

CARIBBEAN NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE (CANARI)

FORESTS AND LIVELIHOODS ACTION LEARNING GROUP (ALG)

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING



THE NATIONAL
FOREST PROGRAMME
FACILITY



HELD IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE INTEGRATED FOREST MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (IFMDP), ST VINCENT

December 2008

Prepared through the European Commission-funded project “Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean”

Financing Agreement ENV/2007/114-812



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The third meeting of the Action Learning Group (ALG) was held over 19-21 August in St Vincent. The meeting was held in partnership with the Integrated Forest Management and Development Programme (IFMDP) in St. Vincent.

The ALG was established in June 2007 under CANARI's Forests and Livelihoods programme. It is supported through the EC-funded project on **Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean**. The ALG members represent key national and regional institutions and include technical and financial support agencies, forest management agencies, forest users, and agencies involved in poverty reduction and rural livelihoods.

ALG members contribute skills, knowledge or experience to research and capacity building on forests and livelihoods. They collectively analyse project findings and play an important role as catalysts for change in their respective countries and in the region through dissemination of project findings to their organisations and institutions. This is the core group from which a shared understanding will develop across the region on institutional arrangements (policies, practices, legislation, structures, etc.) and approaches that optimise the socio-economic benefits to rural poor from forests.

Workshop structure

The group of 23 (including three CANARI staff) participated in a two and a half day workshop including a field trip to Zion Hill and Chateaubelair. The workshop included a mix of small group discussions and plenary sessions.

Objectives

The objectives of the meeting were:

- to share experiences and findings of the EC and FAO projects and any other relevant projects and initiatives in the region on using forests for socio-economic benefits, whether implemented by CANARI or other members of the ALG;
- to analyse information from the presentations, reports, discussion and field trip and extract lessons on institutional arrangements that optimise the socio-economic benefits to the rural poor from forests;
- to review and refine the draft communication strategy;
- to assess what change, if any, there has been in the project countries to develop institutional arrangements that optimise the socio-economic benefits to the rural poor from forests;
- to make recommendations regarding the implementation of existing projects under the Forests and Livelihoods programme;
- to identify specific actions that ALG members will take to disseminate learning in their role as change agents;

- to identify priority needs for development of new projects.

Workshop Summary

On the first day, the group shared and redefined their perceptions of the role of the ALG and recapped their observations on the previous ALG meeting. CANARI presented updates on the projects under the Forest and Livelihoods programme and key lessons from these projects. The lessons were divided into categories of institutional arrangements, external factors, capacities needed and socio-economic impacts. These categories formed the basis of discussions through the course of the meeting. The ALG also provided input on the design of the small grants component of the programme.

On the second day, the ALG journeyed to Zion Hill and to Chateaubelair on the west coast of St Vincent to view the activities of CBOs working with the IFMDP. At Richmond, the ALG and the stakeholders from St. Vincent joined together for more detailed discussions in groups on the institutional arrangements, external factors, capacities needed and socio-economic impacts. The groups shared their learnings in a plenary session and key issues arising were noted.

On the final day, the ALG reconvened to discuss their perceptions on the issues arising out of the field trip discussions. In country groups, the ALG then reviewed and selected potential case studies on forests and livelihoods for Trinidad and Tobago, OECS and Jamaica. The ALG gave their views on which audiences should be targeted under the communication strategy and CANARI is to continue work in developing the strategy. The meeting's wrap-up sessions involved sharing of future plans of the members, proposed mechanisms for intra-group collaboration and an overall evaluation of the meeting.

Action and learning highlights

The future holds opportunities for expanding and using the ALG process as a model forum for sharing information and facilitating policy change from a top-down orientation to a people influenced and participatory process. The ALG sees the concept of action and research as a unique mechanism for generating knowledge that should be sustained. The group perceives itself as a bridge between the rural poor and policy makers and believes that communication between members is needed and communication to other stakeholders is critical. Other learning highlights include the following:

- From a socio-economic perspective, the current methods of valuing natural resources do not include the valuation of inherited knowledge in communities, which use natural resources, and this is disempowering when trading off among livelihoods options at the national level.
- ⊞ The ALG agrees that government agencies must meet the basic infrastructural and other amenity needs of rural communities before they attempt to gain community buy-in to national projects to alleviate poverty among rural populations.
- When CBOs lack technical capacity, their ability to produce outputs is diminished and their projects are disconnected.
- Providing CBOs with business development opportunities is key in building sustainable organisations.
- ⊞ Succession planning in a CBO is a key need as where there are leadership and succession planning problems, project failure followed. CSOs should not be structured around a few persons; there is a need to build capacity beyond core organisation, such as developing layers of leadership within the organisation, where key persons allow others to develop

leadership skills and potential; building on the youth component and instituting long term strategic planning.

Cross cutting issues faced by rural CBOs

Specific to St Vincent, the ALG agreed that CBOs should learn from the national political machinery to target key decision makers. The ALG and the CBOs stressed that communication needs to be promoted, in the form of stronger public relations on the positive outputs on local projects and in general environmental education and public awareness. The generation of information that can assist in multi-sectoral decision-making needs to be accelerated, particularly in terms of economic assessments of alternative livelihoods. Collaboration among CBOs and other types of stakeholders was stressed, including developing relationships with regional NGOs and technical assistance organisations. Institutional arrangements that support the work of CBOs must be developed to suit the local needs and experimentation should be allowed to occur.

Future work

Implementation of projects under CANARI's Forests and Livelihoods programme will continue. This includes:

- initiation of case studies selected by the ALG and continuation of existing case analysis;
- development of a Forests and Livelihoods webpage by CANARI for use by the ALG to communicate and access information on the work under the Forests and Livelihoods programme;
- development of a communications strategy;
- design and implementation of a small grants programme targeting CBOs.

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LISTS OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALG	Action Learning Group
CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EC	European Community
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
EC\$	Eastern Caribbean currency
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IFMDP	Integrated Forest Management and Development Programme
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
LFMC	Local Forest Management Committee
NFPF	National Forest Programme Facility
POTE	Partners of the Environment

SECTION 1- INTRODUCTION

1.1 CANARI'S FOREST AND LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, a regional non-profit technical institute, is at present implementing its Forests and Livelihoods programme in the Caribbean. In keeping with CANARI's core focus of participatory natural resource management, this programme concentrates on research and capacity building activities designed to maximise the contribution of forests to improving the quality of life of poor people in rural communities in Caribbean islands.

The programme is currently supporting two main projects, described as follows:

- A regional project on ***Participatory Forest Management: Improving policy and institutional capacity for development*** is being implemented in partnership with the forestry departments of the project countries of Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago, with funding support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This project excludes Jamaica, which has separate funding, however, Jamaica continues to participate and contribute to the regional activities through association with CANARI. This project is on-going over the period 2006 to 2010.
- A second regional project on ***Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean*** is funded by the European Commission. The project is being conducted in Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago, over the period 2007 to 2010.

1.2 THE REGIONAL ACTION LEARNING GROUP

The regional Action Learning Group (ALG) on Forests and Livelihoods is a mechanism established under the European Commission-funded project on ***Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean*** and is meant to analyse and disseminate learning over the three-year project period. The ALG will also consider the findings of the FAO project and any other relevant projects in the region, whether implemented by CANARI or other members of the ALG.

The multi-sectoral group includes individuals from key national and regional institutions and CSOs who can contribute skills, knowledge or experience to research and capacity building on forests and livelihoods and who are in a position to serve as "change agents" by sharing learning on project findings within their countries, institutions and sectors. The group contains representatives from technical and financial support agencies, forest management agencies and agencies involved in poverty reduction and rural livelihoods.

The strength of the group lies in its independence, range of experience, non-bureaucratic and participatory approach, and the participation of motivated people who can disseminate learning and shape opinion. See Appendix 1 for the ALG Concept Note.

1.3 MEETING OBJECTIVES AND AGENDA

This document is the report of the third ALG meeting (ALG3), which was hosted in St Vincent and the Grenadines at Sunset Shores Hotel (just south of Kingstown) over the period 19-21 August 2008. There were 23 participants from Trinidad and Tobago, St Lucia, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, Grenada and Barbados. Of the 23, 17 were ALG members and their representatives, there was one representative from FAO, three CANARI staff, one Action Learning Project mentor and other St Vincent invitees. A participant list can be found in Appendix 2.

The main objectives for ALG 3 are detailed below:

SHARING

- CANARI to share experiences and findings of the EC and FAO projects and other relevant projects and initiatives that use forests for socio-economic benefits;
- ALG members to share their initiatives that use forests for socio-economic benefits in the region;

ACTION LEARNING

- to analyse information from the presentations, reports, discussions and field trip; and to extract lessons on institutional arrangements that optimise the socio-economic benefits to the rural poor from forests;
- to assess what changes, if any, there have been in the project countries in developing institutional arrangements that optimise the socio-economic benefits to the rural poor from forests;
- to review and refine the draft communication strategy;

MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- to make recommendations regarding the implementation of existing projects under the Forests and Livelihoods programme;

DETERMINING FUTURE ACTIONS

- to identify specific actions that ALG members will take to disseminate learning in their role as change agents;
- to identify priority needs for development of new projects.

The agenda for the third ALG meeting is attached at Appendix 3. Day 1 involved a review of activities to date, the provision of input on project related activities and a review of research questions. A field trip was conducted on Day 2 to study community-based initiatives on forests

and livelihoods. Day 3 provided the opportunity for country groups to review potential case studies and for the ALG provide input on the communications strategy.

In the reporting of the action learnings and recommendations on process and content, a colour coding system will be used to highlight key points.

Key observations, lessons and action learnings will be highlighted in brown.

Recommendations for future work and other content will be highlighted in dark green.

Recommendations specific to the process will be highlighted in lime green.

SECTION 2 – SUMMARY OF DAY 1

2.1 OPENING SESSION

The brief opening session of the third ALG meeting was chaired by Nicole Leotaud, Senior Technical Officer of CANARI, who welcomed the group and briefly outlined CANARI's Forests and Livelihoods programme and the activities conducted to date. She commented on the composition of the group and the opportunities that meeting was expected to generate including sharing of best practices in the different islands, opportunities for action learning and peer review, networking among the islands, and networking with funding agencies and technical assistance agencies.

Fitzgerald Providence, Programme Manager of St Vincent and the Grenadines' Integrated Forest Management and Development Programme, which co-hosted ALG3, welcomed the group on behalf of the host country. He laid out the activities planned for the meeting and his expectations of the benefits to be gained by having regional resource managers reviewing local projects on the planned field trip.



Figure 1: Fitzgerald Providence, of St Vincent and the Grenadines addressing the gathering and a cross section of the ALG group during the opening ceremony

Mr Rueben Robertson, Acting Chief Agricultural Officer of St Vincent and the Grenadines, in his feature address, made several key observations. He drew out the indirect contributions of forests to the local society in the forms of hydro-electric generation, water generation and the ability of forests to provide alternative livelihood options that are income generating and sustainable for Caribbean peoples.

He applauded the funding agencies and the implementing agency for executing the two main regional projects that make up Forests and Livelihoods. Mr Robertson placed emphasis on the currency of the core programme feature of stakeholder participation at a time when international trade practices create more rural poverty in the region. He hypothesised on the impact of increasing rural poverty on local forests, a point that resonated with the group, and predicted that the current high cost of food and gas could threaten forests in the form of indiscriminate felling of trees for firewood and generating charcoal, hunting and, clearing of land for legal and/ or illegal farming. The full text of Mr Robertson's address is attached in Appendix 4.

2.3 RECONNECTING WITH THE PROGRAMME

2.3.1 Overview of the meeting and purpose of the ALG

Nicole Leotaud presented the outline for ALG 3, which included a review of the meeting objectives (see Section 1.3 above). She clarified that although the group composed of government and CSO representatives, each ALG member was invited to participate as individuals so selected based on their capacity to foster change. Ms Leotaud facilitated a rich discussion on the multi-faceted role of the ALG and the issues and perspectives surrounding the group, and this discussion yielded several key insights, which are presented below.

- **The uniqueness of the approach** – the ALG as a key component in the design of the Forests and Livelihoods programme is, as the name implies, action learning oriented, and it is strongly people-focused. The view that natural resource managers are the only purveyors of forest-related information is rejected in this approach.
- **The role of the ALG** – metaphorically, the group viewed itself as a bridge, which is seeking to inform policy and decision makers at the top about development of sustainable livelihoods based on the use of forest resources and the issues faced by the Caribbean's rural poor. It does this by guiding the necessary research and communicating the regionally generated findings in an effective manner.

Some of the issues relevant for the region's rural poor include:

- the trade offs required in the production of fair trade agricultural items such as bananas,
- unsustainable agricultural practices used in forested areas; *including practices for growing illegal crops such as marijuana*
- the need for rural communities to adapt to climatic changes.

- **Man and the environment** – the group felt that throughout the region, there is a disconnect between the land and humans and that the organic connection has been lost. This, the group believed, has serious consequences as forests are linked to life. Through the Forests and Livelihoods programme, the group felt that there were:

- opportunities for challenging the group's understanding as to the sustainable use of forests;
- questions as to how to enhance participation given the politicisation of the issues;
- key needs to find innovative and popular methodologies to empower communities into participation and action, and the flip side of brokering the use of power by decision makers to understand the needs of communities.

The view was expressed that empowering communities for participation and action could be difficult as even the economic valuation of resources is one-sided, for example, the value of the knowledge of subsistence fisher-folk of Soufriere in St Lucia is difficult to assess when compared to the ease in which the formal industry in the same area could be assessed.

- **The work of the ALG** – the group expressed that the functions of strategising, providing feedback and the provision of a forum were key in the action learning process. The ALG conceptualised that their role was to:
 - **create strategies to help society to recognise the importance of forestry:** these could include private sector driven strategies and even use different types of institutional arrangements;
 - **facilitate joint and cross sectoral analysis:** the ALG believes that the opportunity to provide critical feedback is key in understanding what worked or did not work;
 - **provide opportunities for building on efforts in individual countries versus competitive review;**
 - **catalyse and facilitate consensus building among countries:** This could provide leveraging power for focusing future actions such as an advocacy role in economics and natural resource management as a mechanism to support sustainable livelihoods for the region's rural poor.
- **The communication issue** – collectively the group has witnessed instances where scientifically sound, conservation messages which were communicated in a particular manner, did not have the desired impacts, drawing on examples from St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica. There is a real need to simplify complex concepts to assist a variety of audiences to understand issues and translate such knowledge into sound decisions.
- **The value added for members** – the forum of the ALG, which draws on the knowledge and experience of change agents throughout the Caribbean in the field of natural resource management, provides members with unique opportunities for experience sharing and building of individual knowledge bases. The multi-sectoral group has had and will continue to encounter opportunities to coalesce their thinking on programme issues. Enriching interactions during field visits and discussions to validate research generated provide the ALG members with the forum for generating ideas and learning lessons. In turn, members can utilise the output of the ALG into work areas in their home countries, as evidenced by Fitzgerald Providence's use of the ALG2 output to redraft his current work programme in St Vincent and the Grenadines.

