



## **Meeting Report**

**UNEP-CEP Project "Regional Support for the Caribbean Challenge Initiative"**

**64<sup>th</sup> GCFI Annual Meeting  
Puerto Morelos, Mexico  
November 3-4, 2011**

## **1. Introduction**

The Caribbean Challenge Regional Update Meeting was held in Puerto Morelos, Mexico, on Friday November 4, 2011. It was organized by UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP)<sup>1</sup> in collaboration with the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM)<sup>2</sup> and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI)<sup>3</sup>, with funding from the Directorate General for Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>4</sup>. This meeting was part of the UNEP-CEP project "Regional support for the Caribbean Challenge Initiative: Networking, consolidation and regional coordination of MPA management"<sup>5</sup>. The meeting was attended by 30 persons, including nominated representatives of each of the Caribbean Challenge countries, as well as several MPA experts and observers, program leaders and researchers (see Annex 1 for a list of participants and the meeting agenda).

The meeting's objectives were the following:

- sharing information on the project activities by all participants (project coordinating team, country representatives and partners),
- discussion of the each country's efforts to accomplish the Caribbean Challenge objectives; and
- gathering feedback from all to improve project implementation over the next months.

The meeting was preceded by a group field trip to Puerto Morelos National Marine Park on the morning of Thursday November 3 and by the CaMPAM MPA Session at the 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of GCFI. The field trip provided an opportunity for participants to learn about MPA management in Mexico, to meet with park staff and representatives of local stakeholder groups, and to visit and snorkel in the park. Attendance at the GCFI meeting allowed participants to familiarize themselves with the latest in marine fisheries and conservation science and practices in the Caribbean, and to network with members of the marine science and management community.

The meeting included presentations by representatives from the eight Caribbean Challenge countries, each covering the following information from their countries:

- a map of the MPAs already established and MPAs currently being developed, and the institutions responsible for their management;

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<sup>1</sup> [www.cep.unep.org](http://www.cep.unep.org)

<sup>2</sup> <http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php>

<sup>3</sup> [www.gcfi.org/](http://www.gcfi.org/)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cooperazioneallosviluppo.esteri.it/pdgcs/inglese/intro.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php#CarChall>

- brief information on the status of the GEF project(s) in each country in support of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative;
- brief information on the status of the mid-size grant funded by the UNEP-CEP project;
- any existing coordination or cooperation with neighboring countries aimed at achieving their marine conservation goals;
- the impact of the 2010 (for Dominican Republic only) and 2011 UNEP-CEP/CaMPAM Training of Trainers program on MPA management on increasing the capacity of the MPAs individually or in the national system; and
- expectations from the UNEP-CEP Caribbean Challenge Project for the upcoming months.

Project coordinators, focal points and partners gave presentations to update on matters relevant to the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (presentation files attached to this report), followed by a question and answer segment. The final segment included discussions on the way forward and synergies with other relevant partners and efforts. See Annex 1 for a list of meeting participants and the meeting's agenda.

## **2. Summary of presentations and discussions**

### ***2.1 CaMPAM/UNEP-CEP Caribbean Challenge project update***

The presentation given by the Coordinator of CaMPAM and the UNEP-CEP Caribbean Challenge project included the meeting's objectives, agenda, discussion points, a brief project history (2010-2011), and information on the project's management and the activities implemented so far. The presentation included an update on the two Training of Trainers courses completed under the project (Dominican Republic 2010<sup>6</sup> and Belize 2011) and the status of their follow-up local training activities. The Coordinator also outlined the small and mid-size project grants provided to date to the eight countries, the status of the learning exchanges, and information dissemination and networking to date, and the status of the MPA database and the project's website.

The presentation highlighted that a significant number of activities have been implemented or are underway, including the following:

- The Training of Trainers regional course (CaMPAM flagship training activity) held in September 2011 in Belize for the English-speaking Caribbean Challenge;
- A number of small grants were awarded in 2010 (<http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php#SmallGrants>);
- Eight (one per country) mid-size grants (\$45,000 each) were awarded in 2011 (<http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php#>), after a process of proposal development and review;

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<sup>6</sup> <http://campam.gcfi.org/ToT/ToT2010CourseFinalReport2010.pdf>

- two “Learning Exchanges” (by St. Lucia and St. Kitts and Nevis) are in progress;
- website and database technical capabilities are being improved;
- information disseminated to focal points;
- the CaMPAM List community had increased,
- networking and coordination among marine environmental managers of the eight islands had been strengthened; and
- project resources from other partners eg. Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies<sup>7</sup> (CERMES), US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Coral Reef Conservation Program<sup>8</sup> (NOAA CRCP) had increased.

