

**REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE
OF THE CARIBBEAN AND NORTH BRAZIL SHELF LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS (CLME+) PROJECT**

Meeting held online, chaired by the Government of The Bahamas

23 – 25 February 2021

Catalyzing implementation of the
Strategic Action Programme for the Caribbean and
North Brazil Shelf LME's (2015-2025)



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ACRONYMS

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CLME	Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem
CLME+	Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems Project
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
GEF	Global Environment Facility
ICM	Interim Coordination Mechanism
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NIC	National Inter-sectoral Coordination Mechanisms
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OPF	Operational Focal Point
OSPESCA	Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organisation / <i>Organización del Sector Pesquero y Acuicola del Istmo Centroamericano</i>
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PIF	Project Identification Form
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RPC	Regional Project Coordinator
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SCM	Steering Committee Meeting
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USA	United States of America

INTRODUCTION

1. The Third and Final Regular Meeting of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) of the UNDP/GEF Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems (CLME+) Project was convened virtually from 23 – 25 February 2021, in order to:
 - Finalise negotiations and obtain consensus on the text of the Coordination Mechanism Memorandum of Understanding
 - Debrief the PSC on the status of CLME+ Project implementation
 - Share the main outputs emanating from the CLME+ Project
 - Present the preliminary findings from the Project's Terminal Evaluation
 - Present and discuss the status of the new UNDP/GEF Project Concept Note for the continuity of the CLME+ initiative
2. In light of the meeting's objectives and taking into account the order in which the various agenda items would be considered over a three-day period, the PCU had invited all Delegations, in advance of the meeting, to consider including representatives from their respective legal departments to join them on the first day of the meeting, and had also indicated to the CLME+ Project National Focal Points that they may wish to encourage Global Environment Facility (GEF) Operational Focal Points (OFP) to participate on the third day.
3. The list of participants in the meeting is presented in Annex 1.

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

4. Mr. Patrick Debels, Regional Project Coordinator (RPC) of the CLME+ Project, welcomed all participants on behalf of the PCU, noting that this was the third meeting of the PSC that had to be convened virtually. He noted the work done and achievements realised last year by the PSC, in spite of the challenges caused by the pandemic. He thanked all participating countries and partners for their contribution to the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP), in pursuit of a shared vision. He stressed that while the CLME+ Project is nearing its end and reaching a major milestone, this is not the end of the common journey, and there are important issues to be considered by this meeting. Achievements to date provide the foundation upon which the region could and should continue building. Indeed, a major item on this meeting's agenda is the consideration of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) through which the Coordination Mechanism will be created, and he expressed the hope that all outstanding matters will be resolved and that full technical endorsement of the draft MoU will be achieved. In his remarks, Mr. Debels paid a warm tribute to two active and dedicated members of the PSC and the MoU Drafting Group, Paul Hoetjes of the Caribbean Netherlands and Mauricio Herdocia, legal advisor to the Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organisation (OSPESCA), who passed away recently, and he expressed, on behalf of all participants, a collective commitment to continue the work of these two colleagues. In conclusion, he thanked the outgoing Chairs and Co-Chairs (Panama and Trinidad and Tobago) who have successfully guided the work of the PSC through the last three meetings. In conclusion, he expressed the wish for a successful meeting, in order to finalize what is left to be done in the CLME+ Project and to ensure that resources can be mobilised for the continuation of its work .
5. Ms. Ana María Nuñez, Regional Technical Specialist for Waters, Oceans, Ecosystems and Biodiversity at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), began her remarks by stressing the importance of the decisions to be taken at this meeting. She reiterated UNDP's support for the SAP and for the establishment of an effective ocean governance arrangement in the region, as well as its commitment to collaborate in efforts to secure funds for the continuation of the initiative. She said that thoughts and energies should be directed at the people most impacted by the current pandemic, and she stressed that now more than ever there is a need to sustain cooperation and coordination. She is therefore pleased

that UNDP has been able to work with sister United Nations (UN) agencies and other actors to promote the ecosystem-based approach and move this important project forward, for the benefit of the entire region. She highlighted the fact that the Project directly contributes to several of the Goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as to the mandates of several international conventions and agreements, that its objectives are totally aligned with those of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), that Project expenditure is on well track, and that all the expected results are likely to be delivered. She acknowledged the tremendous amount of work done by the Project team to organise and facilitate this meeting under current, challenging conditions. Ms. Nuñez further noted that this meeting must focus in particular on the sustainability of the initiative and the technical endorsement of the draft MoU for the Coordination Mechanism, as well as on the completion of activities of the current project. She encouraged all Delegates to participate actively in all deliberations, stressing the importance of this meeting and of the matters placed on its agenda.

