

SPAW-RAC NEWSLETTER

Inside this issue

- 1 - SPAW RAC and the Cartagena Convention: Launching the new season of SPAW working groups
- 2 - Feedback of SIDS 4 meeting
- 3 - CAMAC: Phase 1 deliverables
- 4 - GCRMN: Call for Data Status of Coral Reefs in the Caribbean region
5. Focus on our partners: CAR-WEN (The Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network)
- 6 - Upcoming events



SPAW · RAC

THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR THE PROTOCOL
CONCERNING SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS AND WILDLIFE
FOR THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

1 - BACK TO WORK FOR THE EXPERTS OF THE SPAW WORKING GROUPS

Mandated by the SPAW Conference of the Parties 12, SPAW working groups made up of experts appointed by the Parties and observers have been meeting since February to carry out mandatory or specific tasks. During this biennium 2024-2025, the SPAW RAC is chairing all the Working Groups.

The outcomes of these working groups may be reviews or comments on documents submitted to the STAC, or information or recommendations on specific issues or questions that will enable the Contracting Parties to make informed decisions.



parrotfish@picasa2.7

The **“Species” working group** is reviewing, evaluating, and providing recommendations on proposals from Contracting Parties to add new species to the SPAW Protocol Annexes or change the listing status of species currently on the Annexes.

The experts of the Species working group is also carrying out tasks related to the conservation of Sawfishes, parrotfishes, whale shark, Giant Manta Ray and Hammerhead sharks.

The **“Protected area” working group** is reviewing and providing the basis for recommendations on proposals from Contracting Parties to add new Protected Areas to the SPAW Protocol annexes. The group is also carrying out the review of the document “Guidelines and Criteria for the Evaluation of Protected Areas to be Listed Under the SPAW Protocol”. A very exCiting join task for the Protected Areas and species Working Group and in link with WECAFC in order to make recommendations to improve MPA management and protection for Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*).

The **“exemption” working group** is reviewing the exemptions reports submitted by Contracting Parties.

The **“Sargassum” working group** and LBS representatives survey Contracting Parties on their needs related to managing sargassum influx and updating and prioritizing the action plan previously proposed to the Contracting Parties.



Whale shark @JuliaBos

Read more about the SPAW working groups on our website : car-spaw.org

2 - FEEDBACK OF SIDS 4 MEETING



Nations
Unies



4th International Conference on SIDS
27-30 MAY 2024 - ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE CONFERENCE WAS TO ASSESS THE CAPACITY OF SIDS TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE 2030 AGENDA AND ITS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

SPAW-RAC took part in the 4th international conference on Small Developing States (SIDS) held in Antigua and Barbuda Antigua and Barbuda from May 27 to 30, 2024.



The SPAW-RAC took part in 2 events to present the Cartagena Convention, the SPAW protocol and the work carried out/underway:

Sargassum: Turning the Golden Tide – Crisis or Opportunity for Caribbean SIDS led by the Secretariat in collaboration with Governments of France and Dominican Republic. Sargassum is an important ecosystem for many endemic species, and we're working to gather scientific understanding of the impact of groundings on biodiversity. It's important to keep in mind the precautionary principle when it comes to management actions, to avoid damaging other ecosystems (beach, water column, seagrass beds) and to favor selective management.

Forging partnerships for the future: Achieving the GBF 30x30 target and securing a nature-positive future for the Caribbean led by the CBF, the Nature Conservancy, Governments of Grenada and Aruba, UN Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity, Blue Nature Alliance, St Lucia National Conservation Fund, Conservation International, Environmental Awareness Group.

Achieving the GBF 30x30 is more than just meeting a numerical target but it is about effectiveness of these areas once established which is where all of the capacity building work over the years has been so important.

[More info](#)

3 - CAMAC PROJECT PHASE 1 DELIVERABLES



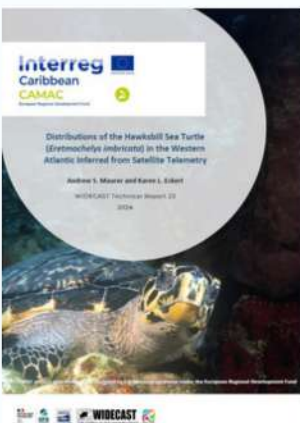
The objective of the CAMAC project is to provide the governing bodies and environmental stakeholders of the Wider Caribbean Region with tools and recommendations aimed at strengthening the conservation of marine megafauna and the sustainability of human activities which depend upon them. The project was build in 2 phases. Funding for phase 1 of the CAMAC project came to an end in December 2023, discover the wonderful work done during this first phase:



AN OVERVIEW OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON INTERACTIONS BETWEEN FISHERIES AND MARINE MEGAFUNA

in the CAMAC area has been completed. It is available on the Agoa Sanctuary website in the form of a report.

[Overview of available information on interactions between fisheries and marine megafauna in the CAMAC area](#)



A STUDY OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE HAWKSBILLTURTLE IN THE WIDER CARIBBEANREGION

made by WIDECAS.T.

[Distributions of the Hawksbill SeaTurtle \(*Eretmochelys imbricata*\) in the Western Atlantic Inferred from Satellite Telemetry](#)

A TOOLKIT FOR MARINE MAMMAL STRANDING RESPONSE

is available online on the Agoa Sanctuary website. It consists of a field guide with 9 field sheets in pdf format, and 5 training videos, includinga necropsy video. Here are the links to the different versions in 3 languages: [English, Spanish or French](#) *The link to the necropsy video will be provided on request to the contact addresses provided in the links. The same applies to the PowerPoint format of the videos, and to the Word format of the guide and the field forms.*



CAMAC REPORT ON CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS ON MARINE MAMMAL STRANDING RESPONSE

Eight training courses were organized in different territories of the CAMAC area, based on the toolkit.

