



The CaMPAM Mentorship Program Concept Note

Concept Summary

In 1997 representatives from 22 Caribbean countries—including more than 50 marine protected area (MPA) managers—created the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM), under the auspices of the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol) of the Cartagena Convention, to address the growing need for tools, resources and social linkages that improve management of coastal resources across the Wider Caribbean. CaMPAM has since grown into an extensive network of managers, decision makers, academics, conservation organizations and other stakeholders who strive toward the common goal of strengthening MPA management effectiveness through training, capacity building, adoption of best practices, and peer-to-peer collaboration and communication. Coordinated by United Nations Environment Program – Caribbean Environment Program (UNEP-CEP) as part of the SPAW Protocol and Programme, CaMPAM continues to grow its network of partners and suite of available programs. Today CaMPAM represents the most active and extensive network of Caribbean professionals promoting information exchange on coastal and marine resource conservation issues.

Acting on the request of numerous marine resource professionals, UNEP-CEP/CaMPAM/SPAW RAC (hereafter the “Project Team”) proposes a creative and innovative *Mentorship Program* to support ongoing professional development for Caribbean MPA managers. Our uniquely collaborative approach aims to create a cadre of leaders (mentors) who facilitate knowledge transfer, skills development and dissemination of lessons learned to managers working across the region. Although MPAs are increasingly embraced by Caribbean nations as a strategy for protecting coastal and marine resources, most, whether new or longstanding, fail to meet management goals and established conservation targets. **The Mentorship Program seeks to sustainably enhance MPA manager/practitioner competencies through the development of mentoring relationships (professional coaching) that respond to common and emerging training, capacity building and technical assistance needs.** Mentoring has long been recognized as an effective means to build individual and institutional capacity. Across the Caribbean, mentors with specialized knowledge and experience in marine resource management therefore play a central role in strengthening both individual and institutional capacity across the network of Caribbean MPAs.

The Challenge

The economic health and well being of most Caribbean nations is dependent goods and services provided by functioning coastal ecosystems. Coral reefs, sea grass beds and mangroves harbor a vital source of protein for local populations, protect coastlines from storms and wave damage exacerbated by a changing climate and fuel a robust \$25 billion annual tourism industry. The region’s diverse cultural heritage and future potential for sustainable development is inextricably linked to this endowed wealth of coastal and marine resources.¹

¹ Burke, Laretta and Jonathan Maiden. 2004. Reefs at Risk in the Caribbean. Note also the economic valuation studies of coral reefs in Belize, St. Lucia, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago.

Yet coastal ecosystems throughout the Wider Caribbean are in rapid decline due to intensive near shore development and land clearance, agriculture, sedimentation, over fishing and unsustainable human activities associated with rapid tourism growth. Moreover, the widespread coral bleaching event of 2010 illustrates the ubiquitous impact of global climate change, warming oceans and increasing ocean acidification.² Recent estimates suggest that nearly two thirds of the region's coral reefs are threatened and continued loss of reefs and adjoining ecosystems will have an increasingly negative impact on more than one hundred million people living in the coastal zone.³

The good news is that social awareness of the region's natural assets has increased significantly over the last twenty-five years. As a result, governments of many Caribbean nations have formally designated various types of MPAs in an attempt to conserve and foster sustainable use of coastal resources through active and adaptive resource management. The region now boasts a network of nearly 600 protected areas across 34 countries, affording some form of legal protection to approximately 170,000 km² of the Caribbean coastal zone (marine and terrestrial)⁴. Most recently, governments participating in the Caribbean Challenge initiative, bolstered by growing support from the private sector, re-affirmed prior commitments to set aside 20% of the coastal zone in each country to protected area status by the year 2020.