6. Ms. Katrin Lichtenberg, Senior Portfolio Manager, Europe and Central Asia Regional Office's Water and Energy Cluster, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), recalling that she has been associated with the CLME and CLME+ Projects for more than ten years, welcomed all Delegates and expressed her pleasure at working with sister UN agencies and other Intergovernmental Organisations (IGO) in this initiative. She noted that the initiative has now reached a new milestone, and that this is a successful and proud moment. The special conditions that we are experiencing now, she said, are reminding us of the importance of coming together, even when it is not possible to do so physically. She expressed her appreciation to the CLME+ Project team for its tireless work, especially considering the many constraints imposed by these special conditions. The collaborative arrangements between UN agencies, IGOs and other stakeholders, she said, provide a good example of how the region's living marine resources should be, and are being, managed, through collaboration and adaptive management. The Project is close to the finishing line, although there remain activities to be completed, but she expressed her confidence that all targets will be reached as planned. She noted that the Project has applied the best tools available in order to achieve effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In conclusion, Ms. Lichtenberg reminded participants that there are many important items on this meeting's agenda, and she expressed her confidence that the decisions that will be made at this meeting will allow the region to move forward.
7. Mr. Christian Severin, Senior Environmental Specialist and lead for the International Waters focal area at the GEF, recalled that this process was indeed initiated over 10 years ago, noting that it remains entirely relevant today, as it focuses on building capacity, and this is a need that will never cease. He congratulated all those involved for their excellent, tireless efforts. He noted that regional cooperation and coordination have been and remain central to the CLME process, and that the trust built over the years has been cemented and has been a critical factor of success in this Project. He remarked that it takes time and courage to build trust, and this is something that this region has done well, showing the world how it is done. Investments such as this, he noted, must eventually lead to the reduction and removal of stresses on the shared resources in the ocean; much has been achieved in this regard, but more can and should be delivered. Ultimately, it is not only about removing stress on ecosystems and resources, but it is about supporting social and cultural development, it is about enhancing human well-being and creating economic opportunities. There is therefore a need to look at the long-term, and to focus on instruments such marine spatial planning, in order to inform political decision-makers as well private sector actions, behaviours and investments. The GEF, he recalled, is keen to promote approaches that focus simultaneously on governance and on stress reduction. He further highlighted the uniqueness of what the region has been able to achieve, with so many countries and territories and a range of sectors, at the same time linking local action to the national and regional scales. The region now seeks to build back "bluer and greener", and it has the opportunity to do this on the basis of what has been achieved, as this region has already taken amazing steps that will be critical to its recovery. In conclusion,

he congratulated the region as a global leader that has been able to demonstrate the value and the practice of cooperation and collaboration.

APPOINTMENT OF HEAD TABLE

8. The Meeting Facilitator, Mr. Yves Renard, invited Delegates to submit nominations for the positions of PSC Chair and Vice-Chair. Barbados nominated The Bahamas to serve as Chair, with Saint Lucia seconding this nomination. The Dominican Republic then nominated Honduras to serve as Vice-Chair, and this nomination was seconded by the United States of America (USA) and by Guatemala. Both nominations were accepted by the meeting without objection, the Heads of Delegations from The Bahamas and Honduras thanked the meeting for the confidence placed in them and acknowledged their appointments, and Ms. Rochelle Newbold, Head of Delegation of The Bahamas, assumed the position of Chair.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA

9. The Chair introduced the proposed agenda for the meeting, with the Meeting Facilitator reminding participants of the proposed structure, whereby: the first day would be devoted to the consideration of all matters related to the Coordination Mechanism; the second day to the review of Project outputs, the conclusions of the terminal evaluation and the revised budget and updated work plan; and the final day to the continuity of the CLME+ initiative, followed by the review and adoption of the recommendations and decisions of the meeting. In the absence of modifications, the approval of the agenda was moved by Barbados and seconded by the USA.

