



Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol and Programme

Newsletter N°19 - July 2016

Commonly used Acronyms

BEST: Voluntary scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European overseas

CaMPAM: Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum

CARICOM: Caribbean Community and Common Market

ECMMAN: Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network

EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone

GCFI: Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute

MPAs: Marine Protected Areas

PAs: Protected Areas

SPAW: Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife

SPAW-RAC: Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife - Regional Activity Center

UNEP-CEP: United Nations Environment Programme - Caribbean Environment Programme

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News of the month

Last mission of SPAW-RAC in Haiti: "Implementation of sustainable activities in the local communities for the protection of marine and coastal biodiversity in the Three bays National Marine in the northeast of Haiti"



Group photo of the mission in "Bord de Mer Limonade" (May 2016) – Credits: Nelly Pelisson.

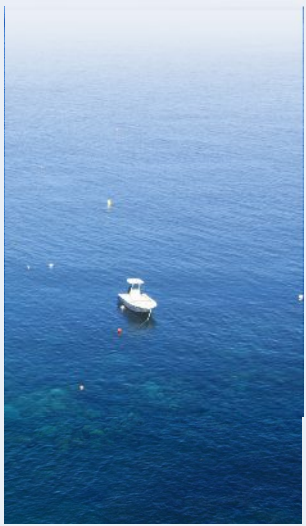
At the request of UNEP and the Government of Haiti, the SPAW-RAC currently provides support to the Haitian Government and local partners including the NGO [FoProBim](#) (Foundation for the Protection of Marine Biodiversity) to set up Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), and coordinate actions for the conservation and the sustainable use of natural marine and coastal resources.

The two year project (2015-2016) consists of two main areas: 1) the restoration of mangroves in association with alternative livelihoods (development of mangrove nurseries, fruit trees and substitution species for lumber and coal, beekeeping with training of adults, coral nursery); and 2) the environmental awareness of

schoolchildren.

From May 9 -13 2016, representatives from the Guadeloupe environmental NGO [Mon école Ma baleine](#), [Kap Naturel](#) and [Conservatoire botanique des îles de Guadeloupe](#), coordinated by FoProBim and the SPAW-RAC, conducted the second and last mission where 120 schoolchildren were made aware of the environment in the rural area of *Limonade Bord de mer*.

The main theme was the importance of protecting coastal and marine areas with a focus on the conservation of marine mammals, sea turtles and sharks, along with the importance of the mangrove ecosystem and its resilience. Basic principles of



hygiene were also presented by two nurses who were a part of the team.

Overall, the presentations were well received by the children who were very interested to learn more about the marine organisms and the richness of their close environment in an area sadly impacted by garbage. The missions were able to reach roughly 300 schoolchildren and their teachers and enabled the planting of approximately 30,000 *Rhizophora* mangle seedlings and other tree species for livelihood purpose.

The SPAW-RAC appreciates the strong involvement of FoProBim which enables the smooth running of both missions and contributed to the development of actions in favour of the conservation of biodiversity in Haiti.

For more information please contact [Franck Gourdin](#) and [Frédérique Fardin](#).



Joseph, a Haitian schoolchild showing an educational factsheet developed for the mission by the “Conservatoire botanique des îles de la Guadeloupe” on mangroves. Credits: Frédérique Fardin.

FOCUS ON

Investigating the ecology and behaviour of sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) and other cetaceans of Guadeloupe

More than 30 species of cetaceans have been recorded in the Wider Caribbean Region, and 20 species are known to occur at varying levels off the leeward coast of the French archipelago of Guadeloupe (FWI). This area is particularly well known to host a year-round resident population of sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*).

Very little is known on the relative abundance, habitat preferences, and behavior of sperm whales and other cetaceans in this region. Thanks to the support of TOTAL Foundation, SPAW-RAC and research scientists from Florida International University have undertaken a research programme on the ecology and behavior of sperm whales and other cetaceans in this region across three field seasons carried out from November 2014 to April 2016 and using multiple methods.

On five occasions, sperm whales have been tagged with high resolution cameras and time-depth recorders to investigate their foraging and social behaviours – this has never been done in this region. Data collected revealed predation at depth, as well as unique social interactions within sperm whale social groups.

Biopsy samples from sperm whales and several dolphin species were collected to better understand their foraging habitats and trophic interactions using stable isotopes. Moreover, these samples have been used to assess pollutant concentrations in the tissues of these vulnerable species.

Altogether, across the three field seasons, more than 200 groups of



Sperm whale caudal fin.
© Vandersarren Gaëlle.



