

**Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine
(FoProBiM)**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Creation of a New Marine Protected Area in
Northeastern Haiti
Port-au-Prince, Haïti
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On Wednesday, December 11, 2013 the Haitian government published the creation of Haiti's second Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the official journal, *Le Moniteur*. The new MPA is hereby called the "*Parc des Trois Baies et des Lagons aux Bœufs* (The Three Bays and Lagons aux Bœufs Park)" and is located in Northeastern Haiti. This new protected area encompasses an area of close to 90,000 hectares (900 sq.km.) and includes the bays of *Limonade*, *Caracol*, and *Ft. Liberté*, as well as the *Lagon aux Bœufs*.

"As with the designation of the new protected area in the southwest in August, we once again applaud the Haitian government's move to protect our natural resources. This designation is yet another critical step forward as Haiti renews its commitment to protect its critical coastal and marine ecosystems," stated Jean Wiener, Director of the *Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM)* in Haiti. "We now need to undertake serious actions to ensure the complete commitment of local stakeholders to actively participate in the *Parc's* management. We must also ensure an increased engagement of all national stakeholders, the government, and our international partners to actively participate in the protection and sustainable management of the resources within this important area."

FoProBiM undertook the outlining of the original park boundaries in 2000, an ecosystem valuation exercise for the area in 2009 and a re-evaluation in 2013 for the Organization of American States/Department of Sustainable Development (OAS/DSD), has just finished research on local sea turtles and manatees with UNEP CAR-SPAW and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), is undertaking the development of a Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) with the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), has just completed the area's first rapid coastal/marine/riverine bio-inventory, and actively participated in the preparation of the legal framework and final establishment of the present park boundaries to help bring about this important designation.

Hopefully the Arcadins, Baraderes, and Rochelois Marine Parks will also soon be created. These areas were also initially surveyed and outlined by FoProBiM in 2000 and it is currently undertaking various research activities nation-wide in order to provide a better understanding of the need to protect these vital ecosystems.

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Founded in 1992 the *Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM)* is Haiti's only coastal and marine environmental organization. It is an apolitical, non-governmental, non-profit organization founded and headquartered in Haiti and was officially recognized by the

Haitian government in 1995 as a foundation working on environment issues in the areas of sustainable development, education, research, monitoring, and advocacy.

As one of Haiti's oldest environmental organizations, and one of the very few with a 100% full-time dedicated staff, FoProBiM's mission includes: (i) raising awareness concerning needed changes in regulations and attitudes concerning the environment; (ii) increasing knowledge and capabilities at the government, community and individual levels in order to make sustainable improvements in the environment and the lives of people, and; (iii) conducting educational programs as well as scientific research, including environmental monitoring, in order to promote improved management of the environment and the protection of biodiversity through a better understanding of the need to sustainably use environmental resources.

FoProBiM is Haiti's only IUCN member and the National Focal Point in Haïti for: IUCN – The World Conservation Union (World Commission on Protected Areas, Marine; Commission on Ecosystem Management; Transboundary Conservation Specialist's Group); the International Coral Reefs Initiative (ICRI); WIDECAST; and the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) among others. It has also acted as the primary consultant for coastal and marine resources for the preparation of Haiti's National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) and undertaken a wide variety of projects for institutions as varied as the IDB, UNEP, UNDP, OAS, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), Whitley Fund for Nature, the Haitian Ministry of Environment, and the US Departments of Agriculture (IITF – International Institute of Tropical Forestry), State, Commerce (NOAA: NMFS, CCFHR, OIA), and Interior (USFWS) to name but a few.

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