COORDINATION MECHANISM MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

10. This agenda item was introduced by Ms. Laverne Walker, Deputy Project Coordinator, CLME+ PCU, who first provided background information on the process followed to date, recalling that the mandate to establish a Coordination Mechanism was explicitly provided by the SAP. Accordingly, work began in 2017 with the recruitment of the firm Centre of Partnership for Development (Global CAD) and the launch of a process to assist the region in the design of the Coordination Mechanism. This has involved three phases, with two regional workshops and extensive bilateral consultations. In June 2020, the PSC met virtually and endorsed the core aspects of the Coordination Mechanism, agreed on the use of a non-binding instrument (a Memorandum of Understanding) and established a Drafting Group to advance the process further. This Group met on four occasions, resolved a number of outstanding issues and proposed alternative text. The October 2020 meeting of the PSC advanced further towards consensus on a draft document, leaving only three areas to be resolved. At that time, the PSC also asked the PCU to consider organising a new consultation to address these outstanding matters, and the draft MoU was shared, with a questionnaire used to gather views and recommendations. An informal consultation was then convened on 4 February with approximately 20 participants, and recommendations were made with proposed text for the remaining bracketed areas.
11. At the end of her presentation, Ms. Walker indicated that the purpose of this agenda item is to:
 - Agree on the proposed text for the three remaining bracketed areas of the MoU
 - Address any other remaining areas of concern in the draft MoU as highlighted by PSC members
 - Obtain technical endorsement of the Coordination Mechanism MoU
 - Define way forward towards adoption of Coordination Mechanism MoU text

12. The Delegate from Barbados shared his country's position that while Barbados has participated and will remain engaged in this process, there remain significant concerns in the current draft of the MoU that need to be considered internally. He indicated that his country is therefore unable to provide definitive endorsement at this point in time, and the Delegate from the USA asked if this would prevent technical endorsement and implications. Meanwhile, the Delegate from the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) requested more clarity on the process moving forward, beyond this particular meeting. In response to this question, Ms. Walker noted that there will indeed be various stages of review and approval after this meeting, with some countries having indicated that it is easier for them to seek legal review when the document no longer contains brackets and optional text. It is therefore hoped that all outstanding issues could be resolved at this meeting and that there could be technical endorsement of the MoU, making it possible for countries to conduct reviews with their legal departments. She also noted the need to ensure full consistency between the two languages of the document. Once language has been reconciled and legal reviews have been completed, and the MoU text agreed upon, the MoU could be available for signature.
13. Following these introductions and discussions, Ms. Laverne Walker guided the meeting through the various outstanding issues and sections, using and presenting two versions of the document, one in which the options from the October meeting were shown, and one presenting the recommendations emanating from the informal consultation of 4 February. In each case, she provided background information on the rationale for the various options and for the recommended text, and detailed discussions took place, with several Delegations indicating their preferences over individual options and in some instances providing additional or alternative text. Following extensive discussion and in-depth examination of options, all outstanding issues were resolved, a consensus on the draft text emerged, and a revised text was arrived at for consideration as part of the decisions of this meeting.
14. The meeting also gave detailed consideration to the processes required to finalise a text of the MoU that is ready for signature. The need for reconciliation between the English and Spanish versions having been noted, it was agreed that the CLME+ PCU, with support from interested PSC Members, should conduct a language reconciliation assessment. Following this, the text of the MoU should be submitted by all States, Territories and IGOs to their respective legal departments for review. In that process, States, Territories and IGOs will be invited to verify if they are satisfied that the MoU as drafted will suffice to allow the Coordination Mechanism and its Secretariat to operate efficiently and effectively in discharging their functions and achieving their objectives, noting in particular the omission of text on the legal personality of the Coordination Mechanism. It was further agreed that the PCU should convene a special Meeting of the CLME+ Project Steering Committee with the aim of achieving finalisation and opening for signature of the Coordination Mechanism Memorandum of Understanding before the end of June 2021.

OPERATIONALIZING AND SUSTAINING THE COORDINATION MECHANISM

15. This agenda item was introduced by Mr. Patrick Debels, who presented the timeline for the operationalisation of the Coordination Mechanism, within the context of the SAP and taking into account the time frame of the CLME+ Project and the expected commencement of a successor project. He stressed the critical importance of keeping the duration of the period between the end of the current Project and its successor to a minimum, as this is critical to ensure continuity. He therefore highlighted the need to submit the Project Identification Form (PIF) for the successor project to UNDP by the end of March 2021, for onward submission to the GEF Secretariat. In conclusion, Mr. Debels presented the meeting with three main questions to be considered: (a) at what level is the MoU to be signed by each participating country? (b) who is to be

the custodian for the MoU signatures? and (c) who is to represent each country in the Steering Group of the Coordination Mechanism?

