CARIBBEAN AND NORTH BRAZIL SHELF LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

The CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (2015-2025) and Partnership





Contents

| 340 | | 677 | 4 | KEY TERM |
|-----|---|--|----|------------------------|
| | Under its International Waters Focal Area, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) helps countries to collectively and sustainably manage their transboundary surface water basins, groundwater basins, and | | 5 | FOREWORD |
| | coastal and marine ecosystems. | | 6 | EXECUTIVE |
| | As a GEF Agency, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implements a global portfolio of GEF co-funded Large Marine Ecosystem projects, among which the Project: "Catalysing the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large | | | WHY A STR For the C |
| | Marine Ecosystems" (CLME+; 2015-2020). | and the second | 8 | A rich and |
| | 722 | and the second | 10 | Ecosystems |
| | UNOPS supports the successful implementation of development projects around the world. The 5-year | | 12 | But there |
| | UNDP/GEF CLME+ Project (2015-2020) is executed by UNOPS through co-executing arrangements | | 14 | THE CLME- |
| | with several UN bodies and native regional organisations: CANARI, CERMES-UWI, CRFM, FAO- WECAFC, GCFI, IOC of UNESCO, OECS, OSPESCA and UN Environment (CEP). | Section 2. 18 | | How the C |
| | | | | A holistic, |
| | The regional CLME+ Project Coordination Unit (PCU) is located in Cartagena, Colombia. | | | , |
| | www.clmeproject.org | | 20 | THE WAY F |
| | www.thegef.org | | 20 | What can |
| | www.undp.org | | | |
| | www.unops.org | | 22 | KEY FACTS |
| | | | | |
| | CLME+ SAP | | 23 | CLME+ PA |
| | Information Booklet v1.6.2 - July 2017 | | | |
| | Cover Photo: © Peter Leahy/shutterstock.com | | | |
| | | | | |

RMS AND ACRONYMS

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IVE SUMMARY

STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME **CLME+ REGION**

and unique marine environment ems and societies at risk ere is hope!

ME+ ALLIANCE, PARTNERSHIP AND SAP

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Y FORWARD

an you do?

TS ON THE CLME+ REGION AND SAP

PARTNERSHIP: CORE MEMBERS

Key Terms and Acronyms

CLME+ Alliance: alliance composed of members who made a pledge to contribute to the achievement of the CLME+ SAP objectives

CLME+ Partnership: Global

Partnership for the Sustainable Management, Use and Protection of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems

CLME Project: Sustainable Management of the shared Living Marine Resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem and Adjacent Regions

(UNDP/GEF; 2009-2014)

CLME+ Project: Catalysing Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Sustainable Management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (UNDP/GEF: 2015-2020)

CLME+ region: The region covered by the Caribbean and the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems

Programme for the Sustainable Management of the shared Living Marine Resources in the CLME+ region

Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries

(EAF): An ecosystem approach to fisheries strives to balance diverse societal objectives, by taking into account the knowledge and uncertainties about biotic, abiotic and human components of ecosystems and their interactions, and by applying an integrated approach to fisheries within ecologically meaningful boundaries. (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation - FAO)

Ecosystem-based management (EBM):

The management of ecosystems and natural habitats to meet human requirements to use natural resources, whilst maintaining the biological richness and ecological processes necessary to sustain the composition, structure and function their lifetime, or with a range of the habitats or ecosystems concerned. It is also defined as a strategy for the integrated

CLME+ SAP: 10-year Strategic Action management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way.

> **Governance:** The whole of public as well as private interactions taken to solve societal problems and create societal opportunities. It includes the formulation and application of principles guiding those interactions and care for institutions that enable them. (Kooiman et al. 2005)

LME (Large Marine Ecosystem): The

'LME' concept was developed to help countries improve the management of the globally important economic goods and societal services provided by marine ecosystems. More information on the world's LMEs

can be found at www.lme.noaa.gov

Shared living marine resources: Marine species that cross maritime boundaries from one country to another during that reaches beyond the maritime boundaries of a single country

Foreword

his booklet provides a quick overview of the context, objectives and scope of the *Strategic Action* **Programme** for the Sustainable Management of the shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine *Ecosystems (CLME+ region).* It also highlights why each of us can and should be involved in ensuring the good health of these unique ecosystems, and why achieving this is so important for human societies and the global environment.