Participants requested additional information on the process currently in place to house data for the MPA CaMPAM database and asked if it included bibliographic sources and socio-economic data for each MPA site. It was noted that CaMPAM obtains information directly from MPA managers and that some fields contain information on MPA users, while others include links to sources, but no bibliography currently exists, though one may be established in the future. The CaMPAM/NOAA Capacity Assessment<sup>9</sup> provides information for some 30 sites which will be added as appropriate, and GCFI is investigating the inclusion of data from other existing sites (e.g. FORCE database as a pop-up). Under this UNEP-CEP project, the priority is to complete the database for each of the eight Caribbean Challenge countries. This reflects a request from participants at the last meeting in San Juan to provide MPA profiles for these countries.

## ***2.2 Caribbean Challenge Initiative and the Sustainable Finance Component***

The TNC representative provided information on the Initiative’s background, the status of the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund and national trust funds, sustainable financing mechanisms and possible next phases of the Initiative. By way of background he described the factors that lead to the eight governments committing to the Caribbean Challenge Initiative – growing recognition of threats to marine natural resources, acknowledgement of the need for more action (with only 8% of nearshore areas protected) and the reality of a lack of funding and real management challenges. Accordingly, he described the three pillars of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative as political will, sustainable, long term, predictable funding, and accelerated on-the-ground conservation action.

He commented on the significance of the target of 20% - this is triple the area currently under protection- which represents a significant advance in the area being protected in each country. In order to achieve this goal, the governments are supportive of finding new ways to fund protected areas. Since the Initiative was launched, a total of US\$57 million has been committed

The second dimension of the funding pillar is the development of a set of trust funds, one regional trust fund (the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, CBF) and the others established at the national level. The CBF is about to be legally established and will be an independent fund in the

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<sup>7</sup> [www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/](http://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/)

<sup>8</sup> [coralreef.noaa.gov/](http://coralreef.noaa.gov/)

<sup>9</sup> <http://campam.gcfi.org/CapAssess/CapacityAssessmentReport2011/index.html>

form of a permanent endowment, invested conservatively, and aiming to reach US\$40 million (of which US\$32 million is already pledged). TNC believes this has the potential to attract further investment and grow to US\$100 million. Both the CBF and the national biodiversity funds will be managed by boards consisting of government and non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives. From the CBF, an anticipated 5% interest will be channeled annually to the national trust funds where decisions for the application of this funding in support of conservation action (by governments and NGOs) will be taken. Starting from Year 3 of this funding, a 1:1 match from new sources of sustainable financing will be required from each participating country.

Participants inquired if funds can be used in support of both marine and terrestrial conservation/protected areas (including marine managed areas) and asked about the risks to a regional trust fund under the present global economic crisis. It was noted that support for both marine and terrestrial areas is possible and there are no specific proportions to dictate this. With regards to planning for the potential impact of financial crisis scenarios on the CBF and national trust funds, TNC replied that the asset manager is a professional with a positive 30 year track record. Investments will be made under conservative guidelines and rolling 3-year averages will form the basis for decision-making.

With regard to the meaning of the 1:1 match and the criteria to determine the national trust funds, TNC explained that 1:1 meant equivalent funding by government and TNC and that the national boards are responsible for the criteria, which can differ between the participating countries. The national trust fund boards will be empowered and will be able to make changes to the CBF.

TNC further explained that the allocations per country will be based on their size and their level of need. It is expected that the funds will grow over time but it may not be able to solve all the funding problems. The aim instead, is to support 50% of the conservation needs of marine and coastal ecosystems.

In terms of timing, it is anticipated that the CBF will be established legally in December 2011 and the board should be in operation by January 2012 with a regional office by mid-2012.

The next activities are a series of sustainable finance workshops per country (with Italian funding via the UNEP-CEP project) which are designed to consider options and build action plans. The first of these will be in Grenada (November 15-17, 2011) and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (December 2011), with one additional workshops to follow each month for the rest of the Caribbean Challenge countries.