16. In the extensive discussion that followed, the merits of various approaches and options were considered. With respect to the authority for signing the MoU, it was eventually agreed that it should be up to each State and Territory to determine the level at which this should be done, and it was recommended that States and Territories consider designating high-level Delegates to serve in the various organs of the Coordination Mechanism. It was further noted that the representation of each State and Territory in the Steering Group should be such that it will facilitate the successful achievement of the goals and objectives of the Coordination Mechanism, and enable adequate articulation among regional-level and national-level ocean governance coordination processes. Taking into account the multi-sectoral nature of ocean governance, the meeting noted the importance of mechanisms such as National Inter-sectoral Coordination Mechanisms (NIC), and encouraged countries to continue working towards the strengthening of such processes. While recognising the relevance and importance of inter-governmental coordination, the meeting discussed and noted the value of actions by all sectors of society, and as such reiterated its support for broad stakeholder partnerships.
17. In order to enable the prompt and successful operationalisation of the Coordination Mechanism and to achieve its sustainability over the short, medium and long terms, with further details provided by the PCU regarding the expected timeline, several Delegations expressed opposition to arrangements that would stipulate mandatory financial contributions from the signatories to the MoU, approaches to financing and financial sustainability were discussed, and the meeting identified specific steps and measures to be reflected in its decisions. The meeting also considered a recommendation from the CLME+ PCU regarding the name of the Coordination Mechanism, and concluded that a new name could not be selected at this stage, but that the CLME+ PCU should solicit proposals for such a name and survey participants regarding their preference. With respect to the receipt of signatures prior to the commencement of the MoU and the establishment of its Steering Group, several options were examined in detail and it was agreed that the CLME+ ICM Secretariat should retain the original text of this MoU and should receive all signatures until the MOU commences; once the MOU commences, this role would be performed by a country or IGO that has expressed interest, and by the Secretariat of the Coordination Mechanism once it has commenced operation.

OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN PROJECT OUTPUTS

18. The CLME+ Project Coordination Unit presented a video featuring the main results achieved under the Project's five components. This video includes testimonials from co-executing partners, as well as the PCU, on a number of project outputs, and it presents opportunities for sustainability of Project interventions and regional ocean governance arrangements. Following this presentation, several Delegates congratulated the PCU for the quality and usefulness of this production, and recommended that the video be used to share the results of the Project with stakeholders and partners within and outside the region.

TERMINAL EVALUATION – PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

19. Dr. Andrea Merla, Terminal Evaluator, presented his preliminary findings on the impact and performance of the CLME+ Project to the Project Steering Committee. Based on his assessment of the Project, he outlined initial recommendations and conclusions, as follows:
 - The CLME+ Project is nearing a successful conclusion, having achieved most of the expected results.

- The Project has excelled in adaptive management, monitoring, and reporting of progress.
- Without the initial delays of administrative nature, countries would have benefited from more time for internalising the numerous strategies, assessments, pilot tests and reform proposals produced by the Project.
- Aligning marine and coastal environmental protection policies and sustainable approaches to wild capture fisheries is a key aspect of the blue economy and an innovative contribution and a goal of the CLME+ Project that countries should continue to pursue.
- Intersectoral consultation/coordination at country level is hence of paramount importance to forge and consolidate regional policies aimed at enhancing the sustainability of shared marine resources.
- Future joint efforts should consider expanding the direct role of countries in project execution.
- The transition from wild capture fisheries to fish farming, and the creation of alternative livelihoods for fisherfolks, have so far not received noticeable attention.

20. In the discussion that followed, the significant progress made by this Project and the entire CLME process was highlighted and the evaluator’s preliminary conclusions and recommendations were noted. In light of the enormity of the challenge posed by the current pandemic, the value of the partnerships created and enhanced as part of this process and the relevance of the ecosystem-based approach cannot be underestimated, as these will be critical to a much-needed recovery. In particular one Delegation stressed the importance of the report and the need to ensure that its recommendations are considered in follow-up actions at regional and sub-regional levels. The case of the transition from wild capture fisheries to fish farming was mentioned as particularly relevant to the region, taking into account earlier experience in this domain.

