

# SPAW NEWSLETTER

*Protocol and Programme*

N° 26

November 2020

# SUMMARY



Meeting and workshops have gone virtual #COVID19

## News

- SPAW-RAC Call for proposals in 2020 ..... 3
- SPAW STAC Preparations ..... 4
- In memory of Paul Hoetjes ..... 5

## Projects

- Marine mammals ..... 5
- Carib'Coast project ..... 6
- ACP-MEA III ..... 9
- CLME+ - Cartagena Convention and The Ocean Foundation ..... 9

## Briefs

- Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease ..... 10
- Herbivorous Fish Partnership with AIDA ..... 10
- SPAW RAC Team ..... 11

## Commonly used acronyms

<b>CaMPAM</b>	Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network and Forum
<b>CARI'MAM</b>	Caribbean Marine Mammals Preservation Network
<b>CEP</b>	Caribbean Environment Programme
<b>CRC</b>	Coral Restoration Consortium
<b>DCNA</b>	Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
<b>GCFI</b>	Gulf Caribbean Fisheries Institute
<b>GCRMN</b>	Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>MPAs</b>	Marine Protected Areas
<b>MMAP</b>	Marine Mammals Action Plan
<b>PAs</b>	Protected Areas
<b>SPAW</b>	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol of the Cartagena Convention
<b>SPAW-RAC</b>	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife - Regional Activity Centre
<b>UN Environment-CEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme - Caribbean Environment Programme

## Contacts

UN Environment-CEP  
14-20 Port Royal Street  
Kingston, JAMAICA  
Tel.: +876 922-9267-9 Fax: +876 922-9292  
Email: [rcu@cep.unep.org](mailto:rcu@cep.unep.org)  
[www.cep.unep.org](http://www.cep.unep.org)

CAR-SPAW  
DEAL de Guadeloupe  
Route de St Phy  
97102 Basse-Terre - GUADELOUPE (FWI)  
Tel. : +590 590 99 43 73  
Email: [carspaw@developpement-durable.gouv.fr](mailto:carspaw@developpement-durable.gouv.fr)  
[www.car-spaw-rac.org](http://www.car-spaw-rac.org)



## SPAW-RAC *Call for proposals* in 2020

COVID-19 has had a negative impact on many projects resulting in start-up delays, withdrawal of funding, and weakened institutional support (especially non-governmental organizations [NGOs]).

In light of this, and in order to strengthen stakeholder capacity via funding for projects focused on regional biodiversity, in June 2020 the

SPAW-RAC launched on its funds a call for proposals for short-term grants (€5,000 - 10,000 for between 4 months to 1 year).

Countries that have ratified/signatories to the SPAW-Protocol were prioritized, particularly those with challenges to access traditional funding sources .../...

### Call for proposals - Result of short-term Small Grants 2020

#	Beneficiaries	Projects	Countries/territories
1	Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Anguilla	An investigation of the state of Anguilla's parrotfish populations, for improved management of the species	Anguilla
2	Environmental Conservation Organization – ECOMAR	Belize Turtle Nesting Beach Monitoring Program	Belize
3	BirdsCaribbean	Conservation of West Indian Whistling-Ducks ( <i>Dendrocygna arborea</i> ) in Cuba through a status assessment	Cuba
4	Stichting Internos – Mangrove Maniacs	Regional Mangrove Restoration Workshop	Bonaire (with attendees from various countries)
5	Fragments of Hope	Expanding Reef Replenishment Efforts with the Critically Endangered Caribbean Acroporid Corals to northern Belize	Belize
6	Fundación Internacional para la Naturaleza y la Sustentabilidad - FINS	How the Neotropical otters are doing in the Mesoamerican Caribbean?	Mexico and Belize
7	Roatan Marine Park - Asociación Amigos del Parque Marino de Roatán	Promoting Responsible Seafood Choices by Enhancing Ecological and Social Responsibility Management of Lobsters within Roatan Bay Islands	Honduras
8	BirdsCaribbean	Teaching youth to know and appreciate Caribbean Birds - Production of Endemic Birds of the West Indies Colouring Book in Spanish and French	Spanish and french speaking countries and territories of the Caribbean
9	Environmental Awareness Group - EAG	Assessment of Newly Discovered <i>Leptocereus</i> Population on Antigua to Determine Taxonomic and Conservation Status	Antigua-and-Barbuda
10	Nature 2 / Park work	Using management effectiveness to strengthen species conservation in the Caribbean	Dutch caribbean
11	Ocean Spirits Inc.	Mobilizing citizen scientists for biodiversity monitoring and threat mitigation at remote Grenadine Islands	Grenada and Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines
12	Kap Natirel	Rékin-ADNe : toward a standardized monitoring chondrichthyans populations in the Caribbean by using environmental DNA	French west indies
13	Fundación Providence and Parques nacionales de Colombia	Coral restoration in the Parque Nacional Natural Old Providence McBean Lagoon Caribe colombiano	Colombia
14	Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola	Conservation and restoration of Bicknell's Thrush habitat in eastern Bahoruco	Dominican republic
15	Des requins et des hommes	TIDENT, First evaluation of sawfish status and management in French Guiana and French Antilles	French Guiana and French west indies