✚ What lies in the future - while the group cautions that the information generated from the research will be useless unless it can be converted into action, the future holds opportunities for using the ALG process as a model forum for facilitating policy change from a top-down orientation to a people influenced and participatory process.

2.3.2 Research questions

In ending the discussion, the group reviewed the research questions, which forms one of the working documents of the Forests and Livelihoods programme (see Appendix 5 for the questions and an edited version of the emerging lessons). These questions formed the basis for further discussion on day 1 (see Section 2.6 Key messages) group exercises for the field trip on day 2 and exercises in selecting case studies on day 3. The broad categories of research questions include:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	
Environment and External Forces (enabling and disabling)	What factors [social, political, economic] have influenced the type of institutional arrangement?
Capacities: (internal capacities of partners in the arrangement)	What are the capacities [knowledge, skill, ability, attitude] needed by actors at various levels of the institutional arrangement to ensure that socio-economic benefits are accruing to the rural poor.
Institutional arrangements: (policies, laws, organisational structures, relationships, agreed practices and processes)	How does the level of participation by rural poor stakeholders in a given institutional arrangement influence the generation and allocation of livelihood benefits to the poor?
Livelihood benefits	What are the specific livelihood assets accruing to the rural poor under these institutional arrangements? include reviewing the socio-economic issues, the institutional arrangements, the capacity issues and the external environment faced by CBOs operating in the rural Caribbean.

2.3.3 Recap of ALG 2

The third session on first day provided Simone Leid of CANARI with the opportunity to summarise the last ALG meeting held in January 2008 in Jamaica. The executive summary of the report of the last meeting (see Appendix 6) and a document of key messages (see Appendix 7) were circulated. In commenting on the summary and documents provided, ALG members highlighted two important issues:

- succession planning among CBOs is key, as evidenced from the field trip to Dolphin Head Trust in Jamaica and the subsequent status of the CBO;
- in terms of national projects to alleviate poverty among rural populations while endeavouring to sustainably utilise forests, effective pre-project action by governments is critical particularly when meeting the needs of rural communities so as to obtain their buy-in and support. These actions include providing access to amenities, communication with communities to identify their real needs, and building the trust of communities.

Other common observations, questions and learnings arising out of ALG 2, particularly in terms of capacity building and institutional arrangements are summarised below.

LESSONS

- The ALG observed that when CBOs lack technical capacity, their ability to produce outputs is diminished and their projects are disconnected.
- Providing CBOs with business development opportunities is key in building sustainable organisations.

- The ALG does not want to be seen as research tourists. “We want to build trust with CBOs and we want to be proactive after meeting the group and we must provide them with recommendations. We need to translate talk into action”

RECOMMENDATIONS

- When there were leadership and succession planning problems, the ALG observed project failure. These instances are opportunities for ALG to use the **small grant programme** to provide assistance in mainstreaming projects and to promote strategic planning.

- Using JEMS Progressive Community Organisation, a CSO based in St Vincent as an example, members of the ALG noted that CSOs should not be structured around a few persons and there is a need to build capacity beyond core organisation. This involves developing layers of leadership within the organisation, key persons allowing others to lead, building on the youth component and long term strategic planning.

COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF CONCEPTS

- A common understanding of key principles such as sustainable livelihoods is needed.
 - In addition, the concepts of what is sustainability and conservation tend to originate from the external environment of CBOs; as a result, CBOs may have inapplicable perceptions of conservation issues. An example was drawn from the field trip to Dolphin Head Trust during ALG2. In the effort to conserve local resources, the group used imported wood products to develop trail features such as a gazebo.
 - The ALG can assist them in understanding these issues from the Caribbean perspective.

OTHER ISSUES AND QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE GROUP

- It is wrong to think that when a leader leaves, that an organisation collapses.
- Donors do not always gravitate to the most vocal groups.
- Does a CBO need to stay in existence ad infinitum? Or should it serve its purpose and cease to exist.

2.4 UPDATE ON COMPONENT PROJECTS

Nicole Leotaud provided the group with an update on projects under the Forests and Livelihoods Programme. The full presentation is given in Appendix 8.

2.4.1 FAO NFPF National Workshops

The NFPF workshops targeted CBOs primarily (with the exception of the Barbados workshop which targeted a wide spectrum of stakeholders), and sought to build capacity for participatory forest management. Thus far, NFPF workshops were hosted in Dominica, Barbados and Trinidad and it is intended that workshops will be held in all of the project countries. Some of the best practices and key learnings on the process of implementation (learning about forests and livelihoods were discussed separately later in the workshop) from the three workshops hosted include:

FAO NFPF National Workshops – lessons learnt (CONTENT)	
Lessons for sustainable CBOs – enabling factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ common vision and values, developed through processes of dialogue and consultation; ■ opportunities for personal development; ■ transparent structure/constitution; ■ membership with commitment and something to give; ■ incentives (financial or otherwise); ■ clear beneficial outcomes; ■ leadership.
Lessons for sustainable CBOs - challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ squabbling between groups (particularly over money); ■ perceptions of people outside groups; ■ over-dependence on a few people – no succession planning; ■ entrenched mindsets.; ■ internal conflicts.
Lessons on CBO capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the tendency for CBOs and NGOs to underestimate – and sometimes under-utilise – the strengths that they have; ■ importance of funding for administrative costs of CBOs; ■ importance of building capacity in organisational management (alongside technical training); ■ research is needed to identify what catalyses the entrepreneurial spirit within groups that may start out primarily with environmental or conservation objectives.
Lessons on institutional arrangement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ participation, communication & conflict resolution are critical; ■ Involvement of the whole community is needed; ■ important, but varied, role(s) played by government agencies in catalysing or supporting the groups' activities; ■ partnerships with private sector are important; ■ partnerships with technical support agencies are important. ■ a formal agreement is not an essential to the success of CBO co-management of forest resources although it may be desirable, particularly where the land tenure is insecure and/or there are likely to be pressures to convert it for other uses. ■ mutual respect and trust are essential ingredients and need to be built and maintained over time; ■ roles and responsibilities need to be clarified and defined.
Lessons on environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ challenge of retaining staff and volunteers in the current economic climate where high wages are available in government programmes and the construction industry in Trinidad & Tobago; ■ Dominica World Heritage Site and focus on nature-based tourism supportive but some challenges; ■ Barbados support for water and soil conservation.
Lessons on benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Difficult to assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack baseline ■ Information not being collected ■ Broader livelihood benefits (beyond economic) not a focus

FAO NFPF National Workshops – lessons learnt (PROCESS)	
Focus on national needs / interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The focus, design and content was varied according to the needs of the three countries ■ CBOs need management skills; even though technical skills are important, having management skills meant that technical skills could be more effectively utilised.
National partner and Mobilisation!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Having a national partner mobilising on the ground in each country was helpful identifying and mobilising participants and in planning workshops. ■ CBOs have extremely low capacity to even attend workshops.
Selecting the “right” CBO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Selecting the right CBO to participate is key, as even this could be a contentious issue within a community or country.
Networking among CBOs and with potential partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CBOs valued the opportunities for networking that the workshop offered. ■ The opportunity for stakeholders to come together and share views was highly valued particularly in Barbados.
Field trip – seeing real experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In all workshops held, the field trip was highly valued.
Learning about forests and potential opportunities for livelihood benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CBOs valued the technical information presented on forests e.g. non-timber forest products

2.4.2 Action Learning Projects

One of the components of the FAO’s NFPF project under the Forests and Livelihoods programme involves the implementation of four local Action Learning Projects (ALPs). Participating CBOs are given a small grant of US\$4,000 over 12 months to test and document new approaches to participatory forest management. Four ALP grants were awarded and the status of these is presented below.

FAO NFPF ALPs			
NATURE SEEKERS, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	SUNDEW TOURGUIDING SERVICES, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	PARTNERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES	AGENCY FOR RURAL TRANSFORMATION, GRENADA
<p>Project area - developing and sustaining forest-based businesses; and community management of tourism resources</p> <p>ALP - developing an agro-forestry enterprise and eco-tourism project</p> <p>Status - Done needs assessment</p> <p>Mentored by: Patricia Elie</p>	<p>Project area – designing participatory institutional arrangements, selecting suitable management regimes, and developing and implementing management agreements</p> <p>ALP – review the actual and potential institutional framework that would facilitate co-management with Forestry Division</p> <p>Status – conducting strategic planning</p> <p>Mentored by: Patricia Elie</p>	<p>Project area - strengthening civil society organisations</p> <p>ALP - Riverbank cleanup and community education</p> <p>Status – on track</p> <p>Mentored by: Andrew Simmons</p>	<p>Project area - community management of tourism resources</p> <p>ALP - community management of tourism resources</p> <p>Status - looking for new NGO</p> <p>Mentored by: Martin Barriteau</p>

These projects are being implemented using mentors to support the CBOs with project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and the action learning process. Mentoring is working very well. Some of the learnings arising out of the ALPs, which will be further explored under the research framework of the ALG, include the following:

- The mentor relationship is proving to be very helpful to the groups.
- While the funding provided is small, it is being used as a stepping stone to build the capacity of groups to deliver on bigger projects in the future.
- The capacity of CSOs in terms of project planning is mixed.

Future actions are expected to include a meeting of the mentors to determine best practices and how better to support groups. In addition, CANARI will work with mentors and groups to extract the key lessons from the ALP project.

Further discussion arising during the review of the ALPs is summarised below:

- The thinking that a formalised relationship is needed between CSOs and governments to enable execution of livelihood projects involving forests that may lie on state controlled land was questioned. Nature Seekers was cited as an example of a CBO that has an informal relationship with the Forestry Division in Trinidad, and this has worked well for both organisations, in the conservation of an endangered species and in the education of the community and the public. External funding programmes such as GEF, however, will not support projects that do not involve a formal arrangement.

2.4.3 EU – Case Studies on Forests and Livelihoods

Two case studies have been initiated, one on Warmmae Letang Group Inc, based in Dominica and the other on the Grand Riviere Tourism Development Organisation, based in north-eastern Trinidad. A third is expected to be developed based on the Fondes Amandes Community Reforestation Project based in St Anns, Trinidad. Preliminary findings from the Warmmae Letang case study indicated that there are significant leadership and capacity challenges, and conflict facing the CBO and thus there was difficulty in extracting lessons on the potential for forest-based livelihoods. could be extracted.

In the process of gathering information for the case studies, consultants should develop mutual trust and respect for contributors.

2.4.4 Aripo Savannas Management Planning

CANARI facilitated the participatory development of management plans for the Aripo Savannas, a protected area in Trinidad. This 18-month process involved a wide variety of stakeholders and sought to include livelihood options that would not compromise biodiversity conservation in this sensitive site.

A case study of the process was being written as part of the project and will provide lessons on forests and livelihoods. Coming out of this project, the CBO Sundew was selected for an ALP.

2.4.5 Trinidad and Tobago Forest and Protected Areas Policies

CANARI was contracted to facilitate the participatory development of a Forest Policy and a Protected Areas Policy for Trinidad and Tobago by the Government. This project fits within the Forests and Livelihoods umbrella and provides an opportunity to explore how forest-based livelihoods can be facilitated at the policy level. This project is ongoing.

2.5 SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

Hema Seeramsingh presented a potential approach to implementation of the FAO NFPF small grant programme. The presentation can be found in Appendix 8. This particular small grant programme is separate from the ALP scheme and allows for the disbursement of a total of US\$50,000 to NGOs and CBOs in the NFPF project countries (See Figure 1 for list of countries). The input of the ALG in the design of the process was sought. The consensus arising out of the discussions include the following design goals:

- all project countries should be given the opportunity to participate;
- the value per group should not be fixed, it should be determined on a case by case basis, with an average suggested average size of US\$5,000;
- a closed call should be used, with the ALG providing recommendations;
- there is no obligation that each country must get a grant;
- there should be a focus on providing grants for projects and groups that might be considered to be risky, meaning newly formed or young groups that may be less experienced but which have innovative ideas;
- a mentor guiding the selected group would help in reducing risks, however, the limited funding may not allow for this and this aspect may need to be pursued using a different funding source such as GEF;
- consider using the grant as a planning/ capacity building grant to assist low capacity NGOs and CBOs;
- the ALG's role can include reviewing selection criteria, selection of the projects; supporting CANARI by executing site visits, assist in identifying other funding or potential for support.

2.6 KEY LESSONS

Simone Leid led a discussion on the research questions under the project and emerging lessons, the original version of which is presented in Appendix 5. The ALG was asked to validate the lessons and provide input based on their experiences. To support this session, coloured sheets were handed out and the group was asked to record their questions and comments on the four aspects: capacities, institutional arrangements, socio-economic impacts and environment and external

forces. This working document was used to record lessons discussed throughout the meeting and updates are highlighted in red.

In addition to the above, the group was provided with coloured paper, corresponding to the research questions related to **environment and external forces, capacities, institutional arrangements** and **socio-economic impacts** and were asked to record their comments and questions over the three-day meeting. Several ideas were suggested including:

ENVIRONMENT AND EXTERNAL FORCES

- Flexible arrangements are needed when dealing with Government agencies
- CSOs should seek out private sector opportunities especially among firms that display corporate social responsibility.
- A workshop could be developed to further develop a public-private sector relationship.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Time and patience are critical needs when dealing with CBOs – to accomplish goals, to facilitate discussion and to build relationships.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Under SEDSnet, a database of CSOs was developed to share among institutions. A similar initiative can be set up with the purpose of profiling for training interventions.
- Funders want CSOs to have formal arrangements/ agreements with government agencies.
- There needs to be analysis and management of the role of potential partners in developing community based initiatives.

- The ALG is a focal group for sharing that would like to continue to exist beyond the EC project.

SECTION 3 – SUMMARY OF DAY 2

3.1 FIELD TRIP – PLANNING

The agenda for Day 2 was an all-day field trip involving visits to CBOs based in Zion Hill and Chateaubelair, both of which are on the west coast of St Vincent. This was followed by a panel discussion with members of the two CBOs and a third which is based in another area, Grieggs, at a third venue, Richmond. Discussions centred on the research framework as they related to the situation and the work of the CBOs.

