

CaMPAM MPA Capacity Assessment Gap Analysis

Introduction: This gap analysis was done as part of a larger “MPA Management Capacity Assessment” project being implemented for the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum, CaMPAM. The project objectives are as follows:

- 1) To review existing information to identify key gaps in MPA management capacity information for countries and MPA sites in the Caribbean Region
- 2) To identify 5 year priority MPA management capacity needs for up to 3 demonstration MPA sites in each of nine Caribbean countries
- 3) To provide key information to CaMPAM about MPA management capacity needs in demonstration sites to guide programmatic planning and services such as training, funding, and technical support.

To fulfill objective 1 of the project, the consultant team carried out a gap analysis of known capacity assessment reports in the region. This was done to inform the approach and methodology needed to complete objectives 2 and 3.

As a first step in the gap analysis the consultant team compiled, reviewed, and prepared an initial gap analysis of existing MPA capacity documents. The purpose of the analysis was to look across regional information to identify gaps, to establish a baseline for this assessment and to understand if needs have changed over time. This analysis also initially aimed at gaining a regional perspective on which countries (and sites) have been most assessed for MPA management capacity, and which have had the least information collected. Additionally, the analysis reviewed which specific capacity components have been captured in previous assessments, and when and what tools have been used to collect the information, to understand the relevance (both in scope and time) of previous efforts to the CaMPAM project. The initial findings of the gap analysis were used to support the selection of countries to carry out the capacity assessment as well as to develop the appropriate methodology.

Approach: The gap analysis began with a review of a summary document put together by CaMPAM Executive Team member Emma Doyle, which provided an excellent preliminary overview of existing capacity assessment reports. This document provided summaries about several previous assessments including: year, purpose, geographic focus, and methods. Including the assessments from this summary, the consultant team reviewed a total of 26 documents for the gap analysis. Finally, discussions were held with The Nature Conservancy’s staff in the region about additional MPA management capacity information that has been collected through their program in the past several years. Some of this work, yet not all, has been written in a reports, while in some cases only raw data is available at this time. The consultant team has reviewed the information collected through TNC efforts and will continue to use this information to support implementation of the full capacity assessment and report writing.

The documents reviewed varied greatly in purpose, geographic scope (e.g. site, country, region), methodology, and capacity information collected. As such making broad based comparisons of information is challenging and will likely not provide an accurate analysis. Rather, the information reviewed was broken down by the consultant team into a variety of categories to inform the decision-making process for the larger capacity assessment project (e.g. methodology, capacity

indicators, existing capacity information per country). Finally, and most importantly, these existing reports will be used to inform the capacity assessment at the country level, as a foundation for understanding previously identified management capacity needs and assess changes that may have occurred over time. As such, existing reports will be summarized and used to prepare for site visits with MPA managers to foster in-depth, detailed discussions about capacity challenges, needs, and changes where appropriate. It should also be noted that the consultants will continue to collect, review, and build upon documents relevant to the countries that will be assessed through this project and therefore this information will evolve over time.

Results: The information presented in Table 1 provides an overview of the documents collected and reviewed for this initial assessment.

Table 1: Documents Reviewed	
Total number of existing documents reviewed:	26 +
# of documents focused on MPA management capacity	17+
# of documents not focused on MPA capacity but other related topics (i.e. sustainable livelihood programs, threats and challenges to the regions resources, etc.)	9
Methodologies used	RAPPAM, How's your MPA doing, tailor-made
# of documents focused on Caribbean region MPA efforts (not specific to a sub-region of countries)	3
# of documents focused on sub-regional MPA efforts (multiple countries in a sub-region)	2 (both MAR region), 6 non-capacity
# of documents focused on one specific country	8 + 9 (RAPPAM data collected only, no report)
# of documents focused on site specific information	2 (Belize and St. Lucia)

Existing Capacity Assessment Methodology:

Protected areas assessments have been conducted in the past using many different methods that vary considerably in their scale, depth, duration, and data collecting methods. In general there are four types of assessment methods: 1) in depth, evidence-based, 2) comprehensive system-wide peer based, 3) rapid expert-based scorecard, and 4) categorical assumption-based methods. In the system-wide approach methods for example, each protected area within a given system is assessed, typically in participatory workshops, and the results for each indicator are peer-reviewed for consistency and accuracy. This method is the most frequently used approach in the Caribbean region through the World Wide Fund for Nature’s Rapid Assessment and Prioritization of Protected Areas Management, RAPPAM. The RAPPAM method includes over 100 indicators and is aimed at understanding management effectiveness of systems of protected areas.

