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Media Release

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Proceedings from 2nd International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA 2 – Martinique) Now Available

Proceedings from the International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA 2) were released today, including recommendations for a third conference in 2014. Complete proceedings are available for free download at <http://second.icmmpa.org>. The 103-page publication includes summaries of the individual talks, discussions, workshops and side events, and contact details for all participants.

The ICMMPA 2 proceedings call for an enhanced mission for the International Committee on Marine Mammal Protected Areas. Recommendations include the use of marine mammal science to inform decision-making, a guide for best practices on marine mammal spatial planning, and the formation of a task force to develop guidelines to engage with the shipping industry, International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other sectors. Two themes emerged from the conference discussions and recommendations: the need to engage stakeholders and local communities, and the need for sustained funding for recovery of threatened and endangered species.

Among other plans by the Committee is a third International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas, proposed to be held in Australia in late 2014.

Full conference proceedings can be found online at:
<http://second.icmmpa.org>.

ICMMPA 2 was convened on the Caribbean island of Martinique in November 2011 to share the experiences, good practices and emerging scientific work

contributing to greater knowledge and improved levels of protection for marine mammals, particularly focusing around the theme of endangered species and endangered spaces. This theme was explored in panel presentations, keynote addresses, workshops and side events, followed by discussions and recommendations agreed upon by all participants.

“We had a great turnout for this second conference,” said Erich Hoyt, ICMMPA steering committee member and editor of the proceedings. “We attracted more than 150 marine mammal protected area researchers and managers as well as government and conservation group representatives from 42 countries and overseas territories. These conferences are proving to be a unique forum for addressing solutions to shared problems related to marine mammal protected areas, including site design, creation, management and scientific monitoring.”

The conference was co-hosted by the French MPA Agency (Agence des aires marine protégées) and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Australian Government and 14 other international and regional sponsors, as well as a dozen supporting organizations, were actively involved, most either based in Martinique or with representation and activities in the Caribbean. Hosting ICMMPA 2 in the Caribbean also provided an opportunity to promote the Agoa Sanctuary for Marine Mammals declared in the French West Indies; to inform stakeholders, marine mammal scientists and the wider public about the Caribbean’s environmental and marine conservation efforts; and to create synergies and networking opportunities for the Wider Caribbean.

On the Conference’s final day, a marine mammal protected area partnership, the “Martinique Declaration”, was forged between France, Dominican Republic, the USA, The Netherlands and the Regional Activity Center (RAC) of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol. Representatives of these countries and agencies recently met in St. Maarten to reaffirm their intention to work together under the SPAW Protocol’s Marine Mammal Action Plan.

To learn more about the International Committee on Marine Mammal Protected Areas visit: <http://icmmpa.org>

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