At each site visited, community members interacted with the ALG. To ensure that the research issues were being covered, the ALG split into four groups to address questions on environmental and external factors, socio-economic impacts, capacities needed, and institutional arrangements. The groups met before the field trip to discuss their approach and to utilise action learning techniques with a focus on active listening and probing.

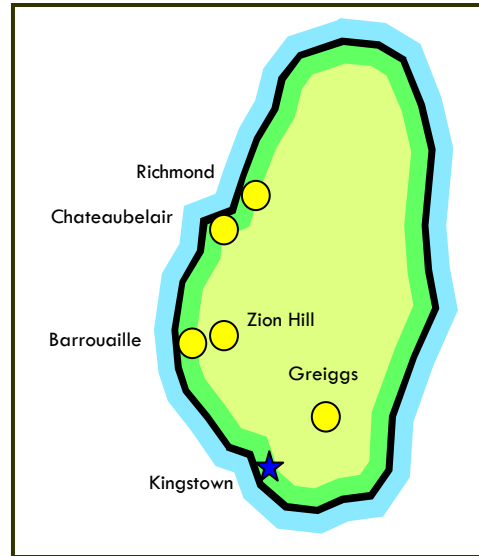


Figure 2: Map of St Vincent illustrating the places visited on the field trip (with the exception of Greiggs)

The group addressing environmental and external factors prepared a list of guiding questions and tips for use by members and these are presented in Box 1.

Environmental and external factors pre field trip group meeting notes

To examine the following issues:

- Issues – natural; financial; physical; human; social; political
- The economic state of the country
- The role of the private sector
- What are the existing relationships in community e.g. leadership, traditional values, knowledge, history
- Do aid agencies consider the above?
- What is the culture? activism or passivism
- Are the groups open to participation?

Dos and Don'ts

- Do not overstep into other three ALG groups' areas.
- Ask specific questions and listen.
- Use skilful probing.

Box 1: An example of pre-field trip group work

3.2 INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

The three CBOs that the ALG interacted with on day 2 are being supported by the Forestry Department and the IFMDP; and these are essentially the institutional partners of the groups.

The IFMDP was started in 2003 as a Forestry Department initiative arising out of a consultancy on integrated forest management. The purpose was to foster deeper participation in the conservation and management of forest resources and the protection of rural livelihoods by developing livelihood opportunities away from destructive practices, which in turn affect the quality of forest resources.

Today, IFMDP is funded primarily by government-owned utility companies and is an annex to the Forestry Department to allow for more autonomy and accountability to participating stakeholders. IFMDP has three main components:

- a programme management unit that oversees programme implementation and stakeholder cooperation;
- projects to strengthen the Forestry Department and;
- projects to develop alternative community livelihood projects to aid in the development of alternatives for sustainable use of forests and in the prevention of deforestation.

The Forestry Department, with the support of the IFMDP, is working with the Zion Hill CBO, while Partners of the Environment and Keepers of the Environment are forest user groups established under the initiative of the IFMDP livelihood opportunity component. Representatives from the institutional partners attended the field trip and participated in group discussions at Richmond.

3.3 ZION HILL ENVIRONMENTAL TRAIL - ZHET

The first stop on the field trip was at Zion Hill, near Barouallie. The Forestry Department has been working with Zion Hill community to conserve and develop the dry forest ecosystem in the area and to tie in to livelihoods benefits for the community.

BACKGROUND

In the past, slash and burn agriculture was practiced on the hillsides and fires sometimes got out of control. Fires were also used to flush out wildlife by persons who were illegally hunting. The result of these activities was an overall reduction in soil quality. Under a CIDA project, the site was used as a test plot and cedar, eucalyptus and fruit trees were planted. In 1992, a fire trace was developed in the area, and this was coupled with an environmental awareness project in the community. Subsequently, it was realised that the clearfelling of trees to develop the fire trace contributed to soil erosion. In conjunction with the community, the trace was converted into an environmental trail, called the Zion Hill environmental trail or ZHET. In addition, a medicinal garden was established alongside the trail.

LIVELIHOODS POTENTIAL

The Barouaille area has a rich historical heritage and coupled with ZHET, the area could be used for environmental education and historical education programmes for schools in the area. Coupled with the sale of indigenous food in Barouaille, the area could become a tourist attraction for visiting cruise ships. The community is seeking assistance in identifying animal species found in the area.



Figure 3: Photographs of the ALG group on the Zion Hill Trail, meeting with Forestry Department officials, the medicinal garden on the trail and the surrounding community

ONSITE INTERACTIONS

Due to weather constraints, the ALG did not have an opportunity to interact with the community in a significant manner. Consequently, the Forestry Department officers who have worked with ZHET shared their perspectives with the ALG over the course of the day. See Appendix 9 for the hand out on ZHET provided by the Forestry Department during the field trip.

3.4 PARTNERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT - CHATEAUBELAIR

The second site visited was Chateaubelair, where the ALG interacted with two forest user groups that were established by IFMDP. The purpose of establishing the groups was to stimulate and support alternative forest-based livelihoods to address the problem of cultivating illegal crops and the resultant watershed degradation. The CBOs are Partners of the Environment, which is based in Chateaubelair and Protectors of the Environment, which is based in Grieggs. Partners and Protectors are therefore sister organisations, linked by the IFMDP programme and since they have similar mandates, they are seeking to collaborate on projects.

BACKGROUND

Chateaubelair is made up of several communities and is one of the poorest areas in St Vincent. Politically, it is a marginal seat and this divisiveness has implications within the group. There is a perception that infrastructural development and service provision to the community (in terms of the establishment of satellite government offices, banks, schools and access to social services) is poor. The CBO believes that the government displays an unconscious bias for the CBO's work in the area, meaning that there is little support for a grassroots initiative; but that there could have been more support if the project idea originated in a more top-down fashion.

Poverty and unemployment are believed to have contributed to the cultivation, processing and transport of marijuana by members of the community. In turn, the agricultural practices used in marijuana cultivation are causing deforestation. Armadillo or "tattoo", a forest animal is prevalent due to its protected status and is being linked to hillside erosion, as the animal's habit is to dig under the roots of trees causing them to topple over.

ACTION LEARNING PROJECT

As stated in Section 2.4.2, Partners received a grant to conduct an ALP and they are being mentored by Andrew Simmons. Partners is made up of thirty-seven community members who are also forest users who began a river clean-up project a few weeks prior to the ALG4. The project was timely, as the river is used by the community as a dumpsite. The group has seen the re-emergence of "Tri-tri" in the river, these are juvenile of local freshwater fishes, and this fact is associated with the clean up. Partners also conducted a door-to-door education programme that attempted to change practice of dumping in the river. There was some success arising out of this programme, however, the change in behaviour was not sustained. Dumping is still occurring and the group hopes that there could be policing in the form of an environmental health officer. They have been engaged in planning trees and are seeking support from government for bins and signs for the area.

LIVELIHOODS POTENTIAL

Partners believes that if provided with titles to land and subsidies, they can sustain agricultural production of legal crops.

ONSITE INTERACTIONS

The meeting consisted of an overview by Partners of their activities and a walk through along the river. During the walkabout, the group stated that they believed that the elephant grass growing in the river hindered the flow of water and should be uprooted. Chris Cox of the ALG shared with the group that the elephant grass is not really a problem as it helps to hold the soil together. This is an example of community groups not having appropriate technical perceptions. Despite

the inclement weather, the group used the opportunity to conduct a tree planning ceremony, see report cover photo.



Figure 4: Photographs of the discussions in Chateaubelair with Partners for the Environment and the overgrown nearby river

3.5 PROTECTORS OF THE ENVIRONMENT - GREIGG

At Chateaubelair, the ALG also interacted with Protectors of the Environment, a new CBO based in Greiggs.

BACKGROUND

Historically, Greiggs is regarded as the oldest settlement in St Vincent and it represented an escape point for slaves during the wars of the 1790s. It was also the settlement of the Garifuna, or the black Caribs, who also settled in Belize and Dominica.

LIVELIHOOD POTENTIAL

Marijuana is also cultivated in this area and Protectors is seeking to initiate two projects involving their surrounding forests, one of which is charcoal production that will utilise tree species such as “wild fig”, ficus, “Spanish ash” and “pennopiece”. Their second proposed project is the development of an area called “Pavement” which has a natural pool and is biodiversity rich into an eco-tourism destination.

INTERACTIONS

During the walkabout in Chateaubelair, Protectors members interacted with the ALG and shared the historical background and livelihoods potential of their area to move beyond marijuana cultivation. They face similar obstacles in the implementation of projects and sought to learn from Partners.

3.6 DISCUSSIONS AT RICHMOND

After concluding the visit to Chateaubelair, the ALG and the CBO members from Protectors and Partners journeyed to Richmond to pursue detailed analysis based on the research framework. At Richmond, the entire group was met by other Partners of the Environment members; due to circumstances beyond their control, Zion Hill community members were unable to attend. Felix Finnisterre, the chairperson for the day invited the CBO members and Forestry Officers to join the pre-established groups to look at:

- external factors
- socio-economic factors
- capacities needed
- institutional arrangements

The leader of each group chaired a discussion on the selected issue and after a few hours of open sharing, the four groups presented their key findings and fielded questions from the wider group in a plenary session. Nicole Leotaud and Felix Finnisterre chaired this discussion.

During the discussions, the groups were joined by the Acting Chief Agricultural Officer, Mr Rueben Robertson and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Mr Allan Alexander. They observed the group discussions and participated in the plenary.



Figure 5: Group discussions at Chateaubelair

3.6.1 External forces

Zakiya Uzoma Wudada presented on behalf of the group reviewing the impact of external forces on Partners of the Environment. The group viewed these as being enabling or constraining and divided them as follows:

PARTNERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, CHATEAUBELAIR	
ENABLING	CONSTRAINING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ HISTORY – after seeing first hand the impacts of indiscriminate practices over the years, there is a genuine desire in the community to reforest the area and the spirit to work together. ■ PROBLEMS ACKNOWLEDGED – from deforestation to the dangers associated with marijuana cultivation are acknowledged by the group. ■ GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR COOPERATION – receiving cooperation from the electricity generating company, VINLEC and the solid waste company, CWSA as mandated by Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE – after independence there was a lax attitude to the implementation of laws. Foresters were no longer part of the community and as such the community has lost respect for the position. ■ POLITICAL PARTISANSHIP – there is political divisiveness in the community, and there have been problems for the group in terms of political mischief and in being condemned for wanting to work in a bi-partisan fashion. ■ FINANCIAL COSTS – CBO members when involved in community participatory processes loose time that they could otherwise spend in earning a livelihood. (This is especially applicable to marijuana farmers who usually spend weeks at a time with their crops in the hills). ■ DEPENDENCY – the community believes that the government is responsible for cleaning the river even if they contribute to the problem. They want to be paid to clean the river. ■ TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS – today's society uses plastic, a material that was not present in the Chateaubelair environment of yesteryear. While it is easy to dispose off, the community does not know if the destructive effects of plastics on the environment. ■ THE VALUE OF THE RIVER – is not as important today as in the past. It used to be the water source for the villages, but today, since water is piped into the region, it does not hold the same importance.

3.6.2 Socio-economic impacts

Simone Leid presented on behalf of the group examining socio-economic impacts. This group examined the situation faced in Zion Hill and Partners of the Environment and derived the following socio-economic opportunities and impacts.

ACTIONS

- River clean up in the community and door-to-door awareness activities in conjunction with government entities – more than 30 persons participated.
- This activity generated media interest and the interest of the parliamentary representative indicating that the group gained political respect.

BENEFITS

- The intervention has stemmed the soil erosion problems; less trees are cut and fires have been reduced.
- Return of butterflies, iguanas and other wildlife in the area.
- Promoting environmental awareness has had a positive impact on the area.

POSSIBILITIES

- There is a blackfish fest in the Barouaille area, and the intention is to link the trail to this activity to act as a tourism resource and to boost awareness on the trail.
- The medicinal garden could yield future benefits.

3.6.3 Capacities exhibited and needed

The group examining the capacities exhibited and needed by CBOs by reviewing the activities of Partners of the Environment of Chateaubelair. The presentation at plenary was done by Neila Bobb-Prescott. This group first sought to define capacity as factors that lead to success or factors which if are absent lead to failure.

PARTNERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, CHATEAUBELAIR	
CAPACITIES PRESENT	CAPACITIES NEEDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ STRUCTURE – the group has a president, vice-president, secretary, public relations officer and its membership is a demographic mixture of male and female, old and young, and government and opposition supporters. ■ COMMON OBJECTIVE - the majority of the group are engaged in illegal agriculture activities in the forests and their objective as a group is to engage in an alternative livelihood ■ IDEAS FOR ALTERNATIVES, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, POLITICAL POWER AND ELOQUENCE - the group is considering ideas such as goat rearing for cheese production and mauby production, with the latter awaiting final approval as seeds have been sourced and propagated. This discussion revealed the presence of and appreciation for local knowledge concerning mauby production. The group was very eloquent in putting across their views and sought out their Member of Parliament to gather buy-in for their alternative projects. ■ COMMITMENT - they meet on the first Thursday of every month and meet on the project site every Saturday for clean ups. ■ PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS - They conduct a post mortem after clean ups to review what was done and what could be done better. ■ ACCEPTANCE OF ASSISTANCE - Having a mentor was helpful in terms of providing technical assistance, as they believe that one of their constraints is in the education level of the members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ PHYSICAL ASSETS - They lack physical assets, they do not have office space, computer, phones, and currently meet in community centre, however, they do possess equipment for clean ups including wheelbarrows and gloves. ■ LITERACY, SKILLS, ACCESS TO SERVICES - In the area, there is little opportunity for jobs, with most government services being based in Kingstown. They want to become technically skilled in monitoring the river and they want to boost their literacy skills, their ability to keep records and to their ability to communicate with the community. They believe that these skills will help them to change the community’s perceptions on using the river as a dumpsite. ■ MORE NETWORKING NEEDED – the group believes that increased networking among CBOs and also government agencies would be beneficial

3.6.4 Institutional arrangements

Gordon “Dread” Patterson presented on behalf of the group looking at institutional arrangements as they impact on CBOs, using both Partners and Keepers of the Environment as examples. Issues discussed include the following:

- There is no existing institutional framework to measure the financial costs and benefits of alternative livelihoods or a scaling back of illegal farming when mixed with alternative livelihoods.
- ✚ Relationships do exist between the Forestry Department and the CBOs. Forestry Department cannot leverage its relationship with other agencies such as the Police in executing their responsibilities to curtail illegal farming. The CBOs believe that trust is needed between the Government and themselves as both work together to decrease marijuana cultivation.
- ✚ Assessment of alternatives should include activities which address the problems arising out of marijuana cultivation including decreasing soil quality and watershed management.
- ✚ Alternatives should include land tenure for farmers – whether through formal or informal arrangements.

