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Fourth Meeting of the Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities in the Wider Caribbean.

Panama City, Panama 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING



## Annex II: Recommendations of the Meeting

### The Meeting:

**Having convened** the Fourth Meeting of the Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committee to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS STAC) in the Wider Caribbean Region, in Panama City, Panama from July 18-20, 2018;

**Taking note of** the significant number of projects and activities that must be completed before the convening of the Fourth Conference of Parties to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP);

**Recommends** to the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP that:

### RECOMMENDATION I WORKPLAN AND BUDGET

1. Contracting Parties at the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP endorse the 2019-2020 Draft Work Plan & Budget as presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS STAC including any recommendations made during the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS STAC.
2. The Secretariat request Contracting Parties to submit additional input to the draft Work Plan and Budget for the biennium 2019-2020 by October 31, 2018. This will enable an updated draft Work Plan and Budget to be submitted to the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP for further review and approval, and to the Eighteenth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) and Fourteenth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention for information and endorsement.
3. Contracting Parties note the continued efforts to develop new project proposals including for submission to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and encourage Governments to have their relevant national government focal points review and endorse these project proposals, as amended.
4. Contracting Parties expand the technical support role of the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) and continue identifying agencies that form part of the Regional Activity Network (RAN) including *inter alia* the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute as a possible member of the RAN for the Wider Caribbean Region specializing in Marine Litter;
5. The Secretariat explore the possibility of expanding the number and/or scope of RACs to better support Contracting Parties in meeting their obligations under the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols;
6. The Secretariat in coordination with the LBS RACs and RAN prepare an information paper for consideration at the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP, and as appropriate at the 17<sup>th</sup> IGM on this proposed expanded technical support role to programmes, projects and activities;
7. The Secretariat, in coordination with the national focal points to the Cartagena Convention, consider postponing the 18<sup>th</sup> IGM and 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP to the first quarter of 2019 to enable completion of several outputs to be submitted for approval at these meetings.
8. The Secretariat continue to explore opportunities to convene future joint LBS and Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) STACs; and a single IGM including the respective LBS and SPAW COPs to encourage continued synergies and to reduce the financial and administrative burden on the Secretariat.

9. The Secretariat work with other agencies to map the ongoing regional programmes and projects relevant to the work of the LBS Protocol and to the Convention building on ongoing and planned efforts in this regard by *inter alia* the UNDP GEF Catalysing implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the sustainable management of shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+) project.
10. The Secretariat strengthen coordination and cooperation with the UN Environment Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Office for North American (RONA) and other regional and sub-regional organizations such as *inter alia* the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Association of Caribbean States/Caribbean (ACS/CSC), Central America Integration System/Central American Commission for Environment and Development SICA/CCAD, and the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) Waste and Chemicals Coordinating Centre in Uruguay to assist the Secretariat in supporting countries in meeting their obligations under the LBS Protocol and to use, as appropriate, such high level political fora to showcase the results and relevance of the State of Convention Area Report (SOCAR) including economic and social benefits of addressing pollution, and to explore how such mechanisms can support development of future SOCARs demonstrating the value of data to drive investment.
11. The Secretariat integrate relevant pollution strategies and reports such as the LBS SOCAR, relevant components of the integrated State of Marine Ecosystems and Associated Economies (SOMEE) report; the Regional Action and Investment Plans for Nutrients Reduction, and the Pollution Research Strategy within the revised CEP Strategy to be presented at the 18<sup>th</sup> IGM;
12. The Secretariat should ensure strategic linkages of their pollution related activities with efforts to promote Blue Growth and Blue Economy approaches in the Wider Caribbean Region, in particular the Sustainable Blue Economy Initiative of UN Environment and explore synergies with relevant work being undertaken in the region on this and related issues.
13. The Secretariat continue efforts to share experiences with other Regional Seas Programmes in particular the Antigua Convention for the North East Pacific noting the common Contracting Parties between the Cartagena and Antigua Conventions and to build on the Cooperation established with the OSPAR Commission.
14. Contracting Parties provide technical input to and complete surveys relating to the (a) GEF CReW+ Project Proposal Development; (b) Pollution Research Strategy coordinated by GCFI for the UNDP GEF CLME+ Project and (c) the development of the new CEP Strategy.
15. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the LBS and SPAW RACs and other interested partners, prepare an information paper on the status of pelagic and stranded sargassum in the Wider Caribbean Region for submission to the 17<sup>th</sup> IGM and to continue to engage in discussions on this issue.
16. The Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention continue to implement national, and in collaboration with the Secretariat, regional actions to address pollution from solid waste, marine litter and in particular plastics. Countries should provide the Secretariat with feedback on national actions being undertaken as well as priority areas for assistance which could inform the development of future project proposals.

