



**CARIBBEAN NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE  
(CANARI)**

**CASE STUDY OF THE  
NEGRIL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PLAN,  
JAMAICA**

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## Credits

This case study is one of the products of a research project entitled “Synthesizing the Caribbean experience in stakeholder analysis for participatory natural resource management”. The project consisted of three major activities:

- the preparation of six case studies from Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, and their preliminary analysis by leading actors in each case;
- the convening, in collaboration with the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust, in April 2000, of a four-day seminar to present and analyse the cases, to identify common themes and concepts related to stakeholder approaches in the Caribbean, and to develop selected principles and skills relevant to the Caribbean context;
- the preparation of a publication presenting the results of the analysis in the form of guidelines for Caribbean practitioners, the six case studies, and an annotated bibliography.

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# **Case Study of the Negril Environmental Protection Plan, Jamaica**

**Susan Otuokon**

**Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust**

## **1. Background and project description**

Developing an Environmental Protection Plan for the Negril Environmental Protection Area (EPA) was one of the first activities of the Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT). The participatory planning process used by NEPT to develop the Negril Environmental Protection Plan in 1995 (updated in 1997) will be described with respect to the stakeholder identification and analysis that was involved.

Negril, located on the west coast of Jamaica, is the island's third largest tourist resort and is reputed to generate more income than either of the other two major resort areas, Ocho Rios and Montego Bay. Unlike the other two resorts, this destination grew out of the "alternative" vacation experience of the 1960's in which hippies camped on the beach and later in rustic accommodations hosted by fisher families.

In the late 1950s, the two main rivers, the North and South Negril, were canalised and the East Canal dug to provide drainage for agriculture in the eastern portion of the Negril Morass. The Norman Manley Boulevard was built, and Negril was connected to Lucea and Montego Bay on the north coast. The road and the canals have resulted in the partial separation of the Morass from the coastal and forest ecosystems on either side. These and other infrastructural developments encouraged rapid and unplanned growth of the tourism industry along the beach strip.

With the increase in value of beachfront land, many fisher families sold their properties and moved further inland to Red Ground. Some of them bought less expensive property on the West End cliffs and went into the tourism industry, but many were not interested in working in a service industry. The discovery of Negril as an idyllic tourist destination led to a dramatic change from a small, fishing village to a sprawling tourist resort over a period of about thirty years. The resort stretches along the seven kilometer beach strip in Long and Bloody Bays and also along the cliffs of the West End spanning two parishes B Westmoreland (where the town centre is located) and Hanover.

In the early 1980's, the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ) began conducting a feasibility study on the mining of the morass for peat to be used as fuel for the generation of electricity. The hoteliers and local community members believed that the mining and processing of the peat would damage the hotel industry. A Nature Conservation Society was formed and invited a scientist from the World Conservation Union (IUCN) to visit and give his professional opinion. The information provided by this wetlands expert indicated that the mining would have a negative effect on the morass, the beach and the water quality. The local community lobbied vigorously against the proposed activity, and this action, along with a global reduction in oil prices, brought the peat mining plans to a halt. The PCJ was asked

by the government to make their study site into a Nature Reserve for the conservation of unique plant species, education of the public regarding wetlands, and for a recreational attraction.

