

CaMPAM Training Program: 12 Years of Building MPA Capacity and Developing Partnerships in the Wider Caribbean

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ABSTRACT

Since its creation in 1997 by the UNEP Caribbean Program, the Caribbean MPA Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) has undergone a notable transformation to improve its effectiveness and better serve the needs of MPA practitioners in the Wider Caribbean region. The continuous effort by UNEP to attract the interest and energy of individual experts, and develop a diversity of partnerships has been the *philosophical stone* that has converted CaMPAM into a communication and training program that now serves the MPA community of the wider Caribbean. However, despite the existence of this and other MPA training initiatives (by OPAAL, TNC, MAR Fund, GEF, national MPA agencies, and other) that have contributed to the increasing qualification of MPA practitioners, there are still large differences in capacity between countries and there are also in different stages of developing effectively designed and managed MPA national systems, one –a good one but not the only- important tool to achieve an effective national coastal management scheme. Among the challenges facing MPA managers are lack of economic incentives for local community participation in MPA management, lack of government support for regional environmental initiatives, and weak national policies supporting the effective implementation of MPA programs. This paper presents an overview of the strategy of the CaMPAM capacity building program, and the work of UNEP-CEP and its committed partners to address those challenges and better serve and meet the training needs of an ever changing MPA community.

KEY WORDS: Marine protected areas, Wider Caribbean, training, conservation, partnerships

El Programa de Capacitación de CaMPAM: 12 Años de Trabajo en la Formación de Capacidades de las AMP y el Establecimiento de Asociaciones con Diversas Instituciones del Gran Caribe

PALABRAS CLAVE: Area Marina Protegida, Gran Caribe, capacitación, asociaciones

Programme de Formation du CaMPAM: 12 Ans de Travail dans le Renforcement des Capacités des AMP et des Partenaires dans la Région des Caraïbes

MOTS CLÉS: Aires Marines Protégées, région des Caraïbes, partenaires

THE BEGINNING

In 1997, 50 MPA managers from 22 countries created the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network (CaMPAM) for enhancing collaboration. In that meeting -convened by UNEP-CEP, and co-sponsored by the U.S. Biscayne National Park and NOAA Sanctuary Program- its mission was established: "the enhancement of marine and coastal area management in the Wider Caribbean Region through sharing and collaboration to strengthen our national and regional systems of existing and future marine and coastal protected areas".

Since then, UNEP-CEP has coordinated CaMPAM since its inception and developed a social network of MPAs to improve management effectiveness through capacity-building, strengthening communication, promoting best practices, collaboration and exchange.

Since its beginning then UNEP- CEP has coordinated all activities aimed at developing MPA capacity. In 2004, CaMPAM was revitalized by creating partnerships with other institutions which contributed with funding and

expertise.

During the 2006-2008 period, CaMPAM implemented the following activities:

- i) Two Regional Training the Trainers Courses (ToT) for MPA managers: in 2006 in the Florida Keys Natl. Marine Sanctuary, Florida, and in 2007, in Sian Ka'an B.R., Tulum, Mexico, with 12 - 15 participants each, and in-kind contribution from numerous local institutions;
- ii) Sixteen (16) local follow-up training activities with ca. 200 participants, targeting issues ranging from park rangers/managers training, to nationwide MPA national systems development, to fostering ecotourism best practices and site co-management scheme development.
- iii) Updating of ToT MPA managers Manual (<http://www.cep.unep.org/publications/spaw/tot-manual-en.pdf>);

- iv) ToT program external assessment (<http://www.cep.unep.org/publications/spaw/tot-evaluation.pdf>) with recommendations for program improvement;
- v) Restructuring and population of the regional MPA database (<http://cep.unep.org/caribbeanmpa>);
- vi) Co-management of the SGP by GCFI; 5 projects funded involving 12 countries (<http://cep.unep.org/caribbeanmpa>);
- vii) CaMPAM@yahoo.com list management;
- viii) Secured funding from different donors, and
- ix) Engaged institutional partners (TNC, GCFI, NOAA, Instituto Universitario Tulúm, etc.) that provided resources and expertise for ToT, SGP, and participation at Annual GCFIs.

With the recently hired Coordinator, CaMPAM should enhance its capacity building program by securing resources (funding and in-kind contributions), identifying and building synergy for collaboration with similar initiatives, and expanding membership activism and participation.

