

**Proceedings of the Symposium on the State of the  
Environment 2010 and Launch of the State of the  
Environment Report 2010**

**Knustford Court Hotel**

**December 16, 2011**

## **Proceedings**

The Symposium took the form of a Joint launch of the State of the Environment Report 2010 and the Human Development Index 2012 followed by a Panel Discussion.

The Symposium was opened by Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, M.P. Minister of Housing, Environment, Water & Local Government with remarks by the CEO of NEPA and UNDP's Resident Representative Dr. Arun Kashyap.

Ms Akiko Fujii, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP, Jamaica gave an overview of the Human Development Index 2011 and Mr. Anthony McKenzie of NEPA gave an overview of the State of the Environment Report, Jamaica 2010.

Members of the Panel were; Dr. Barry Wade: Environmental justice and the poor; Dr. Gladstone Hutchinson: Balanced Stewardship; Prof. Elizabeth Thomas-Hope: A three-pronged analysis of environment & economy, environment and equity, environment and human freedoms.

**Message By Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, M.P. Minister of Housing, Environment, Water & Local Government For the State of the Environment Report 2010**

The 2010 State of the Environment Report (SOE) presents an opportunity for the nation to assess the state of the country's natural resources, while highlighting some of the more fundamental environmental issues facing Jamaica and the action taken to address them. It is evident that we will have to employ more creative and effective strategies to ensure a better quality of life for all Jamaicans including – safe water, a healthy environment and shelter. Over the last decade, natural occurrences coupled with human activity have had an adverse impact on our environment. Indeed, Jamaica has had 'first hand' experience of the effects of changing global weather patterns. There has been an increase in the frequency and intensity of climate phenomena such as hurricanes, droughts and floods. With this in mind, all Jamaicans must become more aware of and proactive in employing mitigation and adaptation measures to meet our changing reality. In moving forward, we need to forge strong partnerships among key stakeholders, including Government, the private sector, civil society and the general public in addressing the country's environmental concerns.

The 2010 SOE provides a 'wake up' call for all Jamaicans as well as an opportunity to reorder priorities, where necessary and appropriate. In this regard, more emphasis must be placed on the transition towards a Green Economy which will require increased capital investment in cleaner technologies and more environmentally friendly products and services, including renewable energy sources.

Next year, the global community, will review the progress made over the last 20 years in implementing the sustainable development agenda arising out of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development as well as address emerging issues, with a focus on strengthened political commitment. In this regard, the SOE will be an important tool in assessing our progress in achieving our sustainable development goals, such as Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals – to ensure environmental sustainability.

As we enter the next decade, it will be important for us to renew our commitment to the protection and conservation of our environment. A concerted effort at all levels will be required to develop and implement an ambitious and progressive agenda, based on scientific

and other data, which will allow for the realization of a “healthy natural environment” in keeping with Jamaica’s National Development goals.

Sustainable development is based on four policy pillars, “education, energy, economy and the environment”. So, with strong leadership, creativity and goodwill, we can safe guard our environment for all. We must do our part to use this information to make better decisions in our daily lives – at work and at home towards enabling Jamaica to move to the path of sustainable prosperity whereby this land of wood and water becomes for us all “the place of choice, to live, work, raise families and do business”.

### **Remarks by Mr. Peter Knight, CEO of NEPA**

I am pleased to present to you Jamaica’s State of the Environment Report 2010. I am pleased, not because of the current trends or state of the environment at this time, as many of our ecosystems show signs of degradation, because this is the first of a series of reports that we will present every three years to the public to ensure that the programmes and projects we are implementing are contributing to improvements in the state of our natural environment. Although Jamaica has made substantial improvements in environmental management, this Report shows that many challenges still remain and need to be addressed. Much of the data presented in this report show that there still exists many worrying trends. Among these are: deteriorating air and water quality, poor management of solid, liquid and hazardous wastes, loss of biodiversity, watershed degradation and net loss of forest cover among others.

It is true that in 2010, Jamaica’s ranking in terms of environmental performance as measured by the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) dropped by over 20 points since 2008, placing the country at 89<sup>th</sup> out of 163 countries with a score of 58 - indicating that the country’s environmental performance has fallen. In 2008, Jamaica ranked 54<sup>th</sup> out of 149 countries and was ranked best in terms of environmental performance in the English-speaking Caribbean. In 2010, the country ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Americas. This drop reflects the need for more focused attention as well as targeted development and implementation of programmes in areas such as ecosystem and biodiversity management. Related to this ranking is the July 2009 National Report of Jamaica on the Millennium Development Goals

which indicated that the country was lagging behind in the area of environmental sustainability.

Improving the current state of the Jamaican environment is the responsibility of both state and non-state actors. The many complexities and unique features of the Jamaican environment require a focus on strategies that can be utilized to ensure that the country's developmental objectives are compatible with the natural environment and in keeping with the tenets of sustainable development. In recognition of the importance of the aforementioned, many of government's sectoral policies over the past ten to twelve years, have reflected the importance of sustainability and seek to take into account social environmental and economic factors.

We recognize that we have lots to do. This State of the Environment Report and reports like this will be important mechanisms for us to continuously monitor and evaluate our performance with respect to how we protect and conserve our natural resources.