TERMINAL EVALUATION – COFINANCING REPORTING AND STATUS

21. Mr. Ivan Pavletich Meza, Operations and Finance Manager, CLME+ PCU, provided the Project Steering Committee with an overview of the committed co-financing reported by CLME+ participating countries and partners to date, and reminded those that have not provided information on co-financing committed to do so as soon as possible, as it is required to finalise the report on the Terminal Evaluation.

REVISED BUDGET AND UPDATED WORK PLAN

22. Mr. Ivan Pavletich Meza provided a short overview of CLME+ Project’s progress with financial implementation, and presented a revised budget and work plan for the remaining months of the Project. He indicated that only minor changes have been brought to the work plan that was presented to the PSC in October 2020: the main changes relate to the extension of the interagency agreements with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), while other activities remained unchanged, with the period of implementation having been extended until July, followed by four months devoted to administrative closure. With respect to the budget, Mr. Pavletich presented cumulative expenditure since the beginning of the Project, noting that a rate of disbursement of 92% at the end of January. Projected rates of expenditure are 96% by April 2021 and 99% by July 2021. A revised budget was then presented, reflecting the extensions to the agreements with UNEP and FAO, as well as the slight delays encountered in some of the consultancy agreements and an increase to the amount allocated to translations.

CONTINUITY OF THE CLME+ INITIATIVE

23. Mr. Patrick Debels informed the meeting that a proposal for the continuity of the CLME+ initiative has been developed and is now at PIF stage. It is aligned with the Programming Directions for the GEF's International Waters Focal Area, with the objective of *"protecting, restoring and harnessing the natural coastal and marine capital of the region to catalyse investments in a climate-resilient, sustainable post-covid Blue Economy, through strengthened regional coordination and collaboration, and wide-ranging partnerships"*, and it is structured around four components. The total of GEF funds allocated to the project would be USD 17.2 million, with a Project Preparation Grant in the amount of USD 350,000 and agency fees estimated at USD 1.420 million. It was noted that while the PIF should be completed very soon, it is understood that further fine-tuning of the project proposal can take place during the 10-month project preparation phase. The requirements for submission of endorsement letters and preliminary indications of country and agency co-financing were also presented, with an explanation of the difference between baseline and alternative scenario co-financing, and an indication that co-financing can be provided in cash as well as in kind. The PCU and the Delegate from UNDP also provided a brief update on the status of receipt of endorsement letters and indicative co-financing commitments.
24. Following this presentation, the Chair gave the floor to Dr. Cesar Toro, Chair of the Interim Coordination Mechanism (ICM), who reported that the 10th meeting of the ICM:
- noted the opportunity provided by the June 2021 GEF Council Work Programme, as well as the fact that later GEF7 Work Programmes may no longer provide the same level of opportunities for leveraging similar amounts of financial support for advancing key SAP processes in the region, and therefore acknowledged the importance of meeting the March 24 deadline for the submission of the UNDP/GEF PROCARIBE+ PIF, and expressed formal support for efforts aimed at meeting that deadline;
 - agreed to liaise with respective Member States, in an effort to ensure the submission of endorsement letters, from GEF eligible countries, for the proposed PROCARIBE+ project, as soon as possible, but not later than 24 March 2021;
 - committed to help mobilising country support leading to the timely provision of GEF OFP endorsement letters and indicative country co-financing for the PIF as soon as possible, but no later than 24 March 2021; and
 - agreed to communicate indicative co-financing contributions for the PIF to the CLME+ PCU at their earliest convenience, but no later than 28 February 2021.
25. In the discussion that followed the PCU's presentation, the meeting expressed support for the proposal presented, taking into account the critical and strategic importance of securing renewed funding from the GEF to support the operations of the Coordination Mechanism and the continued implementation of the CLME+ SAP. It was noted that the timeline for submission of the PIF by 24 March is extremely tight, and the implications of a later submission were discussed, especially with the need to recruit new personnel and the resulting loss of continuity, as well as the risk of losing the possibility of securing funds from the GEF. The benefits of a successful submission of the PIF by 24 March 2021 were therefore stressed, and the requirements for meeting that deadline were noted, including the timely submission of indicative co-financing and the provision of endorsement letters from the GEF OFPs. With respect to the components and activities as currently described in the PIF, one Delegation stressed the need for further discussion around the concept of partnership and its place in the future project.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS

26. The Chair invited the PCU to present the draft Recommendations and Decisions of the Meeting for review and adoption, with amendments as appropriate. These were displayed in real time through a multimedia projector in both languages, and discussed in detail by participants. The Recommendations and Decisions of the Third Meeting of the Steering Committee, as approved by this Meeting, are included in Annex 3.