## **2. Description of institutional stakeholder groups**

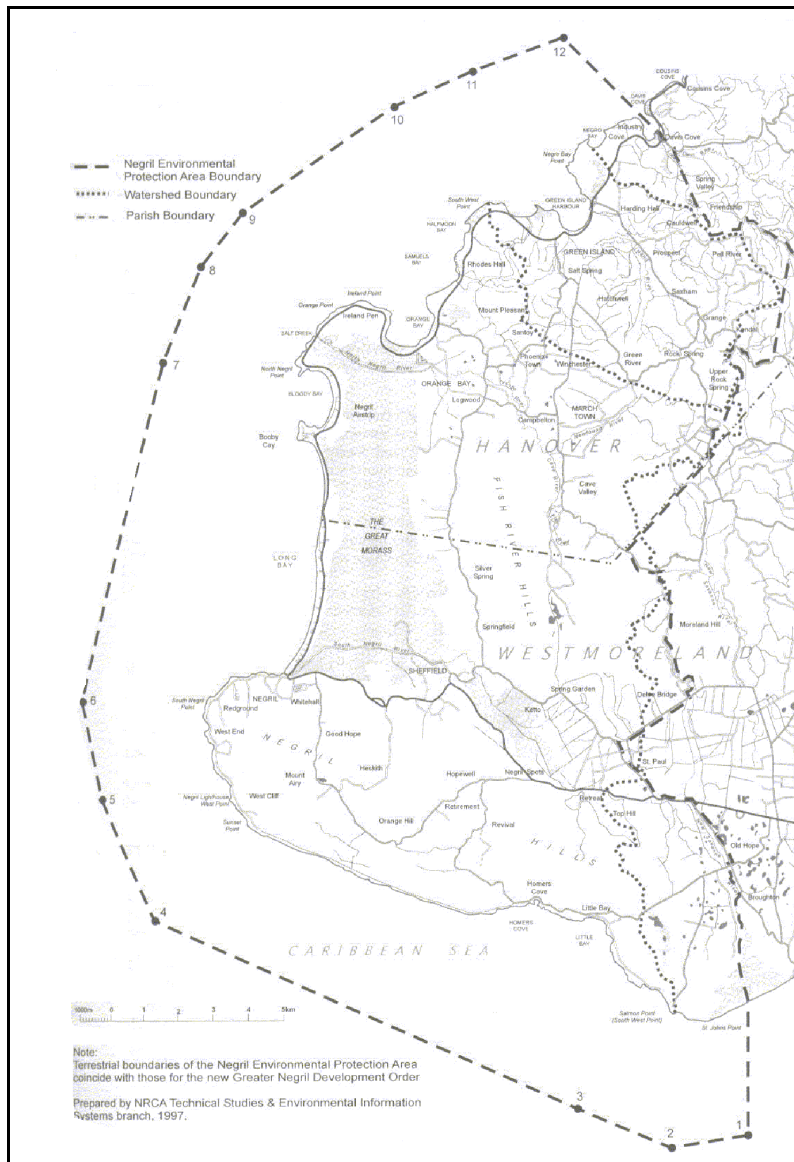
The Nature Conservation Society which later became the Negril Chamber of Commerce (NCC), maintains its membership in the World Conservation Union. The NCC continues to act as a watchdog with respect to environmental problems and also supports environmental activities such as water quality monitoring.

The Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS) was established in 1990 in response to the concerns of many dive operators that reefs were being destroyed. The organisation launched a public awareness campaign targeting diving/snorkeling visitors, watersports/dive operators, hoteliers, fishermen, and students. In addition, it installed mooring buoys at dive sites to reduce the incidence of anchor damage to corals. Workshops that brought together a wide cross-section of society were another tool used by the NCRPS to study the issues and develop solutions.

The idea for the Negril Environmental Protection Area (EPA) and the formation of NEPT came out of the December 1993 Annual Community Workshop of the NCRPS entitled *Protecting Jamaica's Coral Reef Ecosystems B Phase III: Planning Negril's Protection*. The workshop was attended by 38 participants from 10 government and 11 non-government organisations from Negril, its surrounding watershed areas, and national organisations. Current plans for development of the Negril area, concerns regarding environmental issues, and suggested projects to solve the problems, were presented by representatives from the various organisations. The workshop reached a decision to form a new entity that would coordinate and manage environmental projects within the Negril watershed.

The Negril EPA was initially defined as the Negril watershed, coastal, and marine areas, but this was expanded in late 1994/95 to include the Green Island areas. This decision was taken based on the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment that the boundaries of the Negril EPA should be the same as those for the new Greater Negril Development Order that would control development in the area. The Negril EPA was declared in November 1997 and the Negril Marine Park was declared in March 1998.

Development is controlled by the Negril Green Island Area Local Planning Authority (NGIALPA) which reviews plans and makes recommendations on developments to the Town and Country Planning Authority. The Hanover and Westmoreland Parish Councils are also involved in the process of planning approval. The NGIALPA Board consists of representatives from these councils and Negril organisations, including NEPT, NCC, and the Jamaica Hotel and Tourism Association. If the proposed development is of a large or complex nature (and as provided for in the Natural Resources Conservation Authority [NRCA] Permits and Licences Regulations), then additional permission and guidance is required from the NRCA. The latter usually necessitates conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment which requires public consultation.