There is little doubt that increasing the spatial scale of legally protected coastal and marine areas bodes well for conservation efforts across the Caribbean. **Yet a more daunting challenge remains the effective management over time of MPAs throughout the region.** For example, although scientific consensus strongly supports MPAs (broadly defined) as an effective strategy for sustaining fisheries, protecting biological diversity and maintaining ecosystem resilience in the face of a changing climate, numerous studies and broad anecdotal evidence demonstrate that most MPAs fail to meet established management goals and conservation targets.⁵ Furthermore, recent research suggests that maintaining patterns of connectivity for fish and invertebrate populations may require a trans-boundary approach to marine resource management, one that scarcely exists in the region to date.⁶

The pervasive problem of limited management effectiveness affects both long established and emerging Caribbean MPAs as managers commonly struggle to find qualified personnel, secure sustained financing, conduct effective enforcement, and gain the trust and support of resource users and the local community. This challenge is compounded by the fact that MPA structure and management capacity is highly variable across the region, thus preventing a "one-size-fits-all" approach to address common threats. The combination of these circumstances lends credence to the claim that many Caribbean MPAs constitute nothing more than "paper parks" that contribute little to biodiversity and fisheries conservation, and therefore do not meet the goal of protecting ecosystem health and securing the livelihoods of human communities in the coastal zone.

Emergence and Evolution of CaMPAM's Training of Trainers Course

The SPAW Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network and Forum (CaMPAM) -- created in 1997 and operating under the auspices of UNEP-CEP as Secretariat of the SPAW Protocol and an Executive Team -- has achieved notable success in building and strengthening MPA management capacity throughout the Wider Caribbean. One notable program, the annual *Training of Trainers on*

² USA Today. November 9, 2010. Coral Reefs Under Siege From Acidic Oceans.

³ Wilkinson et al. 2008. Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2008. See also Reefs at Risk in the Caribbean, 2004.

⁴ Protect Planet Ocean website – www.protectplanetoclean.org.

⁵ Kelleher 1995, Callum and Roberts, 2000, Mora et al. 2006.

⁶ P.F. Sale et al. 2010. Preserving Reef Connectivity: A Handbook for Marine Protected Area Managers.

MPA Management Regional Course (Training of Trainers), provides robust introductory training in all aspects of MPA management to a diverse array of marine resource professionals. Over the years course graduates (new trainers) have subsequently designed and coordinated local training activities on critical issues such as the establishment of co-management partnerships; professional development in ecotourism guiding and interpretation; marine resources enforcement; coastal habitat, sea turtle and coral reef monitoring; SCUBA diving certification; mooring buoy installation and maintenance; and community education among many others. As the region's MPAs continue to develop and evolve, demand for the course has increased and the Training of Trainers is now viewed as the premiere training opportunity for marine resource professionals in the Caribbean.

Design and Launch of a Mentorship Program for MPA Managers

Mentoring, or what is sometimes referred to as professional coaching, has long been recognized as an effective means to improve individual and organizational performance. In mentoring programs, mentors demonstrate, explain and model while protégés (mentees) observe, question, explore and apply new skills. Studies show that while 5% of learners may transfer a new skill into practice based on learning theory, up to 90% transfer new skills into practice from learning theory combined with demonstration, practice, evaluation during training and both in-situation and ongoing support.⁷ Other studies suggest that mentoring creates multiple developmental relationships within a social network.⁸

Acting on the request of marine resource professionals from across the region, the Project Team is facilitating the design and "pilot" launch of a *Mentorship Program* for Caribbean MPA managers. To initiate this effort eight senior Caribbean MPA managers (mentors) were invited to the Dominican Republic in early 2013 to work collaboratively on the programmatic framework and by extension acquire new skills on emerging training needs, such as sustainable finance and stakeholder engagement. Of note, the Mentorship Program represents a natural evolution of the local leadership realized at multiple sites across the region by Training of Trainers course graduates. Viewed in this context, mentoring represents a welcome addition to the suite of CaMPAM tools that facilitate information exchange, provide professional development opportunities for new managers and foster application of progressive management strategies and important lessons learned.

The primary goal of the CaMPAM Mentorship Program is to sustainably enhance MPA manager/practitioner competencies in the Wider Caribbean through the development of mentoring relationships (professional coaching) that respond to common and emerging training, capacity building and technical assistance needs.

