



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



And so this is Christmas...

By Maria Pena

Dear Friends,

On behalf of my CERMES colleagues, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for staying connected with us over the past year. Another year of the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the adaptive capacity and resilience of CERMES to function and maintain its high quality and standards during this trying time. We have continued to operate in this new virtual reality in the delivery of our teaching programme and the implementation of our projects. The longing for in-person teaching, face-to-face workshops, resuming work travel, and catching up with you outside of online meeting platforms is real. Who knows what 2022 will bring but we say, "bring it!" Here's wishing each and every one of you a happy and safe Season, and the very best for the new year. We look forward to re-connecting in February with the first issue of the *CERMES Connections* for 2022. Until then, be good.

Reflections on Glasgow

By Hugh Sealy

Who in their right mind would want to travel to a cold and wet city for almost 3 weeks to mingle with over 20,000 other people from all over the world in the middle of a pandemic? I have been to almost all of the Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change since 2007, but I did not want to go to COP 26.

However, it was and remains a climate emergency and duty called. We had already lost a year due to Covid. The mini dip in emissions caused by the pandemic had already receded and global GHG emissions continue to

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increase. The science is clearly saying that we have to make drastic cuts (45% below 2010 levels by 2030) to have any reasonable chance of staying below 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming. I don't think I need to emphasise that we are already feeling significant adverse impacts at 1.1 degrees of warming (1850 – 1900 baseline).



Article 6 Negotiators at COP 26. Hugh Sealy in the centre left.

I'm glad I went, despite having to stick a swab up my nose every morning and the health scare of having to self-isolate for a weekend having been exposed to a colleague who tested positive. I was honoured to be

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able to play three roles in Glasgow: (i) lead technical negotiator for Barbados; (ii) lead coordinator on mitigation ambition for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and (iii) co-facilitator of the Article 6 negotiations.

As for the outcomes, I would give COP 26 an 8 out of 10. Seriously. The UK had to cover two years of agenda and very high expectations in the middle of a pandemic. They succeeded. The promise to keep 1.5 degrees alive was kept, barely. The cover decision text in the Glasgow Climate Pact calls for countries to revisit, revise and resubmit their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2022 recognizing that those that have been submitted are inadequate and have us on track for 2.4 degrees of warming. It calls for the phasing down of coal and fossil fuel subsidies, the first time such language has ever appeared in a cover decision. The language clearly establishes 1.5 (not 2) as the target, influenced to a large degree (forgive the pun) by the amazing speech given by Prime Minister Mottley (“2 degrees is a death sentence” and “try harder”). I have never before heard a COP President quote a speech from a head of government in his own closing remarks. I was so proud to be from the Caribbean.

Another defining moment was to land text on specific instruments that could be used to address the climate finance gap. Kudos to Minister Marsha Caddle of Barbados, who led AOSIS on climate finance at the ministerial level, on getting mention of the use of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) which we estimate have the potential to release approximately US\$500 billion/year in needed finance. It was pleasing to hear developed countries pledge to double financing for adaptation.

The Paris Rule Book (the nuts and bolts to make the Paris Agreement fully operational) was finally completed. I was particularly relieved, after 6 years of being a co-facilitator, to have the Article 6 negotiations completed. All of the Article 6 negotiators “stormed” the podium to celebrate during the closing plenary. (see Fig 1 below).

There were disappointments. The finance gap remains both in quantity (currently only at US\$80 billion/year)

and in quality (more loans than grants). Getting our G7 partners to finance Loss and Damage is like “pulling teeth”, but there will be a dialogue next year as to how to do so.

The last-minute intervention to change “phasing out” coal to “phasing down” was disappointing but not unexpected. The very public showing of emotion by the COP President in his reaction, to me, summed up the COP. We had all come to Glasgow, at personal risk, to try to avert a crisis. If we follow through with the commitments we made, we have bought a little more time.

Loss and damage at COP 26

By Le-Anne Roper (CERMES alumnus)

We are very proud to share with you this contribution from one of our CERMES alumnus who featured very prominently at COP 26. Le-Anne Roper, is Senior Technical Officer (Adaptation), at the Climate Change Division, Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change in Jamaica.



To the outside world, it may seem that climate change negotiators meet in a different country annually to talk, make decisions after two weeks and leave it there. However, it is significantly more than meets the eye. After all, countries with diverse cultures, interests and national

circumstances work hard to find common ground.

From my own experience, successful negotiations depend on grit & gumption to endure long and arduous hours, grace to respectfully disagree and goodwill that finds the best compromise. The 26th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and associated sessions¹ were no different. However, arguably more than previous sessions, the eyes of the world were watching more keenly: would we collectively heed the “code red” warning²?