As stated above, several methodologies were utilized including, RAPPAM, How’s your MPA doing?, and several self-designed assessment tools. Additionally, the new NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program MPA checklist was reviewed as a tool that has been used to assess MPA management capacity in priority sites within US jurisdictions. Capacity information from the different methods varied greatly. Some assessments included questions that related to MPA effectiveness (i.e. an evaluation of the MPA achieving its stated goals and objectives biological and social). Other assessments focused mainly on MPA management capacity (i.e. the ability of a management agency to effectively manage the site based on skills, knowledge, and resources available). The list of each specific capacity indicator used in various assessments is long, detailed, and potentially duplicative. Therefore, consultants listed only capacity “themes” in this report, as more than one specific indicator can fall under these themes. The following table (2) shows a summation of various capacity themes that have been utilized in one or several assessment methodologies and were considered for the CaMPAM capacity assessment.

Table 2: Summary Of Capacity Themes From Existing Assessments

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| ▪ Management Planning | ▪ Communications |
| ▪ Ecological Network Development | ▪ Fundraising/ Grant Writing - Proposal Writing and Reporting |
| ▪ Governance | ▪ Technical Staff (ecosystem science/management, outreach, GIS, etc) |
| ▪ On-site management | ▪ Project management (developing work plans, benchmarks, measures of effectiveness, timelines, budgeting, reporting etc) |
| ▪ Enforcement | ▪ MPA management topics incorporated into educational systems (higher education) |
| ▪ Boundaries | ▪ Alternative Livelihood Programs |
| ▪ Biophysical monitoring | ▪ Invasive Species Management |
| ▪ Socioeconomic monitoring | ▪ Adequate staffing |
| ▪ MPA Effectiveness evaluation | ▪ Adequate equipment |

- Stakeholder engagement
- Financing
- Outreach and Education
- Conflict Resolution Mechanism
- Resilience to Climate Change
- Sustainable tourism and development planning
- Integrated Coastal Management Activities Incorporate in Planning or Coordinated
- Data for planning and management effectiveness (SPAG, connectivity, ecosystem function)
- Organizational Management including strategic planning, equipment management, budgeting, reporting, etc
- Community/ Stakeholder Support
- Threat Assessment
- Biological Significance
- Political Will and Support
- Partnerships and Coordination
- Facilitation
- Legal Process for addressing things such as permitting and illegal activities
- Capacity Building programs for staff (training, schooling, tech support)
- Assessment of biological and socio-economic condition (pre-planning)

Country Level Information:

Information collected through previous assessments varied greatly across the region with some countries being assessed more than others. Additionally the type of information collected in each of these assessments greatly varied. There were two notable efforts that had a standardized approach and method. One was the OPAAL assessment carried out in all of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, OECS, which utilized a custom assessment and reviewed individual capacity of personnel at a site to carry out their jobs. This assessment provides and excellent starting point for understanding training needs. The other standardized effort is a RAPPAM project, coordinated by The Nature Conservancy, and carried out in several countries in the Wider Caribbean that received Early Action Grants from the Convention on Biological Diversity. This assessment provides and excellent starting point for understanding capacity challenges and needs within a country protected area system. Information from both of these efforts will be used as the foundation for on-site discussions in countries and sites that the assessment will take place.

Table 3 below provides an initial overview of the countries that have been included in known previous assessments, and how many assessments were carried out in that country. The table does not distinguish if the assessment was carried out for the country specifically or if the country was merely part of a larger “regional or sub-regional” assessment effort.

Table 3: Existing Information per Country

# of capacity documents	Countries
5	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
4	Belize, St. Lucia
3	Grenada
2	Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Antigua & Barbuda, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras
1	Anguilla, Bahamas, Jamaica
0	British Virgin Islands, Martinique, Aruba, Bermuda, Cuba, Netherland Antilles, Guadeloupe, TCI, Barbados, Cayman Islands, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Montserrat, Trinidad & Tobago, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela

After reviewing information from the initial gap analysis and through a process of criteria based selection, the CaMPAM executive team decided on nine specific countries to carry out the assessment at 2-3 specific MPAs in each. These countries are:

1. Bahamas
2. Belize
3. Mexico
4. St. Vincent & the Grenadines AND Grenada (collectively)
5. Honduras
6. Saba & St. Eustatius (collectively)
7. St. Lucia
8. British Virgin Islands
9. Turks and Caicos

Upon finalizing this country selection for the assessment, the consultant team has been collecting further capacity assessment information from these specific countries. The list below provides a list of reports and/or data sets that will be used to provide a foundation for the capacity assessment and on-site discussions for countries selected.