Group of Fraser's Dolphins.
© Kiszka Jeremy.



False killer whales.
© Kiszka Jeremy.

cetaceans were encountered off the leeward coast of Guadeloupe. In order of occurrence, the following species were recorded: sperm whales, pantropical spotted dolphins (*Stenella attenuata*), Fraser's dolphins (*Lagenodelphis hosei*), short-finned pilot whales (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), false killer whales (*Pseudorca crassidens*), rough-toothed dolphins (*Steno bredanensis*), humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), dwarf sperm whales (*Kogia sima*), Gervais' beaked whales (*Mesoplodon europaeus*), pygmy killer whales (*Feresa attenuata*) and Cuvier's beaked whales (*Ziphius cavirostris*).

These observations will provide documentation on the occurrence and habitat preferences of this unique cetacean community. In addition, active acoustic surveys have been carried out during the last field season in April 2016 - this will enable integration of concurrent cetacean distribution data alongside the spatial-temporal variation in acoustic backscatter (proxy of density), and depth distribution of the organisms surrounding the observed species. Prey characteristics (density and distribution) will also be analyzed in relation to oceanographic parameters recorded in situ (CTD) or from satellite data, providing information on cetacean habitat.

Finally, the information collected during this project will be made available to the government authorities and to the *Agoa sanctuary*, a marine protected area specifically devoted to marine mammal conservation and covering the entire surface area of the French West Indies Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). For more information contact Anne Fontaine, SPAW-RAC's Director (anne.fontaine.carspaw@guadeloupe-parcnational.fr), or Jeremy Kiszka, Florida International University researcher (jeremy.kiszka@gmail.com).

The new IUCN website has been launched with a WCPA Caribbean Page

IUCN's Programme on Protected Areas has a long heritage in the Union consisting of a headquarters-based core team and regional staff, and a closely coordinated programme of activities with the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). This is the world's premier network for protected area expertise. It is administered by IUCN's Global Programme on Protected Areas and has over 2,500 members, spanning 140 countries. SPAW works in close conjunction with WCPA. The new IUCN website and its dedicated WCPA Caribbean Page is now available at:

www.iucn.org/protected-areas/world-commission-protected-areas/wcpa/where-we-work/wcpa-caribbean

PROJECTS

[Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network \(GCRMN\)](#)

Caribbean Guidelines Capacity Building Workshop: Towards Comprehensive Coral Reef Monitoring.



GCRMN Caribbean workshop DBLM Jamaica 22 April 2016 © Chloé Mathieu.

In line with the [International Coral Reef Initiative](#) and the [Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network \(GCRMN\)](#) guiding principles, the [GCRMN in the Caribbean region](#) has been growing as a renewed and dynamic network of coral reef experts sharing the goal of **revitalizing and strengthening coral reef monitoring to ensure the collection of useful, comparable and accessible data that can effectively reveal the status and trends of the coral reefs in the region**, for regular, robust and strategic reporting to influence coastal management decision-making at the regional level.

In this context, we are very glad to report on the first GCRMN-Caribbean Integrated Coral Reef Monitoring Workshop held from 18-22 April 2016.

It was hosted under the framework of the UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP), and with the support of the UNEP Coral Reef Unit, the SPAW-RAC, the University of the West Indies (UWI) and a number of regional organizations and programmes. Participants gathered at the Discovery Bay Marine Laboratory, Centre for Marine Sciences, University of the West Indies, on the north coast of Jamaica and included thirty-five coral reef scientists and coastal managers from several institutions such as the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies



Patricia Gonzales field session 3 biophysical component - GCRMN Caribbean workshop DBLM Jamaica 21 April 2016. ©Renata Goodridge.



(CERMES-UWI); Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego; the Waitt Institute, Reef Check Dominican Republic; Universidad Simon Bolivar; and the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program.

The first objective of this GCRMN Caribbean workshop Montego Bay 19 April 2014. ©Chloé Mathieu.

event was to increase capacity for effective integrated coral reef monitoring among GCRMN-Caribbean countries through the use of bio-physical and socio-economic data for coastal management decision-making, and for improved standardized and strategic reporting at the regional level.

Participants were introduced through one of two training components to the GCRMN-Caribbean bio-physical guidelines and socio-economic monitoring framework. They benefited from several opportunities during plenary sessions to share experiences from each component towards strengthening the integration of all participants of this Caribbean regional network.

This workshop was also used as an opportunity to train and identify prospective trainers, especially for future GCRMN Caribbean workshops, and to build new long-term collaborations between islands while reinforcing local/national networks.

