



**OBSERVER'S REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE PROTOCOL CONCERNING SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS AND WILDLIFE IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN (SPAW) OF THE CARTAGENA CONVENTION
JUNE 2014**

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MARINE MAMMAL ACTIVITIES UNDER THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNEP'S CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME AND SECRETARIAT TO THE CARTAGENA CONVENTION AND ITS SPAW PROTOCOL (JUNE 2013-2014)

1) Recommendations from the 5th Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPAW), 22 October 2012, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

Having reviewed the "Report on the Implementation of Activities in Support of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (MMAP)" (UNEP (DEPI)/CAR WG.34/INF.6), the meeting recommended that:

"The Secretariat emphasizes the activities in support of the Marine Mammal Action Plan, including follow-up to the work and recommendations emanated from implementation of the LifeWeb Project; and

The Secretariat continues to collaborate and to identify synergies, to the extent possible with relevant partners and MEAs and strengthens collaboration with the International Whaling Commission (IWC) through the possible conclusion of an Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC)."

The UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme, based in Kingston, Jamaica, as Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention, will follow-up with the Secretariat of the IWC to explore the possibility of concluding such a Memorandum of Cooperation.

2) Decisions from the 7th Conference of Parties (COP6) on the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean (SPAW) under the Cartagena Convention, 23 October 2012

The Parties acknowledged the progress made with the implementation of the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP) and requested that the Secretariat, in collaboration with the SPAW-RAC, continue to fundraise and develop strategic partnerships for its further implementation, in particular the development of activities proposed as follow-up to the LifeWeb Project on marine corridors and marine mammal conservation for the Wider Caribbean, and the implementation of key priorities of the Manatee Regional Management Plan.

3) Update on activities co-sponsored by UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme and the SPAW Regional Activity Centre and jointly implemented as partners with the IWC:

At IWC 64 (2012, Panama), IWC member countries: Dominican Republic, France, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama and USA, along with UNEP-CEP/SPAW proposed three workshops to address human impacts to marine mammals in the Wider Caribbean, in accordance with the recommendations of the IWC Bycatch and Ship Strike Working Groups and CEP's Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife's (SPAW) Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region. Two training workshops, focusing on the forensic detection of human



impacts and the response to entangled large whales have been completed for Spanish and English/French speaking countries, as follows:

3.1 Joint IWC-SPAW Training Workshop to Address Lethal Human Impacts on Marine Mammals of the (Spanish-speaking) Wider Caribbean, La Paz, Mexico, 27-29 November 2012

Previously reported at IWC SC65a (agenda item, 4.13)

3.2 Joint IWC-SPAW Training Workshop to Address Lethal Human Impacts on Marine Mammals of the (French and English-speaking) Wider Caribbean, St. Martin, 12-14 November 2013.

The three-day event was the second, joint IWC-UNEP-SPAW training hosted by the SPAW Regional Activity Centre and supported by a number of government and non-government agencies. Attendees included members of the Regional marine parks, and experts nominated by their country's IWC Commissioner and SPAW Government Focal Points.

The workshop began with a one day training in the forensic determination of human causes of death (e.g. entanglement and ship strike) for stranded carcasses, conducted by Dr. Michael Moore. This was followed by two days of entanglement response training using a now established format starting in the classroom and on land. The classroom sessions covered local and global context, legal issues, tools, techniques and safety protocols. Led by David Mattila of IWC/NOAA and Doug Sandilands of the Center for Coastal Studies (Provincetown, USA), the group also discussed the ultimate goal of preventing entanglements occurring in the first place.

In conclusion, the two above workshops had the desired effect of assisting the attending countries to develop improved (and safer) human impact capabilities and entanglement response. In particular, Mexico used the opportunity to form, train, and equip a national network RABEN (Red de Atención a Ballenas Enmalladas). In addition, these trainings generated other requests for country-specific training, including in Panama, which was arranged and supported by the Government of Panama and successfully completed in September 2013).

The IWC-SPAW training team were able to develop a tool kit specifically designed to support countries in further applying the knowledge acquired during the training workshops and they will be augmented with other necessary equipment and placed strategically in the region.

3.3 Joint IWC and SPAW/UNEP Workshop to Address Collisions between Marine Mammals and Ships with a focus on the Wider Caribbean. Gamboa, Panama, 18-20 June 2014.

The ship strike workshop was proposed to advance work on this topic within the Wider Caribbean along with similar work of the IWC, UNEP-SPAW, and the parties of the Sister Sanctuary Agreement. The proposing nations recognized there is likely much overlap and synergy between these interests.

The Government of Panama has graciously offered to host the workshop in Panama, and the Governments of the USA and the Netherlands, and UNEP-SPAW have made voluntary contributions to assist with its support.

The objectives of meeting are: 1) review current, relevant ship strike mitigation measures with experts from around the world, 2) identify data gaps and information needs in the region, 3) discuss management initiatives which are most likely to be effective in the region, and beyond, and 4) recommend concrete actions for the IWC, UNEP-SPAW and member countries.



4) Implementation of the Spain-UNEP LifeWeb project "Broad-scale Marine Spatial Planning of Mammal Corridors and Protected Areas in Wider Caribbean and Southeast & Northeast Pacific"

This four year project was designed to assist countries in development and application Marine Spatial Planning as a cross-sectoral ecosystem approach to management of human threats to marine mammals. The inter-regional initiative was launched by UNEP in June 2010 through financial support from the Government of Spain under the UNEP-Spain Partnership for the LifeWeb Initiative.

