

At the White Water to Blue Water (WW2BW) Partnership Conference

Several CERMES existing and incoming faculty played key roles in the White Water to Blue Water Partnership Conference that took place in Miami from 22-26 March. Co-Chair of Marine Ecosystem-based Management Day, Dr. Robin Mahon, presented one of the three keynote talks on the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project. Another keynote talk was delivered by Dr. Leonard Nurse who is the former Director of the local Coastal Zone Management Unit and Permanent Secretary in the ministry responsible for environment. Dr. Nurse will soon be joining the staff of CERMES. Their talks were, respectively, on the features of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project and governance relating to living marine resources in the region. Both presentations were very well received.

On the same day there was a breakout session led by Dr. Patrick McConney with Janice Cumberbatch from CERMES and colleagues from the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA), Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The session was on the Socioeconomic aspects of marine ecosystems. It started with a presentation of initiatives in the region, followed by group discussions that focused on valuation and co-management.



Also at the conference, Janice Cumberbatch, assisted by Leah Bunce of NOAA and Manuel Valdes Pizzini of the University of Puerto Rico, delivered a one-day training session on the Socioeconomic monitoring guidelines

for coastal managers in the Caribbean (SocMon Caribbean). A dozen people from around the region attended, and some have requested further training.

Pro Vice Chancellor Professor Wayne Hunte also launched the UWI Coastal Management Research Network (COMARE Net) at the WW2BW conference. COMARE Net was described in the last issue of CERMES Connections. It was a busy week for all.

Collaborating in Nicaragua with the University of Connecticut

Under the Coastal Resources Co-management Project (CORECOMP), implemented by CERMES with funding from the Oak Foundation, Diana Payne and Robert Pomeroy from the Sea Grant Program of the University of Connecticut recently assisted partners in Nicaragua.

Diana Payne spent 4-6 March in Bluefields and Pearl Lagoon working with teachers and community representatives on environmental education. With guidance from Bertha Simmons of the Coastal Area Management Project (CAMP), an initiative of the Centre for Research and Documentation of the Atlantic Coast (CIDCA) of the Central American University (UCA), the group discussed and revised curricula in environmental education that include collaboration in natural resource governance. Sea Grant educational material, in English and Spanish, was provided to assist capacity building.

Dr. Robert Pomeroy facilitated a strategic planning workshop from 27-28 March in Managua to assist the Fisheries Programme of the Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (URACCAN), a small university with campuses on the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua. Assisting him was URACCAN lecturer in fisheries, Karen Joseph, who had just returned from the WW2BW conference along with Bertha Simmons as part of the regional group for which CERMES had secured sponsorship from US sources.

Fourth World Fisheries Congress

An estimated 1,500 fisheries scientists and managers from over 80 countries met in Vancouver, Canada from 2-6 May at the Fourth World Fisheries Congress. The theme of the congress was "Reconciling fisheries with conservation: the challenge of managing aquatic ecosystems". Leading fisheries specialists spoke of the worldwide depletion of fish stocks and how we can reverse these trends. Fisheries depletion and poverty were seen as closely linked in developing countries. Increasing attention to sustainable livelihoods in coastal communities was flagged as essential for rehabilitating fisheries.

Three scientists from CERMES took part in the conference: Dr. Robin Mahon, Dr Patrick McConney and Ms Neetha Selliah. Dr. McConney presented a poster entitled "Contortions in the Co-management of

Small-scale Fisheries in the Caribbean" and also spoke on "Obtaining High Quality Data and Information for Management Decisions Through People-centred Processes". Dr. Mahon convened a session on coral reef fisheries comprising six speakers and ten posters. He gave the lead talk in that session, on "Reconciling the Needs of Fisheries and Conservation in Coral Reefs". The scientists used the conference to network with colleagues from around the world and to explore opportunities for CERMES to collaborate in research.

Other conference connections

Since mid-March CERMES has also been represented at the following important scientific conferences:

OAS Sub-regional Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management in the Caribbean and Meso-America, Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, 4-5 March 2004 by Dr. Hazel Oxenford, Director of CERMES.

IOC/IUCN/NOAA 6th Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) Consultative Meeting at UNESCO, Paris, 29-30 March 2004 by Dr. Robin Mahon, Regional Project Coordinator for the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project.

Eighth Intergovernmental Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions, SC-IOCARIBE-VIII in Recife, Brazil, 14 – 17 April 2004 by Dr. Robin Mahon, Regional Project Coordinator for the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project.

Friends of the Tobago Cays (Marine Park) in the Grenadines

From 24 to 26 April, a group of concerned Vincentian citizens called Friends of the Tobago Cays, joined by an alliance of Grenadines-based environmental groups, hosted an open public Tobago Cays Educational Forum that was hailed as a 'watershed event' in Caribbean marine protection awareness.



Grenadines NGOs included the Mayreau Environmental Development Organisation, the Union Island Eco-Tourism Movement,

the Union Island Water Taxi Association and the Union Island Association for Ecological Protection.

CERMES was invited to make presentations on the revenue generation potential of the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) and on co-management. These were delivered by Dr. Hazel Oxenford and Dr. Patrick McConney respectively. Dr. Robin Mahon, leader of the UWI's Sustainable Grenadines project, also attended. He had been invited by the Friends of the Tobago Cays to arrange for CERMES to provide public information. Also at the forum were local, regional and international managers of marine protected areas (MPAs).

The Tobago Cays Educational Forum was held as two, one-day, sessions. The first session took place at Clifton Harbour, Union Island, and the second in Kingstown, St. Vincent. The purpose of the forum was twofold: to provide expert information to the general public regarding the purposes and best management practices of marine protected areas; and to provide an opportunity for open public dialogue regarding the fate of the TCMP.

The initiative was sparked by fear of the government accepting an offer by Palm Island Resort Ltd. to manage the TCMP. Citizens felt that community stakeholders might be dislocated and disenfranchised by the management arrangement. A few days after the forum, the resort company withdrew its proposal. This paves the way for government and other stakeholders to devise new and effective alternative management, with a strong community perspective, for the TCMP.

CERMES graduate students will undertake a field trip to the area as part of their coursework on biodiversity. The TCMP situation may be researched as a case study in order to assess and document the lessons learned.

[Adapted from the Caribbean Net News article of Friday, May 7, 2004 entitled "Resort company withdraws marine park management proposal" caribbeannetnews.com]

Report on the 2003 sea egg season

An output of the Coastal Resources Co-management Project (CORECOMP) is a report on the 2003 sea egg season. It was produced from project activities done in collaboration with the Fisheries Division and the Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations.

One of the key conclusions of the report was that there must be a new direction to attempts to establish co-management. The suggestion is for a council of persons respected and experienced in the sea egg industry. This council, with its members drawn from around the country, would advise the Fisheries Division on management measures for the fishery. Of particular interest would be the timing and duration of the open season. This may be implemented for the 2004 season.

What is on the CERMES web site

The web site (www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes) has a wealth of information on CERMES teaching, research, other projects, outreach and activities. Applicants for the degree programme can read about the courses offered in the Coastal and Marine Management and the Climate Change specialisation streams. Project reports, guidelines and other documents are downloadable from the publications database. Some pages of the site are still under construction, so bear with us for a while. We hope that the site will be of service to you. Feel free to give us some feedback on the site so that we can help to meet your information needs.