Some of the alternatives discussed by this group include vanilla and charcoal production and the growing of tobacco. There is also an opportunity for the institutionalising of environmental education for children, especially in the area, as CBO members state that they do not want their children to follow their example.

3.6.5 Concluding discussions

The group concluded that among the four presentations, cross cutting issues emerged and these are summarised as follows:

POLITICAL ISSUES

- How can the political machinery be replicated to reach the entire community and for the CBO to access the politicians? The political machinery works when political parties need to reach each community member, and in turn government’s inability to coordinate among different agencies to deliver services to communities is a source of deep frustration and suffering.

COMMUNICATION

- ✚ Successes are not promoted. Farmers who are engaging in alternative livelihoods are doing well, and this is an opportunity to teach the next generation about alternatives and to generate interest in sustainable practices via school science programmes.
- Stronger public relations is needed. People outside of the area are unaware as to the advances being made in changing livelihoods and in forest conservation. A key stakeholder that needs to be brought on board is the police. Overall, there needs to be stronger partnerships with the police.

- Overall environmental education and awareness programmes are missing nationally.

INFORMATION NEEDS

- Economic assessment is needed – all potential alternative activities in the area need to be studied to determine which opportunities to maximise, from agro-forestry and armadillo hunting to vanilla production. This point needs to be recommended to the government.

COLLABORATION

- ☒ It was suggested that an umbrella CBO body be formed to allow the groups to coordinate activities and support each other. This presented the opportunity for existing informal relationships to become formalised.
- There are opportunities for the local groups to learn from other CBOs in other Caribbean islands. The regional Forests and Livelihoods conference at the end of the EC project would provide networking opportunities and organisational mentoring.
- Due to existing international relationships, the country and the area could access French cooperation in terms of agriculture and also FAO support.
- ☒ It was expressed that forestry officers need more training in the social aspects of their jobs.
- A key question generated was: what is the most favourable institutional structure to assist CBOs seeking to change livelihood practices? Studies are needed on experimental partnerships to generate this information.

TRAINING

- ☒ Education and training for groups is a key need.
- Groups would like locally based government representatives in their area who is able to work with them and train them in local law enforcement, for example, environmental inspectors and wardens engaged in policing.
- ☒ It was expressed that forestry officers need more training in the social aspects of their jobs.

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

- The CBOs believe that subsidised agriculture could replace marijuana cultivation.

DIVERSIFICATION

- There was a strong view that tourism was a key aspect of developing alternative livelihoods. It was expressed that there needs to be a link between agriculture and conservation in a way that allows for eco-tourism development. Chateaubelair was a primary banana producer in the past and is in transition to adopt tourism. Legal agriculture should be promoted to meet the needs of visitors and in the production of craft as alternatives to illegal agricultural practices that have filled the livelihood void.
- Non-agricultural alternatives such as music and sport should also be examined as possibilities.

- While there is a lot of talk on changing livelihoods, there is little opportunity for the community to be skilled outside of agriculture in trades for example. The country has a shortage of electricians and plumbers.

Mr Richardson, the Acting Chief Agricultural Officer presented his views at the end of the session, and sought to clarify the government's position on the issues discussed. He stated that the livelihood framework is a new concept and provided an opportunity for politicians to embrace this approach. It allows for the adoption of a participatory framework, but he questioned who would lead such an initiative and suggested using the Zion Hill project as a means of obtaining government buy-in on the concept of livelihoods as IFMDP main problem is securing continued funding to engage in approaches as developed under the Forests and Livelihoods programme.

With respect to illegal agriculture, the government is seeking a partial change over to alternative crops such as vanilla, greenhouse cultivation and vegetable cultivation on a phased basis to farmers based on age and desire to convert to a legal livelihood. This change over would be coupled with an education programme and would be followed by the development of legislation banning the cultivation of marijuana and subsequent enforcement.

SECTION 4 – SUMMARY OF DAY 3

4.1 DISCUSSION ON FIELD TRIP

The third day began with a discussion of the field trip and a review of the meeting thus far. It was felt that the approach of the government to find alternative livelihoods versus the alternative top-down approach was commendable. It was noted that the CBOs did not identify the IFMDP specifically but made reference to the people they interacted with at the government level. This speaks to the trust developed between the stakeholders; this is an external factor that was enabling that was not previously identified. The significance of the field trip was again reiterated. Fitzgerald Providence of IFMDP, expressed that more information on the community should have been presented to the ALG. He also expressed that the alternatives should not be disseminated in a paternalistic manner as IFMDP's perception of what is best might not work for the community. Benefits of alternatives must be measurable and must transform the community. It was also expressed that for tourism to work, transportation around the island must be feasible.

The ALG asked that a document of the key recommendations emerging from the field trip analysis should be sent to the relevant government agencies in St. Vincent. Post meeting, CANARI drafted a letter of recommendations for the government on the field trip issues on behalf of the team with Zakiya Uzoma Wuddada and Neila Bobb-Priscott acting as reviewers. This document was prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Forestry Department, and the IFMDP (see Appendix 10).

The CANARI tradition of a daily maco or suss was in full effect on the field trip day and the maco's presentation is detailed in Appendix 11.

4.2 RECOMMENDATION OF POTENTIAL CASE STUDIES

The ALG was invited to review the short listing of case studies recommended previously per country. The group was split into country teams: Trinidad and Tobago, OECS and Jamaica. Using the list of potential case studies sorted by country, they reviewed the research framework to capture cross cutting issues and thereby select the most feasible and issue-rich case. Recommendations were recorded and presented. These are summarised as follows:

4.2.1 OECS

The OECS group expressed that the selected case should focus on the impacts of institutional arrangements and its potential for contribution to rural development and livelihoods in cases where the arrangements are currently functioning.

They reviewed five projects and eventually selected as the recommended OECS case study **Fond Gens Libre**, in the Gros Piton area, located at the base of Gros Pitons (a St Lucia national heritage landmark). The name of the village means valley of free persons and this area was isolated until the advent of a Soufriere Foundation project that involved infrastructure development into the community including roads, an interpretation centre with computers. This was recommended as a rich community-based tourism initiative.

4.2.2 Trinidad and Tobago

The **National Reforestation and Watershed Rehabilitation Program (NRWRP)** was selected as the recommended Trinidad and Tobago case study. Section 2.4.3 lists Fondes Amandes as a case study for Trinidad and Tobago but this is expected to be replaced by the NRWRP case study pending their agreement to be studied. As summarised below, there are a number of external factors, capacity issues, institutional arrangements and socio-economic factors that make this a worthwhile case study.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

- National concern for reforestation in the northern range
- Politically motivated for conservation and protection of the environment
- Available funding

CAPACITY ISSUES

- Operational problems
 - Leadership was not paying attention to the advice of technical officers seconded from the Forestry Division
 - Overall technical expertise was lacking
 - Uninformed project planning – planting of commercial species within an environmentally sensitive area

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

- Merger of social welfare programmes with conservation
- Communities already engaged in conservation were left out
- Lack of transparency in hiring
- Selection of communities was politically motivated, rather than based on the need for reforestation
- Readily available manpower base for early action on environmental and other activities

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Assistance from Forestry Division, movement of staff to NRWRP
- Political cohesion meant that the Tobago situation flowed smoothly, there was harmonised release of funding

4.2.3 Jamaica

The Jamaican group selected **Buff Bay Local Forest Management Committee (LFMC)**, in the Cockpit country. This case was selected as it is a mature initiative, with funding currently available for development of an ecopark on the Matabe River. There exists good collaboration

between Government, funding agencies, NGOs, academia and the community, including on medicinal plant research, biotechnology research, food manufacturing (wine) and plant propagation. Some of the livelihood benefits include commercial trading of forests products and tour guiding. The group is part of an initiative to brand the cockpit country and a project was signed with the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ). On the ground training and support of the group was facilitated by ALG members and staff of the Forestry Department in Jamaica, Michael Barrett and Noel Bennett.

4.3 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The outline of a communications strategy was presented to the ALG to gain their input. The discussion revealed that the group had varying perceptions as to what the communication messages and the key audiences should be. The group identified the following as a preliminary list of key audiences, ranked as indicated below. It is expected that the target audiences will be refined and that the ranking will adjusted as the group moves closer to a common understanding of the communication issues.

KEY AUDIENCES IDENTIFIED	
TARGET AUDIENCE	RANK
Rural communities	1
Media	2
Political directorate	3
CBOs	4
Private sector (service providers)	5
Technical support agencies	6
Senior public officers	7
International bodies	7
Advocates	9
NGOs	10
Donors	10

To strengthen the focus of the ALG, CANARI will develop a working document on communication messages for sharing among the group and it will continue to develop the communications strategy for review by the group. Some of the issues to be covered include the identification of which groups to we need to influence and what are the messages we must deliver to these groups.

4.4 CLOSING SESSIONS

The closing sessions of ALG3 involved three phases, an opportunity for participants to share with the group what their plans were for the future months and how they would like to see the action learning process work in between meetings; a brief oral evaluation and planning for the next meeting followed by a written evaluation.

4.4.1 Future Plans

Some of the notable plans shared by ALG members include:

- Zakiya Uzoma Wuddada began a thesis on participatory approaches in the Caribbean and the participation in the ALG continues to be informative. She suggested that a workshop on partnering as a participatory approach would be valuable for the region.
- ✚ The Jamaican ALG participants Noel Bennett and Michael Barrett plan to work with Dolphin Head Trust, a CBO that is facing severe capacity issues that was visited during ALG2.
- ✚ On behalf of the Government of Jamaica, Michael Barrett will be identifying sustainable sources of financing for CSOs and plans to utilise the learnings gained from the ALG in that process.
- Minchington Burton of Dominica will be using a multisectoral approach to work with Warmmae Letang in building its capacity.
- ✚ Neila Bobb-Prescott, being a new member of the ALG, will utilise the approaches on forests and livelihoods in development of two protected areas in Tobago - the proposed Main Ridge Environmentally Sensitive Area and the Buccoo Reef Environmentally Sensitive Area.
- ✚ Gordon "Dread" Patterson will be assisting in the development of a geo-tourism map for Grenada in conjunction with the National Geographic Society. He will be seeking to channel ALG learnings into the planning stages.
- Nemedass Chandool is expected to move into urban forestry and will continue to support participatory approaches.
- Nicole Leotaud will be studying monitoring and evaluation at the Commonwealth Foundation for three months in early 2009. It is expected that the new approaches learnt will be included in ALG4.
- ✚ **CANARI is scheduled to host ALG4 in St Lucia in early 2009.**

Overall the group members are committed to sharing information with each other on best practices and pledged to assist each other according to their strengths. In their respective functions, they will continue to strategise on how best to influence their organisations and countries to adopt people focused, participatory approaches to developing sustainable livelihoods among forests users in the Caribbean.

4.4.2 Action Learning Process between meetings

The group is seeking to have more communication between meetings in the form of progress reports and updates. Requests for information and review are to be directed to specific individuals. There were requests for a webpage to be developed for the ALG.

The group would like the next ALG to be hosted after Nicole Leotaud's return from the United Kingdom, so that the new monitoring and evaluation approaches learnt could be shared with the group. April is proposed as the best date for the next meeting.

4.4.3 Evaluation

Using the evaluation form provided, the group articulated on the merits of the ALG as a networking and sharing forum. The group especially noted the usefulness of the field trip, which provides them with hands on interaction with the constituency that the Forests and Livelihoods programme is seeking to assist. They approved the use of dissemination mechanisms that reduced the need for paper and they outlined a few areas in which they would like to see further training for resource managers such as forestry officers in learning how to relate to the rural poor of the Caribbean and training for farmers so that they can become more environmentally conscious.

A summary of the written evaluations is included in Appendix 12.

SECTION 5 – SUMMARY OF LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 LESSONS, OBSERVATIONS AND ACTION LEARNINGS

A summarised list of lessons, observations and action learnings identified in the report of the third ALG is presented below:

LIVELIHOODS

- Issues faced by the region's rural farmers include being 'forced' to trade off between maximising profits and environmentally sustainable practices; others are choosing maximising profits via the cultivation of illegal crops in forested areas.
- The current methods of valuing natural resources do not include the valuation of inherited knowledge in communities, which use natural resources, and this is disempowering when trading off among livelihoods options at the national level.
- Respectfully meeting the basic infrastructural and other amenity needs of rural communities is a must before a government agency attempts to gain community buy-in to national projects to alleviate poverty among rural populations.

CBOs

- The ALG observed that when CBOs lack technical capacity, their ability to produce outputs is diminished and their projects are disconnected
- Providing CBOs with business development opportunities is key in building sustainable organisations
- Succession planning in a CBO is a key need as where there are leadership and succession planning problems, project failure followed.
- CSOs should not be structured around a few persons; there is a need to build capacity beyond core organisation, such as developing layers of leadership within the organisation, where key persons allow others to develop leadership skills and potential; building on the youth component and instituting long term strategic planning.
- Key recommendations from the field trip are presented in Appendix 10 and include the following guidelines for government agencies when interacting with CBOs:
 - **Understand context** of the socio-economic and cultural profile of the communities being targeted – this will help in developing or refining interventions aimed at building sustainable livelihoods.
 - **Build partnerships** with the communities using different government agencies
 - Build public awareness for the work done via the government/CBO interaction and train agencies on how to sensitise CBOs on environmental issues

- **Assess opportunities** by conducting a feasibility study of potential alternative forest-based livelihood **opportunities (including agro-forestry)**.
 - **Build capacity** by decentralising government services into community areas; strengthening the capacity of staff interacting with CBOs for example, Forestry Department in facilitating community social forestry.
 - **Provide support** for CBOs, such as basic training in secretarial duties, computers and access to a meeting place.
 - **Addressing economic needs** by providing subsidies to support early efforts at replanting and developing alternative livelihoods.
- From the ALP project, it was realised that the capacity of CSOs in terms of project planning is mixed. Mentoring groups helped to build their capacity.
 - Small grants are a stepping stone to build the capacity of groups to deliver on bigger projects in the future.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Formalised relationships may or may not be needed between CSOs and governments to enable execution of livelihood projects involving forests that may lie on state controlled land. Nature Seekers was cited as an example of a CBO that has an informal relationship with the Forestry Division in Trinidad, and this has worked well for both organisations, in the conservation of an endangered species and in the education of the community and the public. External funding programmes such as GEF, however, will not support projects that do not involve a formal arrangement.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

A summarised list of recommendations for future work is presented below:

MODEL FORUM

- The future holds opportunities for using the ALG process as a model forum for sharing information and facilitating policy change from a top-down orientation to a people influenced and participatory process.

