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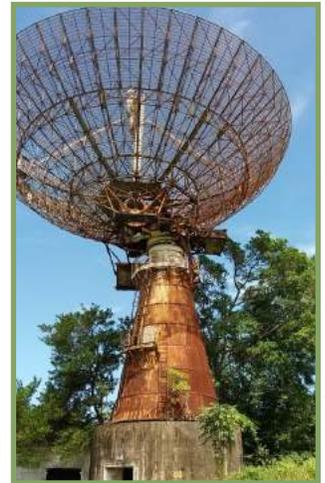
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1 Welcome!

Welcome back to **Protect-Ed!**

2 It's our third issue and it's packed with lots of updates and information on work being done in Trinidad and Tobago to improve our environmental management.

3 Learn about the development of the new protected area system plan and the need for project and programme monitoring for results. Find out what's been happening on the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Surveys that started last year and the development of an Ecotourism Policy for Trinidad and Tobago. It's all here in **ProtectEd**, the newsletter that keeps you connected!



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**6 Updating the National Protected Area Systems Plan
- Dr. Howard Nelson**

The 1979 Protected Areas System plan is now 38 years old. This was written at a time when Trinidad and Tobago were very different places in terms of physical development, recreation and the state of nature generally. Today, the "Improving Forest and Protected Areas Management in Trinidad and Tobago" project is working to develop a new National Systems Plan for Forests and Protected Areas that modernises the old systems plan to take into consideration all the changes in environmental, social and economic situation of the country. It aims to develop a protected areas system that protects our natural heritage for future generations while at the same time, allowing for recreation and sustainable use of biodiversity in these places.

The new systems plan will provide managers and planners with a valuable tool for assisting with plans for future development and for mitigation and restoration activities, by identifying key areas that are priority for conservation action and for zoning the intensity of public activity around these natural areas. This allows government, NGO and individuals to see which conservation areas require special attention and where different stakeholders can get involved in conservation of these key areas. On its completion in December 2017, the new National Systems Plan will serve as a framework for enabling the country to meet its biodiversity conservation commitments for protected areas under the Convention on Biological Diversity.



Protect-Ed is the biannual newsletter of the GEF-funded project "Improving Forest and Protected Area Management in Trinidad and Tobago". (GCP/TRI/003/GFF).

Protect-Ed reports on progress made in the development of a new protected areas system through the activities of five stakeholder committees in six pilot protected area sites in Trinidad and Tobago.

Protect-Ed is produced by the Project Coordination Unit.

Ecotourism for a Sustainable Trinidad and Tobago

- Ms Siddiqua Mondol, Ministry of Tourism

Our twin island destination, Trinidad and Tobago is endowed with an abundance of flora and fauna and a multitude of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems. These natural resources have fascinated and enthralled the minds of the avid eco tourists who have visited the shores of Trinidad and Tobago for years. Nature based travel, of which ecotourism is a segment, currently accounts for 20% of the global tourism market (UNWTO 2015, cited in CREST 2016), however, ecotourism “could grow to 25% of the global travel market within six years and account for US\$ 470 billion per year in revenues,” (TIES, cited in CREST 2015). Hence, to ensure the protection, preservation and conservation of these natural resources, the development of our ecotourism niche must be guided by policies and practices that are environmentally sustainable.

On Tuesday 20 September 2016, the Ministry of Tourism hosted its National Ecotourism Policy Consultation. The Ministry sought to engage governmental as well as environmental and tourism stakeholders to share their contribution on the Draft Ecotourism Policy.

This Policy was developed with the intention of providing a framework to facilitate an enabling environment for the sustainable development and management of the local ecotourism sector. The development of this policy was created in alignment to the Government Policy Framework in addition to the guiding principles and goals from the National Tourism Policy (2010). Sixty-four stakeholders were in attendance at the Consultation and were enthused by the Policy’s direction towards the development of our ecotourism niche. After the Consultation, the policy was amended and is awaiting feedback from Cabinet.

The Ministry of Tourism envisions that with proper management of our environmental products, a memorable tourism experience can be packaged and offered, thereby protecting and conserving our diverse landscapes and rich biodiversity of flora and fauna. To do this, environmental practices and legislation must be enforced, strong stakeholder relations must be built and fostered, marketing and promotion of the destination must be undertaken while offering an attractive, eco-related incentive package.

The Ecotourism Policy will be used to guide the development of all ecotourism activities through an implementation plan in the short (1-3 years), medium (4-6 years) and long term (7-10years). Similarly, a Monitoring and Evaluation Committee will be established to ensure that the goals and objectives of the policy are implemented with little or no impact on the environment.



