



## The Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum

-A social network for enhancing MPA effectiveness in the Wider Caribbean Region-

March 2009

### Background

Biological connectivity of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, transboundary environmental problems and common issues and needs, require regional co-operation and coordination.

The Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) and the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW), constitute a legal commitment to protect, develop and manage common coastal and marine resources individually and jointly, with provisions for the establishment of protected areas and buffer zones, *in situ* conservation of wildlife, with both national and regional co-operative measures for the protection of wild flora and fauna, as well as on the introduction of non-native or genetically altered species, environmental impact assessment, research, education, public awareness, community involvement, among other topics.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through its Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) administers the Convention, the SPAW Protocol and two additional Protocols to control pollution from land-based activities (LBS) and response on oil spills emergencies.

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### The Creation of CaMPAM

CaMPAM was created in 1997 by ca.50 MPA managers from 22 countries at a meeting convened by UNEP-CEP, co-sponsored by the U.S. Biscayne National Park, with the following mission: "the enhancement of marine and coastal area management in the Wider Caribbean Region through sharing and collaboration to strengthen our national and regional systems of existing and future marine and coastal protected areas". UNEP-CEP has coordinated CaMPAM since its inception and developed a social network of MPAs to improve management effectiveness through capacity-building, strengthening communication, promoting best practices, collaboration and exchange.

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## CaMPAM Activities

- Regional Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme
- Exchange visits of fishers and MPA managers
- Small grants aimed at strengthening MPAs and promoting sustainable fisheries and alternative livelihoods for fishers in or around MPAs
- A regional comprehensive MPA Database <http://cep.unep.org/caribbeanmpa>
- Information dissemination via the list serve (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/campam/>)
- Publications
- Discussion fora for managers and scientists.

Since 2004, CaMPAM has established partnerships with relevant institutions from the region which have contributed with resources (both funding and expertise), namely the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, NOAA's National Sanctuary, Coral Reef Conservation Programs, and International Office, and The Nature Conservancy.

**Training of Trainers.** Since 1999, 7 regional courses for MPA Managers (totaling ca. 110 participants) have been delivered (Saba, Netherlands Antilles); Parque del Este (Dominican Republic); the Soufriere Marine Management Area (St. Lucia); two at the Florida Keys NMS (Florida, USA); and the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve (Tulum, Mexico), and the Buccoo Reef Marine Park (Trinidad and Tobago). These courses were funded by several donors and also received in-kind contributions from local experts and institutions. Approximately 60 follow-up local training activities (with more than 1200 persons trained in ca. 25 countries and territories) have been implemented by the alumni of the regional courses, which have had great impact locally and nation-wide. The training manuals in both English and Spanish (<http://www.cep.unep.org/publications-and-resources/promotional-material/publications>) comprise 8 modules on Caribbean MPA planning, management, research, monitoring and regional policy, along with communication and teaching skills, a bibliographic list with more than 300 bibliographic references hyperlinked to pdf files, as well as class presentations.



Participants of ToT course meet leaders of the fishing and ecotourism co-operative in Punta Allen, Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, in September 2007.

**Small Grants Programme.** Run by UNEP-CEP and recently with cooperation from GCFI (see <http://www.gcfi.org/SGF/SGFEng.php>) involves MPA and fisheries managers and has benefitted ca. 15 countries.

**MPA Database.** With 77 fields (identity, legal, biophysical and management) <http://cep.unep.org/caribbeanmpa>, it is being populated and will establish links with similar activities and individual websites. The Database will be a standardized repository of detailed information for Caribbean MPAs and a resource for producing regional analyses and periodic reports.



Caribbean MPA data base homepage

### Objectives for 2009-2010

- Expand the network with policy makers and the business sector
- Build synergy by coordinating activities with local, national and international organizations and programs.
- Expand Training the Trainers Programme by incorporating new training tools and engaging regional institutions.
- Create an active Leadership and Resource Team that can advise and attract resources to expand CaMPAM capacity building program.
- Create a mentorship program for managers using existing expertise in important areas of interest (e.g. community-based ecotourism, best practices, monitoring, and co-management).
- Enhance communication and exchange visits.
- Organize MPA-related sessions at GCFI Annual Meetings, by procuring sponsorship for the attendance of MPA managers and conservation-minded fishers.
- Complete and maintain the regional MPA Database, and disseminate summary reports on the “The State of the Caribbean MPAs” to a broad audience.
- Provide assistance on grant proposal opportunities and development, as well as sources of information to MPA managers.
- Mobilize volunteer efforts to expand CaMPAM activities.

CaMPAM will continue to serve as a significant resource for the region and contribute to the creation of a true learning community of Caribbean MPA practitioners, thus supporting the process of developing effective MPA networks in the next decade.

For additional information contact: Georgina Bustamante Ph.D., Coordinator, Email: [gbustamante@bellsouth.net](mailto:gbustamante@bellsouth.net), [georgina.bustamante@gcfi.org](mailto:georgina.bustamante@gcfi.org); Website: <http://cep.unep.org/about-cep/spaw/campam-network-and-forum>; [www.gcfi.org/campam/CaMPAM/htm](http://www.gcfi.org/campam/CaMPAM/htm); CaMPAM list: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/campam/>

