



A bi-monthly electronic bulletin about interdisciplinary research, teaching and outreach at the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES)  
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## Sargassum management brief



CERMES in collaboration with the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA-W-RAC) and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) have recently published a new management brief just in time for the first arrivals of Sargassum in the southeastern Caribbean. As noted in the opening of the brief, "The purpose of this management brief is to enable government officials, coastal managers, beach caretakers and coastal residents to get ahead of the *golden tides* by providing up-to-date information on the recent 'sargassum influxes' in the Caribbean region; and importantly, by offering guidance on how best to sustainably manage the seaweed, based on lessons learnt to date. This first brief focuses on the immediate problem of clean-up, after mass strandings of the weed. Others will be developed that focus on potential commercial uses of the weed and on adaptation measures suitable for fishers and other vessel operators."

For your copy, find it on the CERMES homepage <http://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes> on the rotator feed.

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## Water-aCCSIS at iEMSs

*By Crystal Drakes*

CERMES was the only organisation to have a representative from the Caribbean attend this year's International Congress of Environmental Modelling and Software Society (iEMSs) Conference, 10-12 July, held in Toulouse France. The purpose of this year's meeting was to foster discussion and the interchange of challenges, solutions, ideas, and new methods and techniques in environmental modeling and software in support of a sustainable future.

Crystal Drakes presented, "A Multi-Scalar Approach to Scenario Development: A Caribbean Experience," from the Water-aCCSIS project Work Package 11, Future Foresight Scenarios. The presentation outlined the methodologies recently employed in the scenario development exercise carried out the Caribbean. Concepts, new adaptations to methods and critique were deliberated with discussions regarding the next steps forward on the objectivity and rigor of scenario methodology. The feedback from the presentation will

be incorporated into a drafted methodological review paper which will be submitted to a peer review journal.

## Open data initiative progress

By Dionne Carbon

COUNTRY	DATA LIASON	DATA INVENTORY	DATA SUBMITTED	DATA UPLOADED
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	completed 	completed 	completed 	WORK IN PROGRESS 
BELIZE	completed 	completed 	completed 	WORK IN PROGRESS 
GRENADA	completed 	completed 	completed 	WORK IN PROGRESS 
JAMAICA	completed 	completed 	completed 	WORK IN PROGRESS 
ST LUCIA	completed 	completed 	completed 	WORK IN PROGRESS 

The Caribbean Gateway Open Data initiative seeks to demonstrate the value of bringing diverse datasets together to enhance innovation in planning, management and communications, and effective decision-making about protected areas. The Gateway is hosted by The University of West Indies Cave Hill Campus (UWI-Cave Hill) and located in CERMES.

For now, the Caribbean Gateway is focused on collection of socio-economic data. All countries possess socio-economic information, but it is spread across various departments so we don't see the big picture. For example, fisheries divisions may have information about the number of fishermen and fish catch within a community, and community development or gender affairs offices hold data on employment, livelihoods and education. The problem is that there is no merging of these data, so no informed decision can be made. An MPA manager may decide to implement policies that will lead to an expansion of a MPA, but as a result of limited availability to data the manager may not fully understand how it will affect the community. Will fish catch decline? Will fishermen change trade and become masons? Will they be able to provide for their families (food, education)? All these are questions that need to be considered before decisions are made. And with the absence of open data or data sharing a lot more uninformed decisions will be made.

Over the past few months a great deal of progress has been made. The initiative went from spending long days trying to convince open data custodians about the importance of open data and the need to share data with the Caribbean Gateway, to a point where data custodians have made contact to contribute what data they possess. Thus far all data for five countries Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica and St. Lucia have been collected and submitted. All that is left is for the data to be transformed in a way that is visually appealing and easily readable. It is hoped that in the next few weeks this initiative will be completed and data uploaded to the Gateway.