[CAMAC - report on capacity-building workshops on marine mammal stranding response](#)

3 - CAMAC PROJECT PHASE 1 DELIVERABLES

KNOWLEDGE ENHANCEMENT FOR MARINE MAMMALS AND SEABIRDS REPORT

In order to enhancing knowledge on marine mammals and seabirds, the CAMAC partners produced an action plan that includes a protocol and the definition of priority areas. The report can be consulted it via the link below:

[Knowledge enhancement for marine mammals and seabirds](#)



CAMACATA

A catalogue of educational tools on marine megafauna in the Caribbean has been produced. *It is published only in English for the moment, but we plan to translate it into French and Spanish in phase 2.*

[CAMACATA: the thematic catalogue of educational tools in the Caribbean](#)



CAMAC ELASMOBRANCH BIBLIOGRAPHIC REVIEW

A bibliographical review of the state of knowledge on elasmobranchs in the CAMAC area is available here:

[CAMAC Elasmobranch bibliographic review](#)



CAMAC ELASMOBRANCH PRIORITY ACTIONS

This reviewed to the development of an action plan, the priorities of which will be implemented during phase 2. The document is available here:

[CAMAC elasmobranch priority actions](#)

CAMAC phase 2 will be devoted to implementing the work plan developed during phase 1, and to developing and disseminating awareness- raising and decision-making tools based on the resultsof the project, in collaboration with the partnersidentified during phase 1. If the co- financing of phase 2 is approved, CAMAC phase II could start atthe end of 2024 - beginning of 2025.



4 - CALL FOR DATA STATUS OF CORAL REEFS IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION

G C R M N C A R I B B E A N

The Caribbean coral reefs are experiencing the Global Bleaching event that is happening in every ocean and seas: this month saw AGRRA's webinar on bleaching in the region and ICRI's webinar on the global state of bleaching with an update from all regions.

IN A NUTSHELL. A SUMMARY OF THE MESSAGE FROM DEREK MANZELLO - NOAA FEDERAL CORAL REEF WATCH COORDINATOR:

"The entirety of the wider Caribbean is currently much hotter than average. Unfortunately, current sea surface temperatures (SST) across the entire region are as hot, or in many cases, hotter than they were last year at this time. We are already seeing bleaching-level heat stress in the southern Caribbean (Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua), which is a full month earlier than what happened last year. NOAA has just predicted that this will be a very active year for tropical storm and hurricane development. In summary, we are trending in the wrong direction. I wanted you all to be aware of this so that you can put plans in place for another potentially bad bleaching year for the Caribbean."



Call for Data

GCRMN-Caribbean

Regional Report Status of
Caribbean Coral Reefs
2025

*Join the
momentum!*



Photo credits: Romelo Williams - Turks and Caicos Islands - Unsplash

Since 2014, the Global Coral Reef Monitoring network (GCRMN) node for Caribbean has been collecting data on reef conditions. This year is crucial because we are working on **the new Regional Report on the State of coral reefs in the Caribbean** to be published in 2025. We are looking for all available data sets in the wider Caribbean region such as Hard coral cover, Algae cover, reef fishes, SCTLD disease, Diadema abundance, etc. We are looking for all available data sets in the wider Caribbean region! Contact us to join the GCRMN-Caribbean network and contribute to this crucial regional assessment.

Join the momentum!



5 - THE CARIBBEAN WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT NETWORK (CAR-WEN)

The Caribbean Wildlife Enforcement Network (CAR-WEN) initiative is a collaborative effort to fortify the region's defenses against wildlife crime. The CAR-WEN focuses on enhancing wildlife management in the Caribbean by fostering cooperation between agencies responsible for enforcing wildlife laws, standardizing regional approaches, and sharing knowledge and information to improve responsiveness.


The initiative also aims to provide training and resources to those involved in wildlife protection, facilitate intelligence exchange to combat wildlife crimes and develop joint initiatives to address and prevent wildlife crime across multiple jurisdictions.

CARIBBEAN WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

CAR - WEN

Our Wildlife, Our Responsibility, Our Legacy

THE CAR-WEN
ASPIRES TO BE A
BEACON OF ETHICAL
AND SUSTAINABLE
WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT
EFFORTS IN THE
WIDER CARIBBEAN
REGION BY POOLING
RESOURCES AND
COORDINATING
ENFORCEMENT
ACTIONS.




The CAR-WEN initiative has made significant progress to full establishment and is actively supported by a dedicated Working Group with focal points from 16 of the 30-plus Caribbean countries/territories. Funding has been secured to establish a formal CAR-WEN from the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI), with additional support from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), and a range of other partners. Notably, pilot projects are currently underway to inspire support and meet immediate needs. The Working Group is now finalizing an incorporating Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with international guidance and expects this MOU to be available for signing in 2025, if not sooner.

[More info](#)

6 - UPCOMING EVENTS

18-22 July 2024 // SANTO DOMINGO // Birds Caribbean 24th international conference

MO/AN	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SARURDAY
JULY 2024	30	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Fête nationale				Birds Caribbean	Birds Caribbean	Birds Caribbean
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Birds Caribbean	Birds Caribbean	Journée mondiale des dauphins			Journée intern. Ecosysteme	



23-27 September 2024 // PERU // IWC (International Whaling commission) meeting 69

MO/AN	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SARURDAY
SEPT 2024	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		IWC	IWC	IWC	IWC	IWC	Journée mondiale de la mer