The Jamaica Coral Reef Monitoring Network (JCRMN), is a great example of this training wherein Jamaican participants developed recommendations and next steps for improving and strengthening their national monitoring efforts.

Recommendations and post workshops suggestions for actions were defined for each of the countries/sites represented, in order to help implement the guidelines and reinforce integration and develop a specific guidance/guidebook. The GCRMN-Caribbean plans to replicate this initiative at the national or sub-national levels throughout the region over the coming years.

Please have a look on the **SPAW-RAC** page www.car-spaw-rac.org for more details about this event.

We encourage all coral reef experts and conservation practitioners to get in touch with us, by contacting directly one of the **Steering Committee members** - www.car-spaw-rac.org/?The-GCRMN-Caribbean,637 or the regional coordinator- julie.belmont.carspaw@guadeloupe-parcnational.fr.

Moving Towards a Sustainable Mangrove Economy: Call for input/participation

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Council has selected Hawaii, United States of America, to host the 2016 [IUCN World Conservation Congress](#) – the world's largest conservation event.

During this meeting, the Conservatoire du Littoral will conduct a workshop entitled: *"Moving Towards a Sustainable Mangrove Economy"* (2 September 2016) (<https://portals.iucn.org/congress/fr/session/9684>). The purpose of this workshop is to demonstrate how "profitable" mangrove protection is, and how much modern societies could gain on an economic, social and ecological level if they replaced currently widespread unsustainable practices (industrial aquaculture, non-regulated wildlife uptake, inadequate waste treatment, backfilling, ill-conceived urban and agricultural expansion and rampant tourism development) with sustainable and high added value practices (sustainable ecotourism, better regulated farming and fishing practices, independent Environmental Impact Assessments preceding coastal developments, etc.), within a climate change context that will deeply affect mangroves in the years to come.

Through the presentation of many existing and efficient practical cases, this workshop aims to highlight the ways in which mangroves can be conserved in the long run.

Call for inputs/participation

*If you have feedback, reports, or any other relevant information related to this subject that you would like to share, or if you would like to attend our workshop or be part of our presentation team, please contact: Mme [Gaëlle Vandersarren](#), Coordinator of the "Resource Center for Overseas' Wetlands". **Deadline for submission & inscription: July 31th***

Last updates on Sargassum influx



Group photo of the BVI Region Sargassum conference, Moskito Island, March 2016. Credits: Government Information Services of the Virgin Islands.

Regional Sargassum Conference

The *Sargassum* influx, experienced over the last few years, has not yet appeared in 2016. However, research is still in progress to better understand the origin of this phenomenon which has been experienced in the Caribbean and West Africa since 2011. There are various ongoing collaborative projects intending to develop a common reflection and strategy to deal with these landings.

Between 21 - 22 March 2016, a Regional Sargassum Conference organized by the Government of British Virgin Islands and [Virgin Unite](#), in partnership with the Caribbean Council, the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, took place on Moskito Island (British Virgin Islands). During this two day workshop, economic and environmental issues associated to the *Sargassum* influx were discussed by several experts and stakeholders involved in research, communication and management of the phenomenon. Representatives of the UNEP Abidjan and Cartagena Conventions and the SPAW-RAC, participated and presented a joint plan of cooperation on this transatlantic issue plaguing the Wider Caribbean and West Africa regions.

All participants agreed that more research is needed to understand this phenomenon and to identify potential and safe uses of the algae. Studies about the uses (biofuel, bio-stimulant for plant growth, bioplastic, etc.) are now in progress involving some of the researchers who participated to the workshop.

UNEA Sargassum Side Event

On 27 May 2016, the Secretariats of the Abidjan and Cartagena Conventions, in partnership with the UNEP/Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based

Activities (GPA), and the USAID/West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change Programme (WABICC), organized a Green Room Event on the *Sargassum* influx during the 2nd Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) which was held between 23 - 27 May 2016.

High-level speakers from West Africa and the Caribbean participated in the session and panelists from each region conveyed specific issues associated with and experienced as a result of the phenomenon (economic impacts on fisheries and tourism industry, relocation of coastal communities due to the hydrogen sulfide gas emissions, etc.).

The emergence of microenterprises around the reuse of *Sargassum* for a range of purposes (fertilizers, soil ameliorants, nutraceuticals and food products), enabling the creation of "green jobs" was also noted by the audience.

Following the discussions, cooperation between the two regions are now being explored to further address the *Sargassum* issue through UNEP/GPA. The global partnerships of researchers, policy and technical specialists from the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management (GPNM) and the Global Wastewater Initiative (GW2I) under the GPA, will lend support through building a research base and mobilizing resources to assist affected countries.

