



United Nations
Environment Programme

Distr.
LIMITED

UNEP(DEPI)/CAR WG.39/INF.12
4 July 2018

Original: ENGLISH

Fourth Meeting of the Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol concerning Pollution from Land based Sources and Activities in the Wider Caribbean.

Panama City, Panama, 18 to 20 July 2018

**PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE TRASH FREE WATERS PARTNERSHIP
USEPA-UNEP COOPERATION ON GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS
2015-2020**

For reasons of economy and the environment, Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of the Working and Information documents to the Meeting, and not to request additional copies.

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Progress report

Reporting Period	January 2018- June 2018
Focus Area	Trash Free Waters Initiative in the Caribbean-Pollution/Solid Waste
Activity Start Date	1 July 2017-3PPP14/401LJ4
Responsible UNEP Manager	Christopher Corbin / Clementine Pinder

1) SUMMARY STATUS

The **Trash Free Waters Initiative** is a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Peace Corps, the United Nations Environment Programme – Caribbean Environment Programme (Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention); UN Environment’s Regional Office for Latin America and its Caribbean Sub-Regional Office. They are collaborating to implement activities in Panama and Jamaica to reduce and prevent land-based trash from entering watersheds, coastal waters, and the marine environment.

1. Jamaica

Launch of Community Pilot in Westmoreland, Jamaica

Sandals Foundation

Sandals Foundation is coordinating the implementation of pilot project activities in the towns of Bluefields and Whitehouse. The launch within the communities was held on June 8, 2018 within the **Bluefields and Whitehouse communities of Westmoreland** (See attached copy of the launch programme) at *Sandals Foundation South Coast*.

This pilot project falls within the scope of the **Trash Free Waters Initiative** involving government and international partners namely: *The National Environment and Planning Agency as lead environmental agency in Jamaica, the United Nations Environment Programme – Caribbean Environment Programme (Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention); UN Environment’s Regional Office for Latin America and its Caribbean Sub-Regional Office, Peace Corps and the donor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).*

This partnership brings stakeholders together to identify priority needs and develop projects and activities in Panama and Jamaica. The overall goal is to reduce and prevent land-based trash from entering watersheds, coastal waters, and the marine environment.

Considering the global call to action to #BeatPlasticPollution campaign, the residents of Bluefields and Whitehouse in Westmoreland participated in a beach clean-up prior to the launch on June 8, 2018 in commemoration of World Oceans Day. A total of 32 community members participated in the launch activity indicating their support and ownership. Over 300lbs of garbage was collected.

These community members included local business leaders, the Community Development Committee, Regional Fisheries Officials, Chairpersons of the Gilling’s Gully Fisherman’s Cooperative and the Parish Development Committee among others.

Statement of Activity anticipated

- ✚ Land and water surveys will be conducted monthly in Bluefields and Whitehouse by divers within the Marine Sanctuaries. The surveys are scheduled for the final week of June.
- ✚ Training on composting is proposed for members of the Bluefields and Whitehouse Communities. Composting material will be collected by local farmers to produce compost.
- ✚ Public Awareness Toolkit will be used to conduct public awareness programmes. The toolkit will include posters, handouts, talking points, elevator speech, communication plan and branding guidelines (See Annex I for Month one poster). These activities are on-going with at least *one activity per week*. A public awareness report will be produced *monthly* to update stakeholders and provide updates on the progress of the project. A Public Opinion survey will be conducted *every 3 months* to assess the response regarding waste management and the project intervention.
- ✚ Bins will be placed in communities in sets of three at predetermined locations within the communities of Whitehouse and Bluefield's. *This is scheduled for August-September 2018.*

For further details, the schedule of activities for June-July is provided in Annex I.

Status of Coordination

- ✚ The contractual agreement was signed between UN Environment and Sandals Foundation to support the implementation of the pilot project in Jamaica.
- ✚ The National Environment & Planning Agency (NEPA), the lead agency for Trash Free Waters in Jamaica met with the recently established National Steering Committee in February 2018 to incorporate their input into the implementation of activities for the community project. The Terms of Reference for the Committee was sent to the community members for their feedback. Suggestions made by the group have been incorporated in the on-the-ground community pilot.
- ✚ The Secretariat prepared a technical research brief on the implementation of Styrofoam and Single Use Plastic Bag bans in the Caribbean. This will be used to raise awareness in the two pilot countries and the region on progress made to reduce marine pollution from trash. It was disseminated in May 2018 to Focal Points of the Cartagena Convention for their review and feedback. Comments were received and incorporated. (See Annex III) It will be presented at the upcoming **Fourth (4th) Scientific, Technical Advisory Committee Meetings in Panama City Panama** from July 18-20, 2018. See [link](#) of interactive map of the countries and their status of such bans.
- ✚ The Secretariat participated at the Sixth International Marine Debris Conference in San Diego, California in March 2018 to showcase the partnership during a meeting of the Caribbean Node on Marine Litter Management.

