



A bi-monthly electronic bulletin about interdisciplinary research, teaching and outreach at the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES)  
 Editors: Maria Pena and Dr. Patrick McConney

## 67<sup>th</sup> GCFI in Barbados

By Maria Pena

CERMES has been fully endorsed by the Board of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) to host and organise the 67th GCFI meeting in Barbados from 3-7 November 2014. The GCFI annual meeting was last held in Barbados in 1996 and participants fondly remember it as a favourite destination. Indeed our proposal to host the meeting in Barbados has been met with great excitement and enthusiasm.

The proposed theme for the conference is *Small islands, big issues: applying fisheries and marine science to solve problems and create opportunities*. This is linked to 2014 being the UN International Year for Small Island Developing States and the 20th anniversary of the Barbados (SIDS) Programme of Action.

GCFI ([www.gcfi.org](http://www.gcfi.org)) was established in 1947 to promote the exchange of information on the use and management of marine resources in the Gulf and Caribbean region. The GCFI annual meeting is devoted to technical presentations and workshops on current issues and research relevant to fisheries, marine parks, seafood products and critical habitats.

CERMES main organizers, Maria Pena and Patrick McConney are well into the planning process with GCFI Program Chair Alejandro Acosta. A CERMES organising committee has been formed and everyone is ready and raring to play their roles in making the 67<sup>th</sup> GCFI a successful and productive conference. For further information about the conference, contact one of the local organisers.

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## FORCE concludes fieldwork

By Rachel Turner

The Future of Reefs in a Changing Environment (FORCE) project concluded its fieldwork in January 2014 with national consultation meetings held in each of the four countries studied by the social science team (Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, Belize and Honduras). A range of representatives from government, NGOs, the private sector and universities participated in each interactive workshop.



Honduras meeting participants

FORCE researchers presented some of the key findings from the social science research

undertaken on livelihoods and coral reef governance in twelve communities across the four countries. Topics included sustainable livelihood enhancement and diversification, economic valuation of reef fishing and dive tourism, drivers of reef health, and resource user perceptions of coral reef governance.

Following discussion of the findings, participants explored future possibilities for coral reef management in their country through exercises in which they identified major drivers of change in the future, and discussed four diverse possible futures and their implications for coral reef use and management. The workshops concluded with a discussion of the outcomes. Further findings from the project will be disseminated over the coming months along with policy briefs identifying important implications for coral reef management.

## REBYC-II LAC Project considers adaptive co-management

By *Patrick McConney*



CERMES was represented at the FAO/GEF Inception Workshop on *Sustainable management of by-catch in Latin America and Caribbean trawl fisheries (REBYC-II LAC)* held in Paramaribo, Suriname, 19-22 January 2014. At the invitation of FAO, Patrick McConney made a presentation on *Adaptive co-management and experience in the region* that was prepared by a TBTI WG4 team comprising Rodrigo Medeiros, Terrence Phillips and Mark Lall and emphasized the importance of stewardship. The

presentation drew on the work of TBTI WG4 and CANARI in bringing fisherfolk into adaptive co-management arrangements in the Caribbean and Brazil. McConney also led workshop participants in an exercise of assessing the conditions that favour adaptive co-management in their countries.

## Water-aCCSIS in St. Peter

By *Shobha Maharaj and Adrian Cashman*

The Water-aCCSIS project, led by Adrian Cashman, is carrying out research into the potential impact of climate change on water availability and the implications for climate adaptation and policy in the Caribbean. The starting point for exploring the impacts is the watershed and there are pilot catchments in the project. In Barbados the chosen catchment is up and around Speightstown in the parish of St Peter.

This area has undergone recent tourism developments; encompasses two marina developments, Port St Charles and Port Ferdinand; the fishing village of Six Men's Bay; and along the coast several up-scale hotel and apartment developments. Inland mixed agriculture predominates as the main form of land use and there are production boreholes that provide water for the Barbados Water Authority and for farmers. Barbados relies almost exclusively on groundwater for its water supplies and the Gully systems of the island are an important feature contributing to recharge. They are important forested areas which are said to be recovering ecosystems that were once used as a source of firewood and top soil. The Whim gully system above Speightstown is an important feature in the landscape, running inland and periodically contributes to the flooding of the town.

Vegetation and ecosystems have an important water balancing role to play in the water cycle but they are equally affected by changes in climatic variables such as temperature and precipitation. Climate change may therefore have an impact on vegetation composition and distribution, dependent on the original state of

the ecosystem and by extension on water balance. One of the Water-aCCSIS work packages, Vegetation Modelling, is looking into this aspect and is being led by DrShobhaMaharaj, previously with the Department of Life Sciences at St Augustine, Trinidad. During February she paid a reconnaissance visit to Barbados to gauge the potential extent of the work that could be carried out in the Speightstown 'catchment'.

