

St. Lucia

Date and Venue

Tuesday, 17th October 2000 – Palm Tree Hotel Conference Room, Rodney Bay.

Participants:

Crispin D' Auvergne	-	Sustainable Development and Environment, Ministry of Planning
Devon Barrow	-	Ministry of Planning
Deborah Budhell	-	Water Resources Management Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Cosmas Charles	-	Environmental Health Department
Emelda Charles	-	National Conservation Authority
Shermaine Chung	-	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI)
Julian Dubois	-	Ministry of Community Development
Cornelius Edmund	-	St. Lucia Electricity Services Limited
Caroline Eugene	-	Program for Regularization of Unplanned Development, Ministry of Planning
Leon Ferrar	-	Department of Fisheries
Esther Flippocytz	-	Soufriere Marine Management Area
Anita James	-	Water Resources Management Unit
Lorraine James	-	Solid Waste Management Authority
Sema Jean	-	Ministry of Planning
Lyndon John	-	Forestry department
Laurianus Lesfloris	-	Solid Waste Management Authority
Lesmond Maghoire	-	Ministry of Labour
Jahto Mahal	-	Ministry of Community Development
Marina Mathews	-	Sir Arthur Lewis Community College
Peter Meyers	-	Caribbean Agricultural Research Development Institute
Peter Murray	-	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Natural Resources Management Unit (OECS/NRMU)
Charmaine Nathaniel	-	St. Lucia National Trust
Eftah Norbert	-	St. Lucia Chamber of Commerce
Hilton Oculien	-	Fire Service
Jeannine Rambally	-	Department of Fisheries
Joanna Raynold	-	Program for Regularization of Unplanned Development, Ministry of Planning
Herbert Regis	-	Meteorological Office
Cheryl Regis	-	Sir Arthur Lewis Community College
Michael Robb	-	Forestry Department
Susanna Scott	-	Department of Fisheries
Cuthbert St. Juste	-	Ministry of Labour
Dr. U O'D Trotz	-	CPACC RPIU

Judi Clarke - CPACC RPIU
Dr. Leonard Nurse - CPACC RPIU
G. de Berdt Romilly - CPACC RPIU

Agenda: See Annex A

Commentary:

The following comments were made during the meeting by various participants:

- A National Climate Change Committee has been established comprising 18 individuals from the public and private sector.
- The *National Communication* is currently being prepared.
- Extensive damage was sustained to the John Compton Dam in 1994 as a result of Tropical Storm Debbie. Cost of the damage and restoration work has been well documented and could serve to demonstrate the financial impacts associated with storm damage where initial design/construction has not taken into consideration anticipated changes in design criteria due to climate change impacts.
- It has been determined that human settlement continues to develop in vulnerable areas, including within the “Queens Chains” area and in flood plains.
- Rainfall records from private estates date back to the 1910’s and clearly demonstrate spatial variability in rainfall patterns, and highlight vulnerability of certain areas. A variety of temperature gauges have been gathering data for some time, and analysis of this data has identified a clear trend towards an increase in medium temperatures.
- In terms of human health impacts, it is anticipated that climate change will result in an increase in infections from vector-borne disease. Medical facilities can deal with this increase, but will need upgrading and additional resources. However, concern has been expressed about the human health impacts arising from water infrastructure that may be damaged during storms resulting in the contamination of drinking water. The more subtle impacts on human health arising from climate change (e.g. increase in rates of asthma) may not be readily discernable by the public, thereby making it difficult to mobilize public support for any policy changes that may be required. There is an urgent need to sensitize the public and media about these impacts from climate change, and a variety of systems of communication should be considered.
- It is anticipated that climate change will affect the country’s marine and terrestrial biodiversity which in turn will result in human and cultural impacts. Additionally, climate change impacts can exacerbate existing problems such as burning undertaken to clear agricultural lands.

- It was agreed that there was a need to develop a *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy* that would outline intervention options and an action plan for implementation. In developing the *National Climate Change Policy* there is a need to look at national development in an holistic and integrated manner so as to ensure that all policies look at climate change impacts and responses. It is considered that climate change should not be a subset of the *National Development Plan* but rather should form an integral part of the national planning framework.. It is essential that the land planning process integrates climate change, and for this reason the Development Control Authority (DCA) should actively participate in the development and implementation of the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy*. Local government authorities should also be involved in the development of the policy since they will need to play a leading role in the implementation of the policy.
- It is recognized that interest in climate change continues to grow in all sectors of civil society, but that there is a need to sustain this interest through a systematic public education and awareness program and through “peer sensitization”.
- The full impacts of climate change upon the insurance/finance sector has not been fully appreciated or quantified. The region needs to involve this sector in adaptation planning to reduce the level of risk, and prevent any unnecessary increases in insurance or finance charges such as was experienced after Hurricane Andrew which caused extensive damage to Florida and resulted in an increase in insurance premiums throughout the Caribbean region to effectively pay for the huge insurance claims in the United States of America.
- It is recognized that the development of a *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy* could be used as a justification to mobilize policy makers and the public to undertake a number of activities that are required to achieve sustainable development and the sound management of natural resources.
- It is government’s objective to achieve a sustainable energy policy. A draft policy document has been prepared and is to be presented to government for approval.
- It is recognized that there is a need for increased monitoring of climate patterns. However, attention should also focus on the type of data and the manner it is presented so that increased emphasis can be placed on obtaining a sound basis for informed decision-making. It is considered that the absence of data on climate change or climate impacts should not prevent the public/private sectors from making sound choices aimed at managing or mitigating anticipated impacts. The “precautionary principle” should govern decision-making.
- It is considered that public education and awareness on climate change and adaptation requires special attention. The scientific literacy/education of the general public needs to be enhanced. A number of cultural barriers to scientific literacy exist. The launching of Component 4 under the CPACC project presents an ideal opportunity to launch an extensive public awareness campaign on climate change. However, the *National Climate Change Policy* needs to identify how cultural barriers to scientific literacy are to be changed or broken.

