



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

CERMES reaps awards!

By Maria Pena

The high quality research that CERMES continues to produce was recently recognised during Research Week at the Cave Hill Campus. CERMES copped four awards across three categories for research conducted in three projects:

- Most Internationally Successful Research Project presented to The Future of Reefs in a Changing Environment (FORCE) Project.
- Best Applied Research Award for The Barbados Lionfish Project.
- Research Team Award to FORCE Project.
- Research Team Award presented to The Vulnerability of Caribbean Fisheries to Climate Change Project

Special congratulations to all Principal Investigators and research teams! You have done us proud.

UWI Open Campus SVG country conference

By Antonio Joyette

From 11-12 March, 2015, CERMES PhD student, Antonio Joyette, participated in the Country Conference hosted by the UWI Open Campus (UWIOC) St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG). The theme of the Conference was 'Promoting a Culture of Safety: Building Resilience to Disasters and Stimulating Sustainable Development.'

Antonio delivered a presentation entitled 'The Management of Drought in St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Challenges to Adaptation'. He also so presented two posters prepared in collaboration with his Supervisor, Dr. Leonard Nurse.

The UWIOC SVG, in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO), the SVG Red Cross Society and Regional Disaster Vulnerability

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Antonio in presentation mode

Reduction Project (RDVRP) accommodated the Conference.

Research topics focused primarily on areas of climate change, disasters, vulnerabilities to natural hazards - particularly coastal, volcanic and drought - and disaster risk management. The audience reflected a wide cross-section of society, including civil society, social, education and economic sectors (agriculture, commerce, energy and water).

The hosts celebrated the increase in public awareness of the impacts of disasters on SVG and achievement of the recommendations needed to guide the sustainable development of the island. The researchers pledge continued collaboration and similar assistance in the future.

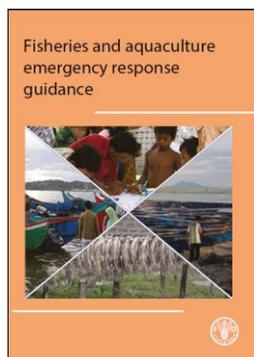
Fisheries and Aquaculture Emergency Response

By Patrick McConney

CERMES was represented by Patrick McConney at the FAO's first Training of Trainers on 'Fisheries and Aquaculture Emergency Response Guidance' held 22 – 28 March 2015 in Fuggi, Italy. In this international course the participants were first exposed to the topic by the facilitators, and then they practiced to deliver the test course material as trainers.



Shortly, the test course material will be updated and available to the trainers for delivery around the world. As a regional level partner in the proposed FAO/WECAFC project on *Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector (CC4FISH)* the opportunity may arise to offer the course as a part of the disaster preparedness and response capacity development requested by the seven countries if the project is approved for implementation later this year.



March. This was an historic event as it was the first time the entire team responsible for implementation of the BIOPAMA Programme's protected areas component were all together. Stephen Peedell, EC-JRC BIOPAMA Coordinator, indicated that, "It was a unique opportunity for us to work together to set the technical framework for the common developments in the Regional BIOPAMA Observatories, and to make progress on data collection, management and publishing within the Regional Reference Information Systems (RRIS)."



IUCN/EC-JRC BIOPAMA team

Updates on the status of Observatory developments in each of the regions were provided, and the Technical Officers, who will be responsible for managing the RRIS, were able to enhance their knowledge and basic skills in data management and analysis. "We [the Technical Officers] took full advantage of the opportunity to interact directly with the EC-JRC team, which is responsible for building the RRIS." – Jason Williams, Technical Officer, BIOPAMA Caribbean. The BIOPAMA Regional Coordinators also took the opportunity to carry out some much needed project management housekeeping as the BIOPAMA programme enters its final year.



Hyacinth (centre), Jason (right) and Mariagrazia Graziano (JRC) discussing the workplan for the Caribbean

BIOPAMA global team meeting

By Hyacinth Armstrong-Vaughn

The BIOPAMA Caribbean team, Hyacinth Armstrong-Vaughn, Caribbean Coordinator, and Jason Williams, Technical Officer, met with their counterparts from the Pacific and Africa regions, the IUCN BIOPAMA Global Coordinator, the BIOPAMA Communications Coordinator and the European Commission – Joint Research Centre (EC-JRC) BIOPAMA team at the BIOPAMA Regional Team Workshop held at the Headquarters for the EC-JRC in Ispra, Italy, 23 – 27

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Caribbean Fisheries Forum laments low interest in university courses may impact future fisheries management

By Patrick McConney

The Thirteenth Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Fisheries Forum was held in Grenada from 30 - 31 March 2015 with UWI as an invited Observer as customary. The Forum followed a new format in which the agenda was based on the CRFM strategic plan, and hence the proceedings were in essence a CRFM Secretariat initiative in participatory monitoring and evaluation. CERMES presented the UWI report on fisheries-related research and publications across the three campuses.