**Figure 1. Negril Environmental Protection Area**

### 3. Description of resource uses

Use of the beaches, coastal waters and land for tourism purposes such as hotels, restaurants, watersports and shops is the major income generator for the area and the dominant natural resource use in Negril proper.

Fishing is the other major natural resource use along the coast, with fishing beaches located in Orange Bay, Little Bay and Green Island. In Negril, most of the fishermen have their base along the mouth of the South Negril River as they have been displaced by the tourism uses. The Fishermen's Cooperative is in the process of leasing a strip of land on the riverbank, near the mouth of the river, to build a

“Fishing Village”. Conch and other shells are collected for use in the craft industry, however this use has declined over the years.

Farming is the other major use of natural resources, with sugar cane being a prime crop particularly in Orange Bay, Green Island, Retreat, St Paul and Broughton. Vegetables and other cash crops are grown in many areas such as Spring Field and Cave Valley. Cattle farming is another small component of farming mainly in the Sheffield and Negril Spots areas. Goats, chickens, and pigs are also reared in various communities on a small scale.

There is a small charcoal and firewood industry mainly in the Negril Hills where logwood is the main wood used. There is also a small lumber industry using some of the hardwoods from both the wet and dry limestone forests. Board houses are typical of this area, and so lumber (although some of it is imported) is in demand. A major use of local woods is for carving of sculptures and trinket boxes for sale as souvenirs.

There are a few limestone/marl quarries within the EPA and illegal sand mining occurs from time to time, mainly in Negril and Little Bay.

#### *Conflict among users*

At the time of the preparation of the Negril Environmental Protection Plan there were few conflicts in the area and these were largely insignificant. The main conflict was between fishermen and the watersports operators. Although most of the watersports activities take place in relatively shallow water and after 9:00 a.m., some fishermen insist that they need to use these areas even after this time. They also complain that their nets are damaged by the watersports operators. The opening of fish pots by divers, although infrequent, was a problem at one time but has subsided significantly with education of the dive operators. Fishermen in general are concerned about the decline of fish and blame both the tourism industry and agricultural run-off.

#### *Management of use*

The Negril EPA is a large area with a complex land tenure system, and with the marine area being open access. The public has traditionally had access to the beach in Negril via a series of parish council roads. Many of these roads are not well maintained, but most allow vehicular access to the beach from the Norman Manley Boulevard. One of these roads passes through the Norman Manley Beach Park - a public recreational park and the site of the Community Centre. Access to the beach is also possible through most restaurants and bars. It is only through the hotels that public access is restricted except for guests.

The fishermen in Negril used to fish directly from their homes on the beach, however many of them relocated after the tourism industry began to expand. This resulted in their eventual relocation to the mouth of the South Negril River. This site is not totally suitable as the sea currents result in sand building up in the mouth of the river, making access difficult.

### Land tenure

Most of the land in Negril is privately owned by Jamaicans from Westmoreland and Hanover. The rest is owned by local people (mainly small properties) as well as by Jamaican companies. Land is very expensive in Negril, and hence can only be purchased by wealthy persons or companies. Squatting is a problem in Negril town as people have moved in to hustle on the beach. In the last year, steps have been taken to begin to address this situation. On the Hanover side of Negril as far as Orange Bay, most of the strip of coastal land on either side of the main road is owned by the Urban Development Corporation (a government statutory agency). The Morass is mainly owned by the Commissioner of Lands, with the Royal Palm Reserve within it being owned by the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica. Outside of Negril, the rest of the land within the EPA is a combination of private and government land.

