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Third Meeting of the Scientific and Technical
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Concerning Specially Protected Areas and
Wildlife (SPA) in the Wider Caribbean
Region

Caracas, Venezuela, 4 – 8 October 2005

**REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR
SPA (SPA/RAC) IN GUADELOUPE FOR THE PERIOD 2004-2005**

For reasons of economy, documents for the Meeting will be printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of the Working and Information documents from the website as available, and not to request additional copies.

Report on the Activities of the Regional Activity Centre for SPAW (SPAW/RAC) in Guadeloupe for the period 2004-2005

Institutional aspects:

In keeping with decision N°8 of the Second Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP) of SPAW on May 6, 2002, the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Overseas territories, approved on June 2005 the final statutes of the association "Plan Mer des Caraïbes" to enable the SPAW/RAC to be operational and autonomous within French law, in accordance with the agreement signed between the Government of France and the United Nations Environment Program on June 7, 2000. The SPAW/RAC will organize its first general assembly by the end of 2005.

Fundraising aspects:

With a view to support the implementation of the approved 2004-2005 SPAW workplan, the SPAW/RAC took an active role in fundraising and providing support for the secretariat. It allowed in particular:

- The signing of an agreement between the DIREN of Guadeloupe and UNEP-CAR/RCU for a grant of 53.110 € to support the development of the Marine Mammal Action Plan in the Wider Caribbean, to support the local training courses for MPA personnel in Antigua, Belize, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Guatemala, Saint Lucia, Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guiana and the publication on the lessons learnt of coral reefs management projects within ICRAN;
- The signing of an agreement between the DIREN of Guadeloupe and UNEP-CAR/RCU for a financial assistance of 10.000 € concerning the organization of the workshop for the development of the action plan for the marine mammals in the Caribbean;
- The signing of an agreement between the DIREN of Guadeloupe and the NGO Island Resources Foundation for a grant of 5.000 € to support the development of Guidelines to prevent species from becoming endangered or threatened with extinction;
- The development (under preparation) of an agreement between the DIREN of Guadeloupe and UNEP-CAR/RCU for a grant of 25.000 € to support the evaluation and the update of the Regional Management Plan for the West Indian Manatee within the framework of the Marine Mammal Action Plan of the Wider Caribbean (MMAAP) (to be implemented during 2006).

Programmatic aspects:

- a) In agreement with recommendation N°IV of the Second Meeting of the Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committee to the SPAW Protocol, the RAC in collaboration with the UNEP-RCU/RAC organized a workshop on the draft guidelines and criteria for the evaluation of protected areas to be listed under the SPAW Protocol. This workshop was held in Gosier,

Guadeloupe from 19 to April 23, 2004. This meeting was essentially financed by the French Government at a total cost of 75.000 € In addition, the SPAW/RAC coordinated the electronic working group in charge of preparing the documents prior to and following the meeting and developing the draft guidelines. As mandated by COP3 in 2004, the electronic working group continued functioning under the coordination of the RAC in order to finalise the draft guidelines. The final draft guidelines are presented to the STAC in document UNEP(DEC)/CARWG.29/3 as well as the related revised annotated format in document UNEP(DEC)/CAR WG.29/4.

- b) In keeping with recommendation N°III of the Second Meeting of the Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committee to the SPAW Protocol, the SPAW/RAC, in cooperation with CAR/RCU and the relevant partners, prepared a preliminary draft of the guidelines to prevent species from becoming endangered or threatened with extinction. This draft was transmitted for review to Island Resources Foundation (IRF), which represents a consortium of non-governmental organizations, including Monitor Caribbean, which was mandated by COP3 to coordinate the process. IRF and the SPAW/RAC will continue to work on the preliminary draft and in early 2006 will circulate same for discussion through an electronic group, to be established in consultation with the SPAW Parties. It is herewith suggested to the STAC that the same consultation procedure that was used for the development of the Marine Mammal Action Plan (MMAP), be used for the development of these guidelines. To facilitate and expedite the work, the MMAP process included a relatively small electronic Working Group with representative expertise and the Chairman of the STAC, in representation of the Parties. The results of the Working Group will then be examined through a wider regional consultation and at the next STAC meeting. To initiate this work, IRF received financial support in the amount of 5 000 € from the SPAW/RAC and the Government of France.
- c) In accordance with the SPAW Programme Workplan for the 2004-2005 biennium, and following the informal meeting of experts on the Marine Mammals Action Plan (MMAP) organized by the SPAW/RAC and the secretariat in St Claude, Guadeloupe, 2- 5 May 2003, the SPAW/RAC took part in the organization of the Workshop for the development of the MMAP which was held in Bridgetown, Barbados, 18-21 July 2005 and provided assistance to the secretariat as required. The RAC also assisted with the establishment of, and took part in, the electronic working group responsible for the preparation of the draft MMAP reviewed and discussed at the Workshop.
- d) In accordance with its approved workplan 2004-2005, the SPAW/RAC worked in close cooperation with the Regional Direction of Environment (DIREN) of Guadeloupe, AEVA (Association for the Study of the West-Indian Vertebrates), the NGO Amazona, the National Forests Office and the Society for the Study and the Conservation of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB) for the organization of the 15th General Meeting of the SCSCB. This Congress was held in Gosier, Guadeloupe, 1-6 August 2005. On this occasion, the secretariat made a presentation on the Cartagena Convention and its three Protocols, with particular focus on the SPAW Protocol and the conservation of Caribbean birds through SPAW. The meeting facilitated the establishment of closer contacts between the SCSCB, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bird Life, CAR/RCU and the SPAW/RAC, with regard to potential partnerships in the following areas:

- The organization of training of trainers courses in English, Spanish and French on the conservation of the West Indian wetlands (with the support of the book by Lisa Sorenson : *Wondrous West Indian Wetlands: Teacher's resource Book*);
- Identification of priority actions within SPAW to support avifauna conservation in the region;
- Exploring financial support, including approaching donors jointly for projects with common objectives concerning the conservation of the Caribbean avifauna.

Coordination and networking aspects:

a) The SPAW/RAC participated in the following meetings with its own funds:

- The WW2BW meeting in Miami in 2004. The RAC facilitated a partnership between Florida International University and the French West Indies, on the creation of the CARWASH Program, which is a monitoring network of the marine water quality in the Wider Caribbean Region.
- The General Assembly of the ICFC (Caribbean Institute of Co-operation), NGO supported by the Region Guadeloupe and in charge of implementing regional co-operation activities.
- Meeting with the RAC/SPA of the Mediterranean Action Plan to seek potential partnerships and areas of co-operation with the SPAW/RAC in the following areas: the development of the MMAP, a Marine Mammal sanctuary, and the development of the guidelines for protected areas.
- The General Assembly of the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) in 2004 in Trinidad and Tobago;
- The UNESCO Conference in St Lucia in 2004 on the Development of a Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage.
- Coordination meetings in 2004 and 2005 in Kingston and Guadeloupe between the Secretariat and the SPAW/RAC.

b) The SPAW/RAC also assisted CAR/RCU with the following tasks:

- Translation and revision of several documents in French for SPAW meetings;
- Promotion of the SPAW Protocol through participation in consultations and at international meetings;
- Printing and dissemination of documents to promote the SPAW Protocol.
- Facilitated meetings between CAR/RCU Coordinator and French Government in Paris to seek support for CEP on a number of matters.