MEETING CLOSURE

27. In closing the meeting, the Vice-Chair, Head of Delegation from Honduras, highlighted the extreme importance of participatory ocean governance and noted the progress made over the past decade in the region. She noted some of the issues that need to be addressed, with challenges exacerbated by the current pandemic, but she also remarked that the current crisis provides an incentive and an opportunity to adapt and see how human behaviour generates major impacts, and how the ecosystem-based approach and the blue economy can support the region's recovery, for the benefit of present and future generations.
28. The Delegate from UNOPS then addressed the meeting to express her appreciation for the progress made during this meeting, noting that a very important milestone has been reached. There is now an agreement that a Coordination Mechanism is the order of the day, she stated, a number of important decisions have been made, and UNOPS looks forward to remaining associated with this regional process.
29. Mr. Patrick Debels illustrated his closing remarks with a picture of the first Steering Committee of the preparatory phase of the CLME project held in 2006, stressing that while the people involved in the project may have changed, the needs of the region remain, the passion and commitment have not faded away, and the region can and should be proud of what it has achieved.
30. Speaking on behalf of the ICM, Dr. Cesar Toro congratulated all countries of the region for having successfully transformed and strengthened the governance and management of the living marine resources in the region, and pledged the ICM's continued support.
31. In closing, all members of the Head Table thanked and congratulated the members of the PCU, the KUDO meeting platform, the translators and all those who contributed to making this meeting a success.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

LIST OF DELEGATES	
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ANNEX 2: AGENDA

#	Time (Colombia time)	Agenda	Meeting Materials
1	9:00 - 9:45	Welcome and Opening Remarks	
2	9:45 - 10:00	Appointment of Head Table	
3	10:00 -10:15	Adoption of Agenda	- Annotated Agenda
	10:15 -10:30:	BREAK	
4		Coordination Mechanism	
	10:30 - 12:15	a. Review, final fine-tuning and technical endorsement of draft Coordination Mechanism Memorandum of Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of Process towards the creation of the Coordination Mechanism - PSC Brief on Coordination Mechanism draft MOU - Coordination Mechanism draft MoU - Annex 1
	12:15 - 13:00	b. Operationalizing and sustaining the Coordination Mechanism: way forward	- Operationalizing and Sustaining the IGCM
END OF DAY 1			
DAY 2			

5	9:00 - 9:40	Overview of Main Project Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Results Overview (password CLME+) - Project Results Framework (June 2020)
6		Terminal Evaluation	
	9:40 - 10:15	a. Preliminary Findings	- Preliminary Results Terminal Evaluation
	10:15 - 10:30	b. Co-financing reporting and status	- Overview co-financing reporting
7	10:30 - 11:00	Revised Budget and Updated Work Plan	- Revised Budget and Updated WorkPlan 2021
	11:00 - 11:15	BREAK	
4	11:15 - 12:00	b. Operationalizing and sustaining the Coordination Mechanism: way forward	
	12:00 - 12:45	a. Review, final fine-tuning and technical endorsement of draft Coordination Mechanism Memorandum of Understanding	
END OF DAY 2			
DAY 3			
8		UNDP/GEF Concept Note for the Continuity of the CLME+ Initiative	
	9:00 - 10:00	a. Overview of Concept Note	- Brief PPT on the new

		b. Status and timeline	project
		c. Status of Indicative Co-financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplified version of the new project's results framework ("project-at-a-glance") - Full UNDP/GEF New Project Concept Note (PIF)
		d. Status of Endorsement Letters	- Endorsement letter template
9	10:00 - 10:15	Any Other Business	
	10:15 - 10:45	BREAK	
10	10:45 - 11:30	MOU Technical Endorsement	
11	11:30 - 12:45	Adoption of Meeting Recommendations and Decisions	
12	12:45 - 13:00	Meeting Closure	
END OF MEETING			