69th Annual conference GCFI Conference

From 7 – 11 November 2016 the [69th Annual conference](#) of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute will be held in Grand Cayman (Cayman Islands), during which a session will be dedicated to the understanding and the management of the pelagic *Sargassum* influx in the Caribbean.

This session aims to share the latest research progress on the *Sargassum* ecosystem (ecophysiology, associated fauna), the origin of *Sargassum* influx in the Caribbean and West Africa, the situation concerning the phenomenon in Brazil, and remote sensing to implement forecasting of future landings.

Recommendations on the management of the massive landings to meet the varying economic, social and health impacts will also be presented.

If you are involved in research, management or awareness concerning the *Sargassum* influx and you are interested in being a part of this session, please contact [Frederique Fardin](#), SPAW-RAC – UNEP-CEP Project Coordinator and [Jim Franks](#), Senior Research Scientist – Gulf Coast Research Laboratory – University of Southern Mississippi.

CARI'MAM Project Call

Interreg Caraibes Project spearheaded by Agoa for Caring of Marine Mammals: Call for partnership.

Introduction

[The Agoa Sanctuary](#) is a Marine Protected Area (MPA) located in the French West Indies (including Saint Martin and Saint Barths, Guadeloupe and Martinique). It was designated under the SPAW Protocol in 2012 and is specifically dedicated to marine mammal conservation. In order to implement concrete cooperation actions in the region with other MPAs, Agoa is pleased to inform all SPAW Parties and focal points about its current initiative for developing **a cooperative project which aims to create a network of Marine Mammal Protected Areas in the Caribbean region** with funding courtesy of Interreg Caraibes.

Objective of the project:

The project spearheaded by Agoa aims to develop a network of marine protected areas dedicated to the preservation of marine mammals of the greater Caribbean and beyond. It also seeks to strengthen skills of common tools and evaluation in order to manage the development of economic activities relating to whale watching across the Caribbean which are sustainable and environmentally friendly.

Agoa intends to formally apply to the Caribbean INTERREG Fund towards a formalized partnership by the end of 2016.

If stakeholders or Contracting Parties involved in marine mammal conservation are interested in this project, please do not hesitate to contact the Agoa team. For questions or further information regarding the CARI MaM building project, please contact [Sabine Garnier](#) (Agoa) and [Frédérique Fardin](#) (SPAW-RAC).

CaMPAM activities

CaMPAM-ECMMAN Small Grant Program

The extended projects implemented in each of the 6 Eastern Caribbean continue to benefit from the technical assistance and financial resources of the UNEP-CEP/SPAW Subprogram through the SPAW-RAC for a total of €155,000 per country. Activities in progress include:

- Development of sustainable financing and business plans for the Pointe Sable Environmental Protected Area in St. Lucia and the NE Marine Management (NEMMA) Antigua.
- Drafting of a participatory management plan for The Narrow Fishing Priority Area (TNFPA) in St. Kitts and Nevis and Grande Anse MPA in Grenada.
- Implementation of biological surveys in Grenada, the Grenadines, the Pointe Sable Environmental Protected Area (PSEPA) in St. Lucia, and the Cabrits National Park (CAPMA) in Dominica.
- Installation of buoys in most managed areas, as well as the remodeling of offices for NEMMA and CAPMA; training of managers, fishers and rangers, and several local outreach and education activities.

An enforcement plan is ready for the St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The increased participation of technical staff from the collaborating government agencies has improved the capacity of the NGOs managing the respective projects in completing the activities planned. International experts with extensive experience in the Caribbean such as Dr. Steve Schill, Dr. William Heyman, Dr. Floyd Homer, Jason Horadan and Lucia Prinz, have collaborated to design and lead some of these activities, as well as train local staff so that they are able to continue activities beyond the life of the project.

The programme management team will evaluate the implementation status of each project in July 2016 and determine the final disbursements for each grant so that the targeted marine managed areas are able to make the most of this funding opportunity.

In Grenada, the lionfish campaign "Eat it to beat It" continues throughout the island – the **Lionfish Display Presentation & Tasting** at Waltham, St. Marks coordinated by the Fisheries Division, allowed community members to see and taste the lionfish for the very first

time. It also allowed kids to participate in some fun quiz questions and giveaways. The activity is geared towards changing the minds of people who have preconceived notions concerning these poorly understood creatures.

See more on this campaign by visiting the **Grenada MPA Network Facebook page**, or join **#eatittobeatit #feastonthebeast**.