This 10-year Strategic Action **Programme** (2015-2025), called the CLME+ SAP, was developed under the CLME Project (2009-2014).

This project was co-funded by the Global Environment Facility (the GEF) and implemented through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Numerous sister UN agencies, global and regional institutions and organisations, and more than 20 countries from the CLME+ region contributed to the development of the SAP.

and agreed upon.



In the CLME+ SAP priority actions required to improve the transboundary governance and management of shared living marine resources have been identified In 2015, following the wide spread political endorsement of the CLME+ SAP, the GEF released a USD 12,5 million grant to help catalyse its implementation through the 5-year CLME+ Project (UNDP/GEF; 2015-2020).

A global partnership is now being mobilised to support full-scale implementation of the SAP: the "CLME+ Partnership".

For more information on the CLME+ SAP, Project and Partnership, please visit: www.clmeplus.org

Executive Summary

he marine environment of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ region) provides us with a multitude of goods and services that are critical for achieving enhanced livelihoods, human well-being and sustained socioeconomic development, both within this region and globally. Fisheries, tourism, shipping and exploration of oil and gas are all important economic activities in the region. At the same time, the region's marine ecosystems are characterized by exceptionally high levels of biodiversity, and support globally important ecological processes.

Within this vast area, **three sub**ecosystem types support fisheries and biodiversity:

- reefs and associated sub-ecosystems, such as mangroves, seagrass beds and coastal lagoons,
- the pelagic sub-ecosystem,
- the continental shelf sub-ecosystem.

However, the capacity to provide goods and services to our societies and to sustain such high levels of biodiversity has become increasingly impacted by human activities. Three inter-related key problems that occur throughout the region are:

- unsustainable fisheries,
- habitat degradation,
- marine pollution.

Impacts from these problems are made worse by increased climatic variability and change.

Geopolitically, the large number of countries and territories in the CLME+ region make this one of the most complex marine regions of the world. Dealing with the above problems to safeguard the living marine resources for the benefit of current and future generations therefore requires cooperation among all CLME+ countries, peoples and organisations with a stake in the marine environment. This demands for the implementation of an integrated, ecosystem-based management approach.

The CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP) builds on such an ecosystem vision. The SAP will initially focus on bringing together stakeholders working on fisheries with those working on environmental protection.

The SAP consists of **6 main Strategies and 4 Sub-Strategies.** It has been designed to resolve the aforementioned priority problems in a progressively holistic and integrative way.

As an umbrella programme, the 10-year CLME+ SAP represents a widely adopted, comprehensive roadmap and reference framework for collaborative action.

By May 2017, the CLME+ SAP had been formally endorsed by 35 Ministers, covering a total of 25 CLME+ countries and 6 overseas territories. Additional countries and territories are currently also considering endorsement of the SAP.

A call is now being made to the international community to support and participate in the implementation of this critically important action programme. In support of this call a global CLME+ Alliance & Partnership is now being mobilised.

CLME+ Alliance & Partnership: now is the time for global, regional, national and local partners from the public and private sector and from civil society to join in and work together to ensure a bright future for the CLME+ region.





A rich and unique marine environment

ogether, the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ region) bound a total marine area of some 4.4 million km². This vast area exhibits exceptionally high levels of unique biodiversity (especially in the Caribbean Sea), and supports globally important ecological processes.



Marine ecosystems in the CLME+ region provide critical goods and services that support livelihoods, human well-being and sustained socioeconomic development:

- It is estimated that nearly 1 million people are directly employed in capture fisheries, with another 3 million jobs in ancillary activities.
- Indicative annual gross revenue from fisheries and aquaculture in the Caribbean was estimated at approximately US\$ 5 billions for 2012.