During this reconnaissance trip discussions and meetings were held with forestry experts persons from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Botanic Gardens, and Soil Conservation Unit, and with local expert Professor Sean Carrington from UWI, Cave Hill Campus who led a visit into The Whim. Observations of the vegetation present within the drainage system that contains the Whim Gulley system were also made.



L to R: Dr. Adrian Cashman and Prof. Sean Carrington during the reconnaissance site visit

Scoping of the area has led to the realization that there is potential to build on some of the small-scale initiatives that are being undertaken in Barbados with respect to management of the landscape through integration of silvo-culture and agro-forestry. This perhaps will be the focus of the work package in Barbados, looking at the role adaptive measures can play in highly modified landscapes.

## Marine renewable energy and marine governance

*By Patrick McConney*

A seminar on *Realising the Potential for Marine Renewable Energy in the Marine Environment* was hosted by the British High Commission in Barbados, 10 -11 February 2014. Participants were drawn from around the Caribbean and the majority of presenters were from the UK, sharing technology and other experience with marine energy. Speaking in a panel on Caribbean context, Patrick McConney presented on *Integrated coastal management and marine governance through marine spatial planning*. He shared information on the development of the Grenadines MarSIS among other CERMES initiatives. There was considerable interest in Caribbean MSP among the UK participants who were familiar with the UK and EU frameworks and policies for marine planning and industry.

## Sustainable Barbados blog

*By Robin Mahon*

On January 9 CERMES established the 'Sustainable Barbados' website in an attempt to broaden discussion about the current economic situation in Barbados. The first post entitled "A no-growth, sustainable Barbados: Is new thinking required?" was by Robin Mahon. It starts, "The prevailing belief in our nation is that we are now in a recession but that (hopefully) in a few years the economy will recover. However, the global economy may not recover as expected, and the Barbados economy may not begin to grow again or may grow only very slowly. Could this be a good thing for Barbados? If so, what do we need to do to take advantage of the opportunities offered by this situation and minimise the negative impacts?" To read more [visit the post by clicking here](#). There are other posts to read and you can make a comment or submit a post of your own ideas.

## Fisherfolk mentoring

By Katherine Blackman

Eleven fisherfolk associated with the Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations (BARNUFO) participated in a fisherfolk workshop on 15 January 2014 at CERMES. The workshop sought to strengthen participation in fisheries governance, focusing on enhancing organisational capacity and encouraging advocacy for policy influence. A problem analysis exercise facilitated fisherfolk understanding of the underlying problems, revealing that in most cases more effective communication was key. Using a learning-by-doing approach, they developed an advocacy plan to promote the development of a more attractive national insurance (NIS) package for seasonal workers such as fisherfolk. A basic communication plan and terms of reference for a Public Relations Officer was also developed to strengthen the organisation's communication with its members. The workshop received great reviews from the participants.

The workshop was co-facilitated by three mentors to BARNUFO: Katherine Blackman, Neetha Selliah and Shelly-Ann Cox. The workshop of the €1 million European Union funded project, *“Enhancing food security from the fisheries sector in the Caribbean: Building the capacity of regional and national fisherfolk organisation network to participate in fisheries governance and management”* is being implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), working in partnership with CERMES, the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO), Panos Caribbean and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CFRM).



## David is awarded his PhD

By Maria Pena



Special congratulations to David Gill, CERMES PhD candidate, on the award of his PhD in January. David first started his association with CERMES in 2005 as a Masters Student in Natural Resource Management. He completed his Masters degree with a research project on developing a socio-economic profile of fishers in the Grenadine Islands. Although he left us to pursue consultation projects for about four years, fate would have it that he return to us to undertake research for his PhD as part of the Future of the Reefs in a Changing Environment (FORCE) project in 2010. David's research focused on the economic value of reef fish to the tourism and fisheries sectors in Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Honduras in order to better inform management of reef resources in the Caribbean. David was supervised by Hazel Oxenford (CERMES) and Peter Schuhmann (University of North Carolina Wilmington) and supported by his FORCE team mates and friends.

Within days of completing a successful viva, David was off to begin a new chapter in his life as Post Doctoral Fellow with the National Socio-environmental Synthesis Centre (SESYNCS), in Annapolis, Maryland, USA. There, he joins an inter-disciplinary team in unpacking the links between marine protected area governance and ecosystem structure, function and services.

CERMES and David's FORCE colleagues wish him a successful and rewarding Fellowship. Visit us when you return home David!

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