
THE CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME AS A NETWORK FOR THE CARIBBEAN REGION

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SUMMARY

The Caribbean Environmental Programme (CEP) comprises the insular and coastal States and Territories of Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and their adjacent water, the United States Coast States, the islands of the Bahamas and south to the French Department of Guiana. In total, it adds up to 28 States and 8 Territories. The ECC also participates, having several Territories on the region.

The Caribbean Environmental Programme was established as a result of the belief that only a cooperative regional approach would be suitable to address the increasing threat caused by mismanagement of the marine environment of the region.

In order to consolidate the Caribbean Environmental Programme, an Action Plan was adopted in 1981. The long-term goal of the plan was to "achieve sustainable development of marine and coastal resources in the Wider Caribbean Region, through effective integrated management that allows for increased economic growth".

Later in 1983, the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region was adopted in Cartagena. The Convention entered into force in 1986, and has so far been ratified by 19 States of the region.

The programme is financed by the Caribbean Trust Fund to which all States and Territories of the region contribute. Financial support is also obtained from the UNEP Environmental Fund and from Counterpart contributions.

1 MECHANISMS EMPLOYED TOWARDS A NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

Within the most important mechanisms employed by the Caribbean Environmental Programme, for the consolidation of the programme as a Network for the Caribbean Region are:

- Intergovernmental meetings.
- Meetings of the Monitoring Committee on the Action Plan.
- Expert meetings on different specific subjects.
- The Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) of The Caribbean Environment Programme.
- National Focal Points, (National) Technical Focal Points.

The above institutional arrangements constitute a region-wide networking mechanism, coordinated, maintained and facilitated by the Regional Coordinating Unit. This networking mechanism is a year-round continued operation, where the meetings referred to above, serve as check-points for its smooth operation, as well as to provide monitoring and guidance to the performance and progress of the entire Caribbean Environmental Programme, and for strategic decision-making.

In addition to the above outlined overall networking mechanism, a number of more project-specific networking systems are continuously being developed in support of initiated and ongoing activities of the Action Plan. Examples of these are the network being developed for the implementation and monitoring of the Special Protected Areas And Wildlife (SPA), Regional Programme, the network of institutions developed for the implementation of the activity on Planning

and Management of Heavily Contaminated Bays and Coastal Areas, the establishment of a network of Regional Programme For The Assessment And Control of Marine Pollution (CEPPOL), Focal Points to assist in the Caribbean Environmental Programme, activities on marine pollution etc.

The convening of regional seminars, workshops, expert meetings, etc., in relation to the various activities of Caribbean Environmental Programme, is a third, and very important mechanism for networking. This mechanism is implemented with the aim of both obtaining region-wide expert-input and support to the implementation of the activities, as well as to disseminate the result of the activities, to benefit of the entire region.

The core of the networking mechanism of the Caribbean Environmental Programme, in terms of region-wide data compilation and distribution, is the Regional Programme on Information Systems for the Management of Coastal and Marine Resources in the Wider Caribbean. Its objectives include the development of databases of specific relevance to the Caribbean Environmental Programme, the publication and distribution of Caribbean Environmental Programme, Technical Reports and other relevant documents, and the Caribbean Environmental Programme, newsletter: CEPNEWS.

2 SPECIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME

In 1990 The Action Plan was modified in order to introduce the concept of five regional programmes, in addition to an overall management function (OCCC), with the objectives to address, in a comprehensive and integrated approach, priority issues related to the marine and coastal environment of the region. The following paragraphs provide a brief description of the major achievements, within many others, of each individual programme.

3 OVERALL COORDINATION AND COMMON COSTS (OCCC)

In addition to the overall coordination and management of the Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU), and the Programme, the following main activities could be attributed to the OCCC:

- Development of Regional Activity Centres and Regional Activity Networks (RAC/RAN). The concept of RAC/RAN was introduced to the Caribbean Environmental Programme, Action Plan in 1990-1991.
- In keeping with Article 7 of the Cartagena Convention, and a decision from the 1987 Intergovernmental Meeting, several steps have been taken towards the development of a protocol on land-based sources of pollution for the region.
- In co-operation with IMO, a proposal on the establishment of a Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Information to be presented to the 1994 Intergovernmental Meeting for approval and to be included in the Action Plan.

4 SPECIAL PROTECTED AREAS AND WILDLIFE (SPAW)

- The convening, since 1992, of the Meetings of Interim Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (ISTAC) to assist with the implementation of the Special Protected Areas And Wildlife (SPAW), Regional Programme and the Protocol - 1992.
- Guidelines for the establishment and management of Protected Areas of the region - 1994 - to be approved by the up-coming Intergovernmental Meeting in 1994.
- Establishment of Special Protected Areas And Wildlife (SPAW), Technical Focal Points in most of the participating countries - 1992/ 1993.

5 REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL OF MARINE POLLUTION (CEPPOL)

- Establishment of (National) CEPPPOL Technical Focal Points in all participating countries - 1990.
- Regional Consolidated Overview on Land-Based Sources of Marine Pollution in the region - 1994.
- A number of on-going and completed pilot studies on pesticides, damage ecosystems, oil and marine debris, the development and coastal sedimentation.

6 REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON INTEGRATED PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES OF THE REGION

- On-going pilot case-studies on integrated coastal planning in five countries, and another three case studies being initiated.
- Assistance being provided to the planning and environmental management of heavily contaminated bays and coastal areas in eight countries of the region. In four of these - pre-investment studies will be carried out shortly in co-operation with GEF.
- The establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee to provide guidance to the above activity and to function as a network for exchange of information and expertise.
- Strengthening of the monitoring network of tide-gauges to assess the changes in sea level and temperature rise in the region.

7 REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF MARINE AND COASTAL RESOURCES IN THE REGION

- Continued development of data-bases of relevance for the management of the coastal and marine resources of the region.
- Periodic production of Caribbean Environmental Programme, Technical Reports and NEWS.

8 REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND AWARENESS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF MARINE AND COASTAL RESOURCES OF THE REGION

- Development of effective guidelines and establishment of small-grant funds for training, designed around community-based approaches towards marine and coastal resources management - 1993.
- Regional seminar on training of media personnel in reporting on coastal and marine management issues - 1992 and the publication of a related media handbook - 1994.

REFERENCE

This document was written based on the information prepared by the Regional Coordinating Unit (Kingston-Jamaica) of the Caribbean Environmental Programme.