• Fish provide a vital source of protein for poor communities.

• Coral reefs in the Caribbean generate US\$4 billion of income to the region each year (shoreline protection, fish nurseries and habitat, tourism activities).

• Gross revenue from tourism and recreation was estimated at US\$ 47 billions for 2012. Relative to its size, the island population of the Caribbean is more dependent on income from tourism than that of any other part of the world.

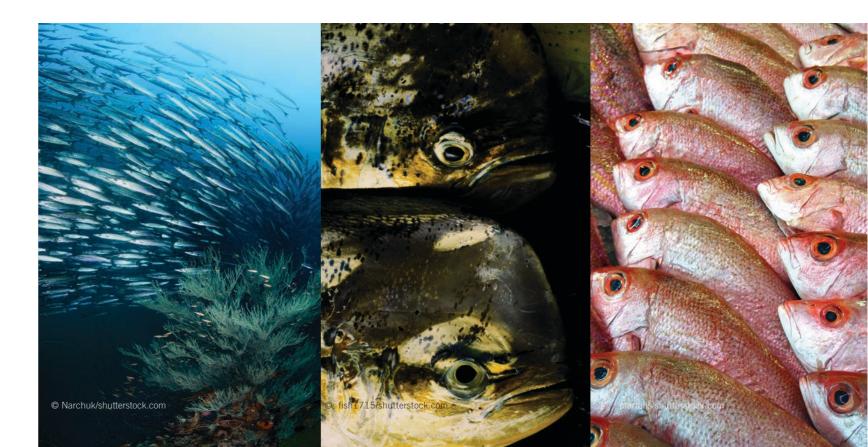
• The CLME+ region is also important for shipping, and holds significant potential as a major producer of oil and gas.

• 12,046 marine species have been reported for the region.

The three sub-ecosystem types of the CLME+ region interact actively and support the most important fisheries and biodiversity:

• Approximately 10% of the world's coral reefs, and around 20% of the world's remaining mangrove forests may be located within the

CLME+ region. These offer multiple uses, functions and benefits, including fishing, tourism, coastal protection and climate regulation.



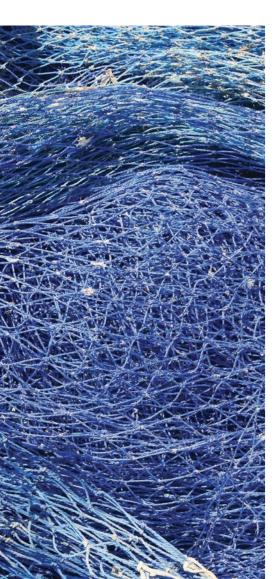
• The continental shelf sub-

ecosystem is home to major shrimp and ground fish fisheries, and is linked to critical habitats (e.g. mangroves and seagrass

beds) that provide coastal protection, climate change mitigation services, and fish nursery grounds.

• The pelagic sub-ecosystem supports a wide array of marine species and human uses such as fisheries and shipping.

Ecosystems and Societies at risk



he marine environment's capacity to provide goods and services to human society has become increasingly impacted by a multitude of marine and land-based activities, climate change and sea-level rise.

Unsustainable fisheries, habitat degradation and pollution have been identified as three key transboundary problems impacting the health of the marine ecosystems of the CLME+ region.

Most fisheries are fully or overexploited. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing constitutes an important aspect of unsustainable fishery practices.

Degradation of coastal and marine habitats such as mangroves, sea grass beds and coral reefs continues, as a result of improper human practices on land and at sea. The introduction of invasive species such as the lion fish poses a serious threat to the unique biodiversity of the Caribbean coral reefs.

