



UN Environment Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP)

CaMPAM Expert Group

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Background

The Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM) is recognized internationally for its success in strengthening management capacity of marine protected areas (MPAs) throughout the Wider Caribbean. In particular, three tools have contributed to this success: 1) the **Training of Trainers on MPA Management** program (composed of a regional course every 2-3 years followed by local training activities), 2) the **Small Grant Program** (financial support with technical assistance that have ranged from US\$5000 to US\$220,000 per project) and **CaMPAM List**, a circulation mail list that distributes personal and institutional messages on a variety of subjects related to marine conservation and area management posted by members and the moderator, which reach to its ca. 1000 members.

In 2013, CaMPAM developed a mentorship program to test a new tool: the one-to-one training (mentor-mentee) between mature, skilled MPA managers and young, less experienced ones in need of training. After training a small selected group of MPA managers to be mentors, launching a call for application and selecting a few mentor-mentee exchange projects, it was apparent that the impact on the mentee capacity did not justify the high cost of this program. The program was discontinued but lessons were learned: the mentors can be used more rationally by increasing the number of members to become an **expert group on MPA science and practice committed to collaborate in an *ad hoc* way to provide support to CaMPAM activities**.

Creation and composition

In 2017, a group of professionals with experience in marine conservation science and practice were invited to join CaMPAM Expert Group. They represent different expertise, subregions, languages, institutional affiliation, but not less important, they have a proved collaborative record with CaMPAM activities throughout the last 15 years.

Many of them are alumni of the Training of trainers program, and most have participated enthusiastically and efficiently in CaMPAM activities as projects and exchanges coordinators, course lecturers, project reviewers, etc.

Here are some statistics of their expertise and cultural background of the members:

- **Country of residence-** They reside/work in 15 different countries or territories: Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Dutch Caribbean, Grenada, Jamaica, Mexico, Puerto Rico, St. Lucia, Venezuela, United states of America.
- **Skills.** The composition of the group covers different expertise in marine area management practices in the Caribbean, both at the site and national levels, and speak the two main languages in the Caribbean: Spanish and English (most Dutch residents and most of French managers and scientists speak English). Twelve members are skilled MPA managers and technical staff with more than 10 years of experience, most of them at the site level but also at the national level; 9 are graduate of MPA Training of Trainers program; 10 are coordinators of programs for strengthening Caribbean MPAs; 9 are researchers or have an academic background on subjects related to MPAs, and work as educators of MPA practitioners or in college environmental programs; eighteen of them are bilingual (English and Spanish) and 2 speak Dutch.
- **Academic degrees.** Almost all have at least Masters Degrees. Thirteen (13) hold Ph. D. Degrees on environmental sciences and have applied their knowledge in advancing marine conservation and MPA management effectiveness.
- **Contribution to CaMPAM.** Eight members are alumni of CaMPAM Training of trainers program, 9 have served as instructors and 7 as coordinators, and 12 have led projects in collaboration with CaMPAM. All have enthusiastically contributed to CaMPAM activities.

Objectives, rules of engagement duties

The members CaMPAM Expert Group agreed to assist CaMPAM with the following:

1. Review project proposals and reports, and strategic documents.
2. Provide *ad hoc* advice to the SPAW Subprogramme and CAMPAM, as needed.
3. Coordinate specific activities and small projects on a contract basis, if required and as appropriate.
4. Translate messages sent to CaMPAM List to other languages, as needed.
5. Assist the CaMPAM List moderator during her/his absences.
6. Serve as instructor or coordinator in regional and local courses on a contract basis, if required and as appropriate.
7. Populate the CaMPAM MPA Database for their related sites.
8. Become active CaMPAM List contributors.
9. Represent CaMPAM in international meetings as needed

They also agreed on the following rules of engagement:

1. Acceptance of this membership is voluntary.

2. The membership is personal, not institutional, and is based on the person's expertise and his/her collaboration record with CaMPAM.
3. The work of the expert group will be coordinated by the CaMPAM coordinator.
4. Activities that require substantive investment of time and effort may be compensated through a contractual agreement, if required and as appropriate.
5. When needed, one, a few or all members will be contacted by CaMPAM coordinator to provide their support on an *ad hoc* basis. We can take advantage of members' attendance at international meetings to have a group exchange.
6. The members of the Expert Group will be acknowledged by the UN Environment-Caribbean Environment Programme, the SPAW Regional Activity Center and CaMPAM, announced through CaMPAM List, and published in their websites with a short biography.
7. This group replaces the Mentor Team created in 2014.