TALK INTO ACTION

- The ALG seeks to translate talk into action by building trust with CBOs and proactively provide them with recommendations.

5.3 PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

A summarised list of process recommendations is presented below

COMPONENTS OF THE ALG MEETING

- The field trip is highly valued by the ALG and should be continued. It facilitates interaction with CBOs, also the panel discussion on the field trip day with CBOs and government representatives also prove beneficial to ALG members. One ALG participant stated the following on the field trip:

...this is the action part of the work being done and affords the opportunity to see what words and what are still challenges. The people involved in case studies and their successes, challenges and development are what validates the research. How can we evaluate livelihood benefits, institutional arrangements etc if we don't interact with the beneficiaries and developers of these?

TIME AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT AT THE ALG MEETING

- There is not enough time during the planned day to satisfy the ALG's desire for in-depth discussions, suggestions were made for longer meeting days or better time-managed sessions
- To maximise the benefits of the interactions, the ALG prefers not to travel on the day of the meeting
- Definitions of terms should be settled so that less time is spent at the meeting working on definitions and more time can be spent on action learning

INFORMATION NEEDS OF THE ALG

- Case studies should be provided to the group ahead of time to allow for review and more time should be allocated to reviewing cases
- More detailed information on the chosen cases was also requested so that ALG members could more confidently approach the research questions
- More information on (other) initiatives in the country of the ALG meeting is requested by the ALG to allow for sufficient analysis of the projects that are included in the field trip
- ALG members requested that the monitoring framework for the project be clarified

PLEASE DEVELOP FOR THE ALG

- CANARI was asked to design an instrument that can be used to collect streamlined data on the cases selected in collaboration with the ALG

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE ALG MEETING

- Less paper was requested (CANARI provided members with a USB key of all documents)

BETWEEN ALG MEETINGS

- CANARI should disseminate information on projects to ALG members on a more regular basis

TRAINING NEEDS OF THE ALG

- The ALG requested the following:
 - workshops on partnering
 - sessions on monitoring and evaluation, including the development of indicators, to assist members in mainstreaming such approaches in their own countries
 - training in:
 - NGO management
 - Research writing
 - EIAs
 - Communications
 - Community participation
 - Conflict resolution
 - Use and abuse of forests
 - training for government staff such as forestry departments to learn how to interact with communities and training for communities in managing expectations while managing projects

INFLUENCE OF THE ALG

- Weak CBOs identified during the life of the ALG can be selected for the small grant programme to provide assistance in mainstreaming projects and promote strategic planning.

COMMUNICATION OF FORESTS AND LIVELIHOODS

- ALG members requested that there be more public promotion of the project

COLLABORATION

- CANARI should join forces with other programmes and institutions that are implementing similar initiatives for greater impact

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

- All project countries should be given the opportunity to participate;
- The value per group should not be fixed, it should be determined on a case by case basis, with an average suggested average size of US\$5,000;
- A closed call should be used, with the ALG providing recommendations;
- Should focus on providing grants for projects and groups that might be considered to be risky, meaning newly formed or young groups that may be less experienced but which have innovative ideas; consider using the grant as a planning/ capacity building grant to assist low capacity NGOs and CBOs;
- The ALG's role can include reviewing selection criteria, selection of the projects; supporting CANARI by executing site visits, assist in identifying other funding or potential for support.

ALP PROJECTS

- A meeting of the mentors of the ALP will be used to determine best practices and how better to support groups. Key lessons from this project will continue to be extracted.

APPENDIX 1: ALG CONCEPT NOTE

Forests and Livelihoods Action Learning Group Concept Note

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

1. Context

The focus of the development community in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) currently revolves primarily around the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the need for adaptation to climate change, yet paradoxically little attention is being paid to the critical role of forests in contributing to these objectives. National Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) rarely reflect the contribution of forests to human well-being, either in terms of environmental services or the goods on which many people depend for food, medicine and revenue generation. Similarly, while practice on the ground is changing, formal forest policy in most countries has not been reviewed or revised to reflect the actual or potential role of forests in ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG7) or contributing to livelihoods.

However, the need to explore and optimise the linkages between forests and livelihoods is evident. Rural poverty has increased in many Caribbean SIDS as a result of the decline of the banana and sugar industries. While tourism is being advanced as the main economic alternative, it also contributes to an increased demand for the services provided by forests, notably water. Predicted climate change trends in the region, such as sea level rise and, in the Greater Antilles, drier rainy seasons, make it all the more pressing to develop interlinked sustainable forest management and rural livelihood strategies.

Implementation of strategies to manage forest goods and services for development of sustainable rural livelihoods must take place in an institutional context that facilitates integrated and cross-sectoral policy making, planning and management. However, forest management institutions in Caribbean SIDS remain for the most part both highly centralised and isolated. Links to policy and decision-makers in cross-cutting areas such as rural development, entrepreneurial development and poverty alleviation remain weak and there are few examples of integrated planning to address the increasing and competing demands on the forest resources, for example for tourism and residential development.

There is also a need for more systematic evaluation and documentation of the socio-economic impacts of various forest management strategies. For example, most participatory forest management schemes are premised on the assumption that this will provide benefits for the communities and community members involved, yet few quantify their socio-economic objectives so there is little other than anecdotal evidence to support this.

2. Forests and Livelihoods Programme

CANARI's **Forests and Livelihoods** programme focuses on research and capacity building activities designed to maximise the contribution of forests to improving the quality of life of poor people in rural communities in Caribbean islands. The programme looks at the contribution of forests in terms of both 'forest goods' (e.g. timber, craft materials, medicinal plants) and 'ecological services' (e.g. preventing soil erosion, contributing to improved water quantity and quality, providing landscape beauty). The programme's definition of livelihoods also goes beyond just the ability for people to earn money from forest resources (although this is important) to include other aspects of quality of life including individual's and community's access to a range of other important assets – natural, social, human and physical (for example a clean environment, basic social services and infrastructure, opportunities for recreation and relaxation).

There are currently two main projects under this programme to which others may be added as research gaps or opportunities are identified:

- A regional project on ***“Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean”*** funded by the European Commission's Programme on Tropical Forests and other Forests in Developing Countries [2007-2009]. The project is being conducted in the following countries: Barbados, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Christopher (St. Kitts) and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.
- A regional project entitled ***“Participatory Forest Management: Improving policy and institutional capacity for development”*** [2006-2008]. This project is being implemented in partnership with the forestry departments of the project countries, with funding support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through its National Forest Programme Facility (NFPF). The project is being conducted in the following countries: Barbados, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Saint Christopher (St. Kitts) and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Jamaica, which has its own NFPF project, is participating in and contributing to regional activities.

3. Role of the Action Learning Group

The Regional Action Learning Group on Forests and Livelihoods is a mechanism established under the EC-funded project on ***“Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean”*** for analysing and disseminating learning over the three-year project period. It will also consider the findings of the FAO project and any other relevant projects in the region, whether implemented by CANARI or other members of the ALG.

The multi-sectoral Action Learning Group, which will meet twice per year over the life of the project, will comprise individuals from key national and regional institutions who can contribute skills, knowledge or experience to research and capacity building on forests and livelihoods and who are in a position to serve as “change agents” by sharing learning on project findings within their countries, institutions and sectors. It is intended that the group should contain representation from technical and financial support agencies, forest management agencies, forest users, and agencies involved in poverty reduction and rural livelihoods.

The terms of reference for the Action Learning Group and the way in which it should operate will be validated and finalised at the first Action Learning Group meeting in June 2007. However, it is anticipated that the strength of the group will lie in its independence, range of experience, non-bureaucratic and participatory approach, and the participation of motivated people who can disseminate learning and shape opinion. Action Learning Group members are therefore invited primarily in their individual capacity and are expected to make themselves available for all meetings.

Action Learning Group meetings will take place twice a year until the end of the December 2009. Meeting arrangements and communication between meetings will be co-ordinated by CANARI, with the format (e.g. emails, dedicated web page, discussion forums) to be determined by members at the first ALG meeting.

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT LIST

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APPENDIX 3: MEETING AGENDA

Forests and Livelihoods Action Learning Group Meeting

Sunset Shores Hotel
St. Vincent
August 19th – 21st 2008

DRAFT AGENDA

Tuesday 19th August

10:00 a.m.	Opening Ceremony	
10:45 a.m.	BREAK	
11:00 a.m.	Introductions Allocation of roles for the meeting	Hema Seeramsingh
11:15 a.m.	Objectives and overview of meeting Review of project objectives and research framework Recap of purpose of ALG and role of ALG members	Nicole Leotaud
11:45 a.m.	Recap of last ALG meeting Sharing on what has been learnt and done by ALG members to apply learning on institutional arrangements that optimise socio-economic benefits from forests to the rural poor	Simone Leid
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH	
1:30 p.m.	Brief update on progress on and plans for implementation of projects under Forests and Livelihoods programme Discussion of key lessons on process and recommendations for implementation Validation of capacity needs identified Review and discussion of emerging research findings	Nicole Leotaud, Simone Leid & Hema Seeramsingh
4:15 p.m.	Summary of day Logistics for field trip	Hema Seeramsingh
4:30 p.m.	Close	

6:30 p.m. Cocktail reception at Sunset Shores

Wednesday 20th August

8:00 a.m.	Review of Day 1 Orientation and small group preparation for field trip	Nicole Leotaud
9:00 a.m.	Field trip to Barrouallie and Chateaubelair to look at community initiatives on forests and livelihoods hosted by the Integrated Forest Management and Development Programme (IFMDP)	Fitzgerald Providence
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH in Richmond	
1:30 p.m.	Small group work to analyse lessons (ALG members and St. Vincent stakeholders) Small group presentations and plenary discussion	Nicole Leotaud
3:30 p.m.	Summary, thanks and close	Hema Seeramsingh
3:45 p.m.	Depart Richmond	
4:00 p.m.	Relax at Dark View Falls	
5:00 p.m.	Travel back to Sunset Shores and Beachcombers	
6:00 p.m.	Return to Sunset Shores and Beachcombers	

Thursday 21st August

8:00 a.m.	Review and discussion of field trip	Simone Leid
9:00 a.m.	Small group work (by countries) on case studies or initiatives in project countries that offer lessons about the relationship between forests and livelihoods (using research framework).	Nicole Leotaud & Simone Leid
10:30 a.m.	BREAK	
10:45 a.m.	Small group presentations and plenary discussion on emerging lessons	Nicole Leotaud & Simone Leid
11:45 a.m.	Review and further development of the communication strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messages • Key target audiences 	Nicole Leotaud & Hema Seeramsingh
12:30 p.m.	LUNCH	
1:30 p.m.	ALG Members sharing on what they plan to do to disseminate learning, participate in action learning process, and recommendations on ALG communication	Nicole Leotaud
3:00 p.m.	Evaluation	Nicole Leotaud & Hema Seeramsingh
3:30 p.m.	Close	

APPENDIX 4: FEATURE ADDRESS BY MR RUEBEN ROBERTSON, CHIEF AGRICULTURAL OFFICER, ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Feature Address for the third Forests and Livelihood Action Learning Group Meeting at the Sunset Shores Hotel on 19 August 2008 by Rueben Robertson, Chief Agricultural Officer

CANARI – Nicole Leotaud/Senior Technical Officer
IICA Rep/ECS – UnaMay Gordon
FAO – Claus Eckleman
Dr. Chris Cox – Programme Manager CEHI
Director of Forestry – Mr Brian Johnson
Project Manager – ADPIU
Mr Andrew Simmons – Resource Person/Gems Progressive Organisation
Kathy Martin – SVG National Trust
Keith Laurie/Barbados National Trust
Staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Delegates
Media

While the agricultural sector contribution to GDP has shown marginal growth over the last 2 years, moving from 9.28% in 2006 to 9.32% in 2007 the forestry sub-sector's direct contribution has been less than 1% over the last 2 decades (this situation is most likely the same in most Caricom member states except for Guyana and Suriname).

While the direct contribution of Forestry seems marginal, we all know that its indirect contribution is enormous, particularly when its contribution to hydro-electricity generation, potable water, biodiversity and the ecosystems are taken into consideration.

The forest because of its biodiversity offers considerable potential for alternative livelihoods among the rural poor. However, the sectors ability to make a greater and direct contribution to GDP rests with us as professionals. We have to commit ourselves to develop, implementing and exploit with precision and with the requisite stakeholders, alternative livelihood programmes that are income generating and sustainable.

The stakeholders must be fully integrated into the process from the start and here is where I take the opportunity to applaud the European Commission's Programme on Tropical Forests and other Forest in developing countries (2007-2009) with emphasis on two regional projects entitled:

1. "Practices and Policies that improve Forest Management and Livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean" and
2. "Participating Forest Management: Improving Policy and Institutional Capacity for Development" and also the other collaboration.

The collaborative efforts of CANARI, FAO and to a limited extent IICA, the governments and non-governmental organisation in helping to realise the objectives of the above-mentioned project cannot be over emphasised.

These projects are critical since our approaches to forest and livelihood programmes come at a time when the international trade phenomena are reaping havoc on our traditional agriculture resulting in declining earnings from bananas,

- Rural household incomes have declined
- Rural household/farm family disposable income diminishing due to the escalation in –
 - Fuel prices
 - Food prices
 - Agricultural input cost
 - Electricity cost

In general, cost of living has increased significantly. While the cooking gas prices have been somewhat stable for sometime, we have to be vigilant since the possibility exists for rural families to turn to the forest to fell trees indiscriminately to produce charcoal as alternative sources of income or to even supplement the cooking gas. There is also the possibility as we go through the process of transformation, that the forest is destroyed further to satisfy legal and illegal farming activities and that our rivers are not either over-fished or polluted to the extent that poses environmental problems for health and food safety, the fishing industry and the tourism product.

We have a lot of work to do, let us get started. On behalf of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, I declare this workshop officially opened.

APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND EMERGING LESSONS

Working Document for Forests and Livelihoods Action Learning Group (ALG)

Research Questions & Emerging Lessons (Edited in August 2008 with insertions highlighted in red)

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

Research question	Emerging lesson	Source of lesson (e.g. specify case study, activity, initiative, etc.)
Environment and External Forces (<i>enabling and disabling</i>)		
What factors [social, political, economic] have influenced the type of institutional arrangement?	<p>Mutual trust, usually built over a long period, is a prerequisite for effective collaborative management arrangement and can be perceived as a satisfactory substitute for a formal arrangement.</p> <p>While trust should inform a formal arrangement, it should not be a substitute. Often informal arrangements are maintained because of personalities and over time, when personalities are no longer in the equation, informal relationships can fail. Formal arrangements then, act as a safety net.</p> <p>Demonstrating capacity is a stepping stone to building trust.</p> <p>Political influence/ connections of a key individual can</p>	<p>Fondes Amandes, Grande Riviere, (Nature Seekers)</p> <p>e.g. Nature Seekers built trust with forestry by being reliable</p>

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	<p>accelerate process of establishing or sanctioning a community-based management arrangement. <i>...and the opposite is also true – it can destroy the process</i></p> <p>Selection of civil society partner on the basis of implicit (e.g. electoral success) rather than explicit objectives (e.g. reforestation, poverty reduction) necessitates much more capacity building over a longer period and generates lower and less sustainable benefits.</p> <p><i>Conservation programmes that are initiated on political grounds such as providing social welfare or targeting an economic need in a community can be just as successful as any other if properly managed.</i></p> <p>Systematic selection of poorest and most marginalised to participate in reforestation project necessitated rethinking and revision of normal working and project management arrangements because absence of culture of regular, team-based working generated conflict.</p> <p>Vision of participating agencies and organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong Rastafarian values - entrenched commitment to conservation and community development before becoming involved in forest management. - Parks Division, TT commitment to building local capacity - Jamaica Forestry Division commitment to 	<p>Fondes Amandes, Warmmae Letang</p> <p>Comparison Fondes Amandes, Nature Seekers and Grande Riviere NRWFP projects with those in e.g. Cocorite, Aripo.</p> <p><i>Argyle Waterfalls e.g. where the political rep sought to empower community to do tours – positive</i></p> <p>Nature Seekers (TT NFPF training)</p> <p>Fondes Amandes</p> <p>Nature Seekers</p> <p>Grande Riviere</p> <p>Jamaica</p>
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	<p>LFMCs and willingness to cede more power when demanded (i.e, inclusion of their role in Forest Act)</p> <p>Close cultural or family bonds may substitute for formal structures in the early stages of enterprise development, particularly if accompanied by clear collective vision</p> <p>Communities with a clear cultural identity are better able to form a strong political constituency of their own and are thus in a stronger position to advance their own agendas.</p>	<p>Nature Seekers and Fondes Amandes)</p> <p>indigenous communities (Dominica's Carib community and Jamaica's Maroon community)</p>
<p>Capacities: <i>(internal capacities of partners in the arrangement)</i></p>		
<p>What are the capacities [knowledge, skill, ability, attitude] needed by actors at various levels of the institutional arrangement to ensure that socio-economic benefits are accruing to the rural poor.</p>	<p>CBOs in Dominica are not fully aware of the opportunities for developing livelihoods based on the use of NTFPs.</p> <p>There are insufficient facilitators of participatory processes in the region.</p> <p>Strong CSO entrepreneurial/ business skills within the institution can facilitate securing of benefits, but is rare, at least at the outset and often absent within government agencies.</p> <p>Organisations that have systematically built a range of assets, including technical, financial, social and political, can more effectively negotiate the terms of their involvement to maximise benefits (e.g. types of tree planted, development of trails under NRWPR).</p>	<p>Dominica national workshop</p> <p>Training of Trainers workshop</p> <p>Case studies</p> <p>Training workshops</p> <p>Fondes Amandes, Nature Seekers, Grande Riviere</p>

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	<p>Groups that are able to build political skills (at all levels) are able to gain more power and attract donor funding since donors want to fund success stories.</p> <p>Strong but collaborative leadership appears to be a common factor in the 'successful' arrangements examined to date.</p> <p>Commitment to the project often differs depending on the demographic of the communities i.e. communities that have fewer alternatives for livelihood options are more willing to see a project through the difficult nascent stages.</p> <p>A comprehensive range of competencies and networks are required to ensure socio-economic and other benefits are realised. These include links with marketing and financial planning arrangements.</p> <p>Building ownership is a function of creating opportunities for community members to develop capacities in leadership, visioning, planning and management. It is perhaps better to devolve key responsibilities earlier rather than later so that the intermediary doesn't become the repository of all knowledge, decision making, motivation</p> <p>Succession planning is key to ensuring sustainability of group/projects. Building leadership often requires a long process of involving members in taking on certain responsibilities, regardless of their current level, and building their confidence over time.</p>	<p>Fondes Amandes, Nature Seekers.</p> <p>Dolphin Head/Bliss Bamboo</p> <p>Dolphin Head/Bliss Bamboo</p> <p>Dolphin Head</p> <p>JEMS (St. Vincent) – 25 members trained at tertiary level through cooperative agreements (student hosting)made between group and universities abroad</p>
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Institutional arrangements: (policies, laws, organisational structures, relationships, agreed practices and processes)		
<p>How does the level of participation by rural poor stakeholders in a given institutional arrangement influence the generation and allocation of livelihood benefits to the poor?</p>	<p>Sometimes donors place restrictions on who can and cannot be a member of the board - such as members may not be paid. This is a hindrance to electing persons who cannot meet the transaction costs of participating</p> <p>Initiatives like NRWRP which involve salaries generate much larger and quicker benefits but will not be sustainable unless entrepreneurial capacity can be built (not currently the case except where it pre-existed the initiative.</p> <p>Technical competency (e.g. forest management, tour guiding, food and beverage skill) alone generates fewer and less sustainable benefits than technical competency combined with strong organisational skills (financial, proposal writing project management HR etc)</p> <p>Technical competencies must be combined with other key skill particularly, understanding power and how to use power to increase participation in governance (negotiation skill) is critical for ensuring that benefits continue to accrue to the community/group.</p>	<p>Dolphin Head/ Bliss Bamboo</p> <p>Comparison Fondes Amandes, Nature Seekers and Grande Riviere NRWRP projects with those in e.g. Cocorite, Aripo</p> <p>Warmmae Letang, Protectors of the Environment vs. Fondes Amandes, Nature Seekers</p> <p>Poor baseline data affects ability to determine this , even with projects with specific socio-economic objectives (e.g. Warmmae Letang and NRWRP)</p>

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Livelihood benefits								
What are the specific livelihood assets accruing to the rural poor under these institutional arrangements?	Financial Assets	Human Assets	Social Assets	Political Assets	Natural Assets	Physical Assets		
								Fondes Amandes
								Nature Seekers
								Grand Riviere
								Wammae Letang
								Dolphin Head

19-21 August 2008

APPENDIX 6: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ALG 2 REPORT

Forests and Livelihoods Action Learning Group (ALG) Second Meeting 13-15 February 2008

Altamont West Hotel, Montego Bay, Jamaica

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Background

The **Forests and Livelihoods Action Learning Group (ALG)** which was convened in June 2007 comprises individuals from key national and regional institutions with relevant skills, knowledge or experience to contribute to research and capacity building on forests and livelihoods. ALG members are also expected to disseminate and apply project findings within their countries, institutions and sectors. Representation on the group is multi-sectoral, with representation from key areas such as technical and financial support agencies, forest management agencies, forest users, and agencies involved in poverty reduction, social development and rural livelihoods.

This report documents the key discussions and conclusions of the second meeting of the ALG held in Jamaica from 13-15 February 2008.

2. Overview of Workshop Process and Activities

Eighteen persons from seven Caribbean islands attended the workshop inclusive of three of CANARI's staff. The meeting spanned three days, one of which was devoted to a field trip to the Dolphin Head projects in Hanover, Jamaica.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- To analyse the lessons learned from activities to date;
- To validate the research questions and framework for CANARI's Forest and Livelihoods Programme;
- To review the status of participatory forest management in the project countries to inform the selection and design of the case studies;
- To review the other activities in the next phase of implementation;
- To apply the action learning approach to lessons learned from a field trip to Dolphin Head;
- To develop a framework for the Forests and Livelihoods communication strategy and identify the roles that ALG members can play in implementing it.

The workshop commenced with a short assessment of the first ALG held in Trinidad, key lessons or messages highlighted and reflection on how each member had sought to apply these to an analysis of policy or implementation of projects for forests and livelihoods in their own countries. Members were then reminded of the purpose of the ALG and the role and responsibilities of members.

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Next there was a review of the activities which were being undertaken by CANARI as part of the joint FAO/EU funded components of the Forest and Livelihoods Program. This precipitated a discussion on the status of Concept Notes produced under the FAO project and the proposed joint work plan. In this regard it was felt that participants should seek to catalyse national reflection on the Concept Notes and attempt to integrate these with government's policy and strategic development focus. It was also suggested that members try to identify other regional meetings or initiatives with which the Forest and Livelihoods approach can dovetail.

This was followed by a discussion of key concepts to ensure mutual understanding and help focus the Group with respect to the analysis of case studies and the upcoming field trip to Dolphin Head. The concepts and definitions reviewed were: **livelihood assets, sustainability of livelihoods, forests and institutional arrangements**. There was also some discussion on the Communications Strategy and how to convey messages about Forests and Livelihoods to different audiences such as donor and government representatives.

On the second day, participants visited the Dolphin Head projects – Dolphin Head Nature Trail and Bliss Bamboo. There, the Group along with the people involved in the projects held panel discussions highlighting issues relating to **Political/Financial situation, Natural and Physical Assets and Human/ Social relations**. These issues were further discussed in workshop sessions on the following day and key messages were noted as well as additional research questions suggested.

Finally, ALG members were divided into country groups to further analyse and add to the list of proposed case studies under the EU-funded project **Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean**.

3. Key Messages

Based on workshop discussions, the field trip and analysis of research questions, the Group identified a number of key learning points or messages arising out of the three day workshop.

- Establishment of appropriate linkages between forestry-related community-based initiatives and the implementation of the National Action Programme for Sustainable Land Management is very important.
- Capacity that exists at local stakeholder level should not be overlooked by relevant government agencies.
- NGOs and CBOs need to be given more government support since their work supports the objectives of numerous sectors and, in many instances, relieves social pressures.
- It is more efficient to brand community attractions together and get one liability insurance.
- Developing sustainable community-based organisations/enterprises is not a quick process.
- In selecting sites, one must be mindful of the existing, or potential to acquire the necessary, physical infrastructure/ facilities/ amenities.

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- Feasibility analyses need to be undertaken before projects are implemented. There seems to be a tendency to assume livelihood benefits without assessing or documenting what these are or what the baseline is).
- Support agencies have a very important role to play in forest-based livelihoods and strong linkages must be built to enable this.
- The “pulse of the people” doesn’t beat to the same timing as project time cycles and donor funding cycles.
- Regional policy is needed to protect each country and their stakeholders interest in the protection/sustainable use and exploitation of their natural resources for nature based tourism.
- Built trust may be more important than formal arrangements. Transparency is also critical to ensuring continued good relations.
- It is important to document process outcomes as well as the tangible project outputs.
- Building a sense of ownership for the project requires an appreciation for the cultural and spiritual norms of the community.

APPENDIX 7: KEY MESSAGES

Working Document for Forests and Livelihoods Action Learning Group (ALG)

Key Messages on Institutional arrangements that optimise the socio-economic benefits to rural poor from forests

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

	Key message	Source
1	The establishment of appropriate linkages between forestry-related community-based initiatives (community/ government/ NGO-driven) and the implementation of the National Action Programme for Sustainable Land Management in each country is important.	Dolphin Head Trust field trip
2	Capacity at local stakeholder levels should not be overlooked by relevant government agencies.	
3	NGOs and CBOs need to be given more government support since their work supports the objectives of numerous sectors and, in many instances, relieves social pressures.	
4	It is more efficient to brand community attractions together and get one liability insurance.	
5	Developing sustainable community-based organisations/enterprises is not a quick process.	
6	In selecting sites for community-based tourism initiatives, one must be mindful of the existing, or potential to acquire the necessary, physical infrastructure/ facilities/ amenities.	
7	Feasibility analyses need to be undertaken before projects are implemented. There seems to be a tendency to assume livelihood benefits without assessing or documenting what these are or what the baseline is).	
8	Support agencies have a very important role to play in forest-based livelihoods and strong linkages must be built to enable this.	
9	The “pulse of the people” doesn’t beat to the same timing as project time cycles and donor funding cycles.	

	Key message	Source
10	Regional policy is needed to protect each country and their stakeholders' interest in the protection/sustainable use and exploitation of their natural resources for nature based tourism.	
11	Built trust may be more important than formal arrangements. Transparency is also critical to ensuring continued good relations.	
12	It is important to document process outcomes as well as the tangible project outputs.	
13	Building a sense of ownership for the project requires an appreciation for the cultural and spiritual norms of the community.	


APPENDIX 8: PROGRAMME UPDATE

Implementation of Forests and Livelihoods projects



Report for 3rd ALG on Forests and Livelihoods




 **Focus of session**

- Brief overview of key projects
 - Lessons for implementation
 - Capacity needs
 - Note lessons on 4 research questions
- Discussion on lessons under each question

 **Key projects**


- Aripo Savannas management planning
- EU case studies
- FAO NFPF:
 - National workshops
 - ALPs
 - Small grants

Aripo Savannas Management Planning



Report for 3rd ALG on Forests and Livelihoods



 **Participatory management planning**


- Engaged wide variety of stakeholders
- Looked at developing institutional arrangements and building capacity for participation
- Looked at livelihood opportunities that do not compromise biodiversity conservation
- ALP, case study and experiences will provide lessons

EU case studies on forests and livelihoods




Report for 3rd ALG on Forests and Livelihoods



 **Status**

- **Warmmae Letang, Dominica:** draft report completed, being revised
- **Grande Riviere, Trinidad:** initial stakeholder consultations held, report being drafted
- **Fondes Amandes, Trinidad:** earmarked
- List of potential case studies

 **Lessons on implementation**

- Selection process needs to rigorously look at potential to extract lessons on forests and livelihoods
- Specific probing questions will be used for each case study to extract lessons

FAO NFPF
National
workshops in
Participatory
Forest
Management




Report for 3rd ALG on
 Forests and Livelihoods



Goal

- Goal: To build capacity for participatory forest management that enhances the contribution of forests to livelihoods.
- Target: CBOs
- But: difficult to mobilise because of limited capacity so broader participation





Field visit to Wammae Letang, Dominica

Workshop objectives

- To build understanding and appreciation of how forests can benefit livelihoods;
- To assess relevant and feasible potential opportunities for strengthening or developing projects that can benefit livelihoods;
- To build capacity to effectively design projects on forests and livelihoods;
- To identify opportunities for funding and technical assistance for projects.