Pollution further affects the health and economic value of marine ecosystems and associated living resources, and can be associated with poor operational practices in tourism, agriculture, industry, forestry and mining, as well as oil and gas exploration and shipping. Major river systems throughout the region discharge large amounts of sediments, nutrients and contaminants into the marine environment.

These problems are often inter-related: e.g. nitrate pollution and overfishing of "grazer" species such as parrot fish both contribute to habitat degradation through algal overgrowth of coral reefs. In turn, habitat degradation and pollution affect all sub-ecosystem types but are especially evident in the coastal zones.

They severely impact the region's tourism potential and sustainability of its fisheries, and thus have substantial **socioeconomic impacts.** This damage caused to marine ecosystems

further increases their of extreme weather and climate change.



vulnerability - as well as that of human societies, to the effects

Alarming facts

• Reduction of total fishery catch in the Western Central Atlantic Region, which includes the CLME+ region, from approximately 1.79 million tonnes in the late 1990s to about 1.25 million tonnes in 2010.

• In 2016 it was estimated that slightly over 60% of the fish stocks across the Western Central Atlantic Region (areas 31 and northern part of 41) are recognized to be fully or over-exploited.

• Projections of annual losses in dive tourism revenue in the region due to coral reef degradation of US\$ 100 to 300 million have been made.

ROOT CAUSES OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION:

Technical studies called Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses conducted under the CLME Project highlighted the root causes behind the cited key problems:

- weak natural resources
 governance
- *limited human capacity and financial resources*
- inadequate knowledge
 & data/information
- *inadequate awareness and public participation*
- inadequate
 consideration of the
 value of ecosystem
 goods and services
- population and cultural pressures
- trade and external dependency

...But there is HOPE!

ffective, sustainable solutions for the CLME+ region's problems require dealing with both the **root causes** and **direct causes** of environmental degradation, across the different sub-ecosystem types. Such a holistic approach demands **region-wide cooperation** and an **integrated**, ecosystem-based management approach.

Global Environment Facility (GEF)-supported interventions across the globe have shown that transboundary collaboration on strategically selected actions, which focus on the root causes of environmental degradation, can trigger far-reaching positive change in transboundary water systems like as LME's. The UNDP/GEF Publication "CATALYZING OCEAN FINANCE"* gives examples of how initial GEF financial support has catalyzed massive action towards environmental restoration, in several instances with investments worth over 200 times the original contribution from the GEF.

(*available from the UNDP and GEF web sites)

Such global experiences, together with the positive results obtained from pilot initiatives in the region and the increased knowledge on root causes acquired through the CLME+ Project (2010-2015), have inspired the CLME+ region's stakeholders to build a comprehensive regional programme of strategically selected actions.

Early results from the CLME+ SAP:

- Formal establishment of the CLME+ Partnership in 2017
- Establishment of the Interim Fisheries Coordination Mechanism among the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), the Organisation of the Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector (OSPESCA) and the Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO-WECAFC) in 2016

• Regional Action Plan for the management and conservation of the queen conch in the WECAFC Area also in 2016

• Regional Action Plan for spiny lobster fisheries

By May 2017, 35 Ministers representing 25 countries had politically endorsed the CLME+ SAP.

• Several new Marine Protected Areas established in the CLME+ region

• 8th simultaneous closed season for spiny lobster fisheries in the Central American Integration System (SICA) region implemented by OSPESCA in 2017

• Marine Spatial Planning efforts in the CLME+ region on the rise

• Augmentation in ratification of SPAW and LBS Protocols

Increased financial support from the GEF for the region (CLME+ Project, CReW+, CROP, IWEco, MAR2R, StewardFish, etc.)



How the clife of the second se

he Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of the shared Living Marine **Resources of the Caribbean** and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+ SAP, 2015-2025) was developed following a **participatory** approach. Stakeholders from the region, including governments, political leaders, scientists and civil society representatives worked together with global experts on the development of the action programme, using the results of environmental analyses (TDA's) and a series of strategically designed case studies and pilot initiatives.