¹ 3rd session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 3) and 16th session of the Conference of

the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 16)

² <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/>

One of the main topics of the negotiations for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and our allies was loss and damage. After all, it is hard to deny the growing evidence that adaptation has limits, and the scale of the climate crisis is beyond human and natural systems to adjust speedily or adequately. For my part, I had the awesome privilege and responsibility of leading the coordination of the loss and damage agenda on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) prior to and at the COP. I became an official negotiator for AOSIS in 2019 and became a lead negotiator for loss and damage in early 2021.

It is no secret that the final outcome is less than we called for; the need for dedicated financing to address loss and damage, for example, did not materialize. But we accept that gains were made: loss and damage gained greater prominence; work progressed on institutionalising the Santiago Network to provide technical assistance specific to loss and damage; and the Glasgow Dialogue was established to further necessary discussions on financing action on loss and damage.

The work is far from over. The actions that follow will be the real tests of commitment and solidarity. Despite the odds, I remain hopeful. Otherwise, the future is even more unimaginable than it is now. Or as we like to say in Jamaica: “wi corner dark”.

Launch of the SARTRAC Scientific Sargassum Series

By Catrina Hinds

The *Teleconnected SARGassum risks across the Atlantic: building capacity for TRansformational Adaptation in the Caribbean and West Africa* (SARTRAC) is a 3-year project (2019-2022) awarded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). SARTRAC focuses on identifying the opportunities for transformational adaptation that can be generated through the management and re-use of sargassum seaweed that is increasingly found across the tropical Atlantic. The project is implemented by the University of Southampton, the University of York, the University of the West Indies (Mona Campus and Cave Hill Campus), Mona Geoinformatics Institute, and the University of Ghana.

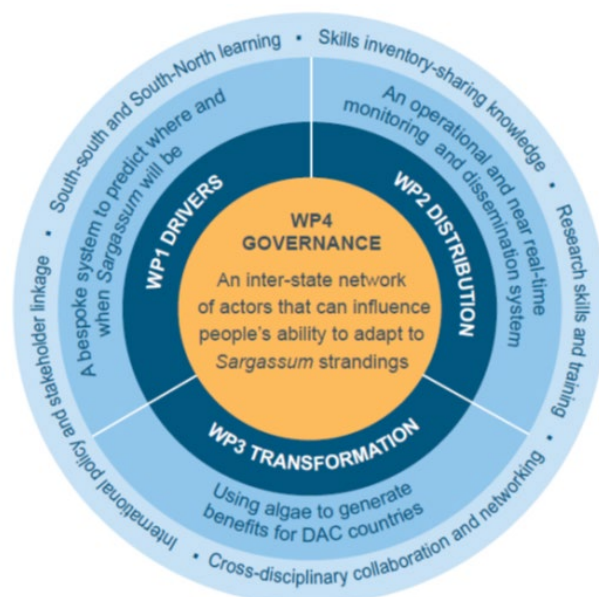
SARTRAC is divided into four connected work packages, each with its own overarching objective:

WP1: To improve prediction of sargassum events

WP2: To monitor and risk map sargassum events

WP3: To assess long term use and local demand for sargassum products

WP4: To explore regional sargassum governance options and issues



To showcase some of the project’s outputs and accomplishments thus far, the CERMES team (who co-lead WP1 and WP4) will host a series of online events such as webinars, panel discussions, and workshops over the coming months. The first two sessions were held in December 2021.

Professors Robert Marsh and Hazel Oxenford, along with Dr. Nikolaos Skliris, kicked off the SARTRAC Scientific Sargassum Series on December 13th by highlighting their on-going research under WP1. This first event, entitled “*Following Sargassum: Connecting Communities*”, focused on stakeholder engagement in monitoring and forecasting – emphasising regional-scale connectivity. It also looked at Caribbean experiences for extension to West Africa.

The second session, “*Risk Management Strategy for Sargassum Stranding in Jamaica and the Caribbean*” was led by Dr. Kerrine Senior on December 15th. Dr. Senior’s presentation discussed the development of a Risk Management Strategy based on her review of sargassum policies and the hazard risk management

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strategies and initiatives currently being used by government entities, corporate society, and affected stakeholders to manage the risks associated with influx events.

The remaining sessions in the SARTRAC Scientific Sargassum Series will be held in 2022, so stay tuned for save-the-date announcements! Also, to learn more about SARTRAC visit us at <https://www.sartrac.org/>.