ANNEX 3: RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS OF THE THIRD AND FINAL REGULAR STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE UNDP/GEF CARIBBEAN AND NORTH BRAZIL SHELF LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS (CLME+) PROJECT

Virtual Meeting of the CLME+ Project Steering Committee,

23 - 25 February 2021

The CLME+ Project Steering Committee:

Having convened the Third and Final Regular Meeting of the UNDP/GEF CLME+ Project Steering Committee virtually utilizing the Kudo Meeting Platform from 23-25 February, 2021, with a total of 109 participants representing 31 States and Territories and 13 organizations, Chaired by The Bahamas, with the Deputy Chair from Honduras,

AGENDA ITEM 4: COORDINATION MECHANISM

SUB AGENDA ITEM 4a: FINAL FINE-TUNING AND TECHNICAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE COORDINATION MECHANISM MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1. Noting an emerging consensus on the text of this draft Memorandum of Understanding,
2. Technically endorses the content of the *Memorandum of Understanding Enabling the Creation of a Coordination Mechanism to Support Integrated Ocean Governance in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems* and the associated Annex 1 as contained in documents [PSC2102 AI4 - Coordination Mechanism draft MoU](#) and [PSC2102 AI4 - Annex 1: Potential Signatories for MoU Commencement](#)
3. Notes that the way forward will include the following steps:
4. Requests the CLME+ Project Coordination Unit (PCU), with support from interested Project Steering Committee Members, to conduct a language reconciliation assessment of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to ensure consistency with language in the English and Spanish versions and share the revised version with the Project Steering Committee by 20 March 2021
5. Encourages States, Territories and Inter-governmental organisations listed in Annex I to the MoU to submit the document to their legal departments for review to allow for the finalization and subsequent opening for signature of

the Coordination Mechanism MoU and to submit any comments/recommendations, including those aimed at resolving the pending issue related to paragraph 3 of the MoU, to the CLME+ PCU at their earliest convenience, but no later than end of April 2021. In that process, States, Territories and Inter-governmental organisations are invited to verify if they are satisfied that the MoU as drafted will suffice to allow the Coordination Mechanism and its Secretariat to operate efficiently and effectively in discharging their functions and achieving their objectives, noting in particular the omission of text on the legal personality of the Coordination Mechanism.

6. Requests the PCU to convene a special Meeting of the CLME+ Project Steering Committee with the aim of achieving finalization and opening for signature of the Coordination Mechanism Memorandum of Understanding before the end of June 2021.

SUB AGENDA ITEM 4b: OPERATIONALIZING THE COORDINATION MECHANISM

7. Acknowledges that it is up to each State and Territory to determine who would sign the MOU on their behalf and who will represent them in the Steering Group.
8. Recommends that, when considering who would sign the MOU, States and Territories consider high-level officials whose purviews cover the functions of the Coordination Mechanisms as outlined in the MOU.
9. Acknowledges that the representation of each State and Territory at the Coordination Mechanism Steering Group should be such that it will facilitate the successful achievement of the goals and objectives of the Coordination Mechanism, and enable adequate articulation among regional-level and national-level ocean coordination processes, such as e.g. those undertaken by National Inter-sectoral Coordination Mechanisms (NICs).
10. Acknowledges in the context of the latter **(a)** the importance of well-functioning NICs, as well as **(b)** the progress made by States and Territories from the region throughout the CLME+ Project towards achieving such well-functioning NICs, and **(c)** encourages States and Territories to continue working towards the strengthening of national-level ocean coordination processes.
11. Acknowledges the importance of simultaneously and expeditiously moving towards the commencement of both the PROCARIBE+ Project and the Coordination Mechanism, to enable the prompt and successful operationalization of the Coordination Mechanism.
12. Indicates preliminary support for the following approach towards achieving short, medium and long-term sustainability of the Coordination Mechanism, while acknowledging the Steering Group of the Coordination Mechanism may revisit and adjust the approach, and taking into account that a number of States and Territories have voiced their opposition to mandatory financial contributions:
 - Short & medium-term (2021/2-2027):
 - Coordination Mechanism Secretariat and other Organs operate (largely) with financial support from the PROCARIBE+ Project
 - PROCARIBE+ Project period used to demonstrate and evaluate CM added value

- CM considers a range of options and decides, prior to PROCARIBE+ Project end, on post-Project financing mechanism(s)

· Long-term (2027 and beyond):

- Deployment of sustainable financing mechanism(s) endorsed by the Coordination Mechanism Steering Group.