Regarding the target audience for the forthcoming sustainable financing workshops, UNEP-CEP highlighted the need to encourage participation by a combination of people in order to avoid a possible disconnect between finance and environmental/marine resources public sectors. It was recommended that TNC also invite the CaMPAM contacts on the ground from the UNEP-CEP mid-size grants projects to attend these workshops.

Participants acknowledged that sustainable financing mechanisms such as airport taxes can make countries less appealing to tourists and as such there is resistance from tourism ministries to take such measures. It was noted that while willingness-to-pay surveys can provide helpful information in this regard and tourists might be willing to pay, governments can still be reluctant to put such measures in place.

TNC is exploring the possible benefits to countries associated with marrying two conditions – government-pledged fast-start financing and the high debt-to-GDP ratios of the Caribbean Challenge countries. This could provide an opportunity to catalyze debt-for-climate swaps and funding for protected areas and climate change. TNC notes possible international interest from donors in this and the potential for sustainable financing mechanisms for countries.

Regarding phase II of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, TNC representative mentioned several interesting ideas:

- a summit for business leaders,(possibly in late 2012), hosted by Tillman Thomas and Richard Branson;
- the acceleration of funding via a donor round table;
- expansion of the scope of the Caribbean Challenge Initiative to include other coastal issues (fisheries, tourism etc) and/or other countries; and
- steering mechanisms lead by governments.

TNC's presentation was complemented by information on their efforts to develop a Caribbean MPA database which aims to assist participating countries to define their 20% of the marine environment requiring protection under the Caribbean Challenge Initiative. It was explained that two layers of information are needed – one with protected area boundaries and another with coastlines and national maritime territories. The new tool, based on the World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA), uses a map viewer with an assembly of MPAs Queries are possible via the database, e.g. status of MPAs, which can help indicate MPA effectiveness. This may be particularly important as CBF funds begin to be used.

Coordination between the CaMPAM database and the TNC database is underway.

### ***2.3 Regional GEF projects in support of Caribbean Challenge Initiative***

The UNEP-GEF Liaison Officer described the vision for the Italian funding of the current project is to facilitate the sharing of ideas and best practices. GEF serves at the financial mechanism from Rio, supporting a number of international environmental conventions such as The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)<sup>10</sup>, Stockholm Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Strategic Priority 1 of UNEP matches with the Caribbean Challenge Initiative and under this there is a portfolio of projects. The most advanced of these projects is in The Bahamas 'Building a Sustainable National MPA Network'. The Dominican Republic is also advancing with their funding mechanisms.

K. McLaughlin sated that there is top-up funding available at GEF. She replied to questions on this that many countries are taking a consultative approach to prioritizing their needs before programming; that GEF 4 was under-subscribed and that UNEP wants to help ensure that this does not happen again. Comments on the prohibitively tedious application and administrative

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<sup>10</sup> <http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

procedures were made. K. McLaughlin explained that they are willing to help with the application process and that some efforts have been made to streamline it. The grant program is open to all agencies, government and non-governmental, as long as their projects are endorsed by their country or territory's official focal point.

#### **2.4 Country focal point presentations**

- **Dominican Republic** (by O. Reynoso and J. Delance). Highlights: The large size of the country's marine mammal sanctuary places the Dominican Republic in the unique position of already exceeding the Caribbean Challenge 20% target. The activities that they are/were involved in include:
  - the development of a co-management agreement for the operation of La Caleta MPA near Santo Domingo;
  - attendance at the CaMPAM Training of Trainers Course held in Bayahibe; Dominican Republic in 2010;
  - training in sport fishing provided to fishers through a GCFI small grant;
  - implementation of several projects via support from the IUCN's Caribbean Biodiversity Corridor Project;
  - funding provided for 18 priority protected areas in the Dominican Republic through GEF 4 funding. The funding will provide assistance to 5 MPAs to increase management effectiveness, co-management and provision of essential equipment;
  - management of the country's protected areas trust fund, which is already generating income;
  - establishment of a proposed monitoring system for endangered species and critical habitat; and
  - The status of the mid-size grant project.