## RECOMMENDATION II

### ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

1. The Contracting Parties continue to provide information to the Secretariat on gaps and barriers that are preventing countries from establishing water quality monitoring and assessment programs and that the Secretariat prepare a status update at the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP for further action;

2. The Secretariat, the LBS RACs and the Monitoring and Assessment Working Group continue to support the efforts of Contracting Parties to establish and/or strengthen their national water quality monitoring and assessment programs that, at a minimum, monitor for SOCAR parameters.
3. Countries benefitting from national and/or regional projects such as GEF IWeco, UNDP GEF CLME+ and GEF CReW+ as well as any future projects, identify and share opportunities for improving national water quality monitoring and assessment programmes, laboratory strengthening and monitoring capacity, and technical training and assistance.
4. The Secretariat work with Contracting Parties/Countries to identify and mobilize financial resources from existing projects and develop new project proposals to respond to the new priorities identified under SOCAR.
5. The existing Interim Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment continue its work prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP to oversee the finalization of the SOCAR based on the comments received during the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS STAC.
6. The Secretariat work with the Interim Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment to prepare a draft Terms of Reference that defines a future role as an open-ended working group that could meet at least once a year and through regular teleconferences to provide expert guidance to the Contracting Parties through the Secretariat.
7. The Secretariat prepare an information paper for consideration by the COP and IGM of a data platform for internalization of Geospatial information relevant to the LBS Protocol (including the outputs of SOCAR) and consider the trial use of the Caribbean Marine Atlas Phase 2 Geonode as such a platform. This information paper should consider issues such as sustainability, financial implications, data sharing and data sensitivities and how such a platform could be formalized for use as a possible regional data base or platform
8. The Secretariat and Contracting Parties participate, as appropriate, in the upcoming Second Technical Meeting of the Caribbean Working Group on Environmental Indicators of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) 4-6<sup>th</sup> September organized by UN Environment in Jamaica and to continue efforts to identify synergies and promote greater harmonization of indicators being monitored in the region.
9. Regarding the finalization and further development of the SOCAR,
  - a) The Secretariat in collaboration with the Monitoring and Assessment Working Group propose a standardized “digital” template for national reporting on the SOCAR with defined periods for agreed parameters and to reflect this activity in the draft 2019-2020 work plan;
  - b) The Working Group identify other parameters that could be added to the existing Cartagena Convention Reporting Template to facilitate biennial reporting including interim reports and products such as those done by other Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans such as the Barcelona Convention and OSPAR Commission.
  - c) Contracting parties and non-contracting parties agree to identify and approve additional national, regional and/or international non-governmental sources of data that could be used for SOCAR reporting in the absence of national data and to review and endorse the use of any external data submitted directly by those organizations
  - d) The LBS STAC4 propose that the baseline year for data submitted for use in future SOCARs should be two years up to that SOCAR being developed. This data should be submitted through an appropriate regional database that would serve as the source of information for future SOCARs);
  - e) That the 4<sup>th</sup> LBS COP consider the period for preparation of a comprehensive SOCAR to be every 6 years and that frequency and format for more regular reporting be guided by the final recommendations of the first SOCAR.

- f) The Secretariat and Contracting Parties ensure that further work on SOCAR is aligned to best possible extent with related planned and ongoing reporting efforts including under the SPAW Protocol and SOME and associated methodological frameworks including the Governance Effectiveness Assessment Framework (GEAF) and the Driver Pressure State Impact Response (DPSIR) framework and that new efforts are undertaken to communicate on and highlight the relevance of such reporting for supporting sustainable socio-economic development and blue economy efforts in the Wider Caribbean.
- g) The Secretariat with support of the Working Group continue to work on setting water quality targets and refining the cut values as better data becomes available.
- h) The Secretariat and Working Group develop a guidance document for harmonized monitoring for the SOCAR parameters and that this be reflected in the draft 2019-2020 workplan.
- i) The Secretariat should strengthen collaboration with other Regional Seas Programmes and Multilateral Environmental Agreements to facilitate improved data collection and analysis for the Wider Caribbean Region.
- j) Contracting Parties provide timely responses to the Secretariat to requests for information and for comments on the draft SOCAR, once available.

### RECOMMENDATION III

#### GEF AND OTHER DONOR-FUNDED PROJECTS

1. The Secretariat and relevant Contracting Parties continue to participate in the development of the GEF CReW+ project proposal.
2. The Secretariat develop additional project proposals, in coordination with relevant regional partners including, *inter alia*, the CLME+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP) Interim Coordination Mechanism, and with the work conducted under the SPAW Protocol, to further support and upscale implementation of the LBS Protocol and the Strategies and Actions under the 10-year CLME+ SAP that are of relevance to the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols.
3. The Secretariat seek to develop project proposals targeting other sources of financing including but not limited to the Green Climate Fund (GCF);

### RECOMMENDATION IV

#### LBS PROTOCOL RATIFICATION

1. The Secretariat and Contracting Parties should continue to encourage Non-Contracting Parties to ratify the LBS Protocol and for Contracting Parties to raise the profile of the LBS at national and regional levels.
2. The Secretariat request Non-Contracting Parties to the LBS Protocol to provide an update of the status of LBS Protocol Ratification in their respective countries including difficulties being faced in their national ratification process. These non-contracting party countries should further identify opportunities to raise the issue of LBS Protocol ratification at high level political fora and other appropriate intergovernmental mechanisms.

3. The Secretariat work with Contracting and other Parties to identify and facilitate the transfer of knowledge, best practices and appropriate technology aimed at pollution prevention and reduction in the Wider Caribbean Region.
4. Contracting Parties and LBS Focal Points should promote the work of the Secretariat with their respective governments as well as assist in ensuring timely and consistent payments to the Caribbean Trust Fund (CTF). To facilitate this the Secretariat should ensure timely submission of invoices copied to all relevant focal points.