Proposals with a focus on species annexed under the SPAW Protocol especially plants, birds, fish (including elasmobranchs), and sea turtles were also given priority – but this did not preclude other proposals.

A number of qualifying factors were taken into account, such as the proposal's innovativeness, how well it addressed the primary goals of the Protocol, the capacity of the lead organization and its partners, and the implementation schedule.

**Of the 37 proposals received, 15 have been**

**selected for funding ( approximately €100,000).**

The SPAW-RAC is currently exploring alternate assistance mechanisms for those proposals which were not selected in this round. And importantly to upscale the call by looking for funders to launch similar calls in 2021!

**(Stay Tuned)**

## **Preparations underway for the Ninth Meeting of SPAW's Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (SPAW STAC9), 17 - 19 March 2021**

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and for the first time in its history, [the Cartagena Convention Secretariat](#) will be hosting its biennial intergovernmental meetings virtually (simultaneous translation in French and Spanish) in March and June 2021 respectively #savethedate.

The SPAW STAC 9 is scheduled to take place 17-19 March 2021 and will see discussions on the work accomplished for the 2019-2020 biennium and plans for 2021-2022. This will be followed by the Protocol's 10th Conference of the Parties (SPAW COP10) in June 2021 (date to be decided).

Preparatory sessions dedicated to the works conducted through the newly reendorsed working groups requested during the last STAC but also other significant subjects will be organized by the SPAW-RAC with likely the same organisation we

developed for the cari'mam workshop (see below). Every week in February/ early March, a special session of 2 hours will be held with focal points and willing observers of the protocol on specific subjects allowing to start preparing the STAC discussion : coral reefs, marine mammals, a transversal session about developing regional cooperation for the species and encouraging exemptions, new proposals...

This will also allow to start preparing for the recommendations of the STAC including the review of the proposals for new additions to the SPAW listings. The organisation is still open and will be finalised within the working groups and the Secretariat.

**Keep checking the Secretariat's and SPAW-RAC's webpage and [social media](#) for updates and documents.**

# In memoriam *Paul Hoetjes*



Friday November 13th Paul Hoetjes passed away. With great appreciation we think back to Paul's commitment to nature policy and conservation in the Caribbean Netherlands.

Paul has dedicated his entire working life to the management, conservation and development of nature in the Caribbean. He started working at the government of the Netherlands Antilles. When the Netherlands Antilles was dissolved in 2010, he came to work for the Netherlands in the Caribbean Netherlands.

He not only limited himself to the three islands Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, but also represented the Netherlands in many international treaties, research projects and

partnerships. His broad knowledge and network spans the entire Caribbean region and the Pacific. It was a privilege to work with Paul not only because of his knowledge and network but also as a person. When you went on a mission with him, everyone, from governor to citizen, approached him with kindness and respect.

For Paul, his commitment to nature was not just his job, but his genuine passion. He has served as an inspiration to many over the years, as an expert to everyone interested in the nature of the Caribbean, and as a driving force behind many processes and projects.