Trash Free Waters Partnership Meetings held:

- Launch of Community Project in Bluefields and Whitehouse held 8 June 2018
- National Trash Free Steering Committee Meeting held 6 March 2018
- Partnership Meeting held January 2018
- Trash Free Waters Stakeholder Meeting in Panama held 13-17 November 2017
- First TFW stakeholder workshop for Jamaica held in February 2017 in Kingston
- Launch of the Trash Free Waters (TFW) in Jamaica in August 2016
- Launch of the Trash Free Waters (TFW) in Panama in May 2016
- Initial meetings with national governments and Peace Corps in both countries.
- Panama in November 2015 and Jamaica in January 2016.
- Launch of TFW in the Caribbean Initiative at the Our Ocean II Conference in October 2015 in Chile.

2. Panama

UN Environment – Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) will coordinate the implementation of the Trash Free Waters Initiative involving the the Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente (ANAM). The evaluation committee will include (MiAmbiente, UNEP/ROLAC and EPA).

Statement of Activity anticipated

- The Small-Scale Funding Agreement was finalized taking into account feedback of stakeholders and identifies the pilot project to be implemented.
- The sub-allotment to Panama was finalized and implementation is expected to commence by July 2018.

Project Linkages

Linkages were established with a Plastic Waste Minimization Project of the Government of Jamaica and the Government's national programme to address Solid Waste Management. This project aims to enhance the legislative framework in Jamaica to support the development and implementation of a national improved waste management system to reduce plastic marine litter generated from land-based activities. The project is sponsored by the UN Environment Sub-regional Office for the Caribbean and the International Environmental Technology Centre through Japan as well as the Government of Jamaica. The budget is US\$700,000 and duration is two years from December 2017 to 2019.

2) OUTPUT PERFORMANCE

Provide a comparison of actual accomplishments with the anticipated outputs/outcomes specified in the agreement work plan.

- Contract between UN Environment and Sandals Foundation was finalized to support implementation of Project.
- Support provided to the pilot project (Solid Waste & Reduction Project within Bluefields & Whitehouse Communities) identified through the stakeholder dialogue process;
- Public awareness activities initiated and project launched among community members who are enthusiastic about the impact on their surroundings
- Letter of agreement was signed between *Beeston Spring Greenhouse and Sandals Foundation to conduct composting activity for project.*
- Letter of agreement was also signed between *Bluefield's Peoples Community Association and Sandals Foundation to conduct land and water surveys in Bluefields.*
- Pilot projects implemented by civil society organizations under the Trash Free marine litter to enhance waste prevention and improve waste management using UN Environment analysis or guidance (Output 2). NEPA, Peace Corps and Sandals Foundation have conducted preliminary surveys which are being used to inform on-going project activities. A series of land and water of Surveys were conducted to track progress of the project.
- Advisory and support: Through the partnership, there are regular meetings with the governments and civil society organizations to facilitate policy making and strategy development toward sound integrated waste management to prevent trash in waterways (Output 4).
- Activities are promoted through the UN Environment CEP website and dedicated web page and social media including Facebook and twitter.

The remaining outputs/outcomes will be realized during the rest of 2019.

3) CHALLENGES

Summarize main challenges and difficulties encountered as well as reasons why anticipated outputs/outcomes were not met, if applicable.

- US Peace Corps is no longer operating in the Bluefield's community. Public Awareness and education activities are to be outsourced to other entities such as Bluefields Peoples Community Association and Sandals Foundation when possible.
- Because of delays in finalization of contracts and administrative/grant issues, the funds to beneficiaries in Panama and Jamaica delayed start-up of activities. However, these challenges have now been resolved.

4) EXPENDITURES

Describe briefly expenditures along with a comparison of the percentage of the project completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies, if any. Provide other pertinent information, including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs. (To be further elaborated when submitting the annual report).

Many of the outputs of the project to date were provided through co-financing (cash and in-kind) by partners due to delays in transfer of funds. Partners have now received full funding for project activities and remaining outputs are to be achieved by end of 2018.