Towards this end, the Mentorship Program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Build and maintain a cadre of mentors who facilitate knowledge transfer, skills development and dissemination of lessons learned in MPA management
- Promote a common framework for mentoring based on targeted objectives, actions and evaluation methods mutually developed and agreed upon by mentors and mentees
- Integrate the mentor/mentee training approaches into the suite of CaMPAM tools, particularly the regional Trainers of Trainers course and Learning Exchanges

⁷ Showers, Beverly and Bruce Joyce. 1996. The Evolution of Peer Coaching. Educational Leadership, March 1996 v53 n6 p12(5).

⁸ Higgins, Monica C. and Kathey E. Kram. 2001. Reconceptualizing mentoring at work: A developmental network approach. Academy of Management Review. Volume 26, No. 2.

- Advance recent Caribbean successes to build national and regional MPA networks by fostering professional skills development of managers/practitioners as a means to strengthen institutional capacity and management effectiveness

The Project Team, working in close coordination with selected mentors, plans a pilot launch of the Mentorship Program in late 2013/early 2014. The initial composition of mentors reflects the diversity of MPA types, cultures and professionals working around the Caribbean to advance coastal and marine resource conservation. Mentors have been selected based on expert knowledge on a range of MPA management issues, extensive professional experience and commitment to grow and sustain the program. Additional mentors may be recruited in the future, especially (but not restricted to) amongst senior managers of Protected Areas listed under the SPAW Protocol, or that will be soon listed (see Appendix I for initial mentors and project team members.) A call for mentee proposals, followed by strategic planning meetings with mentors at the annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, is expected to inform development of the programmatic framework. Close evaluation of early mentor/mentee collaboration will position all parties to refine mentoring approaches and expand programmatic reach and impact through 2014 and beyond.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to ensure both short and long-term programmatic success, the Project Team has developed a robust monitoring and evaluation framework that links all components of the program. A specific focus is placed on the evaluation of mentor/mentee interaction relative to the unique challenges facing each mentee as he/she applies new knowledge and skills developed during the relationship. This will be achieved through development of evaluation instruments that link mentoring directly to follow-up efforts of the mentee, thereby measuring effectiveness of the former (mentoring) by demonstrating success of activities conducted during the latter (mentee application of new knowledge, skills and lessons learned.)

Evaluation instruments will be built into the mentoring agreement that is jointly developed and agreed to by mentors/mentees at the outset of the relationship. The basic framework is based on a multi-level approach: evaluation will consider *reaction* and *learning* during the mentor/mentee relationship (e.g. how did mentees feel about the experience; was there an increase in knowledge and skills acquired) as well as *behavior* and *results* of mentee efforts implemented afterwards (e.g. how were new knowledge, skills or lessons learned applied and behavior changed; what results were achieved and what additional professional development needs to occur.)

Importantly, only through cultivation of a shared sense of **accountability, commitment and program ownership** among both mentors and mentees will such an evaluative framework prove effective in monitoring professional growth, and by extension, improvements in MPA management capacity. This approach will foster collaboration, mutual trust and responsibility among all participants and thus ensure the program is evaluated in its entirety, and not simply as separate, stand alone components or relationships.

Appendix I. Initial CaMPAM Mentors and Project Team Members

Table 1. Initial CaMPAM Mentors

Mentor	Affiliation	Country
Isaias Majil	Marine Protected Areas Coordinator	Belize
Lakeshia Anderson	Parks Planner, Bahamas National Trust	The Bahamas
Martha Prada	Independent Marine Resource Professional	Columbia
Newton Eristhee	Director, CARIBSAVE C-Fish Program	St Lucia
Ramon de Leon	Manager, Bonaire Marine Park	Bonaire
Ricardo Gomez Lozano	Director, Cozumel Reefs National Marine Park	Mexico
Roland Baldeo	Marine Protected Areas Coordinator	Grenada
Ruben Torres	Director, Reef Check Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic

Table 2. Project Team Members

Project Team Member	Affiliation
Alessandra Vanzella-Khouri	Senior Programme Officer, UNEP-CEP
Helene Souan	Director, SPAW RAC
Georgina Bustamante	Coordinator, CaMPAM
Rich Wilson	Mentorship Program Coordinator, Seatone Consulting (on behalf of CaMPAM)