In particular, his heart went out to the Saba Bank, the pearl of coral in the Caribbean. Thanks to Paul's involvement, it is now a national park. In that area Paul also has his dive site: Paul's Cathedral. Paul's name and spirit will always be associated with us through, among countless other things, the Saba Bank and the Yarari Sanctuary.

*From Dutch Caribbean Islands.*

*Paul Hoetjes' tireless engagement and dedication to the implementation of the SPAW Protocol for over two decades, has resulted many resolutions about species and ecosystems of the WCR. He was a champion for biodiversity in the Wider Caribbean Region but also one of the warmest, most skillful person to work with. He is dearly missed. Recently retired, he was always a great guide for SPAW and SPAW-RAC, still being committed to the end with the SPAW activities and networks: the STAC working groups, GCRMN-Caribbean, Cari'MAM, WIDECAS... This year he was involved in most of the activities presented below. He also contributed with other experts to new species proposals with a particular attention to parrotfish, some sharks and rays but also to improve regional collaboration for species already protected (turtles and marine mammals). We all strive to keep his work alive, and hope for good resolutions for the future. We dearly miss him.*

# Marine mammals

## Technical Review of the SPAW Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP)

The [MMAP](#) which was drafted in 2008, has for some time been in need of an update to appropriately guide Contracting Parties of the SPAW Protocol concerning the conservation of marine mammals. To facilitate this update, 2 consultants were hired by the SPAW-RAC at the end of 2019 to conduct a scientific and technical revision of this important document. The first draft which was presented during the last meeting of the marine mammal working group (October, 2020), received positive feedback from the members. The final draft is currently under review by the working group to enable presentation and completion at the [upcoming SPAW STAC9](#).



Spinner dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*) © Claire Pusineri.

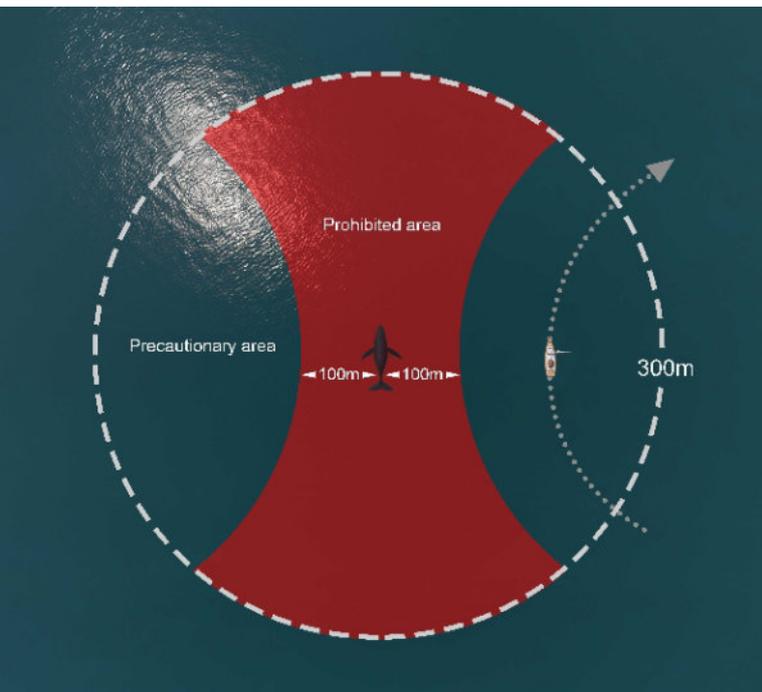
## Proposal to support sustainable whale-watching in the WCR

In accordance with past SPAW COP decisions and requests by regional stakeholders, the SPAW-RAC through the CARI'MAM project is working to develop and promote tools for the development of a sustainable marine mammal/whale-watching industry.

There is a proposal to encourage the use of a label promoting sustainable commercial marine mammal observation in the WCR which will be developed with input from SPAW experts. Additional proposed measures include capacity building, public education and awareness, along with outreach activities.

The international legal framework for supervision of the label is currently being assessed through an analysis of existing regulations and measures which can be implemented in the region. Various scenarios will be identified and included in the final document for submission to the STAC.