Please feel free to visit the website and share information; <http://caribbean-rris.biopama.org/>

## Caribbean Gateway's TO receives training at JRC in Italy

By Julian Walcott



Julian (foreground) attends a seminar on natural capital accounting and ecosystem services mapping

In an attempt to gain greater insights and a deeper understanding of the Caribbean Gateway's two platforms - the Regional Reference Information System: <http://caribbean-rris.biopama.org/> and the GeoNode: <http://geonode-rris.biopama.org/> - Julian Walcott, Technical Officer (TO) spent one week, 1-5 August 1-5 at the Joint Research Centre (JRC) receiving valuable training. The JRC is the European Commission's science and knowledge service. The JRC site at Ispra, Italy, is recognised as one of Europe's leading research campuses, with many areas of focus, including 'sustainable management of global natural resources'. The JRC ultimately helps developing countries to

manage, protect and assess their ecosystems and biodiversity via regional observatories such as the Caribbean Gateway through the development of tools for assessing and monitoring of protected areas, and the provision of scientific and technical expertise for using environmental monitoring tools.

Julian's training took the form of one-on-one or group discussions, seminars and hands-on exercises. Moving forward, the idea is to translate the knowledge gained into improving the functioning of the Caribbean Gateway to better serve the needs of the Caribbean region via the linking of data to better decisions.

Apart from the training, the trip afforded Julian the opportunity to address concerns, discuss the way forward, meet critical members of the BIOPAMA team, forge bonds and develop much needed communication pathways. Key persons interacted with included the BIOPAMA Coordinator at JRC (Stephen Peedell), the BIOPAMA Web Developer (James Davy), a Species Information Specialist (Andrew Cottam) and a Marine Protected Area Specialist (Mariagrazia Graziano).

## BARNUFO board is not bored

*By Patrick McConney*

Although it was elected back in April, the busy board of the Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations (BARNUFO) thought it necessary to have a Board Orientation Workshop to get good advice on NGO board effectiveness based on training that has been delivered by CERMES around the region for several



years.

As an outreach activity, the Board Orientation Workshop was held at CERMES, UWI, on 23 July 2016.

The CERMES resource persons were Katherine Blackman (CERMES MSc alumnus now with UNDP and also a BARNUFO mentor), Shelly-Ann Cox (PhD candidate and also a BARNUFO mentor) and Patrick McConney.

The one-day refresher workshop covered topics such as the constitution, selecting and engaging board members, board member duties, conflict of interest, project management tools, chairing and running meetings and much more. An afternoon session of working through some real issues facing BARNUFO provided practical experience of working with the various tools and procedures.

## GIFT keeps on giving

*By Patrick McConney*

The CERMES led regional Gender in Fisheries Team (GIFT) keeps on churning out deliverables in this under-documented facet of small-sale fisheries. Thanks to support from the FAO-funded project on **Activities to sustain dialogue, partnership and organisational strengthening among fisherfolk organisations**. Ms Tracey Edwards assisted GIFT in preparing presentations for the 6th Global Symposium on Gender in Aquaculture & Fisheries (GAF6), Bangkok, Thailand, 3-7 August 2016. GAF6 was attended by Patrick McConney and Nadine Nembhard. A member of the GIFT, and a key person in the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO), Nadine received generous travel support from the UNDP/GEF Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Project. She made two oral presentations on behalf of the GIFT.

- Nembhard, N., K. Blackman, P. Burke, S. Cox, T. Edwards, V. Nicholls, M. Pena, B. Simmons, L. Soares and P. McConney. *Caribbean fisheries: perspectives on gender*.
- Nembhard, N., S. Cox, T. Edwards, V. Nicholls, M. Pena and P. McConney. *Caribbean fisherfolk perspectives on gender equality in the Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines*.

Both McConney and Nembhard also attended the pre-symposium GAF 101: A Training Workshop Theorizing on Gender in Fisheries and Aquaculture Research, 3 August 2016. It was quite enlightening to share information with gender researchers from around the world at the workshop and symposium.

## Fisheries adapting to climate change

By Patrick McConney

Making the most of their travel support to Bangkok, Thailand, Patrick McConney and Nadine Nembhard also attended the Global Conference on Climate Change Adaptation within Fisheries and Aquaculture, from 8-10 August 2016. Nembhard received generous travel support from the UNDP/GEF Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) Project which has adaptation to climate change as a cross-cutting theme in its components. McConney was partially supported by the FAO which invited him to be a speaker, and the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific (NACA), the local hosts. Also at the conference were CERMES graduate Neema Ramlogan, and former post-doc turned consultant Iris Monnereau. The academics made three oral presentation as follows:

- Monnereau, I., R. Mahon, P. McConney, L. Nurse, R. Turner and H. Vallès. *The impact of methodological choices on the outcome of national-level climate change vulnerability assessments: an example from the global fisheries sector.*
- Ramlogan, N. and P. McConney. *Socio-economic impacts of Sargassum on the fishery sector of Barbados.*
- McConney, P. *Considering climate and disasters in Caribbean fisheries and aquaculture management planning.*

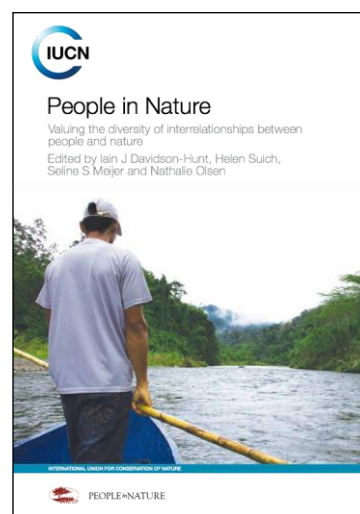
Nembhard used the CNFO Facebook page throughout to post information on the conference that was shared with fisherfolk and others from around the region on a daily basis. Information from the FishAdapt conference should put the CNFO in a good position to actively participate in climate change.

## People in Nature (PiN) publication

By Patrick McConney

Contributions from CERMES and CANARI are included in the new publication from the People in Nature (PiN) initiative of the IUCN. The volume edited by Iain Davidson-Hunt and others is entitled *People in Nature: Valuing the diversity of interrelationships between people and nature.* The two articles are:

- C Julián Idrobo, Hugo Asselin, Iain J Davidson-Hunt, Patrick McConney, Seline S Meijer, Nathalie Olsen and Helen Suich. 2016. *Mixed methodology for PiN landscape assessments.* Pp 35-50.
- Iain J Davidson-Hunt, Hugo Asselin, Fikret Berkes, Katrina Brown, C Julián Idrobo, MA Jones, Patrick McConney, R Michael O'Flaherty, James P Robson and Mariana Rodriguez. 2016. *The use of biodiversity for responding to globalised change.* Pp 19-34.



## Weather station back online

By Dale Benskin



Through the Water-ACCSIS project, a unique opportunity to capture weather data from the tiny island of Carriacou, Grenada, was initiated in 2015. The weather station was setup at the Limlair agricultural station. It was deployed with sensors to measure the

daily solar UV index, solar radiation, rain volume, wind speed and direction.

In May 2016, the Water-ACCSIS team discovered that there was a problem. Data transmissions were no longer providing actionable data. With the aid of the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs and local government, and CERMES, a team was assembled to trouble-shoot and resolve the issue.

It was suspected that a power surge at the location damaged the computer and communications equipment. Through the water-ACCSIS project a new computer was purchased and deployed by CERMES technician, Mr. Dale Benskin, to replace the damaged computer. In an effort to prevent further downtime, a UPS and new ADSL modem was provided via the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs.

Special thank goes to Permanent Secretary Mrs. Bernadette Lendore– Sylvester and the Carriacou Information Technology division headed by Mr. Davon Baker. Mr. Baker is supported by a small but closely knit team which includes Mrs. Trevelyn Andrews and Mr. Jamaal Adams. Without them, the repair and future maintenance of this remote weather station would not be possible.

## BIOPAMA and the Caribbean Gateway at the IUCN Congress

By *Hyacinth Armstrong-Vaughn*



**IUCN  
World  
Conservation  
Congress**  
Hawai'i 2016

Every four years the membership of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) i.e. governments, civil society, indigenous peoples, business, and academia come together at the IUCN World Conservation Congress to address challenges and define solutions for improving conservation of our natural heritage. The IUCN Congress takes place this year from 1-10 September in Honolulu, Hawai'i and comprises two parts: the Forum (2-5 September) where people from all over the world share information, experiences and solutions related to major biodiversity conservation and sustainable development issues; and

the Member's Assembly (6-10 September), IUCN's highest decision-making body.