As a result, regional maps and factsheets have been produced for the following issues:

- Distribution of the 25 marine mammals species that occur regularly in the WCR (24 cetaceans and the West Indies manatee);
- Species richness;
- Main threats and human impacts faced by marine mammals: pollutions, interactions with fisheries, maritime traffic, etc.;
- Existing policies, marine protected areas and governance for the conservation of marine mammals.

All the outputs are available as PDFs on the SPAW-RAC's website: <http://www.car-spaw-rac.org/?-Maps-and-reports->.

As a result of a Inter-regional Workshop held in Panama, 2012, two sub-regional areas have been selected for the future scenario work in the WCR, due to their importance as habitats for marine mammals and to existing work and on-going cooperation dynamics on marine mammals: the first sub-region proposed ranges from the Dominican Republic down to Trinidad and Tobago through the Lesser Antilles.

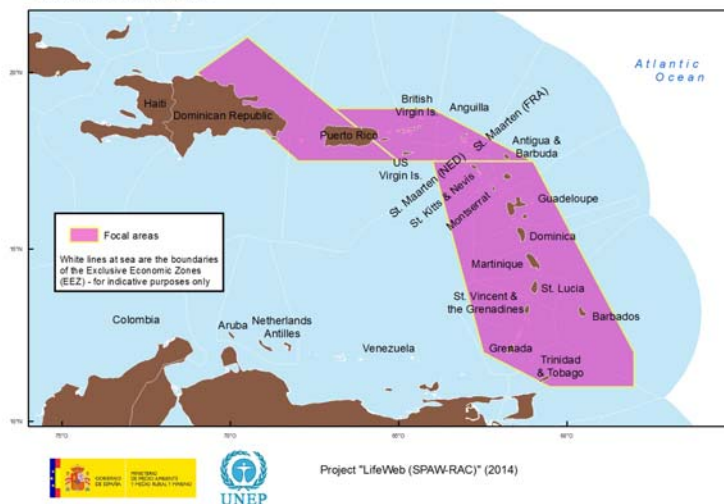
The second sub-region encompasses the continental coast of Latin America from Venezuela to the border between Brazil and French Guiana, together with the Dutch Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao being included in the area.

4.1. Outlining scenarios and recommendations for transboundary management and future work needed to manage marine mammal corridors and their critical habitats in the Wider Caribbean.

Identification of the spatial distribution of conflicts between marine mammal and human activities using the data compiled and produced the LifeWeb project pertaining to the priority area selected to that purpose from the Dominican Republic down to Grenada and Barbados, has indicated three focal areas located as follows: i) northeast of the Dominican Republic, ii) around the Virgin Islands and iii) around the Lesser Antilles south of St. Kitts and Nevis (See Fig. 1). Area limits were determined by data availability on marine mammals distribution.



Three focal areas



The analysis of data sets, pertaining to: pollution, fisheries, protected areas and maritime traffic has been completed. The analysis focused on the existing overlap among marine mammal species distribution maps and key human uses, with priority species identified as: the humpback whale, the sperm whale, the short-finned pilot whale and the Antillean manatee. The goal has been to identify particular areas of conflict among uses and these marine mammal species' distribution.

A meeting on “ Scenarios for Transboundary Marine Mammal Management in the Wider Caribbean” was recently held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, 23-24 April 2014. The meeting was dedicated to reviewing and discussing the proposed scenarios for the above three focal areas, possible mitigation measures to marine mammal threats and identifying next steps in the process of applying marine spatial planning for transboundary management of marine mammals in the Wider Caribbean.

4.2. Workshop on Transboundary Management of Marine Mammals in Northern South America, Paramaribo, Suriname, 18-20 March 2013

An opportunity arose to foster further regional cooperation among countries of Northern South America (from the Amazon delta to Colombia, including Dutch Caribbean of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaco), as a function of this geographic area being identified as a priority for transboundary marine mammal management by the Inter-regional Workshop held in Panama (May 2012) under the LifeWeb Project.

This workshop was designed to provide local support and accelerate regional and national marine protected areas establishment efforts, as well as promote regional collaboration among countries of Northern South America (participants from Aruba, Colombia, Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, French Guiana, Suriname, Guyana and Brazil).

The workshop was also supported by the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas (AAMP), Green Heritage Fund Suriname (GFS) and WWF Guianas.



The aim was to formulate an action plan for the effective management of marine areas and marine mammals in Northern South America to support the protection of the marine biological diversity in the region. The Regional Action Plan will encompass the area from Maranhao state in Brazil to Colombia and include the Economic Exclusive Zones for Brazil (Maranhao, Para and Amapa states), French Guiana, Surinam, Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia (Caribbean region), Trinidad and Tobago and the ABC Dutch Caribbean islands (Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao). This area is in line with the relevant spatial scales of marine mammal populations living in the region, and with the geographical extent of current threats and pressures to which these species are exposed.

As a result of the Workshop, a Steering Committee from representatives of the region has been established with the SPAW-RAC office as a co-facilitator with the objective of promoting follow-up to the workshop and fostering the development of the Regional Action Plan for transboundary management of marine mammals.