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Region

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**REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR  
SPAW (SPAW RAC) IN GUADELOUPE FOR THE PERIOD 2006-2007**

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## **Report on the Activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW RAC) in Guadeloupe for the period 2006-2007**

### **Institutional Aspects**

In accordance with Decision N°8 of the Second Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP), 6 May 2002, an administrative arrangement was established in 2005 by the Government of France to facilitate the functioning of the SPAW/RAC, namely the « Association Plan Mer des Caraïbes » (APMC), the legal framework of the SPAW/RAC. During the biennium, the Minister of Sustainable Ecology and Development (MEEDDAT), Mrs. Nelly OLIN, met with the Chairperson of the APMC on 21 January 2007, at the Guadeloupe Regional Directorate for the Environment (DIREN), where the actions and missions of the Activity Centre were presented to her. Subsequent to this visit, the Governing Board met on 30 January 2007 and held its General Meeting on 2 March of the same year, in order for the SPAW/RAC to be operational and autonomous, in accordance with the Agreement signed on 7 June 2000 between France and UNEP.

From 2 to 5 July 2007, a delegation comprising the Chairperson, Mrs. Marlène MELISSE-MIROITE, the Vice-Chairperson, Mrs. Lise N'GUELA and the Director of the SPAW/RAC, Mr. Maurice Anselme, travelled to Jamaica for a meeting with the UNEP-CEP Coordinator and the SPAW Programme Officer, in Kingston, and with the French Ambassador in Jamaica.

### **Financial aspects**

Within the framework of implementation of the 2006 - 2007 approved Workplan of the SPAW Programme, the SPAW/RAC mainly benefited from funding from the MEEDDAT in the amount of 183,000.00€ (US\$ 286,000.00), 45,000.00€ (US\$ 29,000.00) from the Guadeloupe Regional Council for "Training for humid areas", and US\$ 100,000 from the UNEP-CEP for implementation of agreed activities (see below). It is to be noted that as a result of restructuring in the Ministry and implementation of new laws, the RAC received the funding from the Ministry relatively late in the year and in particular, the balance for 2006 at the beginning of 2007. In this context, a number of activities initiated in 2007 will only be completed during 2008, while others are only being initiated in 2008.

- The operating costs of the Regional Activity Centre, including staff, covered by the French Government, totals 280,000.00€(US\$ 437,500.00). In addition, there is the cost incurred by use of the premises of the Regional Environment Administration (DIREN) in Guadeloupe, as well as those linked to the services undertaken by this administration and its staff on behalf of the SPAW/RAC (computer maintenance, health insurance, training, secretariat, electricity, water, etc.). At present, the cost of these different services has not yet been calculated.

**Programmatic aspects:**

The following are the main programme activities implemented within the approved Workplan and Budget of SPAW:

- a) In accordance with Decisions Nos. 3, 4 and 8 of the SPAW/COP4, the SPAW/RAC led the electronic working group on the draft guidelines and criteria for the evaluation of protected areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol. The final draft is submitted to the STAC4 under reference (UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/3);
- b) In accordance with Decisions Nos. 6 and 8 of the SPAW/COP4, the Centre also led the electronic working group on the development of the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP) with a view to refine the document and identify priorities and realistic concrete actions that may be implemented in the region within a five year period. This document is being submitted to the STAC4 under reference UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/4. This work also included compilation of information relevant to marine mammals, as listed in the documents referenced UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.1 (Cost: 10,000€ in 2006 from UNEP-CEP and 15,000€ in 2007 from France).
- c) In accordance with Decision N°8 of COP3 and COP4, the SPAW/RAC, in partnership with the CAR/RCU and Island Resources Foundation (IRF), which represents a consortium of non-governmental organisations, was given the mandate to coordinate the consultation process. The IRF and the SPAW/RAC have prepared a preliminary draft of guidelines to prevent species from becoming endangered or threatened by extinction. Once the working groups on the protected areas guidelines and marine mammal action plan have completed their tasks, the IRF and the SPAW/RAC will continue their work on the preliminary draft and circulate it during 2008 through an electronic working group. This group will be set up in consultation with SPAW Parties. It is suggested to the STAC that the same procedure that was used for developing the MMAP be used in this instance. In order to facilitate and accelerate the work, the MMAP working group used a relatively restricted but representative group of experts from Parties and non-Parties (Cost: 10,000€ in 2006 and 6,500.00€ for 2007 (US\$ 10,156.00) from France).
- d) The SPAW/RAC collaborated with a number of partners, and participated in various meetings which contributed to formalising contacts with the Society for the Conservation and Studies of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB), US Fish and Wildlife Service and BirdLife International, resulting in partnerships in the following areas:
  - Publication of the French version of the educational manual “Wondrous West Indian Wetlands”. Three training workshops were carried out in partnership with the Region of Guadeloupe, Martinique Regional Nature Park, National Forest Office, SCSCB, OHMIC (Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre), Audubon Society of Haiti, US Fish and Wildlife Service, UNEP-CEP and McArthur Foundation. These training workshops were held in Guadeloupe, 13 to 14 November 2007, in which 15 participants from Haiti also participated; and in Martinique, 15 to 16 November 2007.

