



The CaMPAM Network and Forum - A Social Network for Enhancing MPA Effectiveness in the Wider Caribbean through Communication and Capacity Building Tools

The Path Ahead for Point Sable Environmental Protection Area

[Vieux Fort] (March 6, 2014) *The management plan for Point Sable Environmental Protection Area (PSEPA) in the south of Saint Lucia is currently undergoing review by agencies and community representatives.*

Originally prepared in 2009 as a draft management plan, the document sought to address management needs at Point Sable Environmental Protection Area for a 5-year period from 2009-2014.

“It’s now time to update the management plan to reflect the current status of natural resources in the area. We’re also reviewing the nature of the issues now facing the Point Sable Environmental Protection Area and updating the management plan to reflect priorities for action” explained the Saint Lucia National Trust’s Programme Officer for the South, Mr. Craig Henry.

This week saw some 20 community representatives and local agencies come together at the National Trust’s office in Vieux Fort to take part in the review. Amongst them were fishers, tour operators and tourism industry representatives from various locations in and around the protected area, plus local representatives of the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Forestry, the Town Council, Royal Saint Lucia Police Force and Saint Lucia National Trust.

“Our first step was to seek a review of the management plan by a number of experts,” explained National Trust Director Mr. Bishnu Tulsie. “Technical specialists from the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program, Australia’s Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute volunteered their time and highlighted the areas of the management plan that most require updating and refining.”

These areas provided the focus for discussion during consultation meetings with community representatives in Vieux Fort, as well as for meetings with partner agencies at the national level.

“We touched on many issues during the meetings,” commented Mr. Henry. “The beach featured prominently - the seriousness of the threat of coastal erosion and its’ impacts on the local community and businesses were emphasized, as were concerns regarding recreational use of Vieux Fort’s main beach. The integrity of the mangroves and wetlands featured prominently, with issues relating to pollution from runoff, garbage disposal, illegal cutting and hunting within protected areas.”

The National Trust is now incorporating the input received into the updated draft management plan and identifying priorities for action. The updated draft management plan will next be presented at public consultation meetings.

The review of the management plan is made possible with support from NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute, as part of their assistance to marine protected areas in the Caribbean to help build local capacity for effective marine protected areas management. The Trust expresses its deep gratitude to all agencies and individuals who have participated in the review process thus far and looks forward to future collaborations as the process moves forward.

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Participants at the consultation meeting in Vieux Fort (Photo: E. Doyle)