The meeting participants asked questions about the number of agencies working on the project and whether the national trust fund was a local or international asset. The presenters answered that 400 trained rangers work in terrestrial protected areas and there are some 75 protected areas with staff; the fund consists of national bond and bank certificates. They also clarified the connection between the GEF project and the CaMPAM/UNEP-CEP mid-size grant project (the GEF project focuses on management planning of a small number of MPAs) and this GEF project experience will be shared with other MPAs via the mid-size grant project.

- **The Bahamas** (by T. T. Rahming). The update on the activities linked with the Caribbean Challenge project included the following:
  - maps showing the division of responsibility for the country's 14 existing MPAs (and several MPAs in progress) between the Bahamas National Trust and the Department of Marine Resources;
  - the GEF Full-Size Project 'Building a Sustainable National MPA Network', which consists of creating sustainable financing mechanisms, developing pilot

demonstration projects and monitoring and evaluation. They acknowledged that the consultation process had not gone well in the past, with continuing repercussions. In order to address this, they are seeking to work on increasing community involvement in MPAs, e.g. via dive training and training in business planning.

- The CaMPAM/UNEP-CEP mid-size grant will be used to work on MPA management planning in the Abacos, which will allow them to also address a GEF project objective.
- Their follow-up project from the CaMPAM Training of Trainers course marries park planning with community education, and in turn feeds in to the mid-size project and to the GEF objectives.

The presenter clarified that providing data to the CaMPAM database has been a slow process since they have a small technical team at the BNT. Responding to a question regarding their learning exchange, she said that they are working on a proposal that would allow four staff members to travel to Australia to learn more about GIS. She also responded to a question regarding the enforcement of MPA regulations over such a large geographic area, stating that it is a huge challenge for the country and that they are trying to have community volunteers incorporated into MPA management and to work with NGOs through co-management arrangements. The presenters commented that their baseline MPA coverage is currently 1%, and the goal under the GEF project is 10%. However, their changing GIS capabilities will likely lead them to estimate new figures.

- **Jamaica** (by C. Gordon). Highlights: In Jamaica, several agencies are responsible for MPA establishment and management, including NGOs, fisher societies and the private sector (some MPAs are managed in partnership with private foundations). According to the National Environmental and Planning Agency (NEPA), a 2009 assessment indicated the country has 15% MPA coverage. This includes a total of 10 fish sanctuaries which were added between 2009-2010. Jamaica has a GEF project for the Financing and Sustainability of the Protected Areas System (2010-2016). The UNEP-CEP-funded mid-size grant project addresses the Palisadoes MPA where moorings will be installed. Work on the project is underway with the Terms of Reference having been developed and disseminated.
- **Antigua and Barbuda** (presented by T. Lovell) Highlights: The presenter provided the legislative context for protected areas in Antigua, and the additional legislation relevant to Barbuda. There are currently four MPAs in Antigua and two MPAs in Barbuda, plus additional areas that are under consideration. The mid-size grant project linked closely to the Sustainable Island Resource Management Mechanism <sup>11</sup> (SIRMM) project – in particular the maps produced by this project will feed into the management planning process for Cades Bay. They are currently seeking support to provide training in MPA monitoring for local marine staff, especially for in-water sea turtle monitoring in the MPA, which also ties in with the outputs of the SIRMM project. They are currently implementing their project under the mid-size grant project (consultant for work on management planning being selected). Two participants attended the CaMPAM Training of Trainers course, including a participant from

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<sup>11</sup> <http://gefantigua.org/>



Barbuda (which contributes to country integration). Local follow up-training will address training enforcement staff in legislative framework.

Responding to questions regarding the tourist industry's participation as a stakeholder, the representative replied that the system includes inputs from the tourism industry.

- **St. Kitts and Nevis** (presented by A. Jenkins). Highlights: Greater emphasis is being placed on habitat management and protection, the driving force behind the establishment of the country's first MPAs. The area between the two islands (The Narrows) and the South-Eastern Peninsula of St Kitts are significant multi-use areas and an important focus for MPA establishment. The Full Size GEF project addresses sustainable financing and management of marine ecosystems while the CaMPAM/UNEP-CEP mid-size grant project will enable the placement of moorings (the bid has now been awarded for this work) and will continue the work towards establishing a framework for MPAs (building on existing work on marine zoning). Two participants attended the CaMPAM Training of Trainers course and the follow-up project will focus on building MPA awareness among stakeholders. Other initiatives include collaborating with St. Eustatius MPA in the Dutch Caribbean on lionfish removal. The mid-size grant project is underway.