20-year vision, 10-year SAP

Through the 10-year CLME+ SAP, the States and territories of the CLME+ region adopted a **long-term vision** which aims at achieving, within the next 20 years, a *healthy marine environment that provides benefits and livelihoods for the well-being of the people of the region.*

Such a vision calls for the safeguarding of the health of all three sub-ecosystem types – reefs, continental shelf and the pelagic sub-ecosystem in order to maximize their contributions to societal well-being and sustainable development.

Focus on shared living marine resources

The SAP will do so by putting an initial focus on governance and the management of shared living marine resources.

Support to international targets

The SAP supports CLME+ countries and Agencies in their delivery on marine-related international environmental and development goals and targets, such as the Aichi Targets, UN Sustainable Development Goals (in particular SDG14) as well as ambitions set under the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols and other regional initiatives.

Root causes of key problems

The SAP aims to bring about structural change by tackling the root causes of the three identified key transboundary problems:

• Better governance

Existing regional and national institutions with an established mandate for fisheries and the protection of the marine environment will be strengthened and consolidated. Cost-effective transboundary collaboration arrangements among these institutions will be identified. implemented and/or enhanced. Policy, institutional and legal reforms will be implemented. **A Regional Governance** Framework (RGF) will gradually be built, and enable the progressive implementation of an ecosystem-based management approach.

• Increased Capacity

However, for this to happen, the development of the RGF will need to be matched by regional, national and locallevel human and institutional capacity building initiatives, so that the enhanced institutional and legal frameworks become optimally used.

On-the-ground Action

The SAP fully recognizes that bringing about structural change will not always yield immediate benefits and results. The above actions will therefore be complemented with priority on-the-ground management actions and investments (learning-bydoing), aimed at e.g. combating illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU), creating viable options for improved or alternative livelihoods (decent work), and enhancing the protection and restoration of critical habitats, including through the reduction of land-base pollution. Lessons learnt from these early actions (first 5 years of SAP implementation) will be used to develop plans to upscale the achieved results.



Regional reference framework and umbrella programme

The SAP thus provides a comprehensive roadmap for collaborative and integrated action towards improved governance and management of living marine resources, throughout the CLME+ region.

As a broad-ranging programme, the SAP is not expected to become implemented through a single project or initiative. Instead, it will require the establishment of a wideranging partnership, through which complementarities and synergies will be sought among all actors working in the region, to create win-win situations and to maximize the overall return from all investments.

The CLME+ Partnership



The "Global Partnership for the Sustainable Management, Use and Protection of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large *Marine Ecosystems*, the "CLME+ Partnership" (launched in 2017) aims at ensuring better coordination and collaboration among, and oversight for the many efforts and initiatives on the marine environment in the CLME+ region. It will further promote and secure the engagement and up-scaling of actions by all sectors of society, so that the long-term vision behind the CLME+ SAP can be made a reality over the coming decades.

8 Intergovernmental Organisations with a formal mandate for the marine environment in the CLME+ region will be at the core of this Partnership: CARICOM Secretariat, CCAD, CRFM, FAO-WECAFC, IOC of UNESCO, OSPESCA, OECS and UN Environment (CEP).

It is around this core that the wide-ranging, multi-stakeholder CLME+ Partnership will then be progressively built. Organisations willing to commit to the SAP vision without seeking to coordinate their actions with the Core Membership, can still pledge to become part of the even wider-ranging CLME+ Alliance.

In support of enhanced private sector and civil society engagement in the CLME+ Partnership, funds are now being provided under the CLME+ Project for the region to work on the development and delivery of a "civil society" and "private sector" version of the CLME+ SAP ("C-SAP" and "P-SAP").

The CLME+ Project

As an **umbrella programme**, the CLME+ SAP is meant to create the enabling conditions that will allow individual actions to become more efficient and effective. In this context, a major (lead) initiative under the SAP is the implementation of a new GEF co-funded 5-year project: the CLME+ Project (2015 - 2020).

