



Contact:

Amber Blackman

Communications Officer

amberblackman3@gmail.com

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Barbados Marine Spatial Plan Sets Sail *-Inception Meeting Marks Key Milestone*

Bridgetown, Barbados – March 22nd, 2024 – The Barbados Marine Spatial Plan (BMSP) has officially kicked off its consultation process with an inception meeting today at the Hilton Hotel. This landmark event signals the beginning of a comprehensive initiative aimed at sustainable management and conservation of Barbados' marine resources.

The inception meeting brought together key stakeholders including government officials, environmental experts, industry leaders, NGOs, and community representatives. Together, they will lay the groundwork for the development of a strategic plan to effectively manage and protect Barbados' marine environment.

The BMSP aims to address a range of critical issues including sustainable fisheries management, marine conservation, coastal development, and the preservation of marine biodiversity. By fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, the plan seeks to ensure the long-term health and resilience of Barbados' marine ecosystems.

"We are delighted to kick off another phase in the Barbados Marine Spatial Plan and gather input from stakeholders across various sectors," said Dr. Leo Brewster, Director of Coastal Zone Management Unit. "This initiative represents a significant step towards safeguarding our marine environment for future generations."

Over the coming months, the BMSP will undergo a rigorous planning and communications process, guided by scientific research, stakeholder input, and best practices in marine spatial planning. Through inclusive dialogue and consultation, the plan will seek to balance competing interests while promoting sustainable use of marine resources.

Having completed significant preparatory work since the launch in January 2023 the inception meeting marks the beginning of an exciting journey for Barbados as it charts a course towards a more sustainable and resilient future for its marine environment. The Barbados Marine Spatial Plan is poised to serve as a blueprint for effective marine management, ensuring the continued prosperity of both people and nature.

Barbados Marine Spatial Plan
Warrens Towers II,
Warrens, St. Michael
barbadosmsp@gmail.com
<https://barbadosmarinespatialplan.com/>

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Barbados Marine Spatial Plan

The Barbados Marine Spatial Plan (“**Barbados MSP**”) speaks to the evidence-based, participatory zoning of Barbados’ marine space as well as the requisite administrative and legal arrangements to achieve long-term sustainable ocean management. It is administered by the Marine Spatial Planning Unit (MSP Unit), which is a division of the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU) of the Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy as the MSP authority in Barbados. The Barbados MSP is being developed in partnership with the University of the West Indies Cave Hill and The Nature Conservancy, and with the financial and technical support of the InterAmerican Development Bank, to encourage sustainable national socio-economic development, promote cooperation and reduce conflicts between users.