[See more on the SPAW-RAC's website.](#)



Approach limits of marine mammals - © Conruyt Pascal.

• **4th CARI’MAM Workshop (virtual)**

The 4th CARIMAM meeting was organized from **29 October to 26 November 2020** under the theme “month of CARIMAM” with a new topic of focus for each week. Presentations from CARI’MAM partners were posted online at the beginning of the week followed by a 2 hour online discussion at the end of each week.

**CARI’MAM weekly topics**

- week 1 : knowledge acquisition and scientific monitoring,
- week 2 : threats, protection and awareness raising,
- week 3 : marine mammals watching
- week 4 : Marine protected area and management plan and articulation between local and Caribbean scale ,
- week 5 : outlook and expectation for the follow ups of a Caribbean marine mammal network.

This month of CARI'MAM was an intense moment of sharing and dialogue. The numerous contributions have undoubtedly contributed to the success of this session which gathered around 40 participants from 9 different countries of the wider Caribbean region.

## *Carib’Coast project*

• The 3rd Steering Committee meeting which was originally scheduled to take place in Puerto-Rico, was held virtually in June 2020. The meeting provided an opportunity to review progress by partners and address issues .

The 4th Steering Committee meeting took place November 11/27 to continue dialogue with project partners.

• MSc student Julia Bos who joined the team for a 6 month (March-August 2020) internship, has helped with the production of various communication material (posters and videos)

along with marine ecosystems connectivity tools.

- The videos will reflect the coral reefs, seagrass meadows, and mangroves of the Caribbean in a variety of ways to reflect their important role in the provision of ecosystem services (e.g. coastal protection, erosion mitigation, climate regulation, etc.), the threats they face, and steps to protect and restore these habitats.

- The posters will reflect similar information through colourful and engaging illustrations (*examples below*).../...



Marine ecosystems posters - © Bos Julia.

- Pilots sites have been implemented in Guadeloupe by the National Forest Office – regeneration enclosures have been placed at 2

sites to enable regrowth of upper beach vegetation and mitigate persistent erosion by retaining sand thanks to their strong root system.



*Beach vegetation regrowth.*

**Good news!**

[The website for the Carib'Coast project](#) is now up and running – check out all project activities and progress

# Protected Areas and Conservation

- [Capacity building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements \(MEA\) in African, Caribbean and Pacific \(ACP\) Countries – ACP-MEAs Phase III \(ACP-MEA III\)](#)

This 4 year (2020-2024) EU funded project (USD1,961,264) executed by the Cartagena Convention Secretariat will address the challenges associated with the sound management of chemicals and waste, marine pollution, coastal erosion/protection and steps to curb loss of biodiversity. Phase III of the project began in Spring 2020 and as with previous phases, will promote the sharing of experiences and lessons learned, as well as cross-functional integration with other partners. Specific Secretariat activities will include:

- Reinforcement of Regional Seas Conventions Governance Frameworks and associated protocols
- Development of regionally representative networks of MPAs covering interconnected marine habitats and ecosystems for restoring and sustaining the health of the oceans
- Reduction of the influx of waste (plastics and other forms of human/industrial liquid and solid waste) entering the marine environment of the 4 regions .../...

Read the full article: <https://car-spaw-rac.org/?Protected-Areas-and-Conservation>

**Creating A Marine Protected Area Network in the Wider Caribbean**  
*Strengthening Connections and Collaboration to Conserve the Caribbean Ecosystem*

**Marine Protected Areas**  
*Biodiversity Lifeboats for the Caribbean*

The ecosystem of the Caribbean has evolved over millions of years of geological and biological processes that have shaped the islands and marine environments of the region. These processes have created diverse and complex habitats that have fueled the Caribbean's spectacular biodiversity. The protected areas established to sustain this biodiversity, and the vibrant economies it supports, can be considered the lifeboats for the region's ecosystem, and for the societies that depend on it.

**A Protocol for Protection**

The importance of protected areas in focusing conservation and ecosystem protection efforts in special places in the Caribbean is highlighted by the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol. The SPAW Protocol is the biodiversity component under the Cartagena Convention, an agreement among nations for the protection and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity in the Wider Caribbean.