## 4. Stakeholder groups

Organisations with management authority	Organisations representing users and communities	Other organised Stakeholders
Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society ( <i>de facto</i> )	Rutland Point Craft Market Association	Rotary Club of Savanna-la-Mar
Negril Green Island Area Local Planning Authority	Itinerant Vendors Association	Little Bay Citizens' Association
Negril Police	Negril Watersports Association	Whitehall Citizens' Association
Public Health Department	Negril Craft Market Association	
Negril Environmental Protection Trust ( <i>de facto</i> )	Negril Fishermen's Cooperative	
	Resort Board	
	Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association B Negril Chapter	
	Negril Chamber of Commerce	

## 5. Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholders with shared interests, such as craft traders, fishermen, businesses and hoteliers, had formal organisations. However, these organisations did not include everyone involved in the respective activities. These groups were most effective in terms of planning and implementing activities when they employed professionals or involved persons with significant work experience or some form of post secondary school training.

The stakeholders in the various districts within the EPA were generally organised on an informal basis only. Citizens' associations had been formed at various times but had not been sustained in most instances. The community meetings spurred formation or re-formation of associations in many districts. In the case of the groups organised around both shared interests and geography, those which included mostly persons of lower level education and income tended to be less effective at dealing with the community-wide problems on their own. Some concerns were costly to solve, and the interventions required a high level of bureaucracy and government involvement. One concern even had a potentially negative environmental impact (clearing the canal at Spring Field). Where the problems were fairly simple and NEPT was able to give some assistance, the stakeholders were able to participate actively e.g., beach cleaning and clearing of culverts.

Although the participants at community meetings in the districts were from a variety of educational backgrounds, they were able to identify and express their concerns about the issues affecting them. Most of the environmental issues identified had strong socio-economic aspects e.g. water, garbage, sewage, roads, drainage and education.

Elected persons represented the stakeholder groups at the workshops, but all community meetings were open to the public. Farmers were not represented as a group as there were no formal farmers' organisations. Outside of Negril, many of the fishermen were not members of the Negril Fishermen's Cooperative, however they attended community meetings within their districts, and efforts were made to have representatives from each fishing beach at the workshops.

The relationship between the different stakeholder groups was very good in the sense that representatives felt comfortable about expressing their views, even where they differed or were in conflict with other groups. This situation is typical of Negril where there is a high level of participation in community affairs by people from all walks of life, including local people from "humble" backgrounds who have become community leaders and/or successful entrepreneurs. Although discussions in meetings can become heated, resolution is usually achieved and action taken to solve the problems.

Stakeholders in the Negril EPA play a role in project management and implementation. The particular stakeholder group involved at this level may depend on access to and the availability of funds for the type of project. The development of the Negril Environmental Protection Plan was the first step in determining the projects that stakeholders wanted to implement within districts and how stakeholders could be involved in environmental management generally. One of the premises guiding the management of the EPA was that enforcement was not the main method for obtaining compliance. Stakeholders had to be educated about the problems their activities caused to the natural resources and the possible solutions. They needed to be assisted in developing their concerns and priority issues into viable projects which when implemented would help to better manage the environment within the EPA. Further, the projects would be promoted to serve as examples for other stakeholders to follow.

The 1997 update of the Plan indicated that some work towards solutions had occurred in some districts and new priorities needed to be selected. For example in Retreat, the clearing of blocked culverts to allow proper drainage was noted as the priority problem in 1995. In the 1997 update, it was noted that

the culverts had been cleared and were being maintained but that a new priority had not yet been identified. In early 1998, Retreat indicated “no proper sewage treatment” and concerns regarding contamination of underground water sources as their new priority (noted as a problem in their 1995 list). Since then NEPT has been able to access assistance for the community through the United States Agency for International Development - Government of Jamaica Coastal Water Quality Improvement Project (CWIP). Specifically, the project will provide construction and small business development training for members of the Retreat United Group in Action through their participation in the building of at least eight VIDP latrines for the most needy households. Further, the project will provide for the long-term lease of a compressor and attachments for digging, thus providing leverage for the community group to access additional funds to purchase the equipment. It is hoped that the construction team will be able to generate income by providing safe sanitation solutions and engaging in other construction work throughout the Negril EPA.

## **6. Lessons learnt**

NEPT involved stakeholders at a very early stage in the development of the Environmental Protection Plan that would guide the management of the natural resources within the Negril Environmental Protection Area. This was done even before the protected area was formally declared. Further, the establishment of NEPT itself was an outcome of a participatory activity (the December 1993 workshop) and an effort to involve stakeholders in the management of the area. The approach taken was proactive, not in order to manage conflicts but rather to plan for the management of resources being used by multiple stakeholders.