Workshops

Dominica  Forestry Department	Nov 2007	Nicole Leotaud Betty Perry-Fingal Albert "Panman" Bellot Ronald Charles Arlington James
Barbados  -- not held	Nov 2007 Feb 2008	Nicole Leotaud Leslie Walling Kemraj Parsram Michelle Wilson
Trinidad	March 2008	Sarah McIntosh Neemedass Chandool Barry Mahabir Carlton Roberts Risha Alleyne Suzan Lackhan-Baptiste

Trinidad

- March 18-20 2008
- Matura
- Invited 10 CBOs, 2 persons each
- Only 7 CBOs participated - challenge with capacity to participate
- Field trip – Nature Seekers & Grande Riviere Tourism Development Organisation
- Panel discussion – resource agencies

Capacity needs of CBOs

- facilitation of community visioning and strategic planning processes;
- training in conflict management;
- several areas of organisational management.

Lessons on process for workshops

- Focus on national needs / interests
- Mobilisation!
- National partner
- Selecting the "right" CBO
- Panel discussion & Barbados – networking with potential partners
- Field trip – seeing real experiences
- Networking among CBOs
- Learning about forests and potential opportunities for livelihood benefits

Photo: Michelle Wilson

Action Learning Projects in Participatory Forest Management




Report for 3rd ALG on
 Forests and Livelihoods



Learning objectives

1. How can forests benefit livelihoods and improve the quality of life of the rural poor in the Caribbean?
2. What role can NGOs and CBOs play in forest management in the Caribbean?




Fondes Amandes reforestation project in Trinidad

Approach

- 4 small grants of US\$4,000 over 12 months
- Action learning
- Mentors assigned for each




Sundew Tourguiding Services works with other stakeholders involved in management planning for the Aripo Savannas in Trinidad




Process

- 4 small grants of US\$4,000 over 12 months
- Action learning
- Mentoring by consultant – guidelines and reporting forms developed
- Invited 12 applications – independent selection committee – 4 selected




Marilyn Headley with a member of a Forest User group in St. Vincent




Projects selected

NGO / CBO	Project area	ALP
Nature Seekers (Tdad) Pat Elie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing and sustaining forest-based businesses community management of tourism resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing an agro-forestry enterprise and eco-tourism project Done needs assessment
Sundew Tourguiding Services (Tdad) Pat Elie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> designing participatory institutional arrangements, selecting suitable management regimes, and developing and implementing management agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the actual and potential institutional framework that would facilitate co-management with Forestry Division Strategic planning




Sundew tour in Aripo Savannas, Trinidad



Projects selected

NGO / CBO	Project area	ALP
ART (Grenada) Martin Barrieteau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community management of tourism resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> design arrangements for the management of a community trail passing through private and public land Looking for new NGO
Friends of the Environment (St. Vincent) Andrew Simmons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthening civil society organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riverbank cleanup and community education On track




Lessons on process

- Mentor relationship is working well – providing additional support
- Capacity for project planning and management is mixed
- Need to work on extracting lessons on forests and livelihoods

Lessons on forests and livelihoods



Report for 3rd ALG on Forests and Livelihoods



Lessons from FAO NFPF national workshops




Report for 3rd ALG on Forests and Livelihoods





Lessons for sustainable CBOs – enabling factors

- common vision and values, developed through processes of dialogue and consultation;
- opportunities for personal development;
- transparent structure/constitution;
- membership with commitment and something to give;
- incentives (financial or otherwise);
- clear beneficial outcomes;
- leadership.



Lessons for sustainable CBOs - challenges

- squabbling between groups (particularly over money);
- perceptions of people outside groups;
- over-dependence on a few people – no succession planning;
- entrenched mindsets.;
- internal conflicts.




Lessons on CBO capacity

- the tendency for CBOs and NGOs to underestimate – and sometimes under-utilise – the strengths that they have;
- importance of funding for administrative costs of CBOs;
- importance of building capacity in organisational management (alongside technical training);
- research is needed to identify what catalyses the entrepreneurial spirit within groups that may start out primarily with environmental or conservation objectives.




Lessons on institutional arrangement

- participation, communication & conflict resolution are critical;
- Involvement of the whole community is needed;
- important, but varied, role(s) played by government agencies in catalysing or supporting the groups' activities;
- partnerships with private sector are important;
- partnerships with technical support agencies are important.




Lessons on institutional arrangement

- a formal agreement is not an essential to the success of CBO co-management of forest resources although it may be desirable, particularly where the land tenure is insecure and/or there are likely to be pressures to convert it for other uses.
- mutual respect and trust are essential ingredients and need to be built and maintained over time;
- roles and responsibilities need to be clarified and defined.



Lessons on environment

- challenge of retaining staff and volunteers in the current economic climate where high wages are available in government programmes and the construction industry in Trinidad & Tobago;
- Dominica World Heritage Site and focus on nature-based tourism supportive but some challenges;
- Barbados support for water and soil conservation.



Lessons on benefits


- Difficult to assess:
 - Lack baseline
 - Information not being collected
 - Broader livelihood benefits (beyond economic) not a focus





Timber and NTFPs in Dominica



Photo credit Arlington James



Community based tourism in Dominica

Photos Ronald Charles & Albert "Panman" Bellot




Activities for livelihood benefits - Trinidad

- Government reforestation programme
- Agroforestry
 - organic fruits and vegetables
 - wild life farming
 - herbs and medicinal plants
 - seedling production/grafting
- Agroprocessing
- Tourism, recreation, research and education
- Craft
- Charcoal production from trees on ground



Livelihoods based on direct use of forest - Barbados

- Boat builders
- Craft producers
- Tour Operators
- Fishers
- Horticulturists
- Bee keepers
- Fruit vendors/Hawkers



Livelihoods based on indirect use of forest - Barbados

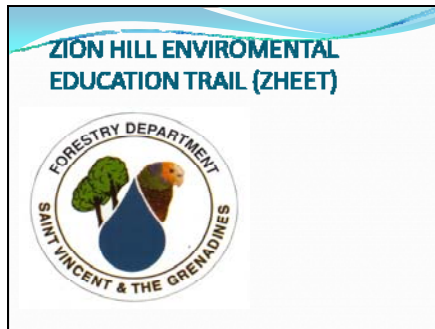
- Farmers
- Communities living near forests
- Tourism businesses/sector - marine & terrestrial
- Road users
- Consumers of water
- Users of wood for fires
- Recreators (local users)
- Tourists
- [Landscapers]



Livelihoods based on indirect use of forest - Barbados

- Forest managers
- Hunters
- Schools
- Private landowners
- Users, harvesters, sellers of bush medicines
- Researchers

APPENDIX 9: ZHET HANDOUT



Back Ground of Zion Hill

- Location of Zion Hill
- Zion Hill within the Dry eco- Zone
- Farming Peanut sand Peas
- What was the problem?
 - Zion Hill regularly indiscriminately slash and burn method,
 - Burning of house hold garbage
 - Malicious set of fires to the fallow dry grass areas
- What did the FD did?
 - Replanted trees under the cider project
 - Establish a Fire trace
 - Increase patrols

GOAL STATEMENT

- *"To sustain conservation ,educate and enhance economic benefits from the use of existing natural resources"*

PROJECT PURPOSE continue

- *To stop deforestation and land degradation in and around Zion Hill and neighbouring communities.*
- *To provided employment opportunities to community members*
- *To be a model site for social and community forestry f or the forestry department.*

Mission Statement

- *To be a more professional organization conserving protecting and developing the national forest resources with and for the optimum benefit of the entire community of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.*

Background Continue

- What is the problem now?
 - Lots of bush fires still occurring within these areas
 - Deforestation occurring in the upper areas around Zion Hill
- What does Barrouallie and Keartons have;
 - Strong community sprite and groups.
 - Have historical buildings and strong cultural festivity

PROJECT PURPOSE

- To reduce the negative impacts of unsustainable livelihood practices in and around Zion Hill.
- To increase environmental awareness by impressing on the minds of children and surrounding community members of the importance of conserving, protecting the environment.
- To provide an outdoor classroom and recreation site for environmental education and awareness.

Approach for the development of ZHEET

- The maintenance and conversion of some parts of the Fire trace to trail for fire management
- Taking the GEF small grant approach for funding activities
 - Capacity building of group
 - Write the project proposal for the group
- Consultation
 - Community groups
 - Interviews
- Implementations

First Consultation

- Consultation with the schools, community interest groups and community members
- **Why** A public consultation to identify other major problems and formation of a strong community group to look after the affairs of the project that will fund ZHEET.

Consultation Purpose

- Determine and address problems and that the group can handle. Conduct interviews with old and young people in the community.

Who are we inviting

- Persons from all the Schools Principals and teachers
- Forestry Field workers
- Community groups
- Clubs, Scouts
- Local craft persons ,
- Blackfish fest group and health groups, community members living close to Zion Hill. 70persons

Where, When and How

- **Where the meet is to be held** Barrouallie community center or secondary school or primary school
- **When** July 30th 2008 at 5pm
- **How** are we going to inform people Use of a flyers, word of mouth, and telephone

What are we going to tell Them

- We are inviting them to a community meeting to start a community group for the development of Zion Hill into a recreation trail that will help in creating employment for tour guides and park rangers, care takers that will also provides environmental educational opportunities for our children.





APPENDIX 10: CROSS CUTTING ISSUES ARISING OUT OF FIELD TRIP DISCUSSIONS

Recommendations on the Partners of the Environment emerging out of discussions at the third meeting of the Forests and Livelihoods Action Learning Group (ALG)

1. Background to the Action Learning Group

The multi-sectoral regional Action Learning Group (ALG) on Forests and Livelihoods comprises individuals from key national and regional institutions who can contribute skills, knowledge or experience to research and capacity building on forests and livelihoods and who are in a position to serve as “change agents” by sharing learning on project findings within their countries, institutions and sectors. The group contains representation from technical and financial support agencies, forest management agencies, forest users, and agencies involved in poverty reduction and rural livelihoods. The ALG is coordinated by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI).

ALG members collectively analyse findings of research projects that seek to improve forest management and livelihoods from the use of forest resources. They also play an important role as catalysts for change in their respective countries and in the region through dissemination of project findings to their organisations and institutions. This is the core group from which a shared understanding will develop across the region on institutional arrangements (policies, practices, legislation, structures, etc.) approaches that optimise the socio-economic benefits to rural poor from forests.

The ALG is a mechanism established under the EC-funded project on ***“Practices and policies that improve forest management and the livelihoods of the rural poor in the insular Caribbean”*** for analysing and disseminating learning over the three-year project period. It also considers the findings of the FAO-funded National Forest Programme Facility (NFPF) project ***“Participatory Forest Management: Improving policy and institutional capacity for development”*** and any other relevant projects in the region, whether implemented by CANARI or other members of the ALG.

2. The Action Learning Group in St. Vincent

The ALG met in St. Vincent August 19th – 21st 2008. The visit was hosted by the Integrated Forest Management and Development Programme (IFMDP), a member of the regional ALG. As part of the visit, a field trip was conducted to Chateaubelair to discuss the efforts of the Community-Based Organisation (CBO) Partners of the Environment (POTE).

This group is being supported under the IFMDP. Out of recommendations from the IFMDP, POTE has also received a small grant of US\$4,000 as part of the FAO project to implement an Action Learning Project (ALP) on Forests and Livelihoods. This ALP involves a

river clean-up and community education. Andrew Simmons is mentoring the POTE for this ALP.

The field trip involved a visit to the site of the river clean up and discussions with members of POTE, IFMDP, Forestry Department, as well as CBOs working with the IFMDP in other communities in St. Vincent.

3. Recommendations from the Action Learning Group

Discussions among the stakeholders noted that the POTE initiative was an “early action” project that was seeking to build the capacity of the community and cohesion of the CBO. Meeting the bigger challenge of alternative livelihoods would build on these early efforts.

As part of this, stakeholders recommended that the following actions should be considered by the key government agencies involved in this initiative:

1. **Understanding context:**
 - a. A full assessment of the socio-economic and cultural profile of the communities being targeted should be conducted to assist in developing or refining interventions aimed at building sustainable livelihoods.
2. **Building partnerships:**
 - a. All of the government agencies that have responsibilities and can play a role to assist with building sustainable livelihoods in the community (including the Police) need to be identified and engaged in the process.
 - b. Linkages and informal structures should be strengthened to build partnerships and increase coordination among government agencies involved.
 - c. Twinning of CBOs involved in IFMDP projects should be facilitated so that experiences can be shared and peer support offered.
 - d. Linkages with the agriculture and tourism sectors should be made.
3. **Building awareness:**
 - a. Strengthen public relations to promote achievements, successes and lessons learnt from the initiative.
 - b. Strengthen the sensitisation and education campaign in the community to build support for POTE and IFMDP efforts.
 - c. Provide basic training and information to government agencies on successful mechanisms used for sensitisation and awareness on environmental issues to CBOs.
4. **Assessing opportunities:**
 - a. Conduct a study to assess the feasibility of potential alternative forest-based livelihood opportunities (including agro-forestry). This should include cost-benefit and market assessments of each proposed livelihood opportunity as well as pilot studies in the community and watershed inclusive of utilising information and resources from regional agencies such as IICA.

5. Building capacity:

- a. The local government system should be strengthened to provide on-site support for this initiative. Specifically, a permanent employee should be stationed in the community as a field officer working on community development.
- b. Litter wardens should be appointed. These may be public servants or community volunteers appointed by the relevant government agency.
- c. Build capacity in multiple relevant disciplines in the IFMDP initiative so that it can address community development issues in a comprehensive way.
- d. Build capacity in the Forestry Department in facilitating community social forestry.
- e. Provide support for CBOs, such as basic training in secretarial duties, computers and access to a meeting place.

6. Addressing economic needs:

- a. Provide a subsidy to community members to support early efforts at replanting and developing alternative livelihoods.

APPENDIX 11: THE MACO ON THE BUS

The report of the Suss in the Big Buss, Wednesday August 20th 2008.

On leaving the hotel, the Big Buss opted to immediately increase its carbon footprint when all occupants insisted on air-conditioning full blast.

Without mentioning names directly, the following was observed first and second hand.....