The SPAW listed protected areas are special places that incorporate diverse biological and habitat components of the large Caribbean ecosystem. The diverse settings, biological resources and conservation approaches at each of these sites provide an interconnected framework on which to build stronger protections for the Caribbean's environment and its resources.

With funding from the European Commission and in partnership with the European Union, the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is developing a plan to facilitate cooperation between the SPAW-listed protected areas and create a functional network of marine protected areas (MPA) in the Caribbean. Developing a regionally representative network of marine protected areas is a priority in the Multilateral Environmental Agreements in African, Caribbean, and Pacific Countries Phase III project (ACP-MEA III) and UNEP has been entrusted to implement the ACP-MEA III actions.

Marine Protected Areas are established to protect endangered species, their habitats and biotopes, and to ensure populations of economically important biological resources.

- [Collaboration under the United Nations Development Programme/Global Environment Facility \(UNDP/GEF\) Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem \(CLME+\) Project – Cartagena Convention and The Ocean Foundation](#)

The Secretariat through its SPAW and [pollution \(AMEP/LBS\) Sub-programmes](#) in collaboration with [The Ocean Foundation \(TOF\)](#), is developing the **“CLME+ baseline and (pre) feasibility assessment and investment plan for large-scale action on habitat protection and pollution prevention”** under the [UNDP GEF CLME+ Project](#). This activity aims to join efforts on international agendas, such as the [Decade of Restoration \(2021-2030\)](#) which calls for the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems to combat the climate crisis and improve food security, water supply, and biodiversity; [the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), specially SDGs 6, 13, 14, 15; [the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020](#); and [the Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#).

As one of the most biologically rich marine environments in the Atlantic, the Wider Caribbean Region is highly dependent on its marine and coastal resources. The growing impacts of unsustainable coastal development, climate change, overfishing, and marine pollution threaten the viability of the region's marine and coastal ecosystems.../...

Read the full article: <https://car-spaw-rac.org/?Collaboration-under-the-United-Nations-Development-Programme-Global-Environment-for-more-information>

OUR CHANNELS ▾ DEBATE PARTNER Q

SOLUTIONS PROJECTS NEWSSTREAM ABOUT

**THE OCEAN FOUNDATION**

**What do you want to do for the ocean?**

As the only community foundation for the ocean, we're dedicated to reversing the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world.

Support the ocean cause you love

# Coral Reefs

## • **Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD)**

SPAW-RAC has been very involved in this issue in 2020. We attended two meetings for the FWI, one for Guadeloupe and St-Martin and the second for Martinique. We joined the SCTLD Caribbean Cooperation Team in September 2020 and presented the FWI situation. Our role is make the

## • **Herbivorous Fish - Aida**

[The Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense \(AIDA\)](#) and the SPAW Protocol have developed a collaborative alliance to regulate herbivores fish species associated with vulnerable ecosystems such as coral reefs. Through AIDA's participation as an active observer at the STAC and as part of the effort to cultivate this partnership, they provided input to the [RSAP](#) concerning the protection of spawning aggregations and banning the use of spearguns and traps.

In collaboration with SPAW focal points, the SPAW-RAC, and the Cartagena Convention, AIDA developed a [factsheet](#) providing key recommendations for the protection of

link between the FWI and the regional groups to broadcast information in both ways. In accordance to the SCTLD-CCT work, action plans have been built for each french territory depending on the disease stage they face. Contacts with Dominica have also been made.

herbivorous fish species and hosted [virtual seminars](#) to increase [awareness](#) in the WCR.

This partnership has also resulted in joint education and outreach activities, as well as discussions on how to improve regulations of parrotfish in the [Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission \(WECAFC\)](#).

Future initiatives include the development of a project to nominate 16 Caribbean species of parrotfish for inclusion under Annexes II and III of the SPAW Protocol (this will be an initiative of the STAC species working group).



»» PROTOCOLO SPAW (Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife)

**Marco para regular la protección de los peces herbívoros y de los arrecifes coralinos del Gran Caribe**

Los peces herbívoros realizan procesos ecológicos fundamentales para los arrecifes coralinos, el ecosistema marino en mayor riesgo ante la crisis climática global.

