



Connections

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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, The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus
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2008-2009 freshers are here

CERMES welcomed twenty new MSc hopefuls for the 2008-2009 academic year. With such a diverse group hailing from the wider Caribbean region and North America, class discussions and cultural exchanges are bound to be interesting! Already chatter in Spanish can be heard in the halls on a daily basis. The majority of this group have chosen to specialise in Coastal and Marine Resource Management, with the remainder divided between the Climate Change and Water Resources Management specialisations.

Also this year three MPhil students have chosen to pursue their studies in CERMES. From the start of the semester the department has been a hive of research activity.

We wish you every success in your studies with us and hope that your experience in CERMES will be ever rewarding.

Honing aquatic skills

The new CERMES students jumped into the 2008-2009 academic year with a splash! On 2 September, as part of CERMES orientation, students and some staff went on a land and sea tour of the island. During the tour students were introduced to environmental issues relevant to Barbados and to the region. Overseas students were able to get a glimpse of the beautiful island they would call home for the next year and which they would undoubtedly explore throughout their stint at CERMES.

From 3-6 September, some of the previously non-aquatic students learned to swim under instruction from Michael Young of Underwater Barbados. The certified scuba divers among the group had a check-out session and then enjoyed a dive through

the Carlisle Bay wrecks. By the week's end, all the students were snorkeling among the wrecks in the Bay, and many of the new swimmers showed significant improvement in their swimming ability.



Elation before learning about the swim back to shore!

There was no stopping the fun at this point, as the students learned to kayak, tie marine knots, make splices, row a dinghy, and were introduced to basic boat handling skills onboard our very own UWI-CHILL. Our new 'water babes' are now keen to approach the marine fieldwork courses to come!



Diving session

Solar irrigation at CERMES

CERMES is pleased to announce its recently completed solar irrigation system. This project is the brainchild of Professor Robin Mahon, and was implemented by Renata Goodridge CERMES Marine Technician, Natasha Corbin Project Officer Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences, and the hands-on electrician Glendon Pile, Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences. The irrigation scheme waters the south CERMES gardens with rainwater collected from one roof of the building. The 1,000 gallon tank is situated behind the building, and the pump is powered by photovoltaic cells on the other, flat, roof of the building. This irrigation scheme is a clean running system; one that is not only good for the garden, as it is now watered with sweet rainwater, but also for the general environment, as there are no fossil fuels being used in the system. On 28 October, CERMES hosted a brown bag lunch presentation on this project, given by Natasha Corbin.

CIDA interns for CERMES

CERMES is happy to welcome four interns to the Department. Meet the first two, Jen Cavanagh and Don Logan, in this issue. These Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) interns joined CERMES in September and since then they have been working feverishly on their respective projects while enjoying their new surroundings.



Jennifer Cavanagh is a recipient of the Dalhousie University's (Nova Scotia, Canada) International Youth Internship Program that is part of the government of Canada's

Youth Employment Strategy, funded by CIDA. Jen will be working with the CERMES MarGov project team. Particularly, she will be assisting the Communications Officer with the implementation of the communication plan and interpreting and re-packaging information related to marine governance. Read more on Jen in the *MarGov project update* section following.

Don Logan or 'Logan', also a CIDA sponsored intern is from Halifax Nova Scotia, on Canada's windswept east coast and is enjoying his first visit to beautiful Barbados. Combining a background in



international development and marine management, he will be working here as a Monitoring and Reporting Assistant supporting the Caribbean Sea Initiative

from September to February 2009. In addition to the CLME project, Logan hopes to learn about and contribute to other CERMES initiatives and operations in the Caribbean.

Shell scholarship awarded

New CERMES student Shamal Connell has become the first recipient of the Shell MPhil Scholarship in Environmental Studies. The Vincentian has embarked on a course of research into the gully ecosystems and the important coral reefs off Barbados' west coast. At the cheque handing over ceremony this month, Country Chairman for Shell Western Trading, Ian Charman, had words of praise for Shamal.



