



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

CERMES hosts regional Sargassum Symposium

By Janice Cumberbatch



www.sargassum-at-cermes.com

On 17 August, CERMES coordinated the regional Sargassum Symposium at the 3Ws Pavilion, on behalf of the Cave Hill Campus of The University of the West Indies. The regional Symposium brought together natural and social scientists from across the University with key stakeholders in the Caribbean's tourism, business and fisheries sectors to discuss the Sargassum seaweed phenomenon invading our region's beaches and threatening key economic sectors.

The Symposium was coordinated and chaired by Dr. Janice Cumberbatch. Prof. Hazel Oxenford gave the keynote address focusing on the ecological aspects and source of the mass influx of Sargassum in the Caribbean. There were two panel discussions. The first "The Impacts of the Sargassum Seaweed in the Caribbean," comprised Fabian Hinds, Barbados Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU); Stephen Willoughby, Barbados Fisheries Division; and Sue Springer, the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA). The second panel "Adaptation and Mitigation: Social and Economic Opportunities", comprised Dr. Winston Moore, Department of Economics UWI; Dr. Bidyut Mahapatra, Department of Biological and Chemical Sciences; and Mark Hill, MPhil Student in the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES).

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Participants shared a range of concerns as well as lessons learnt about the seaweed and sought to find ways of dealing with the impacts while seeking ways of benefiting from the resource. Seven round table discussions focused on areas such as ecology, climate change, beach clean ups and product development in the areas of alternative energy fertilisers, pharmaceuticals and health products. For each area of interest summary reports were produced capturing participant views on what is being done, issues to be investigated, stakeholders to be involved, resources required and potential sources of funding. These reports will be used to inform research proposals and action plans.

As an immediate follow up to the Symposium, the website, <http://www.sargassum-at-cermes.com/>, was launched. This website provides the footage of the symposium as well as pdfs of all the presentations and discussion held during the event. It also provides links to regional and global Sargassum research and initiatives.

New academic year

By Neetha Selliah

It's a new academic Year, and we are already mid-way through the first semester. This year the MSc Programme in Natural Resource and Environmental

Management welcomed 14 students from nine countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and our first from Italy. We are happy to report that five students, distributed across our three specialisation streams, received AusAID scholarships and a sixth student was awarded a Sol Scholarship.

We also have a new addition to the CERMES family with the transfer of the MSc Programme in Renewable Energy Management from the Department of Computer Science, Mathematics and Physics. In addition to the 22 continuing students, CERMES also welcomes three new students to this Programme, all hailing from Barbados.

As with every new cohort, we look forward to learning from their collective regional and local experience and to them enriching our CERMES alumni. In return we hope that their experience with us is equally edifying.

Aquatic skills 2015

By Renata Goodridge

The CERMES 2015-16 cohort of 14 splashed into their first semester with the Aquatic Skills class held on 3 and 4 September 2015. This year's CERMES team comprised Renata Goodridge, Dale Benskin and Jehroum Wood on the ground and in the sea with the students.



Global students from as far afield as Italy upgraded their swimming and snorkeling skills, learned the basics of small outboard boat handling, used a GPS for waypointing and finding sites, and learned some basic knots that every good coastal person should know.

A Sargassum talk by Prof Oxenford and Neema Ramlogan was held one afternoon, so that all of CERMES is on the same page regarding latest information. With help from National Conservation Commission (NCC) lifeguards, those students who were truly not comfortable in the water became sea sprites and enthusiastically snorkeled the wrecks of Carlisle Bay

alongside their classmates. The class also snorkeled with green sea turtles foraging in the Bay; a real treat for everyone in the class, as the turtles are not shy and swam right up to the group looking for handouts. Enthusiasm for snorkeling in the Bay was so high that for the first time ever, we have students signing out snorkel gear so that they can get out on the weekends. This is what we like to see!

BIOPAMA Gateway launch

By Carmel Haynes

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and The University of the West Indies (UWI) officially launched the "Caribbean Protected Areas Gateway (Caribbean Gateway)" on September 2, 2015, during the IUCN Regional Conservation Forum in Panama City, Panama.



Jason Williams, Technical Officer, BIOPAMA Programme, presenting on the Caribbean Reference Information System

The [Caribbean Gateway](#), that serves to integrate a diverse range of relevant protected area and biodiversity data and information across the region, is a joint undertaking between the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme in the Caribbean and UWI's CERMES, an IUCN Member, at the Cave Hill Campus in Barbados.

Dr. Patrick McConney, Senior Lecturer at CERMES and the focal point for the Caribbean Gateway at the centre, said: "The launch of the Caribbean Gateway was a critical moment for the UWI in terms of our role in regional networking and sustainable development as it concerns linking data to better decision-making. There is clearly considerable demand for the products that the Gateway can provide. However, the quality and quantity depends largely on the engagement and contribution of stakeholders, who will be the ultimate

then used for a training of trainers session in Dominica on 29 July. These events were organised in close collaboration with the Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations (BARNUFO) and the Dominica Fisheries Division respectively.

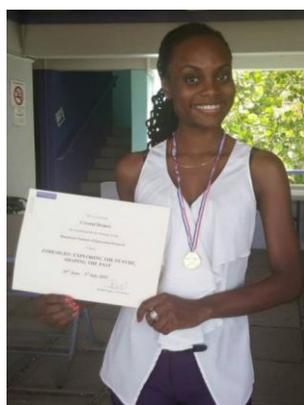


Fisherfolk participating in the Barbados (top) and Dominica (bottom) trainings

The leadership course covers topics such as group dynamics, motivation, chairing meetings, negotiation, conflict management, communication, facilitation and several other topics. The overall aim of the leadership training is to develop capacity and assist in empowering fisherfolk organisations.

Capacity building in Future Foresight Scenarios

By *Janel Georges*



Among the aims of the Water-aCCSIS project is to build capacity and new knowledge. Crystal Drakes, the research assistant responsible for the development of first-of-their-kind foresight scenarios for the Caribbean attended the annual Manchester Institute of Innovation Research (MIOIR)

Foresight Executive Course at the University of Manchester facilitated by the Manchester Business School. Crystal, the first participant from the Eastern Caribbean to attend the course, participated along with 16 other foresight practitioners from Australia, Colombia, South Africa, Tunisia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, United Kingdom, Russia and Tanzania. This year's course was held in June 2015 and has been running annually since 1999.

Preliminary SocMon results: Dominica fishing villages

By *Elsa Tokunaga*

A Socio-economic for Coastal management (SocMon) reassessment was recently conducted in three coastal fishing villages in Dominica: Colihaut, Dublanc and Bioche via a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife foundation. The original study was carried out in 2008. The re-assessment gathered similar information to the original allowing us a proper comparison between the years. Data were collected concerning the level of activity on the bay front and any changes perceived in resources as well as any problems and solutions regarding the resources and resource management.

Although fishing continues to be vital in each village, it is a declining practice. Fishers talked about their increasing difficulties of selling and catching fish. Resources were generally thought to be in poorer condition than they were five years ago, and a common perception was that a quarry in the study area played a role in this decline. Garbage, human waste disposal, and quarry waste were the most often repeated problems, while suggested solutions were a combination of community unity, education, and law enforcement. Stay tuned for the publication of the site monitoring report.



CERMES intern, Elsa Tokunaga (far right) and Derrick Theophile, Fisheries Officer, Dominica Fisheries Division (second right) sharing preliminary results about the SocMon study at a local radio station in Dominica

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