Table 4: Existing Information per Selected Countries

1. St Vincent and the Grenadines:

- a. St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Protected Areas System Capacity Development Final Draft Plan, 2007
- b. OECS Protected Areas and Associated Livelihoods Project, Capacity Building for Protected Areas Planning and Management and Associated Livelihoods Regional Protected Areas Training Needs Assessment - St.Vincent and the Grenadines Country report, 2007
- c. TNC/ RAPPAM Assessment - St Vincent and Grenadines, 2007
- d. Expansion, Consolidation and Strengthening of MPA Network in the OECS, 2010
- e. CERMES Technical Report No 14: Learning from evaluating MPA management effectiveness, 2006 (specific to Tobago Cays Marine Park)
- f. SVG National Parks and Protected Areas System Plan 2009 – 2014 DRAFT, 2008

2. Grenada:

- a. OECS Protected Areas and Associated Livelihoods Project, Capacity Building for Protected Areas Planning and Management and Associated Livelihoods Regional Protected Areas Training Needs Assessment – Grenada report, 2007
- b. TNC/ RAPPAM Assessment - Grenada, 2007
- c. Expansion, Consolidation and Strengthening of MPA Network in the OECS, 2010
- d. Grenada National Protected Areas System Capacity Development Final Draft Plan, 2007

3. St. Lucia:

- a. OECS Protected Areas and Associated Livelihoods Project, Capacity Building for Protected Areas Planning and Management and Associated Livelihoods Regional Protected Areas Training Needs Assessment - St. Lucia Country report, 2007
- b. TNC/ RAPPAM Assessment- St. Lucia, 2009
- c. Expansion, Consolidation and Strengthening of MPA Network in the OECS, 2010
- d. Management Effectiveness Assessment Report for Saint Lucia Protected Area System, 2009

4. Belize:

- a. Recommendations for the Design of the MAR Learning Center Report ; and MAR Project, Learning Center Questionnaire Results, 2005 (Sub-regional assessment)
- b. Línea Base Regional de la Efectividad de Manejo en Áreas Marinas Protegidas en Región del SAM (Regional Baseline on MPA Management Effectiveness in MAR, 2007 (Sub-regional assessment)
- c. A profile of the Hol Chan Marine Reserve (Belize): success and challenges (if Hol Chan

is included as a demonstration site)

- d. CERMES Technical Report No 14: Learning from evaluating MPA management effectiveness (if Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve is included as a demonstration site)

5. **Mexico:**

- a. Recommendations for the Design of the MAR Learning Center Report ; and MAR Project, Learning Center Questionnaire Results, 2005 (Sub-regional assessment)
- b. Línea Base Regional de la Efectividad de Manejo en Áreas Marinas Protegidas en Región del SAM (Regional Baseline on MPA Management Effectiveness in MAR, 2007 (Sub-regional assessment)

6. **Honduras:**

- a. Recommendations for the Design of the MAR Learning Center Report ; and MAR Project, Learning Center Questionnaire Results, 2005 (Sub-regional assessment)
- b. Línea Base Regional de la Efectividad de Manejo en Áreas Marinas Protegidas en Región del SAM (Regional Baseline on MPA Management Effectiveness in MAR, 2007 (Sub-regional assessment)

7. **Bahamas:**

- a. TNC/ RAPPAM Assessments - Bahamas, (date unknown)

8. **Turks and Caicos:**

No previous assessment documents have been identified at this time.

9. **British Virgin Islands:**

No previous assessment documents have been identified at this time.

10. **Saba and St Estatius:**

No previous assessment documents have been collected at this time; however, a recent interview with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance indicated that management capacity has been measured annually for the past five years, and action plans have been developed based on the assessments to fill priority capacity needs. This information will be provided to consultants and reviewed to understand the relevance/need for site visits.

Conclusions:

Assessments of management capacity have been conducted previously in several countries of the Caribbean in the past years using diverse methods to capture a wide array of information. Moreover, there seems to be an emphasis on measuring management effectiveness of systems of MPAs or personnel rather than exploring in depth management capacity at specific sites.

Several of the assessments note that the capacity for management many times is affected by institutional settings including available financial resources, decision makers' political will, or levels of staffing. On the other hand, when comparing the different tools, it is noted that not all establish clear baselines or state desired future conditions. This kind of information is necessary for assessing capacity needs.

Additionally, the concept of management capacity in the existing assessments varies widely. Some focus on a knowledge base about different aspects of MPAs and the issues facing their managers, such as the knowledge of ecosystem processes, biophysical characteristics, legal issues, and socio-economic setting. Others focus on cross-cutting skills that managers require in order to make plans, make decisions and implement management practices. For example, decision-making skills, resource prioritization, budget control, project management, adaptive management, stakeholder participation, negotiating skills or conflict resolution. Even personal traits such as accountability, transparency or a participatory management style are included in at least one assessment.

Given the varied methods and focus of existing assessments, the consultants are not able to make any concise statements about specific site or regional priority capacity strengths, challenges, or needs at this time. However, as stated previously, these existing reports can and will inform discussions and further collection of site specific capacity information to achieve the objectives of the capacity assessment. As such, existing information will also be reflected in the final report upon completion of the site-specific assessments.

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