The total budget amount (USD60,000) as below with continued implementation expected over the period of a year.

The costs are provided in Annex II.

5) WAY FORWARD

Provide a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period, including a description of equipment, techniques, and materials to be used or evaluated.

- Enhancement of Webpage and development of separate pages by partner agencies that will be linked
- Project activities in Jamaica include:
 - Regular collection of garbage
 - Structured programme for collection after the project
 - Best practices document prepared,
 - Public awareness toolkit and
 - Recommendations based on experiences of the project (institutional/policy/legislative/regulatory)
- For Panama, implementation to take place as per contract agreement.
- Ensuring Regular Collection -Partnering with three separate entities to collect from distributed bins to ensure regular collection (scheduled for August 2018)
- Best Practices- Best practices document will be produced through the reports which will determine the highlights and shortfalls of the project (scheduled for May 2019)
- Institutional/Policy/Legislative/Regulatory Recommendation- Based on the experiences of this project, the final report will provide a list of recommendations for implementation at both the community and national levels. This will ensure future sustainability as well as identify opportunities for replication and/or upscaling both in Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean (scheduled for June 2019)

Despite the challenges mentioned, the project is still scheduled to be completed on time by the end of 2018.

6) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Provide other pertinent information, including any changes of key personnel concerned with the project, if applicable. List supporting documents included as annexes, if any.

With the absence of US Peace Corps in the Bluefield's community at this current time, Public Awareness and education activities are to be outsourced to the Community Association.

ANNEX I

June-July Schedule of Activities

JUNE -JULY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 Launch of project	9
10	11 Whitehouse health center visit	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 Whitehouse Underwater survey	22	23 Community walk
24 Church visit	25 Ferris Primary	26 Kings Primary	27	28 Whitehouse Land Survey	29 Bluefields Underwater Survey	30 Bluefields Land Survey
1 Church visit	2 Community Meeting	3	4	5	6	7

Sample Design of Month 1 Poster



KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY CLEAN BY

- not overfilling bins
- reducing plastics
- not littering
- keeping gullies clean

ANNEX II

The total budget amount (USD60,000) as below with continued implementation expected over the period of a year.

Personnel	USD662
i. Project Supervision	
ii. IT Technical Support/ Webpage development & maintenance	
Travel	
i. Partial support in Marine Litter Conference	USD2000
Contractual	USD50,500
i. Community Consultation/ Surveys/ Field Visit Project Launch in Jamaica	
ii. Meeting of National Committees	
iii. Development of Promotional Material (on-going)	
iv. Funds for Panama pilot project for sub-allotment	
In-direct Costs (13% cost to the total budget)	USD6837.74
	USD60,000

ANNEX III

Technical research brief on the implementation of Styrofoam and Single Use Plastic Bag bans in the Caribbean

Abstract

Plastic pollution is no doubt one of the most relevant and important issues of our time. Plastic has gradually become a part of our everyday life, but this is no longer tenable; the traditional linear production, use and disposal model for conventional plastics is ecologically unsustainable and has caused adverse and unacceptable environmental harm. Over the last decades the debate on the ban of Styrofoam and disposable plastics has gained momentum. There is increasing consensus among stakeholders – which include the public and private sector, environmental NGOs, and civil society – that current production and consumption patterns of single-use plastics have severe economic, social and environmental consequences. A growing number of governments are committing to reducing and preventing the large amount of plastic waste that litters the environment. They are introducing policies to regulate the production, import, and use of plastic bags and Styrofoam products. This report aims to capture the key aspects of these policies and regulation instruments that have been implemented in the Wider Caribbean Region in order to draw lessons for policy makers who seek to regulate the use and production of disposable plastics. Following an introduction on the impacts of pollution from Styrofoam and disposable plastics, on-going regulation measures and those that are to be promulgated among countries of the Wider Caribbean Region are analyzed. The best practices, stories and lessons learned are described in greater depth and in conclusion, the alternatives to Styrofoam and plastics are presented. This study provides an interactive map that can be updated periodically. With an aim of spreading knowledge and sustainable practices to all the Caribbean states, as well as through the the LBS protocol of the Cartagena Convention, the map will be made available to all the focal points of the member states of the Convention. Member states may update the progress of the efforts to ban plastic in their country and look to other regulation mechanisms that have been successfully implemented. The target audience therefore are governments, businesses, and all other actors that can help to achieve a plastic-free world.