The third workshop was held in January 2008 in French Guyana (Cost: a total of 90,000.00€ (US\$ 140,625.00), including French funding of 15,000.00€, a grant from the Regional Council of Guadeloupe amounting to 45,000.00€ and 30,000.00€ from the other partners listed above);

- In collaboration with BirdLife International, support the development and publication of the book “Important Bird Areas of the Caribbean”, as noted in the status of SPAW activities presented by the secretariat in document UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.31/INF.3 (Cost: total of 10,000.00€ (US\$ 15,600.00), with US\$ 7,500.00 from UNEP-CEP and the balance from the French Government);
- e) Coordination meeting with the UNEP-CAR/RCU in Kingston in 2007, and preparations for a meeting between the CAR/RCU Coordinator and relevant Ministries in Paris;
- f) Assistance with fundraising, in particular for projects having common objectives relating to the conservation of Caribbean avifauna.

**Additional activities of the SPAW/RAC during the biennium financed by France:**

- Collaboration with the University of the West Indies-Guyana on the “Diagnosis of an epizootic in the queen conch (*Strombus gigas*”. Identification of a parasite in the digestive gland of these molluscs in order to ascertain its effect on the reproduction of the queen conch and draw conclusions in terms of management of the species and its habitat (Cost: € 18,000.00 (US\$ 28,000.00). It should be noted that this mollusc is included in Annex III of the SPAW Protocol and is also listed in CITES Appendices.
- One-day seminar for Marine Reserves of the French Caribbean, 18 to 20 July 2006, which included the Nature Reserves of Grand Cul de Sac Marin, Petites Terres, Saint Martin and Saint Barthélemy. This contributed to reactivating this network, promoting SPAW and the CaMPAM Network through presentations, resulting in these reserves joining CaMPAM (Cost: 4,481€ (US\$ 7,000.00))
- The publication of a booklet entitled “The child fish of the Caribbean”, published in 200 colour copies with the primary school of the town of Vieux Fort about the importance of the Caribbean Sea and the future of the West Indian manatee (Cost: 1,300€(US\$ 2,000.00)).
- Participation in the First Festival of Migratory Birds, convened by the Amazona Association in partnership with the SCSCB and the USHUAÏA Foundation. This involved the production of posters and other documents relating to avian fauna, the organisation of conferences for public information as well as field trips relating to the protection of their habitats (Cost: 1,000.00€(US\$ 1,500.00)).

**Aspects relating to networking and coordination:**

In consultation with CAR/RCU, the SPAW/RAC also participated in the following meetings, using funds provided by the French Government, with the aim of promoting the Protocol and developing relevant linkages and synergies:

- Meeting convened by IFAW and CCA on the conservation of whales (Trinidad and Tobago, 19-21 April 2006);
- Scientific Committee Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (St Kitts and Nevis, 26-31 May 2006);
- Guadeloupe Prefecture, first meeting (Guadeloupe and Martinique) on the creation of a marine sanctuary in the territorial waters of the French West Indies (Guadeloupe, 2 June 2006);
- BirdLife Workshop on Important Bird Areas in the Caribbean Region (Puerto Rico, 21-25 June 2006);
- Second Forestry Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean (Dominican Republic in June 2006);
- Workshop on French Biosphere Reserves in Guadeloupe (11-15 December 2006);
- Workshop on Sustainable Development organised by the Guadeloupe Regional Council, where presentation on mission and objectives of CEP was delivered (December 2006)
- Regular participation in meetings of the Guadeloupe sea turtle network;
- Meeting on areas likely to be classified as Ramsar sites, at the invitation of the Martinique General Council and in coordination with the National Forestry Office and the DIREN of Martinique, (Martinique, January 2007);
- Meeting on the Integrated Coastal Areas Management (ICAM) (Grand-Bourg de Marie Galante, 25 January 2007);
- General Assembly of the Institute of Franco-Caribbean Cooperation (ICFC), an association supported by the Guadeloupe Region and implementing regional cooperation (Guadeloupe, February 2007);
- 60th Symposium of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) (Dominican Republic, 4-9 November 2007) (the next meeting of the GCFI is scheduled to take place in 2008 in Guadeloupe with financial support from the Guadeloupe Regional Authority);
- Second meeting of the steering committee on the project to create a marine sanctuary in the territorial waters of the French West Indies (Martinique, 14 February 2007);
- International Symposium on Sea Turtles organised by the WIDECAST network (South Carolina, 23-26 February 2007);
- National Congress of Nature Reserves of France (RNF), with a presentation on issues related to biodiversity in the Wider Caribbean Region, as well as participation in a training session in which issues on biodiversity protection in the Wider Caribbean Region and the SPAW Protocol were presented (Saint François, Guadeloupe, 13-20 May 2007);
- Open day of the Martinique Regional Nature Park, 22-24 June 2007.

Additionally, the SPAW/RAC has also assisted with the following tasks:

- Translation and revision of a number of documents in French for meetings of the secretariat; and
- In 2006 and 2007, under the presidency of Mrs. Marlène MELISSE-MIROITE of the Association Plan Mer des Caraïbes, the RAC organised three management meetings and two General Assemblies relating to management of the Association, in support of the Regional Activity Centre for the SPAW Protocol.