CaMPAM clarified that they had consulted with TNC in relation to the mid-size grant project since it builds on the marine spatial planning project.

- **St. Lucia** (presented by N. Cazaubon). Highlights: The mid-size grant project by the St. Lucia National Trust and Fisheries Department addresses teacher training in the marine environment. Teachers are currently being selected for participation in the pilot teacher training course (via communication with the Ministry of Education). St. Lucia is working on the development of a lionfish response plan (as part of the regional GEF Invasive Alien Species project), in conjunction with The Bahamas. Additional activities include the national protected areas master plan, especially the approach to MPA management at the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), fisher exchanges with Grenada and training for MPA staff and fishers at the ToT, thanks to small grant funds in 2010 and 2011.

Examples of educational programs in Antigua and Barbuda and The Bahamas National were suggested as potentially being of interest for St Lucia. Further clarification was provided on the method of collecting fees at SMMA (visiting yachters pay fees at the SMMA office), and that the MMA operates without financial support from the government with 90% of its income coming from tourism.

- **St. Vincent and the Grenadines** (by O. Harvey). Highlights: There is currently only one existing MPA in the country (Tobago Cays Marine Park) but another is being established through the CaMPAM/UNEP-CEP mid-size grant project for management planning and stakeholder consultation. The country's MPA management structure will include a marine parks board and the country will continue to participate in other MPA collaborations, especially the Grenadines MPA Network (established with small grant funding) and associated MPA site visits and exchanges. Two participants attended the Training of Trainers course and the follow-up project on enforcement of MPA regulations will be implemented together with the Grenada MPAs.

The need for an MPA plan to assist with marine mammal conservation was clarified by the presenter since whales are seen in national waters, e.g. off the west coast of Union Island.

- **Grenada** (by R. Baldeo). Highlights: There are currently two MPAs in the country, with plans for the establishment of a third one with assistance from the CaMPAM/UNEP-CEP mid-size grant project, which is also enabling the development of MPA-related educational materials and communications activities. The target date for completion of the project is December 31, 2011 and work is so far on-target. Additional projects include a Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) project on adaptive capacity for MPA governance (managed by Zaidy Khan). Video footage of the underwater sculpture park in Molinière/Beausejour MPA and the recent win by Grenadian athlete Kirani James was shown to highlight that a new sculpture, featuring Kirani James will be added to the park and he will act as the celebrity spokesperson for Grenada's MPAs.

### *2.5 Partner presentations*

- **CERMES project on socio-economic monitoring of MPAs of several islands of the Caribbean Challenge.** (by M. Pena) Highlights: A project has been funded by NFWF which will take place between Sept 2011-Aug 2012 to train 40 MPA staff in three countries via three 'learning by doing' workshops. The project will also include eight site assessments and monitoring programs and will take place in St. Lucia (workshop planned for January 9-13, 2012), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (workshop already held October 17-22, 2011) and Grenada (workshop planned for February 6-10, 2012).
- **CaMPAM/NOAA MPA Management Capacity Assessment** (presented by D. Wusinich-Mendez) Highlights: The Caribbean Challenge countries included in the capacity assessment were The Bahamas, Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The top five needs indicated by MPA managers in these countries were identified (enforcement, sustainable financing, socioeconomic monitoring, biophysical monitoring, outreach and education). Representatives from countries involved in the assessment were encouraged to apply for funding to help address these capacity needs, especially through current grant opportunities from NOAA CRCP and NFWF.

### **3. General discussion and wrap up**

The consultation/feedback session was led by A. Vanzella-Khoury, SPAW Program Officer at UNEP-CEP. Questions on learning exchanges, outreach and the CaMPAM database were asked. Comments are summarized hereafter (organized by topics):

Topic: Learning Exchanges

A participant commented on the possibility of learning from the Micronesia Challenge in the coming months.

Grenada found the opportunities for training of MPA staff via the CaMPAM/UNEP-CEP Caribbean Challenge project to be extremely useful (they are already seeing results) and suggested the use of the learning exchange funds to support the attendance of Grenada MPA staff at selected upcoming workshops that help address their MPA management capacity needs, and indicated the desire to arrange for a visit by their Permanent Secretary to a demonstration MPA site such as the Hol Chan Marine Reserve.