Notwithstanding, the value inherent in sharing the information in these reports we will continue to work with all our stakeholders in the public and private spheres to implement various plans, programmes and projects in the areas of biodiversity management, waste management, forestry management and freshwater resources management to name a few.

This will be underpinned by continuing to raise awareness among Jamaicans about the links between our actions and our natural environment. We can expect these programmes if properly implemented taking into account the principles of continuous improvements, to reduce the pressure on ecosystems from our various activities.

In moving forward we know that the environment sector will play a fundamental role in helping Jamaica to reach developed country status by 2030 and to achieve the vision of making this land of wood and water "the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business"

We will do our part in creating a healthy natural environment.

**Remarks by Dr. Arun Kashyap, UN Resident Coordinator,  
Resident Representative, UNDP, Jamaica**

The 2011 Human Development Report (HDR) *Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All* was launched in Copenhagen, Denmark by UNDP Administrator Helen Clark. The Report points to the mutually reinforcing relationship between environmental sustainability and human development. It argues that the remarkable progress in human development over recent decades that the HDR has documented cannot continue without bold global steps to reduce environmental risks and inequality. At the same time, the 2011 Report illustrates that environmental sustainability can be most fairly and effectively achieved by addressing health, education, income, and gender disparities together with the need for global action on energy production and ecosystem protection.

While countries like Jamaica show improved ranking on the Human Development Index, development progress in the world's poorest countries could be halted or even reversed by mid-century unless bold steps are taken now to slow climate change, prevent further environmental damage, and reduce deep inequalities within and among nations, according to projections in the 2011 Human Development Report.

The Report adds its voice to those urging consideration of an international currency trading tax or broader financial transaction levies to fund the fight against climate change and extreme poverty. A tax of just 0.005 percent on foreign exchange trading could raise \$40 billion yearly or more, the Report estimates, significantly boosting aid flows to poor countries-amounting to \$130 billion in 2010-at a time when development funding is lagging behind previously pledged levels due to the global financial crisis.

Such innovations will be necessary to sustain and possibly increase resource flows in support of development efforts in least developed countries as well as in middle income countries such as Jamaica, which, in a global recession, is at risk of losing ground in key human development indicators. Jamaica's HDI value for 2011 is 0.727-in the high human development category-positioning the country at 79 out of 187 countries and territories. Between 1980 and 2011, Jamaica's HDI value increased from 0.607 to 0.727, an increase of 20.0 per cent or average annual increase of about 0.6 per cent.

In the 2010 HDR, Jamaica was ranked 80 out of 169 countries. However, it is misleading to compare values and rankings with those of previously published reports, because the underlying data and methods have changed, as well as the number of countries included in the HDI.

While Jamaica is progressing in HDI rank the country's 2011 HDI of 0.727 is below the average of 0.741 for countries in the high human development group and below the average of 0.731 for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. From Latin America and the Caribbean, countries which are close to Jamaica in 2011 HDI rank and population size are Trinidad and Tobago and Dominican Republic which have HDIs ranked 62 and 98 respectively

Latin American and Caribbean nations are reducing wide income inequalities while taking steps to confront deforestation and other environmental threats that could slow human development gains in the region, says the 2011 Human Development Report.

In June 2012, the region will be in the spotlight as host of the Rio + 20, landmark UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The 2011 Human Development Report elaborates on many of the issues which will be at the forefront of the Rio + 20 Conference.

The annual Human Development Report is an editorially independent publication of UNDP, focuses the global debate on key development issues, providing new measurement tools, innovative analysis and often controversial policy proposals. The Report is guided by the belief that development is ultimately a process of enlarging people's choices, not just raising national incomes.

## **Panel Discussion – Key points of presenters**

Dr. Barry Wade: Environmental justice and the poor

- Environmental injustice as an underlying factor in issues of land tenure, squatting & environmental refugees
- New thinking on how to solve these issues moving from a law enforcement focus to the framework of environmental justice

Dr. Gladstone Hutchinson: “Balanced Stewardship”

- Balancing the demands of the built and natural environment
- He will use the GIS poverty maps to focus on rural, hinterland/highland poverty and the environmental costs and consequences of deprivation in those geographic areas
- Policy responses – special reference to the climate change funds to create awareness of their existence and possible types of projects

Prof. Elizabeth Thomas-Hope:

- The intersection of the pursuit of economic growth with HD - defined in terms of human freedoms and equity; and the implications/intersection with environment.
- A three-pronged analysis of environment & economy, environment and equity, environment and human freedoms.

## **Attendance at the Symposium**

Approximately 150 persons attended the Symposium including government, NGO and private sector representatives (see picture collection in Appendix).



APPENDIX: Picture collection from the Symposium







*The Ministry of Housing, Environment, Water and Local Government  
through the National Environment and Planning Agency  
and  
the United Nations Development Programme*

cordially invite you to the

*joint launch*  
of the

*State of the  
Environment Report 2010*

and

*Human Development  
Report 2011*

*"Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future For All"*

*Friday, December 16, 2011*

*9:30 a.m.*

*Blue Mountain Suite*

*Knustford Court Hotel*

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