IYAFA 2022 launched

By Patrick McConney

FAO is the lead agency for celebrating 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA 2022). The year was officially launched globally and regionally on 19 November 2021 in online events organised in collaboration with several fisheries-related organisations and interested parties. The tag line for IYAFA 2022 is “Small in scale, big in value”. This certainly reflects the importance of small-scale fisheries (SSF) and aquaculture or aquaponics to many Caribbean countries.



CERMES is a member of the IYAFA Western Central Atlantic Coordination Committee which is guiding the organisation of celebratory initiatives by countries and groups in the region. We will be sharing information on these activities with readers of CERMES Connections throughout the year. CERMES two areas of main focus are gender and intersectoral linkages, paying special attention to youth. We aim to work closely with our usual Caribbean project partners, especially fisherfolk groups, for IYAFA 2022. One of the earliest activities is a call for champions (outstanding people and organisations) to highlight the often-overlooked contribution of SSF, in particular, to our economies. Stay tuned to hear more and get involved.

Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) sharing session

By Patrick McConney

On 23 November 2021 a virtual webinar provided a “first-look” at some key findings from the upcoming Illuminating Hidden Harvest (IHH) report due around March 2022. CERMES participated in this major global investigation of small-scale fisheries (SSF) that was led by FAO, Duke University and WorldFish. The IHH research generated new evidence on the importance of small-scale fisheries (SSF) to inform policy and practice. The comprehensive research report, based on new and novel methodology, looks at environmental, social, economic and governance contributions of small-scale fisheries globally in a new light. Resource persons from the above-mentioned organisations shared highlights of what we expect to see in the report and other information dissemination products.

New sargassum project in the UK Overseas Territories

By Patrick McConney



A new sargassum project is being implemented from 2021 to 2023 by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in partnership with CERMES, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission and organisations in United Kingdom (UK) Overseas Territories. The UK Government-funded Darwin Initiative project on ‘Sustainable Sargassum Management in Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Montserrat’ was launched on 1 December 2021.

The main aim of the project is to enhance the institutional frameworks, knowledge, experience and commitment of coastal and marine resource managers and users in these UKOTs to manage the ecological and socio-economic risks from sargassum influxes. The project will use participatory approaches to inform management best practices and decision-making.

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Capacity building will also be a strong feature of the project, including training partner agencies, civil society organisations and local communities. At the policy level, the project will collaboratively develop sargassum management plans.

(Extracted from a CANARI press release, 29 November 2021).

CPAG participates in 74th GCFI

By Julian Walcott



The resilience of The Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) was on full display as it moved its annually held regional conference to a fully virtual event, considering the COVID-19 pandemic. The Caribbean Protected Areas Gateway (CPAG) was pleased to be part of GCFI74, held 1-12 November 2021. CPAG participated in the 'Marine Protected Areas Science and Management' technical session via an oral presentation given by Julian Walcott (Technical Officer). The presentation '[Insights into Marine Protected Areas Management throughout the Wider Caribbean Region](#)' highlighted CPAG's on-going capacity enhancement in the area of Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) assessments and insights into current MPA management based on PAME assessments facilitated by CPAG, as well as data from global knowledge products (i.e. the World Database on Protected Areas and the Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness).

As of 2006, PAME was embedded within the biodiversity commitments made by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. This was reflected in Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 which called for effective and equitably managed protected areas. This component of the target was tracked via an indicator

which simply recorded the number of assessments of management effectiveness completed by countries for each protected area. This clearly highlights the need for improved indicators to track the effectiveness of management of MPAs. Indicators which speak to quality, rather than quantity should be utilised. We encourage you to share your thoughts pertaining to the improved reporting of MPA management with us via the following emails:

info@caribbeanprotectedareasgateway.com and/or technicalofficer@caribbeanprotectedareasgateway.com

For more information on CPAG and/or to keep abreast of our activities please visit our [website](#) and follow us on our various social media platforms (Facebook - [@theCPAG](#), Instagram – [the_cpag](#) and YouTube - [cpagmedia](#)).

Making the next five years count: SocMon/SEM-Pasifika strategic planning

By Maria Pena

[The Global Socioeconomic Monitoring for Coastal Management \(SocMon/SEM-Pasifika\)](#) initiative is committed to (re-)defining its strategic direction over the next five years. Via eight facilitated virtual sessions held in November and December, SocMon/SEM-Pasifika coordinators and technical advisors from the Caribbean, Central America, Brazil, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands, spent their nights and early mornings (depending on geographical location!) revising and updating the 2014-2019 SocMon/SEM-Pasifika Strategic Plan. This work spanned the revision of the original mission and vision statements, the updating of strategic goals and objectives, and prioritising specific actions for improving SocMon/SEM-Pasifika and its impact on marine and coastal management decision-making.