Shell Scholarship winner Shamal Connell accepting his scholarship from Minister of the Environment, Dr. Esther Byer-Suckoo, while CERMES Director, Professor Robin Mahon (left) and Shell Country Chairman, Ian Charman, look on

"When we signed the Memorandum of Understanding for an MPhil Scholarship in Environmental Studies with the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies, it was to provide the opportunity for appropriately qualified students to pursue an interdisciplinary research programme in Natural Resource Management or Environmental Studies leading to a Masters in Philosophy degree."

"We are confident today that this goal will be realized and that Mr. Connell will make good use of this opportunity. It is evident to us that Mr.

Connell already embraces the essence of the Caribbean spirit, born in St. Vincent, he completed his Bachelor's Degree in Jamaica and now will pursue his post-graduate work here in Barbados," said Charman.

National tourism sector adaptation strategy to address climate change in Barbados

CERMES has been contracted by the Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change (MACC) Project and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre in Belize to prepare a national tourism sector adaptation strategy to deal with the predicted adverse effects of climate change on the sector. A policy forum with members of various government agencies and a national consultation meeting were held in October at which the outputs of the project were presented and discussed. The CERMES team is now finalising the draft strategy before presentation to the Ministry of Tourism at the end of October 2008.



Children and the environment in the eastern Caribbean



Janice Cumberbatch and Adrian Cashman together with Jenna Blackwood and Amanda Byer are part of a UWI team undertaking a Gap Analysis consultancy for the United Nations Children Environment Fund (UNICEF). Adrian and Jenna are covering Environmental Health Hazards whilst Janice and Amanda will be

covering Education and Awareness of Environmental Issues. The work will focus on Barbados and Grenada but data will also be collected from other Eastern Caribbean countries as well as the Turks and Caicos Islands. The work

aims to identify the most critical issues which need to be addressed in the next decade with regard to the environmental issues impacting the health, well-being and development of children in the Eastern Caribbean. This will assist UNICEF and UNEP to identify possible interventions which may be undertaken to address and alleviate those environmental threats and concerns.

Getting coral reef biodiversity into schools

During October, Mrs. Andree Griffith, Executive Director of Caribbean Conservation Association and Ms. Katherine Blackman (CERMES) have been distributing the People and Corals workbook to primary schools across the island as part of the *Community-based Coral Reef Monitoring and Management* project. The People and Corals workbook is designed to allow teachers to incorporate its activities into their usual teaching sessions while simultaneously engaging the students' interest in coral reefs and associated marine biodiversity and the importance of conservation. The distribution of the workbooks is expected to assist with incorporating coral reef biodiversity conservation and management into the primary schools curricula. So far principals have thanked the project for its donation especially since it will assist them with on-going coral reef projects.

CERMES to host major symposium in December

This month Barbados' Minister of the Environment, Dr. Esther Byer-Suckoo, officially launched the *Marine Ecosystem Based Management in the Caribbean: An Essential Component of Principled Ocean Governance* symposium to be held at the Cave Hill Campus, 10-12 December.

As Dr. Byer-Suckoo launched the symposium she praised CERMES for taking the initiative to host the event. "Resource managers have recognised that it is no longer practical to manage our natural resources on a sectoral basis. This results in user conflicts and impairment of the sustainable use of the resource due to the existence of separate governance structures. Hence the need to advance a "new" management regime with respect to the sustainable use of our natural resources. The time

for change is now. I am therefore heartened to know that you are elaborating a Large Marine Ecosystem Governance Framework which will provide a practical means to promote the sustainable use and management of our living marine resources," said Dr. Byer-Suckoo.

CERMES Director Professor Robin Mahon anticipates that over the three days the approximately 80 participants from over 16 countries would be making a significant contribution to charting the way forward to ensure that the marine resources of our region would be there for future generations.