The CLME+ Project will catalyse the overall implementation of the SAP, by spear-heading key actions on governance and capacity building, by executing onthe-ground pilot initiatives, and by providing an **overarching framework for monitoring & evaluating progress in SAP implementation** (the "SAP M&E Framework").

The CLME+ Project has been instrumental in launching the CLME+ Partnership.

Increased investments, higher returns

The SAP M&E framework will **coordinate** and **facilitate the integration of multiple donor efforts**, and guide investments to where they are needed most. This is a crucial point, as it is clear that the achievement of largescale impacts under the SAP will demand that existing or planned efforts are further complemented by new efforts requiring co-financing from both public and private sector partners, as well as an optimised financial resources use.



THE CLME+ ALLIANCE, PARTNERSHIP AND STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME

A holistic ecosystem based approact

ix Strategies have been defined under the CLME+ SAP.

The first three Strategies focus on the strengthening of regional-level mechanisms for shared living marine resources governance:

Strategy 1: protecting the marine environment

Strategy 2: achieving sustainable fisheries

Strategy 3: integrated ocean governance, through intersectoral policy coordination

Strategies 4 to 6 focus on the implementation of the ecosystem approach to the management of living marine resources in the CLME+ region's 3 key sub-ecosystem types:

Strategy 4: ecosystem-based management (EBM) for reefs and associated sub-ecosystems

Strategy 5: an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) for the pelagic sub-ecosystem

Strategy 6: EBM/EAF for the Guianas-Brazil continental shelf sub-ecosystem, with special emphasis on shrimp and ground fish fisheries

Given their particular importance for the region, Sub-Strategies were also specifically defined to implement the ecosystem approach (EAF) to the following four key fisheries:

Sub-strategy 4A:

Caribbean spiny lobster

Sub-strategy 4B: queen conch

Sub-strategy 5A: fourwing flyingfish

Sub-strategy 5B: large pelagics



Each SAP Strategy includes different types of Actions:

"Governance" actions aim at strengthening institutions and policy and legal frameworks, facilitating the implementation of EBM.

- "Capacity building" actions will put particular attention on data and knowledge creation, management and sharing, and the use of findings from science in decision-making and resources management.
- "On-the-ground management" actions will include initiatives such as combating IUU fishing and demonstrating/providing viable alternative sources of decent work.

Significant attention is further given to the mainstreaming of adaptation to climate change into all strategies, to ensure increasing resilience of ecosystems and human society to climate variability and change.

Example from Strategy 4b: Establish and strengthen the arrangements for the management and conservation of queen conch between all relevant organisations such as CFMC, FAO-WECAFC, CRFM, UNEP-SPAW, OSPESCA and CITES

Example from Strategy 1: Establish and/or enhance the institutional capacity to undertake and mainstream valuation of ecosystem goods and services in decisionmaking and policy development

Example from Strategy 5A : Implement the CRFM/FAO-WECAFC Sub-Regional Management Plan for flyingfish fisheries in the Eastern Caribbean

THE WAY FORWARD

What can you do?

he degradation of marine ecosystems in the CLME+ region and the depletion of associated living marine resources have become obvious to many over the past decade(s). Several initiatives and efforts have already been initiated, and more are being planned.

However - and despite all these efforts - in the absence of an overarching reference framework for coordinated action, human society has failed to sufficiently halt or reverse this process of environmental degradation.

But this situation can change. Through the **adoption of the SAP**, the CLME+ countries have provided us with a **comprehensive roadmap for collaborative action**.

Through its high-level political endorsement, regional organisations and national governments manifest their commitment to implementing the programme's Strategies and Actions. The CLME+SAP initially brings together the people, institutions and organisations working towards sustainable fisheries and those working on the protection of the marine environment.