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Enhancing Climate Change Awareness and Resilience in the Communities of Northeast Tobago

- Mr. Neil Cook, Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville

One of the most significant environmental challenges faced today, perhaps especially by coastal communities in small island states, is global climate change. While much of society has at least some rudimentary level of understanding of the environmental and social implications of a changing climate, this is often not the case in marginalised or isolated communities. As a result, it is in fact those people most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change that are frequently the least informed, aware, resilient or ready to adapt.

During 2016, the Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville (ERIC), with its team of community-based field technicians, identified a knowledge gap in Northeast Tobago regarding community awareness and understanding of the threat of climate change to the natural environments and societies of the region, and what could be done locally to increase preparedness for and build resilience to this threat. Moreover, this lack of awareness and response appeared to belie the potential severity of climate change.

To address this knowledge gap, the Northeast Tobago Climate Change Champions Network was developed. This group of 14 members representing 11 community-based organizations, is trained to raise awareness of community vulnerability, increase knowledge of what can be done to build resilience and strengthen communities, and the dangers of failing to act now to mitigate against future impacts. The Champions comprise a cross-section of society, from young people to village elders from various professions with a history of active involvement within their communities, rendering them the ideal candidates to direct climate change conversation among residents of northeast Tobago.



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Above: First annual meeting of the Northeast Tobago Climate Change Champions Network, October 2016

With the ongoing IFPAM-TT project's plans to improve management of the Main Ridge Forest Reserve and implement a proposed Marine Protected Area, the Climate Change Champions can play a vital role by providing a communication link to advocate the importance of the protected areas in protecting livelihoods and building climate change resilience.



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At left: Climate Change Champions Ian Daly (Bloody Bay Fisherfolk) and Nkosi Kerr (L'Anse Fourmi Village Council) with community members in Parlatuvier, Northeast Tobago. **At right:** Climate Change Champions completing a Threats Assessment for Northeast Tobago

Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation: A Responsibility of the Public Service

Mr. Ephraim Serrette

National Transformation Unit, Ministry of Planning and Development

An effective and efficient public sector is critical to sustainable development, economic growth and well-being of all citizens. Globally, the concept of Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBM&E) has evolved as a result of increasing concerns among citizens and other stakeholders, as well as international financial and donor agencies about the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector performance. Hence, Governments are being challenged to become more effective in the provision of services while focusing on achieving positive impacts on the lives of beneficiaries and sustaining the change over a period of time.

Developed and developing countries alike continue to struggle with the problem of devising and implementing strategies to improve the performance levels of their public sectors. By focusing on 'results' rather than 'activities', RBM&E help Governments to better articulate their vision and support for expected results and to better monitor progress using indicators, targets and baselines. Many have moved towards RBM&E because it focuses on making policies, strategies, projects and programmes a reality.

What is RBM&E?

The traditional monitoring and evaluation system works best as a reporting system in the public sector, and involves tracking **inputs** (public funds, resources, strategies), **activities** (what actually took place) and **outputs** (the products or services produced). It focuses on monitoring how well a project, programme or policy is being implemented and assesses compliance with work plans and budget. The RBM&E approach encompasses a larger spectrum of functions that seeks to ensure transparency, accountability, high performance and service to the citizens. Also, whereas the traditional monitoring and evaluation works in isolation from the financial audit, RBM&E supplements it. In some developed countries, RBM&E has been introduced as part of financial auditing process conducted by the office of the Auditor General. A leading example of this is the Canadian Audit Office.

RBM&E is a strategic tool for enhancing services provided by the public sector. The responsibility for implementing government policies, programmes and projects, in the most part, falls under the ambit of the public service which is accountable to the state and citizenry. Its performance is directly related to the success, or not, of the policies, programmes and projects.

Some reasons to do RBM&E: provides crucial information about public sector performance; identifies potentially successful programmes or practices; promotes credibility and public confidence by reporting on the results of programmes; focuses attention on achieving outcomes that are important to the organization and its stakeholders; provides a view over time on the status of a project, programme, or policy; helps formulate and justify budget requests; provides timely and relevant information for decision-making; permits managers to identify and take action to correct weaknesses and better supports a national development agenda.

Initiation and Development of the M&E approach in Trinidad and Tobago

In Trinidad and Tobago's context, although, there has been no formal monitoring and evaluation (M&E) policy at the national level, the move towards M&E was initiated in 2005 when the then Ministry of Social Development established an M&E Policy for the Social Sector. The main goal was to establish common structures and standards that would govern the application of effective M&E systems in the social sector and facilitate the attainment of maximum benefits from social interventions.

