



**Factsheet**

# The Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean (SPAW):

## Sanctuaire Agoa - A SPAW listed site -

### Identification

- Country:** France
- Name of the area:** Sanctuaire Agoa
- Administrative region:** ZEE Antilles françaises (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint-Martin, Saint-Barthélémy)
- Date of establishment:** 10/10/2010
- Geographic location:**  
Longitude X: -60.908203  
Latitude Y: 16.688817
- Date of listing under SPAW:** 23 October 2012



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### Introduction

Encompassing 143256 km<sup>2</sup> of ocean, Agoa Sanctuary is located in the eastern Caribbean Sea. The sanctuary is designed to ensure the conservation of marine mammals in waters under French sovereignty and jurisdiction in the French West Indies. These include the territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ's) surrounding Martinique, Guadeloupe and its dependencies of Marie Galante, the Saints Archipelago, la Desirade, Petite Terre, as well as those of St. Barthelemy and St. Martin. The Caribbean Sea is a special habitat for feeding, reproduction and migration of marine mammals. Twenty-four species have been identified in the French Antilles waters. With the creation of Agoa Marine Mammals Sanctuary, France wanted to contribute to make a model of the Caribbean region for

the marine mammals protection and the sustainable development. The EEZ of the French Antilles are now an area of dialogue between all the stakeholders in order to set up an harmonious model of development and of conservation of the marine mammals critical habitats. Agoa is based on an innovative governance system bringing together the local governments of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélémy Islands and their environmental departments, the French MPA Agency, the French Ministry of Environment, the socio-economic partners, environmental NGOs but as well University and scientific bodies.

#### SPAW criteria met

- Ecological criteria**
- Representativeness
  - Conservation value
  - Rarity
  - Naturalness
  - Critical habitats
  - Diversity
  - Connectivity/coherence
  - Resilience

- Cultural and socio-economic criteria**
- Productivity
  - Cultural and traditional use
  - Socio-economic benefits

## Site description

### General features of the site

**Size:** 143256 km<sup>2</sup>

**Terrestrial surface under sovereignty, excluding wetlands:** 0 sq. km

**Wetland surface:** 0 ha

**Marine surface:** 143256 km<sup>2</sup>

**National status of your protected area:** Protected area

**Marine ecoregion:** 64. Eastern Caribbean

### Management structure, authority

Agence des aires marines protégées

### Main fauna populations and/or those of particular importance present (resident or migratory) in the area:

Cetaceans present in the Agoa sanctuary represent a remarkable biodiversity with more than 24 species theoretically present (Ward & Moscrop 2001). Among the most observed species, the humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) during the breeding season from January to June, the sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) or some dolphins like the bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) who regularly attend the sanctuary. It is interesting to note that many species are observed throughout the year which would indicate that some species (*Stenobredanensis*, *Tursiops truncatus*, *Physeter macrocephalus*, *Stenella attenuata* and *Feresa attenuata*) have some degree of fidelity to certain sites.

### Inhabitants inside the area or in the zone of potential direct impact on the protected area:

In the zone of potential direct impact

Permanent: 849365

Seasonal: 3442669

### Management plan

#### 1 - Knowledge / Monitoring

1 - Campaigns : biannual transect lines and acoustic samples:

- Study the evolution of the estimated numbers in the sanctuary,

- Identify the number of individuals during migration periods,

- Inform on the population dynamics

- Study the evolution of the abundance and distribution

2 - Genetic monitoring campaign (biopsy) and movement of individuals (tags).

3 - Program of photo-identification of individuals to describe their site fidelity (humpback whales, sperm whales ...).

4 - Characterization of habitat favorable for marine mammals,

5 - Acoustic monitoring (including buoys), identification of marine mammals and noise.

6 - Continuous assessment of interactions with human uses (bycatch, depredation, water activities, pollution, noise, etc. ..)

### 2 -SUPPORT/GUIDANCE

1-Definition of an intervention network for animals in distress, entangled and/or stranded,

2-Definition/support/guidance of an intervention network for prevention of pollution, pollution control, and followed post-pollution,

3-Support and assistance for projects aiming at conserving and restoring habitats likely to receive marine mammals,

4-Support for tourism operators in an eco-responsible approach,

5-Support for the production of scientific studies and scientific articles,

6-Expertise and advice to project developers for impact assessments,

7-Support/Training for MPA managers of the French Antilles and the Caribbean islands for the observation, identification and intervention in case of distress and strandings

8-Support the targets of the chlordecone plan,

9-Support/search for innovative devices intended to limit the impact of human activities on marine mammals

10-Promotion of the sanctuary at regional level, of its work, its governance, organization...

### 3 - Control / Aareness

- Pooling of resources of the State action at sea, of the services and operators of the state and of the network of MPAs for:

- Establishment/strengthening control over the disturbance and harassment of cetaceans,

- Strengthening control on the degradation of natural areas and seascapes that can have adverse effects on habitats of marine mammals,

- Awareness of stakeholders to approach techniques

- Promoting respect of the French Order of July 1st 2011

- Establishment of outreach and educational tools (website, code of conduct, activities, exhibitions, forums)

### 4 – Regulation: Supervision

As recommended by the statement:

1 - Recommendations for potential regulations:

- Activities of whale watching,

- Seismic research and other activities using acoustics,

- The use of fishing gear which may result in the capture of marine mammals,

- Offshore competition, nautical events,

2 - Supervise:

- Shipping,

- The establishment of a network "alert : stranded and distressed animals" throughout the French Antilles

### International status and Date of designation

SPAW Site : 2012



## Links

PA LISTING : [www.spaw-palisting.org](http://www.spaw-palisting.org)

CaMPAM : <http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php>

UNEP-CEP : [www.cep.unep.org/](http://www.cep.unep.org/)

SPAW-RAC : [www.car-spaw-rac.org](http://www.car-spaw-rac.org)