A nivel mundial, existe una degradación del 30% de los arrecifes coralinos y en caso de que la temperatura global ascienda 1.5 °C se proyecta la pérdida de hasta un 90% de estos ecosistemas<sup>1</sup>.

En el Caribe, su degradación es del 50%<sup>2</sup> y en el Sistema Arrecifal Mesoamericano, de más del 90%<sup>3</sup>. El deterioro se asocia a los impactos antropogénicos combinados de origen global y local, como la acidificación

de los océanos, el blanqueamiento, la destrucción de hábitats costeros, el sargazo, la contaminación y el mal manejo pesquero<sup>4,5</sup>.

Los peces herbívoros son importantes para los corales porque controlan la abundancia de macroalgas e incrementan los nutrientes que favorecen el crecimiento de las comunidades coralinas y alimentan a otros peces de arrecifes<sup>6</sup>. Además, sus llamativos colores los convierten en especies atractivas para actividades turísticas como el buceo y el esnorquel<sup>7</sup>.

Desafortunadamente, los servicios ambientales que la herbivoría marina brinda a los arrecifes coralinos no

han sido regulados adecuadamente. No existen políticas pesqueras y de conservación adecuadas para mantener ecológicamente funcionales a las poblaciones de peces loro y erizos diadema.

Por estas razones, se recomienda normal efectivamente el manejo de este grupo de peces para evitar una mayor degradación de hábitats en riesgo. También se debe mejorar el ordenamiento pesquero<sup>8</sup> y el ecológico, así como gestionar efectivamente la vida silvestre, para lograr la conservación los peces herbívoros y con ello abonar en restablecer la salud de los arrecifes coralinos<sup>9</sup>.

# *New additions to the SPAW-RAC Team*

## **Marine DIDIER**

*Graduated in international relations and political sciences from Sciences Po Strasbourg, my main interest has always been geopolitics, especially in the Mediterranean region, which led me to conduct research in Lebanon on the trash crisis that struck Beirut in 2016. Since then, I have decided to dedicate my career path to the protection of the environment and focused my various experiences on this one goal. Therefore, I am delighted to join the Carib-coast project that allows me to grow through both my passions, international relations and the environment, and to discover the fascinating Caribbean region.*



## **Camille CAUMETTE**

*Originally from Guadeloupe, I left the island in 2013 to study in Canada. I would go on to graduate from UQAM with a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and Law, and later from McGill University with a Master of Science in Integrated Water Resources Management.*

*In my studies I focused on several topics of interest that I am particularly passionate about, including access to water by First Nations Peoples, traditional methods of water management, and water resources challenges faced by the insular territories of the Caribbean.*

*Eternally captivated by the ocean and finally returned to Guadeloupe, I am thrilled to take part in the SPAW-RAC's work, and to get involved in this exceptional region of the Caribbean.*



## **Elisabeth FRIES**

*I am very pleased to join the SPAW-RAC team and work for the preservation of specially protected areas and wildlife in the Caribbean Region.*

*During this year, I will help prepare the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee in collaboration with the experts from the signatory countries of the SPAW Protocol.*

*I graduated from Montpellier SupAgro after having specialized in political sciences and ecology in AgroParisTech. Then, I have worked for a year in Mexico with fish farmers as an adviser to help them comply with biodiversity protection Laws. Afterwards, I followed a Master's course at University College London and expanded my knowledge of international cooperation as regards sustainable resources management. Last year, I worked for an organism in Brazil that promotes sustainable use of coastal and Caatinga ecosystems. I look forward to putting my energy into the SPAW-RAC projects and I am excited to keep on working for biodiversity protection at an international scale.*



## **Claire PUSINERI**

*I am thrilled to join the SPAW-RAC. I have been working for almost 20 years on the study and conservation of large pelagic marine fauna and in particular marine mammals in the temperate and tropical Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean. I strongly believe regional networks are key tools to strengthen marine mammal conservation and I look forward to contribute to CARI'MAM project.*