The CERMES representative reported that there had been a decline in the number of applicants for the Coastal and Marine MSc specialisation that included fisheries. A few delegates observed that despite the valiant efforts of the CRFM Secretariat to offer advanced academic opportunities to fisheries officers, there was apparently less interest among young people in fisheries studies. Like CERMES, the delegates were concerned that low interest in university fisheries courses offered regionally may negatively impact future fisheries management. CERMES hopes that wide dissemination of the CRFM Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Agenda, to be available soon, will motivate new interest in both taught and research graduate degrees.

UNICPOLOS – oceans and sustainable development

By Robin Mahon



Professor Emeritus Robin Mahon, CERMES, was invited to speak on a panel at the Sixteenth Meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), held 6-10 April, New York. The theme of the consultation was 'Oceans and Sustainable Development: Integration of the Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development, Namely, Environmental, Social and Economic,' a topic of considerable importance to Barbados and the Caribbean in general.

Professor Mahon spoke on how the large number and complexity of regional and global ocean governance arrangements impacts the small island developing states of the Caribbean. Limited staff and resources make it difficult for countries to deal and engage with these processes that are in place for fisheries, biodiversity, pollution and other ocean matters. He outlined progress in the Caribbean with regional initiatives that can help alleviate these constraints. He also emphasised the need for global level reform that will make it easier for countries to engage at that level.

As regards national reforms, he expressed concern that despite the importance of marine ecosystems to their economies, few Caribbean countries have national ocean policies, such as those found in many developed countries. He stressed the need for Caribbean countries to develop the mechanisms such a national ocean committees needed to bring about integration at the national level and prepare themselves for the opportunities present by ocean oriented development – the Blue Economy.

Publications on tackling climate and disasters in fisheries and aquaculture in the Caribbean are available from FAO

By Patrick McConney

The FAO 2015 publications on *Disaster risk management and climate change adaptation in the CARICOM and wider Caribbean region – Formulating a strategy, action plan and programme for fisheries and aquaculture*, the proceedings of a regional workshop held 10–12 December 2012 in Kingston, Jamaica, are now published as FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Proceedings No. 35. Companions to the workshop report with the assessment study are separate reports with the *Strategy and action plan* and the *Programme proposals*.



CERMES assisted in the work behind these publications and it is gratifying to see them being used by FAO and CRFM to inform their project proposals. These reports are definitely not just sitting on the shelf. Download, have a look, and make best use of them.

Exploring Tobago's submerged mountains

By Robin Ramdeen and Jeanel Georges

CERMES alumnus, Robin Ramdeen, is a 2015 Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education (EDGE) Fellow exploring the linkages between the condition of *Montastraea faveolata* and the socio-economic condition of reef stakeholders in Tobago. The mountainous star coral, as it is commonly called, is an Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered (EDGE) species which is among other corals of Tobago that are suffering the ill-effects of global warming, pollution and physical damage from recreational activities. The aim of the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) funded project is to build in-country

conservation capacity and implement conservation initiatives.

Robin and her expedition team: Marc de Verteuil of Papa Bois Conservation, Jeanel Georges of CERMES and Kirsty Richards of the ZSL, went SCUBA diving along the north and western coasts of Tobago from 6-10 April to measure the relative abundance and health of the star coral. The team also conducted interviews with reef stakeholders such as glass-bottom boat tour operators and dive instructors in order to document the attitudes of locals towards corals and coral conservation. Over the next year the team will conduct further surveys on land and underwater as they work hard to save remaining fringing reefs surrounding sweet sunny Tobago.



(L) Robin monitoring her EDGE coral species (R) The Expedition team resurfaces from coral monitoring. Photo credit: Marc de Verteuil.

Promoting CERMES via social media continues

By Maria Pena

Since our February *Connections*, CERMES Research Assistant Jehroum Wood, has been maintaining a steady stream of posts to the CERMES Facebook page and has embarked on producing short video highlights of recent CERMES alumni.

Have a look at some of the videos either on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/cermesuwi>) or on our very own You Tube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjYS5ZuEjt70f70caK0ws1Q>).

If you are a CERMES graduate and would like to share your CERMES experiences via video, please contact Jehroum at jehroum.wood@cavehill.uwi.edu. Stardom awaits!