13. While recognizing the relevance of inter-governmental coordination, also acknowledges the importance of actions by all sectors of society, and as such reiterates its support for broad stakeholder partnerships.

14. Requests that the CLME+ PCU solicit proposals for names for the Coordination Mechanism and survey participants regarding preference.

AGENDA ITEM 5: OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN PROJECT OUTPUTS

15. Acknowledges the successes and results of the CLME+ Project and recognizes its transformational nature in having stimulated cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration on oceans in the region, at multiple levels; and congratulates the participating States and Territories, co-executing partners and PCU on the successful delivery of the project's outputs.

AGENDA ITEM 6: TERMINAL EVALUATION

SUB AGENDA ITEM 6a: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

16. Takes notes of the preliminary findings, recommendations and conclusions of the CLME+ Terminal Evaluation.

17. Recommends that the initial recommendations and lessons learned from the CLME+ Terminal Evaluation Report be taken into account in the design of future projects and interventions as appropriate.

SUB AGENDA ITEM 6b: CO-FINANCING REPORTING AND STATUS

18. Urges CLME+ participating States and Territories, co-executing organisations and other project partners which have not yet reported on their co-financing contributions under the CLME+ Project to do so no later than Friday 5 March 2021.

AGENDA ITEM 7: REVISED BUDGET AND UPDATED WORK PLAN

19. Approves the CLME+ revised budget for the period January - October 2021 as presented in document [PSC2102 AI7 - Revised Budget and Updated Work Plan 2021](#)

AGENDA ITEM 8: UNDP/GEF CONCEPT NOTE FOR CONTINUITY OF THE CLME+ INITIATIVE***SUB AGENDA ITEM 8a: OVERVIEW OF CONCEPT NOTE***

20. Acknowledges the critical and strategic importance of expeditiously mobilizing renewed funding from the GEF to support the operations of the Coordination Mechanism and the continued implementation of the CLME+ SAP, and to give continuity and sustainability to key CLME+ Project Outputs and Outcomes.
21. Notes the objectives, components and outputs proposed under the new UNDP/GEF PROCARIBE+ Concept Note (PIF) as presented in document [PSC2102 A18 - 6290 PROCARIBE+ PIF working draft 22feb2021](#) for the continuity of the CLME+ initiative, with the understanding that further fine-tuning of the project proposal can take place during the 10-month Project Document (PPG) development phase.

SUB AGENDA ITEM 8b: STATUS AND TIMELINE

22. Acknowledges the information provided by the CLME+ PCU in relation to the status of this PROCARIBE+ Concept Note (PIF) and the strategic importance of the proposed timeline for submission to the GEF Secretariat by March 24, 2021, with the aim of enabling its inclusion in the June 2021 GEF Council Work Programme.
23. Notes the formal expression of support from the CLME+ ICM, conveyed on behalf of the ICM to the Meeting by means of the ICM Chair, for the aim of achieving successful submission of the PROCARIBE+ Concept Note (PIF) to the GEF Secretariat by March 24, 2021.
24. Recommends that States, Territories and Intergovernmental Organisations interested in participating in this new project endeavor to meet all requirements for successful submission of this PIF by 24 March 2021.

SUB AGENDA ITEM 8c: STATUS INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING

25. Notes **(a)** the information provided by the CLME+ PCU in relation to the GEF co-financing requirements for GEF-supported projects, **(b)** the current status of identification of indicative co-financing for the new PIF, and **(c)** the related need for the timely provision of indicative co-financing values.
26. Urges States and Territories and prospective project partners and stakeholders who may not have done so yet, to submit their indicative co-financing information to the CLME+ PCU as soon as possible, but no later than 20 March 2021.

SUB AGENDA ITEM 8d: STATUS ENDORSEMENT LETTERS

27. Notes **(a)** the critical importance of the timely provision of GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) endorsement letters for the PROCARIBE+ PIF by those States that wish to participate in the new initiative, and **(b)** urges Steering Committee members to liaise, as applicable, with the national GEF OFPs with the purpose of achieving the submission of these endorsement letters by all GEF-eligible States wishing to participate in the new initiative to UNDP as soon as possible, but no later than 20 March 2021.