

# **Designing a pilot monitoring plan for Jamaica's Protected Areas**

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## **Introduction**

Jamaica's first national park, the Montego Bay Marine Park was declared in 1991 under the Protected Areas Resources Conservation project, a joint USAID/GOJ project. Since then, eight other protected areas using IUCN criteria have been declared. This is only a small part of over 150 areas that have been recommended for declaration.

However, the system that Jamaica has in place has resulted in very little coordination among the parks which are mostly managed by NGOs that acts as the agents of the GOJ. To change this, a national policy for protected areas was written in 1997 by the Natural Resources Conservation Agency (now the National Environment and Planning Agency). A national systems plan is also presently being prepared. The national policy and the system plan have recommended strategies that will result in coordinated operations between all protected areas in Jamaica.

While this has occurred, there is very little monitoring is actually occurring to determine whether activities carried out is having a positive effect in any protected area. It is recommended that one park that has already been partly mapped be chosen and a monitoring plan developed in this park and assessed for one year. If this strategy proves useful after one year of monitoring, then it will be recommended to be adopted for the National System of Protected Areas in Jamaica.

The expected output of this action plan is as follow:

1. A monitoring plan that is guided by the ecological and park zoning plans to measure changes in the park's ecosystem.

An important partner for this programme is The Nature Conservancy that has a country office in Jamaica. TNC has expertise in developing monitoring programmes and have indicated a willingness to assist in developing such programmes in Jamaica. Another important partner is the Forestry Department who have been doing forest cover maps and monitoring programmes using some of TNC's methodology. The Park is also a Forest Reserves which makes the Forestry Department a critical stakeholder and the Forestry Department has developed Forest cover maps of the Park and Forest Management Plans.

## **Goal**

The major goal is to develop a monitoring plan that will serve the following purposes:

- ?? Serve a blue print for a national plan. Evaluation of this plan after one year after it is implemented will assist in developing a national plan that will then feed into the National Protected Areas System Plan and National Strategy and Action Plan on Biological Diversity (short term – one year)
- ?? Create common approaches between government agencies and NGOs that are all involved in Natural Resources Management (long term, two –five years) to monitor the resources.

**Expected barriers**

- ?? Funding
- ?? Increase work load on small staff
- ?? Lack of formalized delegation agreements/MOUs between GOJ and NGOs (long term)
- ?? Lack of coordination within Jamaica Protected Areas Network (NGO body formed to deal with issues of collaboration, long-term).
- ?? Training of Park Rangers to collect data.
- ?? Disagreement among park managers on what needs to be monitored

**Expected benefits**

- ?? Coordinated approach to determine changes in ecosystem and be proactive in reaction to negative changes.
- ?? Better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the park system as a whole.
- ?? More economically feasible since resources can now be channeled as needed.
- ?? Closer collaboration between agencies and civil society in the long term since it will be better to work closely with the communities to collect the data.
- ?? Training for park rangers and community members.

**Activity Matrix**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators of Success</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Time line</b>
Evaluation of present land use maps and forest cover maps and meet with GIS unit at NEPA	- Maps collected and evaluated. - Meeting held	Already in place such as maps, software and computers. Ikonos satellite images also available plus geo-referenced aerials.	August – September, 2004
Meeting with Shauna, Susanne (JCDT), Owen (Forestry), Kimberly and Terry (TNC) to discuss	Meeting held and consensus reached	None anticipated	September 2004

Inform JPAN	As above	Mileages, work shop finances	September, October
Design system using TNC 7 s methodology	System properly designed	Software, Kimberly John (TNC trainer)	October
Train rangers and some community members to collect data	Rangers and community persons trained. These community members can be hired as part time wardens (funds??)	Kimberly, Dr. Vogle, Shauna, Liz, equipment, field time and vehicles.	November
Establish data collection points and parameters	Points established	Byron, Peter Vogle (UWI), equipment, field time and vehicles.	November – early December
Analyze data quarterly	Data bank and trends analyzed	Software, computer	2005 until October
Evaluation/ retooling.	Tool finalized	Software, TNC trainer, UWI	October 2005
Present data finding	Workshop and final approval for implementation	Financing of one day workshop.	November 2005

## Key Stakeholders

- ?? TNC
- ?? Forestry Department
- ?? University of the West Indies, Department of Life Sciences
- ?? NEPA GIS branch
- ?? The Boss (NEPA)
- ?? Communities such as Maroon Town, Millbank, Hagley's Gap, Section, Cascade, Penlyne Castle.
- ?? NGOs (JCDDT, CCAM, FOS, MBMPT, NCRPS, NEPT) that form JPAN
- ?? Institute of Jamaica
- ?? Urban Development Corporation
- ?? Institute of Jamaica

## Positively Impacted

- ?? All of above
- ?? Key persons to be contacted and will be present at the final workshop are:
- ?? Linnette Wilks (Rio Grande)
- ?? Valley Hikes and Valley tours (Rio Grande)

?? Colonel of the Maroon community

### **Negatively Impacted**

- ?? It will involve more work for everyone. Funding will be critical.
- ?? Dependent on findings, some areas in Parks that are being negatively impacted will need management measures that might prove unpopular with hikers, community members and the NGOs.

### **Expected outcomes**

- ?? Database on ecological and cultural parameters important for protected areas management
- ?? Strengthening of the Jamaican Protected Areas System Plan
- ?? Respect for the agency whose job it is to ensure that ecosystem management is actually occurring in the areas.
- ?? Increased savings in operational and recurring cost in the protected areas in the long term
- ?? Relatively quick realization of critical changes in ecosystems and the increased ability to react to these changes.