Other participants indicated the importance of involving a scientist in such visits and the project coordinator commented that this could also be the objective of a proposal for the next round of small grant funding. It was suggested that linear exchanges with key stakeholder groups, such as tour operators, could be focused on.

Topic: Referenced publications, information sharing, databases

There was discussion about the potential for the MPA database to provide referenced information (e.g. wiki based on peer data entry) providing customers' contribution. The current database provides site-level summaries and may potentially include a template for the development of site-specific MPA management plans, and a map viewer. Partnering with others organisations, such as TNC, may increase the database's functionality. Individuals can have access to the database in order to update information about their MPAs. This assistance would be welcomed since data is gathered from the Caribbean Challenge countries and from the capacity assessment sites.

It was stressed that UNEP encourages the sharing of information and will work with TNC on promoting GEF themes and regions at high levels, especially reaching out to decision-makers via the International Conservation Caucus Foundation.

Other topics:

*Enforcement* was stressed as a need for MPA effectiveness and the participation of fishers in the management of the Hol Chan Marine Reserve was highlighted as a model.

*Communications in relation to MPAs was stressed.* The important role of involving media contacts in exchanges and site visits was raised, as well as the need to use new, fun means of communication to get stakeholders involved. This includes communications to get stakeholders involved, not only MPA staff, but also fishers, tourism industry and other government representatives.

*Pushing MPAs as a way to improve food security,* and making the most of relationships or the proximity of stakeholders to MPAs was highlighted.

It was suggested that attendance at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Korea in 2012 would be valuable. A. Vanzella-Khoury commented that this could indeed be a learning experience and indicated that we would help the countries to access GEF funds.

In closing, A. Vanzella-Khoury invited the country representatives to keep in touch with CaMPAM, to look around the region for funding opportunities, and to consider opportunities for exchanges. She asked for further feedback on anything they would like to see in the database. She expressed an interest in producing, packaging and disseminating these tools/products as part of the current project. She also asked participants to indicate how they thought CaMPAM could help with communication activities in their countries.

#### **4. Project results, challenges and opportunities, and recommendations**

Based on the information shared by project coordinators, focal points and partners, the project has achieved the following results:

- The advancement of the MPA agenda, which has been especially evident on islands where there are currently no or only few MPAs.

- Strengthened communication and collaboration among the country focal points and with partners thanks to the following activities:
  - the two project meetings and the GCFI conferences at large (2010, 2011);
  - the Training of Trainers regional course and the development of follow-up training proposals;
  - exchanges; and
  - the dissemination of information via CaMPAM and other Internet Lists.
- The integration of Caribbean Challenge project activities and optimizing of synergies between project funding provided via small grants, mid-size grants and Training of Trainers follow-up funding, achieved through CaMPAM coordination and improved communication with country focal points,
- Better understanding among project participants about each country's GEF projects associated with the Caribbean Challenge Initiative.
- Greater understanding among project participants about the process of developing the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund led by TNC and the role of stakeholders in each country in fund management.
- Recognition of the value of NGO participation in the implementation of small and mid-size projects.
- Recognition of the importance of creating public standardized profiles of each MPA and the many potential uses of the CaMPAM MPA database.
- The advancement of the MPA agenda in some islands with none or few MPAs.
- Recognition of the value of using small grants to implement exchanges, promote experience sharing, and accelerate learning by MPA managers and fishers towards the common goal of the restoration and sustainable management of coastal resources.
- Increased skills among project participants for project proposal development and writing.
- Regional programs and academia increasingly focusing their project resources in the islands associated with the Caribbean Challenge.
- Greater understanding among project participants about the coordinating role of CaMPAM and the benefits of its training and communications platform for the Caribbean Challenge Initiative.

