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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Barbados' Marine Spatial Planning Initiative Receives Dual National Honours on Independence Day

Bridgetown, Barbados — 12 December 2025- Barbados' Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Unit has earned two prestigious national awards in recognition of its leadership, innovation, and national impact in advancing sustainable ocean governance. Presented during the 2025 Independence Day National Honours Ceremony, these awards affirm the central role of ocean planning in strengthening the island's environmental stewardship and long-term economic resilience.

The first honour, the **Public Service Leadership Award**, was bestowed on **Ms. Allison Lynette Wiggins, Project Manager of the Marine Spatial Planning Unit**, for her exemplary leadership in driving the development of Barbados' first Marine Spatial Plan. Ms. Wiggins has spearheaded the team whose work has been instrumental in shaping a modern, data-driven system for managing the nation's marine space, enhancing national resilience, safeguarding ocean resources, and creating pathways for sustainable economic growth.

“I am greatly appreciative of this recognition, not just for me, but for the entire Marine Spatial Planning team. Their dedication, collaboration, and commitment make my role easier every day, and any success is truly a reflection of our collaborative efforts to achieve the goals of the Marine Spatial Planning process for Barbados.”

In addition, the **Marine Spatial Planning Unit itself received a National Award for Excellence in the Public Service**, acknowledging the Unit’s outstanding contributions to national development. This award was presented by the Prime Minister of Barbados to Dr. Leo Brewster, Director of the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU), and Mr. Richard Suckoo, Deputy Project Manager of the MSP Unit, on behalf of the team.

“This award recognizes the extraordinary efforts of a full Bajan team who have been working diligently under very tight timelines to advance this nationally important project. It reflects the team’s commitment, professionalism, and shared determination to meet key milestones under very strict timelines, while delivering a marine spatial plan that serves the best interests of Barbados and future generations,” stated Dr. Leo Brewster.

Dr Brewster further highlighted that “this team has worked intentionally to bring creativity, innovation, inclusivity, and strong technical expertise to a subject that can often feel complex and difficult to digest. We have been able to engage Barbadians in an authentically Bajan way, making ocean planning accessible, relevant, and meaningful to everyday life. Given this approach, receiving this national award is a true honour and an affirmation of the meaningful work being carried out by the team in service of Barbados.”

These national awards celebrate the dedication, innovation, and collaborative work that have positioned Barbados as a regional leader in sustainable ocean management. They also highlight the importance of the MSP initiative as

Barbados moves toward finalizing its Marine Spatial Plan, an essential tool for supporting blue economy growth, protecting marine ecosystems, and strengthening climate resilience.

Members of the MSP Unit include:

- Allison Wiggins- Project Manager
- Richard Suckoo- Deputy Project Manager
- Gregney Holder- Project Officer
- Donna King-Brathwaite- Senior Marine Environmental Education Consultant
- Dwight Leach- Marine Education and Public Engagement Officer
- Renice Medford- Communications Consultant
- Amber Blackman- Communications Officer
- Jehroum Wood- Geospatial Data Consultant
- Ismail Desai- Data Technician
- Henderson Turton – Accountant
- Charmaine St.Hill - Administrative Officer
- Rashaana Hutchinson- Administrative Officer
- Tristan Parris – Marine and Research Economist

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About the Barbados Marine Spatial Plan

The Barbados Marine Spatial Plan (“BMSP”) 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 BMSP is being developed in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the University of the West Indies Cave Hill, 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.