

**Grenada Protected Area System Plan Stakeholder Workshop**  
**Press Room, National Stadium**  
**February 25 & 26, 2009**

Participants

1. Mel Turner, Protected Areas System Plan consultant
2. Junior Minister Ingrid Rush, Ministry of Agriculture
3. Permanent Secretary Gemma Ban-Thomas, Ministry of Agriculture
4. Richard Huber, OAS
5. Martin Barriteau, Sustainable Grenadines
6. Sandra Nichols, the Environmental Law Institute
7. Roland A. Baldeo, MPA (Fisheries Dept.)
8. Phil Saye, GSDA
9. Aden Forteau, Forestry
10. Anthony Jeremiah, Forestry
11. Ruth Blyther, TNC
12. Augustus Thomas, Forestry
13. Gordon Patterson, Forestry
14. Alan Joseph, TNC local coordinator
15. Tyrone Buckwire, Rare Grenada
16. Michael Jessamy, Min. of Tourism
17. Andrea Easter-Pilcher, St. George's University
18. Clare Morrall, St. George's University
19. Bonnie Rusk, Grenada Dove Conservation
20. Denyse Ogilvie, People in Action
21. Kirl Grant-Hoschtialek, CTBT
22. Gordon Paterson, FNP
23. I. Griffith, FNP
24. George Vincent

**Day I**

*Welcome and overview*

Anthony Jeremiah opened the workshop with greetings and an overview of the plans for the event. Permanent Secretary Gemma Ban-Thomas brought word from the Minister of Agriculture that the government has given approval for updating the protected areas systems plan and added that this work is important for the future of Grenada.

*Context of the project*

Richard Huber and George Vincent gave an overview of the development of the 1988 OAS System. Huber mentioned that he is establishing a page on the Organisation of American States Department of Sustainable Development with resources related to Grenada's protected areas system. He explained that the methodology for the first PA plan was to identify the ecosystems and the best representative areas and try to protect them; identify the areas, then overlay that with land tenure and go from there.

The team worked with all the agencies in developing the plan. There was a public perception and a consciousness that Grenada was a special place – the Spice Island – that needs to be protected but that its ecosystems were being degraded – that there was a need to deal better with waste, manage flooding. There was also an interest in developing tourism opportunities – and ecotourism.

Huber gave an example of the importance of preserving watersheds -- the water for St. George's comes from Grand Etang watershed. And Grenada's topography is also a factor. 77% of the land is class 6 – steep slopes, flooded, or fragile.

He concluded by saying that often, existing land use plans can inform current planning efforts. He observed that the soil conservation plan from the 1930's in the United States is still the best plan for all aspects – water quality, preventing emergencies etc. If we adhere to it is still the best plan for responding to the new and emerging challenges of climate change. The same rules apply now, it is just a question of repackaging.

George Vincent presented the background for the institutional arrangements for the protected areas system. The plan included most of the factors it should have but failed to get it right in order to garner political support. Now the goal is to get it right and get it passed once and for all.

Issues to consider:

1. Have we evaluated the reality of what we are asking policymakers to do? The 1988 plan protected 13% of the land space of Grenada. The plan was presented to the cabinet and there was concern that the plan would hinder progress and development, so they didn't approve it. Now we want to protect 25% of marine and terrestrial. Are we not going down the same path – that they will not pass this?

There were enthusiastic supporters but they realized that people would be locked out of the land and could not support it. Of course there were others who just tried to develop proposed protected areas... i.e. Levera.

So, plan should be appropriate, and doable given the context. Must be able to show the benefits and how the PAs will be financed, and show them how this will affect livelihoods and income generation etc. The politicians' reality is that they want to get reelected.