- In identifying appropriate intervention options for adapting to climate change, the temporal aspects of climate change impacts (i.e. changes over next 10, 20, 50 years) needs to be quantified leading to the formulation of appropriate and timely management mechanisms.
- Greater understanding of traditional knowledge and skills needs to be acquired in order to identify whether traditional or historic practices may provide guidance when designing suitable climate change adaptation options.
- It was considered that obtaining support, consensus and buy-in from the public/private sectors is an essential part of the process to develop the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy*. The Department of Forestry has a public outreach program that could be utilized to assist with the formulation and implementation of the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy*.

Development of Climate Change Adaptation Policy - Proposed Work-Plan:

- (a) It was agreed that the Climate Change Committee would co-ordinate the development of the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy* and Implementation Plan. As a first step in the process the Committee would develop a work plan and public education program and within 30 days submit to the CPACC RPIU a breakdown of the resources that will be required to support these initiatives.
- (b) The Country Focal Point would undertake further work on the Issues Paper, and then forward the draft document to members of the Climate Change Committee for review and comment. It is anticipated that work on the Issues Paper will be complete within 2 weeks.
- (c) Work is required on the identification of identifying gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies in current and proposed policies, initiatives and legislation which are relevant to climate change adaptation planning and management. In this regard, the Ministry of Planning is currently looking at undertaking an institutional review in the context of environmental management. This review is to be undertaken in November 2000 with support provided by the OECS NRMU under the CIDA funded ENCAPD project. It is considered that should CPACC be able to provide the small amount of additional funding required, the terms of reference for this review could be expanded to also look at the existing laws, policies and institutional structures from the perspective of climate change adaptation planning and management. This review needs to be undertaken prior to the articulation of policy options under the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy* and Implementation Plan.
- (c) It is considered that a “participatory decision-making” process needs to be employed to develop the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy*. The Climate Change Committee would initiate work on the launch of this process. CPACC RPIU will assist in the development of presentation materials that will articulate and communicate a clear message to parliamentarians and the political directorate on the importance of initiating urgent action on climate change, and the need to develop and implement a *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy*. Materials for these presentations to parliamentarians and the political

directorate will be developed by the end of November 2000. The Climate Change Committee will make a presentation to Cabinet outlining the proposed consultation program that will lead to the formulation of the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy*.

- (d) Materials for presentations to various sectors of civil society need to be prepared in order to launch the public education and awareness campaign in support of the development of the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy*. This material needs to focus on special interests of select stakeholders, and should be tailored in a manner that will identify specific issues and concerns.
- (e) It is considered that the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy* should be based on a “vision” with a clearly defined action-oriented strategy to achieve that vision. The policy paper should clearly establish the factual basis for action since too many policy documents exist which are not based on fact.
- (f) It was foreseen that a technical meeting would be needed to facilitate discussion on intervention options and discuss proposed management mechanisms. This technical meeting should be held in January 2001 - comprising 2 half-day sessions. These sessions would result in the formulation of a Position Paper that would be submitted for broad-based consultation. Thereafter, the Climate Change Committee would undertake an extensive public consultation process leading up to the development of a draft Policy Paper.
- (g) Once the draft Policy Paper had been formulated, the Climate Change Committee would undertake the development of an Implementation Plan.
- (h) Once agreement has been reached, the Climate Change Committee shall submit the Final Draft *Climate Change Adaptation Policy* and Implementation Plan to Cabinet for review and eventual approval.
- (i) It is anticipated that resources would be required from CPACC to assist with the costs associated with printing and disseminating the Draft Policy document, and in facilitating the public consultation process.
- (j) The CPACC RPIU would prepare a “collation” of issues and impacts from each of the Issues Papers prepared by the 12 participating countries in order to assist with prioritization and the identification of appropriate intervention options. The collation would be summarized under sectors (e.g. agriculture, health, fisheries, biodiversity, etc.).

Public Awareness and Education

St. Lucia seems well on their way with regard to public awareness on climate change issues. The Sustainable Development and Environmental Unit has already embarked on a program that goes into primary schools to speak about environmental issues as well as climate change.

However, the aspect of the National Climate Change Adaptation Policy still needs to be included.

Public Awareness and Education Activities

- Community development officers should be used to implement public awareness at the community level.

Public Awareness and Education – Next Steps

- Focal point to select a committee to incorporate climate change issues as well as the policy into existing programs.