The strategic planning sessions helped to identify a number of best practices that will be adopted to guide the efforts of the initiative. These include increasing the frequency of meetings among the global and regional coordinators to improve internal information exchange; the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) for greater institutionalisation of the approach to socioeconomic monitoring; and annual evaluation of

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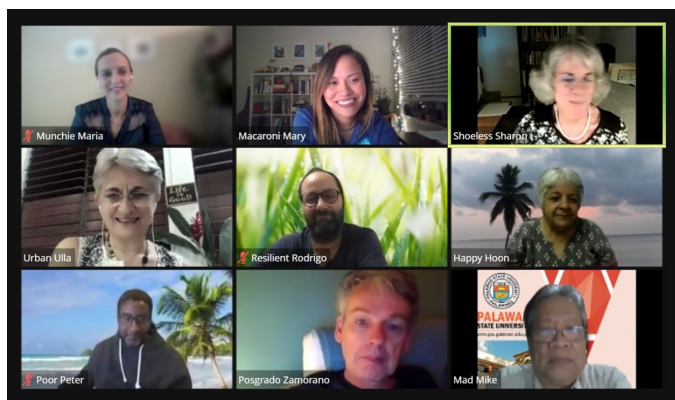
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the initiative regionally and globally for documenting and sharing successes, and identifying opportunities for improvement.



It also served to reaffirm the commitment of this dynamic and experienced team of coordinators and technical advisors to promoting and applying the socioeconomic context to coastal management for the benefit of local communities and stakeholders. The SocMon/SEM-Pasifika family is strong and reenergized to make the next five years count!

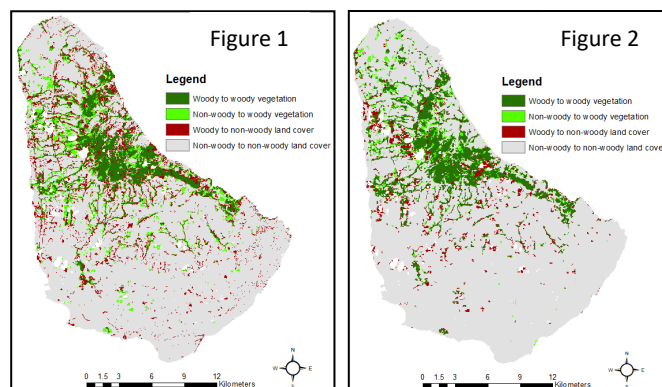
Check back here in March 2022 for a glimpse at the 2022-2026 strategic plan.

A look at woody vegetation cover in Barbados

By David Yawson

Barbados is known to have low or no forest cover compared to other Caribbean Islands. As a result, management of remnant or planted woody vegetation is important to serve multiple ecosystem services, including soil and water conservation, slope stabilisation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation. Dr Yawson, in a paper accepted for publication in the *International Journal of Applied Geospatial Research*, applied machine learning techniques to satellite imagery to analyse changes in woody vegetation cover in Barbados for two time periods: 2001-2015 and 2015-2019. The machine learning technique was complemented with intensity analysis which shows the magnitudes, direction, and processes underlying the patterns of observed change. The results of this study showed that, overall, woody vegetation cover in Barbados reduced by 13.73% from 2001 to 2015, and 2.27% from 2015 to 2019. Intensity analysis showed that the rate of change in woody

vegetation cover was slow in the first study period (2001-2015), but fast in the second study period (2015-2019). This suggests that, without management intervention, overall net loss of woody vegetation at current rate could be larger than observed for the comparable period of 2001-2019. Management intervention is necessary to reduce the current rate of loss and increase tree planting and survival. The results are summarised in Figures 1 (for 2001-2015) and 2 (for 2015-2019).



Change in woody vegetation cover compared with other land cover categories

GIFT promotion

By Patrick McConney

The Gender in Fisheries Team (GIFT) gained some good exposure during two webinars held towards the end of the year. Maria Pena, GIFT co-lead, was an invited panelist in two online discussions organised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) on 18 November, and SAEDI Consulting Barbados Inc. on 14 December. The FAO webinar addressed *Reducing the Gender Gap in the Fisheries Sector for Sustainable Food Systems in SIDS*. Maria shared some relevant GIFT work with the audience. View the recording [here](#). In the SAEDI Consulting Barbados Inc. webinar on *Powerful Stories of Women and Natural Resources*, Maria shared the story of the collective action of an all-women fisherfolk organisation in Barbados and a few examples of challenges experienced by women in Caribbean small-scale fisheries. Look [here](#) for this fishy presentation and those from other featured speakers from the Caribbean, Colombia, Ukraine and India as they share narratives of women involved in natural resource management. Recording coming soon to the SAEDI Consulting website.

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