2. When the plan was not passed in its entirety, we took an incremental approach. We tried to figure out where there was money; how to carry the plan forward without cabinet approval. The Canadians bought Grand Etang and Fort Frederick. The basis for Grand Etang, the tourist part and the revenue generation... the only protected area that pays for itself in Grenada is Grand Etang. The revenue collected in Grand Etang pays for the cost of the tourism operation. But because

- of the institutional arrangement, the funds go into a deep dark hole of the consolidated fund. The government gives back and pays the funds.
3. Grenada also got funds from the EU for Levera and from USAID for other. The EU also funded for Mathew and Fort Frederick but the funding was redirected to housing after Hurricane Ivan. This shows that there is an international commitment to support the development of the protected areas system if we can get the institutional structures in order – the EU said that they would give Euro 8 million if there were acceptable structures to manage the protected areas.
  4. So, we should put our efforts into creating something feasible.
    - a. Finances – self-financing
    - b. Should create a very clear plan, timeline
  5. Currently National Parks Administration is within tourism (managing the sites). The Cabinet did not decide to take national parks back into the Ministry of Agriculture; they want tourism and parks to both be responsible and to work together. But the institutional home of the management of the tourist sites is not a settled question and there are historical reasons for putting parks under forestry.

#### *Review of Existing Areas*

Aden Forteau presented a review of existing Forest Reserves and National Parks in Grenada. Roland Baldeo gave an overview of the work currently going on in Marine Protected Areas. Phil Saye presented important areas for scuba diving and sites where he has observed abundant biodiversity.

Currently there is lots of pressure on the Molinere/Beausejour site on the west of Grenada. It is popular for snorkeling and scuba diving, with up to 200 visitors a day, as well as yachters. This is the location of the underwater sculptures. The board of tourism has taken some management steps, with the installation of buoys and they will be funding a patrol vessel. The Molinere/Beausejour MPA co-management group was launched on Feb 11, 2009. It includes community representatives; the MPA Warden will be appointed by ministry of agriculture and will also work on Clarks Court Area. Apparently, the management committee will be appointed by Cabinet before the end of March. The committee will be interagency including representatives from: tourism, Board of tourism, Grenada ports authority, science and tech council, min of Agriculture, NGOs etc., scuba divers' assoc.

There was a general discussion about promoting Grenada as the dive center of the Eastern Caribbean and some comments on financing for protected areas systems. Richard Huber mentioned that Costa Rica and Mexico provide successful models.

It was mentioned that the Underwater Cultural Heritage Act has just been signed. Michael Jessamy presented the Heritage Sites and issues related to tourism development. Alan Joseph mentioned that the Ministry of Agriculture wants to streamline the

authorities responsible for Protected Areas in Grenada. Anthony Jeremiah summarized the first day and the closed the session.

## **Day II**

As a group, the participants in the workshop reviewed the compilation of all existing and proposed protected areas in all management categories in order to identify which to focus on immediately and which still require more preparation. The group identified those for which boundaries are clear and there is political support for protection as the first priority for focus. The group also identified areas that critical require protection but need clarification and more efforts to build political support before initiating the process of establishing legal protection.

Ruth Blyther gave a presentation on capacity and financing for protected areas in Grenada. She presented the sustainable financing plan and the progress on developing the conservation fund. Sandra Nichols gave an overview of a legislative proposal to developing an institutional structure with responsibility and authority to implement the requirements of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements to which Grenada is a party. There was a discussion about were the national-level authority for protected areas coordination and planning should be rooted institutionally and there was a generally view that the Ministry of Agriculture was the natural home.

Fabian Purcell, of the Grenada Physical Planning Unit, presented the local area planning process and current plans in place. There was general discussion about the need for more detailed and comprehensive planning, for a land use policy, and for enforcement authority. There was also a discussion about how comprehensive land use planning can coordinate with and support protected areas planning. It was mentioned that there is a sustainable land use planning project under the land use division in the Ministry of Agriculture, which will be starting soon.

A recommendation was made that a presentation be given to Cabinet to sensitize them to the value of biodiversity and the protected areas of Grenada. Forestry should develop a presentation like the marine presentation, with pictures and figures to share and a meeting should be convened. Anthony Jeremiah summarized the day's discussion and called the meeting to a close.