Batts Rock Blues

The following is a letter submitted in August to The Nation newspaper by CERMES Water Resources Management lecturer, Dr. Adrian Cashman. As you read you will note just how very timely and applicable this letter is to the recent flooding episodes in Barbados.

"Most mornings I go down to Batts Rock to swim. To get there I go down the temporary footpath behind the old Esso site and along the side of the gully that runs down to the sea. The gully was until last week home to birds, wildlife and an impressive collection of fig trees. One of each morning's delights was to see these trees, a welcome contrast to the sterile building site created by the huge Four Seasons development. I say 'was', because to my horror and dismay the contractors have bulldozed into oblivion these wonderful trees and the habitat that they provided.

All that is left is a tangled scene of destruction.

Why? For what purpose?



The crime scene

To me this is just another case of wanton, unchecked destruction. These trees were on the side of the gully. It is land that is not going to be built on. Why then cut them down? Who has allowed them to do this? Is it a case of big money buys what it wants, does what it wants and cannot be held to account?

This example also raises important environmental and development issues. By removing the vegetation in the gully, providing no run-off protection from the surrounding building site, the passage of stormwater run-off from the surrounding areas has been considerably eased. There is little to slow the flow of water. The consequence is that flood waters pick up and transport more sediment and debris as it flows. All this increases the erosive power of the flood waters which now reach the coast not only more quickly but more destructively. Sediment-laded flood waters will now be deposited in the marine environment, negatively impacting on the shoreline and the coral reefs.

It is a usual condition of planning approval that developments should not add to exiting or create additional stormwater run-off from the property – when complete. However, there seems to be a serious environmental problem arising during construction where controls and stipulations over minimising environmental impacts are less stringent. The fact is that one serious flood and the harm is done.

The sad fact is that this environment is now lost for good – nothing we can do will bring it back. So what is the use of having a policy of public access to Barbados' beaches when the attractions of the sea shore have disappeared?

Unless people and professionals take a stand on seemingly small matters such as this, you may wake up one morning, like I did, and find that there's nothing left to protect."

Keep on 'telling like it is', Adrian!

MarGov project update

by Carmel Haynes

This section has been specially added to our e-bulletin to inform, update and share lessons learned with partners, stakeholders, policy makers and other interested persons about the IDRC-funded CERMES Marine Resource Governance in the eastern Caribbean (MarGov) project.

MarGov team expands

The MarGov Project continues to strengthen its research and outreach capacity with the addition of new members to the team. Joining the team at the start of this semester was the second and final MPhil Fellowship awardee, Shelly -Ann Cox; and Jennifer Cavanagh, a Canadian International Development Agency-funded intern.

Shelly-Ann recently completed a BSc (Hons.) in Environmental and Natural Resource Management with Marine Biology at UWI, St Augustine. Her research focus under the MarGov project involves research into the adaptive co-management of small scale fisheries with an emphasis on the adaptive co-management of the sea urchin fisheries in Barbados and St. Lucia.

Jennifer has joined the MarGov team until February 2009 through the International Youth Internship Program of Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada. She is a graduate of Dalhousie's Marine Management Masters program, and holds a BSc in Environmental Engineering from the University of Guelph. Jennifer will assist with the communications planning and research carried out within MarGov.

Supporting the Barbados FAC

Since awarding the Barbados Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) a US\$8,750 grant in July to strengthen its role in the sustainable governance of fisheries resources in Barbados, the MarGov Project has played an active supporting role in the FAC initiatives. The MarGov team has assisted the FAC with devising a work plan for executing the project and supporting the FAC in its meetings with fisher folk. This has also benefited the MarGov researchers, who have been getting first hand reactions to governance issues that concern the fisheries sector. The MarGov team also participated in a strategic planning retreat held by the FAC executive to chart a way forward for the committee that was legally mandated in 1993 to be the advisor to the Minister of Agriculture in all matters related to the sector.



Chair of the Barbados FAC Felicia Corbin receives the first grant cheque from MarGov Project Manager Dr. Patrick McConney while Barbados' Minister of Agriculture, Senator Haynesley Benn, looks on.