Some of the challenges that the project faces, and possible opportunities, include:

- Ensuring that project activities receive sufficient attention from the focal points to enable their successful, on-time completion, in spite of the reality that a small group within each country (a few MPA managers or environmental officers) is coordinating many projects at the same time.
- The need of a more involvement of country focal points in the process of providing data to populate the MPA database

- The importance of increasing the database capabilities by incorporating new tools, and the potential coordination with TNC database managers on the use of data from both parties (see 3. for more detail)
- The difficulties of developing a proposal for a GEF project and the needs to tap into the GEF IV funding.
- Use the exchanges or upcoming small grants opportunities to fund the visit of politicians or decision makers to successful MPAs as a way of raising awareness in this important stakeholder group.
- Include the application of best marine recreational/tourism management practices as a critical topic for MPA staff and stakeholder training.

Recommendations:

- Better coordinate project activities under the UNEP-CEP project led by both TNC and CaMPAM, such as workshops, sharing results, etc., so participants of both project components can better benefit from these interventions. This will require an effort from all parties -CaMPAM, TNC and country focal points- in order to identify opportunities and actively seek coordination.
- Communication is an important aspect of the project and for support of MPA activities in general. CaMPAM's communications tools (the Internet List and web page) are at the disposal of the MPA community. However, information technology is continually evolving and there is a need to capture the audience's attention. The message and the messenger have to be appropriate in order to reach the desired audience. The use of new, fun means of communication was suggested.
- Promptly launch of the Call for Proposals for Learning Exchanges and identify the best way to make the most of the funding available. Structure exchanges so the leader has a scientific or technical background.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.

## Annex 1. Meeting agenda

09:00-09:15 Participants introduction (name and position, less than 1 minute each)

09:15-10:00 Agenda and meeting objectives (presented by Georgina Bustamante, Project coordinator, 5 minutes)

Update on the Caribbean Challenge UNEP-CEP project, including the MPA strengthening component (Training of Trainers Course in Belize, small and mid-size grant projects, Learning Exchanges, MPA database, communication and networking). Presented by G. Bustamante, project coordinator (25 minutes presentation and 10 minutes Q an A)

10:00-10:35 MPA Sustainable financing mechanisms and GEF projects: background and next phase of the Caribbean Challenge initiative (other countries joining, scope expansion, overview of the GEF projects, the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund and national trust funds, and the workshops on sustainable financing). Presented by Sheldon Cohen, Director of External Affairs, TNC Caribbean Program. (15 minutes presentation)

MPA Database of TNC Caribbean Program (by Steve Schill, Sr. Scientists (10 min. presentations)

10 minutes for Q and A

10:35-11:05 Regional GEF projects in support of Caribbean Challenge Initiative: brief summary and synergies (10 minutes presentation); and UNEP/GEF Project “Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean (Fifth draft strategy and action plan for invasive alien species in the Caribbean Region 2011-2015) By Kristin Mclaughlin, UNEP Task Manager, UNEP/GEF Project (10 minutes presentation). 10 minutes for Q an A

11:05-11:20 Coffee break

11:20-12: 30 Update of the activities associated to the Caribbean Challenge activities by each country: Dominican Republic, The Bahamas, Jamaica (15 minutes each presentation and 20 minutes total of Q an A at the end) (please follow the guidelines provided above for the presentation; email your Powerpoint presentation by Saturday Oct 29<sup>th</sup>, or give it in a USB drive to G. Bustamante by Tuesday Nov 1)

12:30-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:35 Update of the activities associated to the Caribbean Challenge activities by each country: Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada. (15 minutes each presentation, and 20 minutes total Q an A, divided into two) (please follow the guidelines provided above for the presentation; email your PowerPoint presentation by Saturday Oct 29<sup>th</sup>, or give it in a USB drive to G. Bustamante by Tuesday Nov 1)

15:35-15:55 Socioeconomic Monitoring by Caribbean Challenge MPA Managers. Update of project funded by NFWF and others. Presented by Maria Pena, CERMES) 15 min presentation, 5 minutes Q&A

15:55-16:10 Coffee break

16:10-16:30 MPA Capacity building assessment (NOAA-CRP/CAMPAM) Project results and relationship to the Caribbean Challenge islands. Presented by Dana Wusinich-Mendez and Scott Frew (NOAA CRCP and Intl. Office, respectively). 15 minutes presentation and 5 minutes Q and A

16:30- 17:30 Discussion and feedback on upcoming activities of the UNEP-CEP Project:

Learning Exchanges

MPA Database and MPA reports

Communication and outreach

Coordination with other projects and synergies

## Participants

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