(Continued on Page 5)

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Government, in 2008, in recognition of the need for evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation, and the necessity of tracking progress towards outcomes and impact of projects, programmes and policies, mandated the establishment of M&E Units in all Ministries and relevant Departments. Further, the Programme Management Office (PMO), in the then Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment was instituted to monitor and report on Government's progress toward achieving national development. In the same year, the Ministry of Public Administration was entrusted with the responsibility to design structures of M&E Units for all Ministries and Agencies and to build M&E capacity.

In a further effort to institutionalise the M&E function, the PMO was redesigned as the National Transformation Unit (NTU) in 2010 with responsibility for national oversight and policy formulation for the practice of M&E in the public service, and to provide general guidance to M&E Units in line Ministries and Departments. Since then, the NTU launched an online Development Evaluation Forum in 2011 to encourage local and regional dialogue and share resources.

Also, to allow Government to measure, report and use results-based performance information in a systemic fashion, a National Performance Framework (NPF) was developed in 2012. The NPF, together with the Integrated Performance Management Framework (IPMF) focuses on ensuring that systems and procedures are in place to assist Government Organizations to manage their resources to guarantee effective and efficient operations and delivery. This framework identifies five components as seen in the diagram at right.

Integrated Performance Management Framework



Some Challenges

The challenges to date have been as follows:

- A high proportion of monitoring and evaluation resources are being devoted to monitoring the physical and financial implementation of large projects. This practise is being driven largely by donor agency requirements. As a result, little or no attention is being devoted to assessing the results, sustainability, delivery of services, and the quality and distribution of benefits of projects;
- Monitoring and evaluation systems in the past tended to be more compliance-based, data rich, information poor and were disbanded with termination of projects;
- The misperception of evaluations as auditing, policing or fault-finding exercises;
- Lack of an active M&E process champion and political will;
- Absence of legislation to mandate the M&E function;
- Dearth of capacity, both institutional & people; and
- Fragmented M&E activities – MoSD, MoF, MPA, IDB.

In Conclusion

Equally important to the move towards RBM&E is leadership commitment to achieve a better performing public sector together, alongside the individuals dedicated to improve public sector performance. **So... it comes down to a combination of institutional capacity and political will.** However, this should not discourage public sector planners and implementers from making that first step in this direction by introducing this strategic tool for good governance within their own spheres of influence.

European Union Environment Programme for Trinidad and Tobago

- Dr. Floyd Homer, Programme Coordinator

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) and the European Commission signed a financing agreement for the European Union (EU) Environment Programme on May 17, 2013. Under this agreement, the Government was to receive eight million euros (€8 million) from the EU in budgetary support over four years to assist in immediate policy interventions. The overall objective of the Environment Programme is to support Trinidad and Tobago's pursuit of a low-carbon development path through the implementation of the National Environment Policy, the Forest Policy, the Protected Areas Policy and the National Climate Change Policy. The Programme supports the Government to improve environmental governance by:

- becoming an Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) compliant country;
- modernising the protected areas management system;
- introducing clean emission technologies in the public transportation system;
- strengthening carbon sequestration capacity; and
- promoting environmental awareness at the grassroots level.

Trinidad and Tobago attained Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Compliant status in January 2015, after meeting all seven EITI requirements for compliance. The Trinidad and Tobago EITI Secretariat also submitted four EITI reconciliation reports which disclose the total payments made by companies to government, independently reconciled with government's declared receipts.

The Strategy for the Reduction of Carbon Emissions approved by the Cabinet in 2015 focused on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the country's power generation, transportation and industrial sectors (identified as the major emitting sectors of the economy), consistent with implementing provisions of the National Climate Change Policy. Activities included procurement of 35 compressed natural gas (CNG) buses for use on the Priority Bus Route and rehabilitation of approximately 80 hectares of abandoned quarry sites to assist in carbon sequestration. Notably, CO₂ emissions in the transportation sector have been reduced by more than 12,000 metric tonnes in 2016.