BIOPAMA and the Caribbean Protected Areas Gateway will be represented at the IUCN Congress. Of the estimated 1,200 events (workshops, pavilions, discussion forums, e-poster sessions, high level dialogues, etc.) scheduled for the Forum, the Caribbean Protected Areas Gateway will host a knowledge café (round table session) titled [Linking Data to Better Decisions – Improving the performance of Protected Areas in the Caribbean](#) on 3 September from 14:30-16:30. Moreover, the Caribbean Gateway and the other regional observatories in Africa and the Pacific will be the subject of several other sessions, including the knowledge hub, "Essentials for a Protected Planet", "the BIOPAMA hour" at the Protected Planet Pavilion, the social event, "Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Night" and the conservation campus "Interactive tools for mapping and analysing protected areas."

The full BIOPAMA agenda at the WCC can be accessed [here](#) and our recently developed programme video can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/YQvreYeirpE>. Aloha!

## My experience at CERMES

By *Antonio Di Cintio*



I will be done with my research project in two months approximately. As such, I am now close to becoming an "ex" CERMES student. Mixed feelings surround me: on the one hand, the satisfaction of having completed such a demanding master course. On the other hand, the

acknowledgement that the emotions, lessons and experiences encountered throughout this year will hardly be lived again. Being enrolled in the Master in Natural Resource and Environmental Management here at CERMES has been absolutely incredible.

I came into contact with CERMES by doing some online research. It was not hard to find out that the institution is at the forefront in the promotion of environmental

protection and sustainable development, not just in the Caribbean. The professionalism of the staff was immediately perceived from day one: lessons are interesting, intense and so much worth attending. The multidisciplinary approach to sustainable development followed throughout the year provided each of us with some considerable tools to use in our future careers.

Surely, the workload is challenging, but CERMES is not just that. Many experiences and classes took place outdoors, far away from a desk or a computer lab. Particularly in our specialisation stream in Coastal and Marine Resource Management, beaches, mangroves and coral reefs have on several occasions been our classrooms. Field trips made us familiar with field research methods, and built our skills in measuring and analysing vital coastal and marine ecosystems. We learned a lot while at the same time enjoying the wonderful Caribbean environment!

I encourage everyone to join the wonderful CERMES family. For the entire duration of the Masters, I felt like I was at home. I want to wish good luck to all the upcoming students, and invite everyone else to apply for a place in this great institution. All the best to everyone!



## Another satisfied and successful CERMES alumnus

*We love to keep track of our past students to find out how they are progressing after life at CERMES. One update came a few weeks ago from Larissa Ferguson through her former lecturer, Adrian Cashman. We are so proud of you Larissa.*

As a student of CERMES during the 2012-2014 academic period, I knew that the programme was ideal for me, in that it would certainly propel me further toward the advancement of my career aspirations. Upon

successfully completing my final research paper which focused on the use of climatic data by the water sector in The Bahamas, I proudly stepped back into the professional arena at home; eager to apply all that was bestowed upon me academically. Unknowingly to me, my research paper would provide an open door for a short term consultancy job which focused on monitoring and assessing water levels at a local developmental project site.

Shortly thereafter, I received a call from The Ministry of the Environment and Housing in The Bahamas and in April 2015 I began my tenure with the Ministry as an Environmental Officer. Being employed at the Ministry has afforded me with invaluable experiences thus far and a great depth of knowledge and insight regarding the public sector's role in ensuring effective environmental management throughout The Commonwealth of The Bahamas. Working in the Natural Resources Unit has provided me with opportunities to represent The Bahamas at CARICOM meetings and other Regional Seminars as well as International seminars/conferences in South Korea and Abu Dhabi, respectively. To my surprise, while attending these seminars I met two former CERMES students on separate occasions, which is indicative of the far reaching impact of the programme!

I truly consider myself blessed to be among the astute minds of those who have traversed the classrooms of CERMES. Undoubtedly, I am grateful for the quality of education I received from the MSc. Natural Resource and Environmental Management (Water Resources) Programme, as it certainly has been a major factor in the professional opportunities I have since received.

## Two more CERMES Technical Reports ready for reading

Download the most recently published CERMES Technical Reports and learn about the 2015 sea egg open season in Barbados (CTR 79) and the return of acroporid corals on fringing reefs along the west coast of Barbados (CTR 80). Download your copies now from the CERMES website via

<http://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/news/technical-reports.aspx>. Happy reading.