The main lessons learned from this process are:

### ***Stakeholder identification is critical and must be done thoroughly.***

Although the process used to establish NEPT and prepare the Negril Environmental Protection Plan seems to have identified the main stakeholders, the methods used were not clear. The fact that farmers were not specifically targeted (except through districts where farming was the major occupation) indicates that a more thorough and documented method of identification would have been useful.

### ***Full coverage of the geographic area of interest is important.***

Dividing the area into districts was useful as the area is very large and the divisions made it possible to reach most persons within the Negril watershed. Steps were taken later to improve representation and involvement from the Green Island watershed.

### ***Representation of stakeholder interests is necessary.***

In developing the Environmental Protection Plan, the districts used a democratic and transparent process to select a community representative to attend the major workshop. Participation through representatives was often necessary, as it was impossible to accommodate everyone together, particularly at EPA-wide meetings.

***Community meetings are useful ways of gathering stakeholders together.***

Holding public community meetings was a good way to send and receive information. NEPT continues to use this approach for public education and keeping in touch with stakeholders. It is important, however, to publicise these meetings properly. NEPT has found the use of mobile public announcement systems to be a very effective method of informing communities about meetings.

***Confirmation of results/information with the stakeholders should be done before finalising the document being prepared.***

NEPT organised community meetings before and after the workshop and the drafting of the Environmental Protection Plan. This helped ensure that the concerns and recommendations of the stakeholders in the various districts within the EPA were correctly recorded. This is important for accuracy in planning which will later affect implementation, and also in developing trust between stakeholders including the convening organisation.

***Dependence on external assistance can result in delays.***

Government and funding agencies can slow down implementation considerably when organisations have to face lengthy bureaucratic processes or wait for funding to be disbursed. Emphasis should be placed on creative, small-scale, income-generating solutions.

***The stakeholder participation process may raise levels of expectations from the community.***

In the context of a political system in which communities rely on someone from outside to help them with handouts, information about sustainable community development is easily misinterpreted. Care must be taken not to focus too much on funds, but rather to facilitate the strengthening of community-based organisations so that they can manage the affairs of their district.

***Stakeholder analysis can yield a variety of information; it must be clear exactly what information is required.***

At the organisational level the formal interest groups and agencies were able to voice not only their concerns but to present their plans and recommendations for solutions. At the geographical district level, the main component of the analysis was focussed on finding out from the community members their environmental concerns. This was useful for the development of the Environmental Protection Plan and has helped NEPT direct assistance to districts based on the concerns of that area. Additionally, it would have been useful to conduct a more rigorous study of the socio-economic issues in each district and to link these to a scientific assessment of the ecological issues so that a more objective assessment could have been made with respect to priority issues.

***Follow-up assistance to stakeholders is necessary in order to increase their level of participation in natural resource management.***

The core committees and community associations needed assistance to develop and strengthen their organisations. NEPT was not in a position to provide much assistance in this area at the time, as it was just developing itself. The need for a staff member to assist stakeholder groups in participating in management of the area was recognised by NEPT. Through activities of the CWIP Community Liaison Officer in 1998/9 and from September 1999 a Community Development Officer at NEPT

funded by the European Union, NEPT has been able to provide organisational strengthening to community groups in five districts and to interest groups such as the Fishermen's Cooperative. Additional staff and funds provided through CWIP and the European Union have also increased the ability of NEPT to involve stakeholders in the management and implementation of project activities that contribute to the management of the natural resources within the Negril EPA.

## **7. Key documents**

NEPT. 1997. Negril Environmental Protection Plan (1995 Update).

NEPT. 1995. Negril and Green Island Area Environmental Protection Plan.

NEPT. 1994. Negril Watershed EPA Plan - Part One: Executive Summary (draft) for discussion and comment B Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1994.

NCRPS. 1993. Summary of December 1993 workshop, "Protecting Jamaica's Coral Reef Ecosystem, Phase III: Planning Negril's Protection".