- ✚ A strong Jamaican female accent was heard constantly on a cell-phone, making arrangements for meetings with Ministers and other big people all over the Caribbean. The Jamaican multi-tasker brought her office with her on the field trip.
- Talk at one point centred on the astronomical cost of travel between the islands. One St. Lucian ex-politician recounted his days as a student travelling by boat between the islands and having a girlfriend in every island.....Or so he thought!
- ✚ One St. Lucian artist I overheard talked about some of the defining moments in his life that led him to his present occupations of forestry and art. It was inspiring to hear how he first went to the Forestry Department and took to it like a horse to water, through his art and tour guiding.
- Time stood still while the whole of the Caribbean celebrated Usain Bolt's phenomenal 200 metre win and new world record. We was blinging in de Big Buss, led by U no who!
- ✚ At Zion Hill we demonstrated that a lot of us outdoorsy types afraid rain! But while we were getting wet, a gentleman from Barbados was eating roast breadfruit and iguana. The unofficial wet T-Shirt competition was won by Nicole.
- Meanwhile in the little Buss, Trini Jack found his Marijuana Jill and Winning grey-beard tried to kidnap young ladies back to Kingstown
- Congratulations are in order for Keith and Susan Laurie on their recent marriage. Mr. Laurie found true love, married and separated all in the same day! We are not without firsts in the Caribbean!
- ✚ Congratulations are also in order to CANARI Trini gyal for her ability to attract a personal tour guide. A patent is pending for that particular brand of perfume or was it a pheromone!
- At Chateaubelair we met and had lovely interactions with two groups:
 - Partners in Marijuana and
 - Keepers of the MarijuanaTwo groups who wore only designer footwear by Nike, Timberland and Merrell, who drove the best Toyota SUVs, all from a really depressed area of the country, with no indoor bathroom plumbing and had to take to doing their numbers on the banks of the rivers!
- Meanwhile, the motion sickness queen from Trinidad, who shall be called Queasy Queen and the Banana Mama from Dominica, fought over community members after lunch. Banana Mama won, retaining most of her community members for the discussion, while the wild Rasta from St. Lucia managed to attract beauties with orange heart-shaped earrings into his corral.
- Queasy Queen demonstrated her name on the way back due to the driving of the Little Buss driver and took a while to recover and surface for dinner.

- Some slightly weighty ladies tested the spring bridge at Dark View Falls and found it to be firm and good. They may have left it a bit the worst for wear on their departure however. A collection should be taken up to assist the Forestry Department in the repair of the bridge for the next visit of weight challenged *homo sapiens*.
- On the way home, tired and hungry, heightened Jamaican olfactory senses were attuned to the herb, roast corn and mangoes, as we passed through the villages.
- Some people were dropped off in the city and they have apparently made it back to the hotel in one piece, where the Barbadian and the 'Hans' from the FAO demonstrated their institutional arrangements, socio-economic affinity and capacity to imbibe Rhum.

APPENDIX 12: SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

The responses of the ALG members to the evaluation form are presented below.

Question 1: Did you find the workshop useful in learning about how to optimise socio-economic (livelihood) benefits to the rural poor from the use of forests in the Caribbean? *All thirteen responders stated YES*

Please explain:

- *Through the ventilation of issues in sites visited and case studies reviewed*
- *Exposure to CBOs in rural St Vincent was a great experience*
- *The meeting strengthened my capacity to understand that each of the representatives has familiar projects and sharing information to go forward was welcome*
- *The presentations and discussions highlighted the positive and negative lessons learned, including issues, consensus and constraints. Also testimonies from beneficiaries*
- *Including the difficulties of the capacities of people to take advantage of opportunities and their own decision-making processes in terms of economic returns*
- *Interaction among participants helped in improving overall approach in working with communities in improving livelihood benefits from forests*
- *The analysis of process of creating initiatives was quite useful*
- *There were useful experiences that persons could learn from*
- *Confirmation that livelihood benefits have to take place as part of a wider community development programme rather than in the forest environment*
- *Had an opportunity to share experiences but more importantly learn from others experiences in the region*
- *Contact with the community and learning exactly what their livelihoods needs are to structure interventions*
- *This was especially evident when dealing with farmers who have produced a high income crop like marijuana, and we have to look for alternatives to “compete” with that*

Question 2: What is the most important thing that you learned / understood / felt from this workshop?

- *The importance of elucidating underlying socio-economic factors that influence forests livelihoods. And hence the importance of these factors in assisting with ensuring the sustainability of forest projects*
- *The important role Forestry can play*
- *The communication strategy*

- *Politicians do not fully understand the importance or are very ignorant about the importance of contribution of forests to GDP or socio-economic development*
- *The research questionnaire and approach to gathering information from CBOs proved very useful and should be incorporated in national programmes*
- *Motivated to continue the work I want to do re: participatory, people-centered approaches to rural development*
- *Impediments to moving progress and how gaps may be addressed; what works, what does not work in the case of SVG, there were structural limitations that are hindering progress – perhaps the ALG may be a catalyst to advancing progress*
- *The regional view of the analysis of the plans*
- *The work to promote benefits for people is dynamic and approaches must be flexible. Validation through peer assessment reinforces the commitment*
- *All forest participatory initiatives may not be able to sustain livelihoods*
- *The political divide is sensitive and real but in the case of Partners, they recognise the need to work together for the benefit for all*
- *Frank discussions, openness and genuine passion to work together to make the lives of rural peoples better*

Question 3: What did you like about this workshop?

- *The composition of the ALG*
- *Well-organised by sessions; Good companions/hip; CANARI*
- *The participation of each member*
- *Generally, meeting was alright*
- *Open discussions especially in terms of marijuana cultivation*
- *The field trip was a very enlightening experience*
- *The opportunity to share ideas and experiences*
- *Diversity of participants – bring much experience to bear*
- *The interaction – both formal and informal*
- *Rapport – open constructive communication between members*
- *The field trip – interacting with communities to get first hand information*
- *The structure and high level of planning among the facilitators which guaranteed success*
- *Able to share/ network – formally and informally; that the ALG reorganised it's action role and the need to give feedback ad recommendations after interaction with groups*

Question 4: What did you dislike about this workshop?

- *The length of the sessions – seemed too short*
 - *Programme too congested and no time to socialise with people locally*
 - *Arriving the same day of the meeting*
 - *The limited time – late starts*
 - *Arriving on the morning of the workshop; the service at the hotel; time management*
-
- *Nothing*
 - *Nothing*
 - *Can't identify any single factor*
 - *Internet access (or lack thereof at the hotel)*
 - *Hotel – sporadic internet access*
 - *Food variety limited; coffee very un Caribbean; island breakfast should be standard requirement of the hotels*
 - *Accommodation; not enough choice for dinner – expensive and poor quality*

Question 5: Please indicate which sessions you found particularly useful:

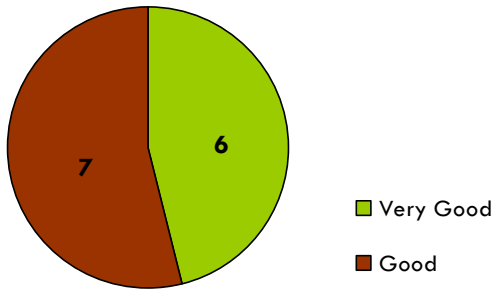
- *All sessions had value – cannot weigh which was more useful*
- *Group sessions and the site visit with interaction with residents*
- *Meeting with community; small group work on day 3 discussions specific country projects*
- *All sessions were useful, but session (post-lunch) of field trip proved the most interesting*
- *Meeting with community groups as part of the field trip*
- *Field trip*
- *The field trip with the participation of the Partners of the Environment and Keepers of the Environment*
- *Field trip and all group work*
- *The field trip; the review session*
- *Fieldtrip – community discussion*
- *Field trip and its discussions; get an opportunity to see a little of the country*
- *Field trip – this is the action part of the work being done and affords the opportunity to see what words and what are still challenges. The people involved in case studies and their successes, challenges and development are what validates the research. How can we evaluate livelihood benefits, institutional arrangements etc if we don't interact with the beneficiaries and developers of these?*
- *Field trip; Thursday morning small group and plenary*

Question 6: How could the meeting have been improved?

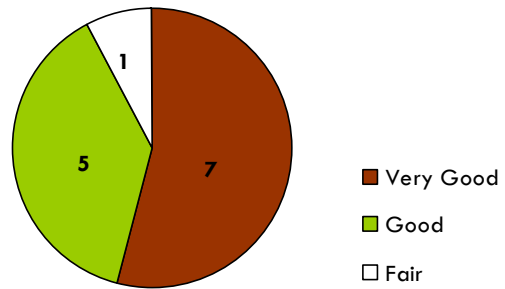
- Sessions seemed not to have adequate time to complete discussions – possibly longer meeting times in a day
 - Have a longer lunch break; Sessions at 7-11 am and 3-7pm; Tropics need a siesta
 - Improved time allocation and management for sessions; a little more time for shopping etc.
 - No same day travel for start of meeting
 - CANARI should consider less dissemination of hard documents and greater use of soft copies – although I understand this is in motion
 - More time given to clarify objectives for each session
 - There should have maybe been consideration of existing parallel initiatives especially in the case of SVG that would contribute to the efforts of this project – insufficient analysis of the baseline ahead of time
 - At least a day to look at case studies
 - More group (small) assessment of issues. We should not be spending so much time on definitions – by this third meeting; such matters should have been settled and more focus on the more substantive issues of the research – actions viz. learning
 - Manage time more effectively – don't go over time too much
- No opportunity to go into town, feel the pulse of Kingstown, get souvenirs; most people too tired to go after the field trip
 - It was very informative – could not be better
 - A good meeting, well thought out processes and sessions

Question 7: How would you rate the following areas of the workshop structure and delivery?

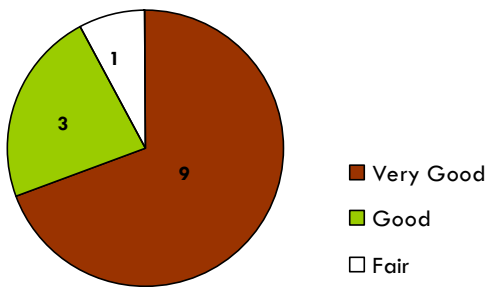
Clarity of objectives



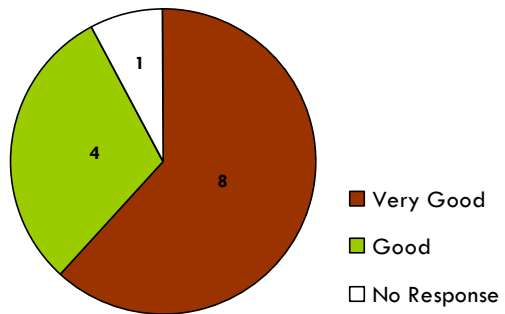
Content



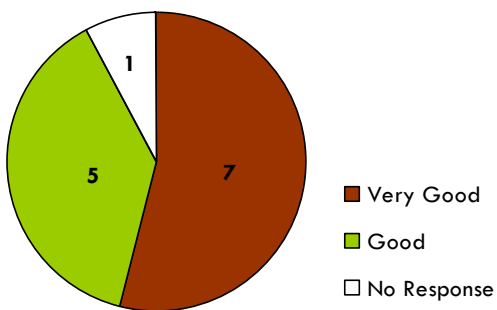
Relevance to your needs



Facilitation



Materials



Any additional comments on the above:

- *Contribution of participants should be captured in the evaluation*

Question 8: What is one thing that you will apply from the workshop in your organisation's work.

- *Identifying additional sustainable livelihoods from the forest for current users*
- *To have a wider media coverage of the livelihoods meeting*
- *As much as possible*
- *To continue to work participation into projects at all levels and institutionalise it into the organisation's work*
- *Application of research questionnaire format in analysis/ work with community groups*
- *The increased use of appropriate frameworks for analysis off/ and summarising of information*
- *The ALG approach is useful in project work*
- *The open analysis of the project*
- *Communication of the strategies for livelihood enhancement and documenting the procedures and realities that affect ordinary people in communities*
- *Using the learning experience to conduct research*
- *The four research questions can be applied in other areas*

Question 9: What would prevent you from applying the ideas discussed in this workshop?

- *Political influence*
- *Different environment*
- *No constraints*
- *Administrative bottlenecks*
- *Nothing*
- *Extremely tight workload (if this is an excuse). Really, I believe time should/ will be put aside into trying to apply ideas*
- *No foreseen limitations*
- *The pace of the public sector*
- *Funding – there are limitations on travel to do the kind of in-depth follow up work required*
- *Boss buying into the process (support)*
- *Cost of implementation – transport cost to visit groups and time – involvement in other programs*

Question 10: Do you or your organisation have any additional training needs?

- Yes – but I can't list them
 - Will communicate to CANARI when need arises
- Yes – NGO management; research writing
 - Yes – need training in EIAs
 - Monitoring and evaluation of projects
 - Communications
 - Indicators for monitoring and evaluation
 - Qualitative monitoring and evaluation
 - Community participation; conflict resolution
 - Training of Forestry Division staff to manage their own reactions as they relate to community members. Local community organizations incl. LFMCs are trained to manage expectations while managing their projects
 - Formal training on use and abuse of forests; notice that fair-trade farmers are involved in protecting forests, waterways and are more environmentally conscious now

Question 11: What recommendations would you like to make for CANARI's Forests & Livelihoods Programme?

- To act as resource personnel to Caribbean professionals working on forest management
- To disseminate information on projects to ALG members on a more regular basis
 - That communications strategy developed be strictly approached in order to achieve desired objectives
 - Workshops on partnering
 - The monitoring framework for this project needs to be clarified
 - Set up a monitoring and evaluation session to help participants monitor and evaluate their efforts
 - Design instrument to collect data on the cases selected – ALG members can assist in refining the instrument
 - Develop monitoring and evaluation criteria and country workshops on how to develop and apply them
 - Provision of more detailed information on the case studies. Not an extensive report – but background information to assist in applying the four research questions. Choice of hotel/ restaurant – greater choice of restaurants is needed in the proximity of the hotel
 - To seek to join forces with other programmes and institutions that are implementing similar initiatives for greater impact
 - More public promotion of the effort

Question 12: Any other comments:

- *Impact of forestry on marine environment; need to include alternative sources of energy for use by CBOs; use of wildlife farming; use of livestock*
- *Revisit the issue of ALG facilitation – CANARI perhaps should be doing more presentations (reporting) to the ALG? ALG critically assess the work done, provide feedback and direction?*
- *Good meeting – congrats to CANARI for leading this meeting*
- *Flash drive – great idea for saving paper*
- *Memory stick – an excellent idea*