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The continuous effort by UNEP to attract the interest and energy of individual experts, and develop a diversity of partnerships has been the *philosophical stone* that has converted CaMPAM into a communication and training program that now serves the MPA community of the wider Caribbean. However, despite the existence of this and other MPA training initiatives (by OPAAL, TNC, MAR Fund, GEF, national MPA agencies, and other) that have contributed to the increasing qualification of MPA practitioners, there are still large differences in capacity between countries and there are also in different stages of developing effectively designed and managed MPA national systems, one –a good one but not the only-important tool to achieve an effective national coastal management scheme

Among the challenges facing MPA managers are lack of economic incentives for local community participation in MPA management, lack of government support for regional environmental initiatives, and weak national policies supporting the effective implementation of MPA programs. This paper presents an overview of the strategy of the CaMPAM capacity building program, and the work of UNEP-CEP and its committed partners to address those challenges and better serve and meet the training needs of an ever changing MPA community.

CAMPAM ACTIVITIES

- i) Regional Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme;
- ii) Exchange visits of fishers and MPA managers;
- iii) Small grants aimed at strengthening MPAs and promoting sustainable fisheries and alternative livelihoods for fishers in or around MPAs (<http://www.gcfi.org/SGF/SGFEng.php>);
- iv) A regional comprehensive MPA Database (<http://cep.unep.org/caribbeanmpa>);
- v) Information dissemination via the list serve (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/campam/>);
- vi) Publications, and
- vii) Discussion fora for managers and scientists.

Since 2004, CaMPAM has established partnerships with relevant institutions from the region which have contributed with resources (both funding and expertise), namely the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, NOAA's National Sanctuary, Coral Reef Conservation Programs, and International Office, and The Nature Conservancy.

Training of Trainers

Since 1999, 7 regional courses for MPA Managers (totaling ca. 110 participants) have been delivered (Saba, Netherlands Antilles); Parque del Este (Dominican Republic); the Soufriere Marine Management Area (St. Lucia); two at the Florida Keys NMS (Florida, USA); and the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve (Tulúm, Mexico), and the Buccoo Reef Marine Park (Trinidad and Tobago). These courses were funded by several donors and also received in-kind contributions from local experts and institutions. Approximately 60 follow-up local training activities (with more than 1,200 persons trained in ca. 25 countries and territories) have been implemented by the alumni of the regional courses, which have had great impact locally and nation-wide. The training manuals in both English and Spanish (<http://www.cep.unep.org/publications-and-resources/promotional-material/publications>) comprise eight modules on Caribbean MPA planning, management, research, monitoring and regional policy, along with communication and teaching skills, a bibliographic list with more than 300 bibliographic references hyperlinked to pdf files, as well as class presentations.

Small Grants Programme

Run by UNEP-CEP and recently with cooperation from GCFI; involves MPA and fisheries managers and has benefitted ca. 15 countries <http://www.gcfi.org/SGF/SGFEng.php>.



Participants of ToT course meet leaders of the fishing and ecotourism co-operative in Punta Allen, Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, in September 2007.

MPA Database

With 77 fields (identity, legal, biophysical and management) <http://cep.unep.org/caribbeanmpa>, it is being populated and will establish links with similar activities and individual websites. The Database will be a standardized repository of detailed information for Caribbean MPAs and a resource for producing regional analyses and periodic reports.



Caribbean MPA data base homepage

- vii) Organize MPA-related sessions at GCFI Annual Meetings, by procuring sponsorship for the attendance of MPA managers and conservation-minded fishers;
- viii) Complete and maintain the regional MPA Database, and disseminate summary reports on the "The State of the Caribbean MPAs" to a broad audience;
- ix) Provide assistance on grant proposal opportunities and development, as well as sources of information to MPA managers, and
- x) Mobilize volunteer efforts to expand CaMPAM activities.

CaMPAM will continue to serve as a significant resource for the region and contribute to the creation of a true learning community of Caribbean MPA practitioners, thus supporting the process of developing effective MPA networks in the next decade.

OBJECTIVES FOR 2009-2010

- i) Expand the network with policy makers and the business sector;
- ii) Build synergy by coordinating activities with local, national and international organizations and programs;
- iii) Expand Training the Trainers Programme by incorporating new training tools and engaging regional institutions;
- iv) Create an active Leadership and Resource Team that can advise and attract resources to expand CaMPAM capacity building program;
- v) Create a mentorship program for managers using existing expertise in important areas of interest (e.g. community-based ecotourism, best practices, monitoring, and co-management);
- vi) Enhance communication and exchange visits;