For more information on the CaMPAM-ECMMAN Small Grant Program please contact Dr. Georgina Bustamante, CaMPAM-ECMMAN Small Grant Program Coordinator at gbustamante09@gmail.com.

Upcoming "Training of Trainers Course on Caribbean MPA Management"

On June 1st, CaMPAM launched the call for applications for the "XII Training of Trainers course on Marine Protected Area Management" for Spanish speaking countries. The 2-week regional course will take place between 29 August – 10 September in the northern coast of Dominican Republic, an area with several coastal protected areas and increasing coastal development.

Since 1999, the UNEP-CEP SPAW regional courses have been coordinated through CaMPAM with the technical and financial cooperation of local and international organizations. The last one (for English-speaking MPA practitioners) was held in 2015 in Grenada and was organized with support from Fisheries Division's National MPA Coordination with funding from the Caribbean BIOPAMA program led by IUCN-ORMA in partnership with CaMPAM. The 2016 course will be funded by the [Agency for International Development and Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) under a UNEP-CEP/SPAW project for the promotion of marine ecosystem based management and will be organized by [Reef Check Dominican Republic](#).

The project aims at assisting Caribbean countries in the application of the ecosystem-based approach for coastal area management which includes the development of a Decision-Support System that will be tested in the northern coast of Dominican Republic, with further training and potential pilots in other Caribbean countries.

For more information on the course contact Dr. Martha Parada, course coordinator at pradamc@gmail.com.

UPCOMING AND RECENT EVENTS

■ **19-24 June 2016:** 13th [International Coral Reef Symposium \(ICRS\)](#). Honolulu, Hawaii.

■ **20-24 June 2016:** 16th Session 2015-2016 - [Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission](#) – WECAFC. Guadeloupe, Gosier.

■ **30 Aug - 10 Sept (TD):** Training of Trainers on Marine Protected Area Management Regional Course. Dominican Republic.

■ **24-28 October 2016 :** Conference on Coastal Ecosystems Science and Management (EcoCIEC 2016). Cuba. For more details please see

www.ciec.cu.

■ **31 Oct - 5 Nov 2016:** Joint LBS/SPAW STAC. Miami, Florida. Please check www.cep.unep.org/meetings for more information.

■ The Board of Directors of GCFI is pleased to announce that the **69th GCFI meeting** will be hosted by the Cayman Islands Department of Environment in Grand Cayman from **7 – 11 November 2016**. Please check the website www.gcfi.org for more information in the upcoming weeks.

A festival for the oceans

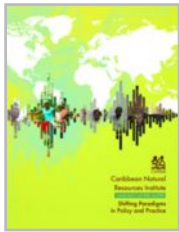
UNEP-CEP recently collaborated with the Institute of Caribbean Studies to launch the Third Annual Caribbean Sea Fan Festival which was hosted online on 8 June 2016 in keeping with World Oceans Day 2016.

UNEP-CEP note - "We aim to raise awareness and showcase the work of the wider Caribbean Region on ocean-related projects and activities. We collaborated with Dr. Claire Nelson, the founder and president for the Institute of Caribbean Studies, to showcase projects, activities, stories, videos, etc for World Oceans Day and although our funding is limited this year, we are still trying to highlight best practices." Interviews from our colleagues who participated in the Caribbean Sea Fan Festival can be downloaded at www.caribbeanamericanmonth.org

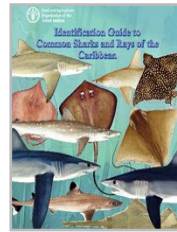
Annual workshop on French Antilles and Guiana wetlands in Martinique

On 25 – 26 May 2016, the annual workshop regarding the French Antilles and Guiana wetlands was held and gathered managers, local government, associations, researchers and consulting firms to convey the most recent updates, exchange experiences and share common reflections on protection and management of these valued ecosystems. The summary and presentations of the workshop are available [here](#).

PUBLICATIONS



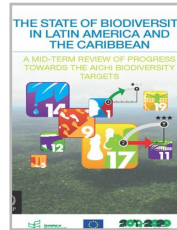
[CANARI's Annual Report 2014-2015](#) “Shifting paradigms in policy and practice”



New FAO publication “*Identification Guide to Common Sharks and Rays of the Caribbean*” is [available](#).



The State of the World's Sea Turtle Report, [Volume XI](#) is available.



On the International Day for Biodiversity, a major series of four regional reports entitled “*The State of Biodiversity – a mid-term review of progress towards the Strategic Plan*” have been launched. The four reports, one each for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean are [downloadable](#).

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