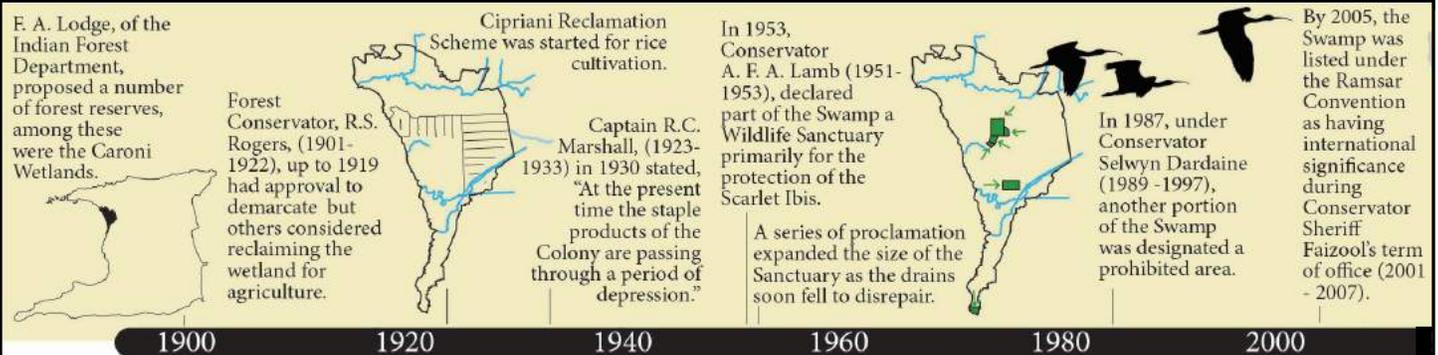
www.ngc.co.tt/cng/

To support these efforts, environmental awareness activities were undertaken by several agencies such as the Environmental Management Authority, the Institute of Marine Affairs, the Forestry Division, the Environmental Policy and Planning Division and the Trinidad and Tobago EITI Secretariat in the course of their annual programmes. These programmes targeted schools, local communities and fenceline communities adjacent to quarries.

Key project activities: January 2017 - May 2017

February 6th - 8th	- Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop
February 16th	- Lessons Learned Workshop for all Subcommittee members
March 21st	- Meeting with Caroni Bird Sanctuary Tour Operators on draft conservation objective
April 19th	- Orientation meeting with Forest and Protected Area Unit, Forestry Division
April - May 2017	- Mid-Term Evaluation

A wetland protected area: trends and observations - Raynaldo Phillips, Forestry Division



Graphic: Caroni Swamp protected status timeline (© Raynaldo Phillips)

The Caroni wetland ecosystem is continuing to receive much needed attention, a focus derived out of current contract arrangements (2015-2019) made between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO/UN). This has called for improved management, a balanced perspective between conservation and development and an innovative process.

The need for improved management

According to McNeely, Harrison and Dingwall (1994) “*The need to devise methods to manage and protect marine environment and resources became widely recognized internationally during the course of the 1950s and the early 1960s*”. Lodge and Rogers’ vision therefore may have been ahead of their time, however, the passage of over one hundred years has not brought adequate and effective management to the Caroni wetlands. Its early use laid emphasis on consumptive benefits, as users extracted mangrove for fuel and harvested fishes and other animals for food. While over-exploitation is a persistent issue, the wetland has also become a destination of interest for non-consumptive activities that build on its intrinsic natural values. These include boating through scenic waterscapes, birding, frogging, photography and research.

Establishing balance

The adverse influence of unregulated agricultural practices on the wetland include chemical use, fires and land engineering practices which have impaired the ecosystem, limiting its functions and services. Conservation efforts have also evolved from a narrow focus on single species (mangrove and Scarlet Ibis) to a broader management focus that considers ecological, economic and social linkages. Competition for management and development of the Caroni wetlands and national circumstances and interests prevailed in a win/lose manner in Captain Marshall’s day. Rival and adversarial relations between different players, against the backdrop of pressing national developmental concerns, now need to be defused to allow adoption of integrated approaches that harmonise conservation and development in a new approaches to management.

Your participation

What appears to be innovative is really an emphasis on some old axioms. These include “two heads are better than one” - the merger of local and scientific knowledge in a context of mutual respect works and makes up for knowledge gaps and loss of precious time in saving this wetland. Be part of the process: have your say.

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Improving Forest and Protected Area Management in Trinidad and Tobago

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Contact us! We'd love to hear from you!

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THE BACK STORY: Rounding up the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices surveys

April 2017 marked the completion of the first year of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) surveys in all six pilot protected areas, with field activity coming to a close in communities surrounding the Nariva Swamp and Coastal Zone. The surveys captured the views of residents, to find out what they know of the areas, whether they value these sites and agree that they require special management and also the type of engagement they have with these areas, if at all. In the process of conducting the surveys, there were notable features:

- groups of persons were engaged as enumerators, including persons from communities near the pilot sites;
- aspects of people's engagement with sites identified gaps in knowledge of boundaries and managers;
- people shared advice on how to improve negative attitudes and influence positive and supportive actions for protected area management;
- previously unknown threats to the areas' integrity and positive actions among communities that assist in management were uncovered.



Sharing views in the KAP survey

The survey findings were shared with the Subcommittees and a small working group for each reviewed the data and devised strategies for communicating with key audiences. These individual plans will shape the communication strategy used in going forward over the next two years, in the second half of this IFPAM-TT project. Near the close of the project, the surveys will be repeated to determine the extent to which these communication strategies have influenced an increased awareness and valuing of these pilot protected areas.