Special fisheries forum

MarGov Project Manager, Dr. Patrick McConney, represented the University of the West Indies once again as an observer at the Special Fisheries Forum of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) held in St. Vincent in September. During the two day meeting, Dr. McConney learned of progress in formulating the second medium term plan for the CRFM and several new initiatives such as a poverty study of fishing communities.

The forum also delved into one of the most critical matters concerning marine resource governance – the preliminary legal opinion on the relationship between the Common Fisheries Policy and Regime (CFP&R) and the revised Treaty of Chaguaramas that governs the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The treaty relationship may well determine the future and fate of the CFP&R. A final legal opinion, followed by discussion among Member States, is due soon.

Researchers getting down to business

MarGov MPhil researchers Tenile Grant and Shelly -Ann Cox have been getting hands-on experience with fisheries governance issues over the last two months. The two have been working closely with the Barbados Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC), adopting the role of observers at the FAC monthly meetings and attending the open-air special meetings called by the FAC with fisheries stakeholders at Consett Bay in St John and the Bridgetown Fish Market as part of the MarGov funded FAC project. They also both attended the important Fisheries Division meeting where the decision was made between sea urchin fishers and fisheries officers, based on data collected from the surveys this year, to keep the sea urchin fishery closed for another year. Shelly -Ann also attended The Conch Fishery Management Workshop on 2 October, at the Fisheries Division where stakeholders were involved in formulating management strategies for this fishery.

Dalhousie University associate research student Laura Tabet has spent the last month meeting and interviewing a number of fishers, vendors and representatives of fisheries management authorities across Barbados to gain insight into how fisher folk voice their concerns to government agencies, how information flows between different people in the fishing industry, as well as investigating the role and activity of fisher folk organisations (FFOs). Following on from her field visits in May with the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) to St. Vincent, St. Kitts and Nevis, Laura also participated in the 10-day training workshop for fisher folk leaders hosted by the CRFM in St Lucia from 22 September to 3 October, in order to gain a better regional perspective on the successes and challenges facing FFOs.



MarGov MPhil Shelly -Ann Cox takes note as chair of the Barbados FAC Felicia Corbin addresses fishers in Consett Bay.
MarGov MPhil Tenile Grant takes down fishers' contact information at the Consett Bay meeting.

Guiding fishers on communication, advocacy and networking

MarGov Project Manager Dr. Patrick McConney and Communications Officer Carmel Haynes travelled to St Lucia in late September as trainers in the 10-day Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism workshop for regional fisher folk organisation leaders and fisheries officers. The workshop sessions took place between the Palm Haven Hotel and the Bay Gardens Inn, both in Rodney Bay. Dr. McConney took the 26 participants through the rudiments of the project cycle, log-frame analysis, and networks; while Carmel addressed the links between timely and strategic communication and advocacy.



Dr. Patrick McConney guiding workshop participants through a workshop exercise

MarGov puts on fisheries panel discussion

The issue of governance of the regional fisheries sector and how it is addressed by regulators and fishers on the ground were put under the microscope when the MarGov Project held its first panel discussion - "Caribbean Fisheries: Sinking or Swimming in a Sea of Uncertainty", this month. The public discussion took place at the Fisheries Division Complex on Princess Alice Highway in Bridgetown where MarGov Project Manager Dr Patrick McConney and his fellow panelists Milton Haughton, Deputy Executive Director of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Secretariat in Belize; Barbados' Ambassador to CARICOM, Dennis Kellman; and Mitchell Lay, an Antiguan fisher who heads up the coordinating unit for the Regional Fisherfolk Network, tackled such questions as: whether fishers have enough say in regional fisheries management decisions; and whether regional governments have the political will to come a collective agreement on fisheries?



Barbados' Ambassador to CARICOM Dennis Kellman (right) makes a point while (from left) moderator Julius Gittens and panellists Mitchell Lay, Milton Haughton, and Dr. Patrick McConney listen