

An electronic bulletin about interdisciplinary research, teaching and outreach at the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences, University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus

The first semester in the 2005-2006 academic year has started with a CERMES graduate student intake of over 25 people pursuing MSc degrees in four specialisation streams. In this issue we will share some of the finer moments of their orientation session and tell you what faculty have been up to. New CERMES projects too!

Orientation and aquatic skills!

New CERMES students completed a week of aquatic skills soon after their orientation field trip of a land and sea tour around the island. On this whole-day tour they were (re-)introduced to Barbados from natural resource and environmental management perspectives.



They are seen (courtesy of David Gill) paying close attention to explanations about the coastal features at the Crane and Tent Bay given by CERMES faculty. In the aquatic skills week-long session many brushed up on their basic swimming skills, whilst others took the plunge to obtain SCUBA diving certification.



Besides being lots of fun (a good way to start a degree programme), the students got a taste of what they need to be proficient in to safely conduct research in the field.

CERMES secretarial upgrade

Our hard-working departmental secretary, Bibi Selman, obtained her BSc in Social Science (specialising in Management, Accounting and Psychology) from the UWI Cave Hill Campus. Hearty congratulations Bibi!

Socioeconomic information for fisheries management planning at the Negril Marine Park in Jamaica

The Counterpart Caribbean 4C's (Caribbean Coastal Co-management and Coral Regeneration) programme, funded by the European Commission and implemented in part by CERMES, continued in Negril, Jamaica. MSc student Katherine Blackman conducted research and held stakeholder workshops as part of her work on the socioeconomic information needs of the Negril Marine Park fisheries management plan that is currently being drafted under this project due to end early in 2006.



She is seen (at left) presenting some of her results to staff of the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS), the umbrella Negril Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT) and Negril

project officer of the Caribbean Regional Environmental Programme (CREP). The Fisheries Division of Jamaica and other parties (governmental and non-governmental) also participate in this project. Dr. Patrick McConney of CERMES is the lead technical coordinator. Papers on what has been accomplished to date will be presented at the 58th meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute coming up soon in San Andres, Colombia.

Presenting issues of governance

The governance of marine resources in the Caribbean is one of the critical areas of research at CERMES, and one that urgently requires input from academics as well as policy and planning practitioners. Over the past few months the Director of CERMES, Dr. Robin Mahon, has had the opportunity to share thoughts on the topic at various international meetings. These included:

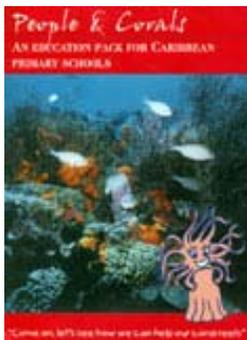
- The IOC/IUCN/NOAA/UNEP Large Marine Ecosystem 7th Consultative Committee Meeting, 5-6 July 2005 in Paris, France, where he presented a talk on 'Governance for Caribbean fisheries'
- The MARE People and the Sea Conference in Amsterdam, July 7-9, 2005 where he presented a

paper entitled 'Governability of fisheries in the Caribbean: a preliminary assessment'; and

- The Third Meeting of the Interim Scientific, Technical & Advisory Committee (ISTAC) to the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land Based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) in the Wider Caribbean Region, Mexico City, Mexico, August 22 – 26, 2005 that concerned transboundary governance issues.
- The FAO FishCode STF Project and WorldFish Center 'Workshop on Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Assessment of Small-Scale Fisheries', Rome, Italy, 20-22 September 2005. The workshop was held to develop a research framework for a four-year project on small-scale fisheries to be carried out by these agencies and collaborating organisations.

Sustainable Grenadines promotes primary school education on reefs

CERMES and the Sustainable Grenadines Project have received funding from the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) for a project to put the "People and Corals" workbook in the Grenadines' primary schools.



The workbook was developed by the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) for Caribbean primary schools. It includes a variety of information and learning activities to make students aware of the many goods and services that coral reefs provide and how to protect them. This education pack has been in high demand.

The project will purchase workbooks for schools, train teachers in how to use them and monitor how well they are received by both teachers and students in the Grenadines. It is expected that all fourteen Grenadines primary schools from both countries will be involved in this project. We hope that this will build future capacity.

Land degradation issues discussed

For small islands like Barbados land degradation is a very serious issue that must be addressed at policy level. Dr. Leonard Nurse represented CERMES at the "National Consultation for Finalization of the Barbados National Action Plan to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation" held at the Savannah Hotel on 8th September 2005.

Also there was MSc student Terry Bradshaw who is an intern at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) doing research on land degradation under the guidance of Dr. Reynold Murray. Terry is comparing 3 study sites in Barbados and examining the implications for sustainable land management policy. This should be of considerable interest to other places in the region.

Biodiversity and bleaching events

Dr. Hazel Oxenford attended the Technical Working Session for the preparation of Barbados' Third National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, hosted by the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment (Environment Division).

Hazel and her assistants are also monitoring the current severe coral bleaching event in Barbados along with the government's Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU).



Sea temperatures in excess of 30°C are currently being recorded at patch reefs on the west and south coasts, and on west coast bank reefs down to 20 metres deep. The extent of bleaching is now as high as 70-80% of live coral at all sites (bank, fringing, patch reefs) and is affecting virtually all hard coral species, soft corals and anemones. CERMES will continue to monitor the event.

CERMES project officer goes global

Maria Pena, a CERMES graduate and our project officer, has been accepted to participate in the UNEP Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Fellowship Programme. She joins the Expert Working Group consisting of Lead Authors, Coordinating Lead Authors and Contributing Authors for the production of Chapter 5 on Biodiversity for the GEO-4 to be produced in 2007. The GEO is the practical implementation of UNEP's mandate to keep the global environment under review.

CERMES new regional project on MPA management effectiveness

This new project, to be lead by Dr. Patrick McConney, will contribute towards building regional capacity in MPA management effectiveness evaluation methods in the Caribbean. MPA managers and other stakeholders at 3 MPAs in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Jamaica and Belize have agreed to participate. This project will build capacity where there is a demonstrated need and a genuine commitment to improvement. Integration with the university's communications, teaching and research programmes will add to the project's regional impact through the sharing of lessons learned and the output products. Participatory approaches will facilitate stakeholder involvement and encourage adaptive management to ensure that the best practices are institutionalized based upon the lessons learned and skills acquired during the project which ends in 2007.