Wider Caribbean Region to meet their obligations under the LBS Protocol. This is facilitated through a range of projects and activities such as the GEF funded Project “Testing a Prototype Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CReW)” which seeks to establish innovative, financing mechanisms for cost-effective and sustainable financing of wastewater management in the WCR; to facilitate policy discussions, strengthen legislative frameworks; and to facilitate regional dialogue and knowledge exchange among the key stakeholders in the WCR.

GEF CReW is a four (4) year project managed and implemented by the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme. There are thirteen participating countries: *Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago*. The project also has four 4 pilot projects countries: Belize, Jamaica, Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago. The Project completed baseline assessments in all the participating countries to determine policy, legislative, capacity building and training needs for effective wastewater management. The baseline assessment reports are being finalized. Regional training workshops convened by the project included topics such as *Appropriate Wastewater Treatment Technologies, Revolving funds for Wastewater Management and Operator Assessments for Wastewater utilities*. The Project continues to work with the pilot project countries to develop national Pilot Financing Mechanisms. For more information, please visit <http://gefcrew.org/>

Following the successful completion of the GEF Integrating Watershed and Coastal Areas Management (IWCAM) project, UNEP CEP in collaboration with the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI) is now developing the full project proposal for a new multifocal area project entitled:” Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean SIDS (IWEco)”. The project proposal was approved for inclusion in the work plan of UNEP CEP at the

15th Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme and the Twelfth Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention held in October 2012 in the Dominican Republic. The four year GEF funded project has been endorsed by the governments of ten countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago. The Project will focus on *implementation of innovative solutions* in response to the policies, plans and strategies developed by the GEF IWCAM Project. For additional information, please visit

http://www.carrcu.org/images/meeting_docs/img15/igm15/information_documents/UNEP_DEPI_CAR_WG.33INF.10/UNEP_DEPI_CAR_WG.33INF.10_EN.pdf

UNEP CEP continues to work on Marine Litter Management through the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAPMaLi) and continues work in developing a Marine Litter Activity Guide and an online Interactive Game and Learning Tool on Marine Litter for the Children's page of the CEP website. Activities continued to focus on the development of targeted educational, promotional and awareness material for children, decision makers and the general public.

Mainstreaming of National Programmes of Action (NPAs) into national processes under the framework of UNEP GPA and Regional Seas.

UNEP CEP in collaboration with the UNEP Global Programme of Action (GPA) and NOAA assisted in facilitating the implementation of National Programmes of Action (NPA) projects for the prevention of pollution from land based sources and activities in 2012. Direct support was provided to the Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, and Suriname. The NPA project in Suriname involved a baseline analysis of the quality of water in the Suriname River. The NPA Project in Saint Lucia involved mainstreaming Saint Lucia's National Plan of Action through a North West Coast Water Quality Demonstration Project. The NPA project for the Dominican Republic entitled "Reaching out the National Programme of Action on Land-based Marine Pollution" developed outreach and education material on land-based sources of marine pollution and promoted integration and implementation of the NPA with local and national authorities, main stakeholders, and coastal communities.

Maritime safety, prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships

The Protocol concerning Co-operation in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region (Oil Spills Protocol) of the Cartagena Convention which entered into force in 1986 is supported by the Regional Activity Centre (RAC) REMPEITC-Caribe. The designation of the Wider Caribbean Region as a Special Area under Annex V of the MARPOL Convention which prohibits the discharge of all garbage by ships became effective on May 1, 2011.

UNEP CEP in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) continues to provide support to countries of the Wider Caribbean Region to meet their obligations under the Oil Spills Protocol, MARPOL Annex V and other related IMO Conventions. The Regional Activity Centre REMPEITC-Caribe provided technical support in conducting rapid assessments, training and capacity building for oil spill preparedness and response. RAC –REMPEITC trained approximately 60 persons from the WCR in Oil Spill Preparedness and Response in 2012.

A revised draft Ballast Water Management (BWM) Strategic Action Plan for the Wider Caribbean Region was developed by the 2nd Regional Task Force Meeting on the ratification and implementation of the IMO Convention on Ballast Water Management organized by RAC-REMPETIC and IMO in 2012. The Strategic Action Plan seeks to provide a regional framework for the activities that need to be developed and implemented within the WCR in order to mitigate, minimize and eventually eliminate the transfer of HAOP in ships' ballast water, in accordance with the BWM Convention and relevant programmes such as the GEF/UNDP/IMO GloBallast Partnerships project (GBP); to enhance regional cooperation and capacity in BWM matters towards the protection and conservation of the marine environment in the WCR using the existing regional bodies; and to encourage the accession to the BWM Convention by IMO Member States and facilitate the harmonized implementation of effective ballast water management strategies and policies within the Region. The Action Plan has nine (9) Strategic Priorities. For additional information, please visit <http://cep.unep.org/racrempeitc>

Increasing resilience and reducing vulnerability of coastal areas and SIDS to impacts of Climate Change.

Support continued to be provided by UNEP CEP in efforts to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience, through the protection and development of coastal ecosystems through the Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Project in Jamaica funded by the European Union (EU). Some ongoing activities under the project include; replanting of mangroves in degraded coastal regions; restoration of Seagrass beds/areas; improving database for monitoring changes in coastal ecosystems; reforestation and agro-forestry in selected Watershed Management Units; establishment and/ or strengthening of Local Forest Management Committees (LFMC); development of a fire management programme; designing and implementing climate change awareness campaigns; and policy and institutional review and reforms. For more information, please visit <http://www.cep.unep.org/eu-climate-change>