

CONCEPTS & AGREEMENTS RELEVANT TO THE CLME+ SAP

- Globally, “**Large Marine Ecosystems**” or “**LMEs**” produce over 85% of the annual marine fisheries catch. LMEs are relatively large areas of coastal waters and ocean space adjacent to the continents or surrounding islands. Their boundaries are based on ecological criteria and processes; as such, they constitute a recommended geographic base unit for implementing the ecosystem approach to natural (marine) resources management. Within these larger LME’s, further differentiation can still be made between different ecosystem types.
- The “**Caribbean Sea LME**” (CLME; 3.3 million km²) is bounded to the south and west by the North Brazil Shelf LME and the coasts of northern South America and Central America, to the north by the southeastern limits of the Gulf of Mexico LME and of the United States of America, and to the east by the Antilles chain of islands. The Caribbean Sea is an ecosystem with overall moderate productivity rates that show considerable variability over space and time. The Sea supports a broad array of commercial and subsistence fisheries and constitutes a sub-area of a distinct and globally important biogeographical area of coral reef development with high levels of endemism.
- The “**North Brazil Shelf LME**” (NBSLME; 1.1 million km²) extends from its southernmost limit near the Paraíba River estuary in Brazil, along the wide continental shelf off the Atlantic Coast of South America up to its northern boundary with the Caribbean Sea. High volumes of water and nutrients from terrestrial river basins in South America - including the Amazon and Orinoco basins- are transported by the North Brazil Current through this LME into the Caribbean Sea. The highly productive North Brazil Shelf supports important fisheries, and has moderate levels of biodiversity characterized by an important degree of endemism.
- “**CLME+**” is the acronym used in this Strategic Action Programme (SAP) to refer to the area covered by the CLME Project. It corresponds to the combined areas of the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf LMEs, hence the use of the superscript “+”. However, unlike the Cartagena Convention, it does not include the area of the Gulf of Mexico LME.
- The “**ecosystem approach**” has been defined as “*Ecosystem and natural habitats management (...) to meet human requirements to use natural resources, whilst maintaining the biological richness and ecological processes necessary to sustain the composition, structure and function of the habitats or ecosystems concerned.*” It is also defined as “*a strategy for the integrated management of land, water, and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way*”. It recognizes that “*the ecosystem is a functional unit at any spatial scale*” and that “*humans with their varied cultural and social needs are an integral part of many ecosystems*”.
- “**Societal benefits**”: the marine ecosystems in the region provide a wide variety of goods and services to human society. These include the provision of protein and income through fisheries and tourism. Ecosystem types such as corals, mangroves and sea grass beds act as coastal defense and/or as sinks for the carbon emitted into the atmosphere by human activities.
- Interactive “**Governance**” emphasizes solving societal problems and creating societal opportunities through interactions among civil, public and private actors. The institutional, legal, economic and other practical arrangements made to enable and control this process are referred to in this document as “**governance arrangements**”.
- “**Mainstreaming adaptation**” to climate variability and change can be described as the integration of climate concerns and adaptation responses into relevant policies, plans, programmes and projects, and is an important consideration throughout the CLME+ SAP.
- “**Caribbean Sea Initiative**”: the UN Resolution “*Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations*” recognizes the Caribbean Sea as an area of unique biodiversity and a highly fragile ecosystem that requires relevant regional and international development partners to work together to develop and implement regional initiatives to promote the sustainable conservation and management of coastal and marine resources.
- “**Cartagena Convention**”: the *Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR)* is a comprehensive agreement that provides a legal framework for cooperative regional and national actions. It is supplemented by 3 Protocols (oil spills, specially protected areas and wildlife, and land-based sources of pollution).
- The “**wider Caribbean Region**” is the region to which the Cartagena Convention applies. It corresponds to the marine environment of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and the areas of the Atlantic Ocean adjacent thereto, south of 30 deg north latitude and within 200 nautical miles of the Atlantic coasts of the States referred to in article 25 of the Convention.
- The “**United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**” (UNCLOS), is the international agreement that resulted from the third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III; 1973-1982). It defines the rights and responsibilities of nations in their use of the world’s oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources. In the context of the CLME+ SAP, it provides an important reference framework especially for the participating countries that have ratified the Convention.