The scope of the collaborative frameworks will then be gradually expanded, by involving other key economic sectors such as tourism, shipping and oil and gas. Renewed financial support from the GEF (CLME+ Project, CReW+, CROP, IWEco, MAR2R, StewardFish, etc.) is now allowing the region to kick-start the implementation of the SAP. However, given the variety, magnitude and complexity of the problems faced, fullscale implementation of the SAP cannot occur without the long-term support and collaboration of all those with a stake in the marine environment of the CLME+.

It is clear in this context that stakeholders from civil society and the private sector must now also become increasingly involved.



Underpinned by the Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations: Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations (Caribbean Sea Initiative) and in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a call is made for international and region-wide support for the implementation of the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme.

MAKE A PLEDGE AND BE PART OF THE CLME+ ALLIANCE

Are you willing to:

- Subscribe to the **CLME+ SAP vision** of: "healthy marine ecosystems that provide benefits and livelihoods for the people of the region"

- Adhere to the key principles of **good marine resources management**, formulated in the SAP?

THEN MAKE THE CLME+ PLEDGE!

Whether you belong to, or represent an organisation, institution, multi- or bi-lateral donor, the private sector or civil society, only through your contributions can the vision behind the CLME+ SAP become fully achieved.

Your support will be critically needed to preserve the unique marine ecosystems of the CLME+ region, and to protect and enhance the lives of all people, local and remote, that in one way or another depend for their well-being and development on the multiple benefits rfu provided by the living marine resources of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf LME's.

For more information:

info@clmeplus.org - www.clmeplus.org

Key facts on the CLME+ region and the CLME+ SAP

The CLME+ region

- Region covered by the Caribbean Climate variability and change and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems
- Total area of 4.4 million km²
- Shared by 26 countries and 18 overseas territories
- Globally relevant levels of biodiversity, with high endemism
- ~10% of global coral reefs
- ~20% of world mangrove forests

Main economic uses

- Fishing
- Tourism
- Shipping
- Oil and gas

Three sub-ecosystem types support the most important fisheries and biodiversity

- Reefs and associated systems
- Continental shelf sub-ecosystem
- Pelagic sub-ecosystem

Three key transboundary problems

- Unsustainable fisheries
- Habitat degradation
- Pollution

Cross-cutting issue

Political support

- SAP endorsed by 35 Ministers covering 25 countries and 6
- overseas territories (by May 2017) 6 Strategies to implement the

ecosystem approach in the CLME+ region

3 region-wide Strategies

- S.1: Protecting the marine environment
- S.2: Achieving sustainable fisheries
- S.3: Facilitating ecosystem-based management (EBM) through inter-sectoral coordination of

policies

3 ecosystem type-specific Strategies

- S.4: Towards ecosystem-based management (EBM) for reefs and associated ecosystems
- S.5: Towards an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) for the pelagic ecosystem
- S.6: Towards EBM/EAF for the continental shelf ecosystem

4 fisheries-specific Sub-Strategies

S.4A: EAF for the Caribbean spiny lobster fisheries

- S.4B: EAF for the queen conch fisheries
- S.5A: EAF for the fourwing flyingfish fisheries
- S.5B: EAF for the fisheries of large pelagics

Root causes to be addressed through the CLME+SAP

- Weak governance
- Limited human and financial resources
- Inadequate knowledge and data & information management
- Inadequate public awareness and participation
 - Inadequate consideration of the value of ecosystem goods and services
 - Population and cultural pressures
- Trade and external dependency

CLME+ Partnership: Core Members

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS - THE INTERIM COORDINATION MECHANISM



Secretariat: CLME+ Project Coordination Unit - info@clmeplus.org

COUNTRIES

Countries from the CLME+ region that have endorsed the SAP^{*} (status: May 2017) - SAP signed by at least one Minister



| Belize | Brazil | Colombia | Costa Rica |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Grenada | Guatemala | Guyana | Haiti |
| | | * | * * |
| Montserrat | Nicaragua | | Saint Kitt & Nevis |
| The United States | Trinidad & Tobago | | |

For the full and updated list of CLME+

