



**Summary Report on the 12th Annual Conference of
UWI/Sustainable Economic Development Unit (SEDU)**

**With support of UNESCO Kingston Cluster Office for the
Caribbean**

*Title: Bridging the Gap between Research and Policy for
Sustainable Development in Caribbean Small Island
Developing States (SIDS)*



May 2009

INTRODUCTION

On March 27th and 28th 2009, the Sustainable Economic Development Unit (SEDU) of the Department of Economics, University of the West Indies hosted its 12th Annual Conference with the support of the UNESCO Kingston Cluster Office for the Caribbean.

The theme of the conference was **“Bridging the Gap between Research and Policy for Sustainable Development in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)”**. This theme reflected SEDU’s continued efforts to deepen discussions on how research institutions and Units such as UWI/SEDU, international organisations such as UNESCO and national and regional government and civil society can collaborate to bridge the gap between research and policy so that our countries can meaningfully achieve sustainable development. The theme was also consistent with SEDU’s mission to *conduct empirical and theoretical research and facilitate interdisciplinary work on the most promising policies for Sustainable Economic Development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)*.

The Conference agenda was developed primarily to provide an opportunity for tripartite discussion – among public sector policy makers, civil society representatives and researchers from academia. A secondary objective of the agenda was to explore and reignite opportunities for collaboration between SEDU and other regional stakeholders working in the area of Sustainable Development.

An overall number of sixty- seven (67) persons participated over the two-day conference.¹ Many participants came from various Caribbean islands including Jamaica, St. Lucia, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, and Guyana.

In addition, many leading organizations participated at the conference including:

- Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI);
- The Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI);
- Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA);
- The Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC);
- Belize Enterprise for Sustainable Technology (BEST);
- Fredrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) of Jamaica;
- The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science of UWI, St. Augustine;
- Department of Economics, UWI, Mona Campus;
- Health Economics Unit, UWI, St. Augustine;
- Department of Liberal Arts, UWI, St. Augustine;
- UWI Planters for Social Change;
- Environmental Management Authority;
- Cipriani Labour College;

¹ Names of participants and the institutions they belong to are located in the appendix of this report.

- University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT);
- BPTT;
- Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment (Trinidad and Tobago);
- Faculty of Science and Agriculture , UWI, St. Augustine;
- Behavioural Sciences Department, UWI, St. Augustine;
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC);
- MCT Consultants;
- Office of Deputy Principal, UWI, St. Augustine.

DAY 1: PUBLIC POLICY AND CIVIL SOCIETY CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On Day 1, participants addressed the main theme of the conference—“Examining the gap between public policy and research”.

Some of the main challenges to bridging the gap between public policy and research include:

1. Inadequate database systems, bureaucratic systems and policies.
2. Research from public service is conducted by external sources and not from the formal service.
3. The political system is faced with several problems including the inability to distinguish the responsibility between the politician and the public servant;
4. Policy research is delayed or replaced by political platform promises;
5. The continuous political administration change and lack of permanence in planning and policy process
6. Fiscal constraints and the power of political interest groups.
7. Resource unavailability and competition for resources;
8. Ad hoc policy driven by external dictates;
9. Maintaining balance between satisfaction of immediate needs and sustainability;
10. Internal ministerial conflicts;
11. Eurocentric nature of research that are not scalable for small islands;
12. Public policy does not reflect Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation agendas;
13. Project approaches to national policies are usually developed and are highly influenced by international financial institutions;
14. Lack of interaction between research agencies and organizations that focuses on SD issues and an absence of interaction between research institutions and central governments;
15. Slow progress in implementation of policies.

The strategies identified in dealing with these challenges included:

1. Developing a new approach to governance;
2. More dialogue between researchers and policy makers;
3. Pursuing an interactive model of stakeholder participation;
4. Identifying key issues and examining the context of the environment;
5. Use of technology and capacity building;
6. Finding ways to integrate persons into national decision-making.
7. ‘Change’ interventions including changing the mindset of policy makers, researchers and communities, putting people to the forefront so they will serve as a resource to policy debate, enhancing local research and policy capability, and information sharing among SIDs;
8. Forging formal links between central governments and research institutions;
9. Forging links between research institutions and organizations that specializes in SD issues at both the national and regional level;
10. Development of a Regional Coordinating Mechanism to link research agencies in the Caribbean;
11. Promotion of SD issues at the tertiary level, and identification of SD issues in national programmes;
12. Management instruments to include promotion of demand-side management, strengthening of capacities investment in equipment for data collection and monitoring, resolution of allocation issues;
13. Need to address the definition of sustainable development in terms of their context;
14. Learning from one’s history so to ensure mistakes and bad policy are not developed as they can have catastrophic impacts.

Further on Day 1, participants also discussed the role of research in civil society decision-making processes.

The main challenges as identified to bridging the gap between research and civil society include:

1. Need to prioritize research agendas and the purpose of research is to develop lessons, develop coalitions, and assist local communities;
2. Civil society must prepare to deal with the economic challenges of the global political economy, and its impact on daily lives around the world including advances in digital technology, fiber optics, the internet, satellites, and modern transportation leveling economic and cultural barriers between countries;
3. Movement of capital from one’s country and access to cheaper consumer goods and services;
4. The effects of civil society being the *object* of the research process include objectives determined elsewhere, inability to affect outcomes, limited impact on livelihoods of citizens, no transfer of skills or technology, no ownership of process are not likely to lead to policy interventions. On the other hand, the effects of civil society being the *subject* of the research

- process include owners of one's vision of what is needed, owners of one's agenda of empowerment, demonstration of collective action and work, demonstration of the value of self-education, power-sharing versus power over, reduction in systematic inequalities such as gender inequality.
5. Political parties and groups can be a challenge to implement projects since their objective is to stay in "office" and therefore, they will serve their interests groups and facilitate projects that seek their own self-interest and interest groups;
 6. Competition for resources between different portfolios of the government. This often delays projects, increases cost overruns and results in many other problems.

Some of the strategies to dealing with these challenges include:

1. Trust between the stakeholders;
2. Visioning, research, consultation to involve the wider public, good mobilization;
3. Information gathering from communities;
4. Effective governance requires empowerment and participation of ordinary citizens in the decisions that affect them, as a means of mobilizing their own resources, (human & financial), skills and talents, for community and national development;
5. Information exchange as a better concept to utilize rather than information sharing. There is a need to for more exchange of ideas and concepts between individuals, between organizations and Caribbean countries;
6. There is a need to utilize our local resources e.g. CANARI as facilitator of projects in the Caribbean before venturing outside or externally for assistance. Therefore, we need appreciate the local resources instead of foreign resources.

Additionally, SEDU was able to launch its first Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Greening Policy Publication Series entitled "The Economics of an Integrated (Watershed) Approach to Environmental Management in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)- From Ridge to Reef." Authors of the publication are Professor Dennis Pantin, Dr. Marlene Attzs, Mr. Justin Ram and Mr. Winston Rennie. The book discussed many issues including economic valuation and cost benefit analysis, policy instruments for internalizing externalities, and socio-economic determinants of priority setting for environmental management in many Caribbean case studies.

SEDU was also able to launch its upgraded website. The homepage address is <http://www.sta.uwi.edu/sedu/>. The website redesign was carried out with the assistance of the UNESCO Kingston Cluster Office for the Caribbean. In addition, the design of the website utilized the format and guidelines for UNESCO's MOST online Tool. The main objective of the website is for the diffusion of policy-oriented research results on themes of sustainable development of Caribbean Small Island Developing States. A number of items are identified on the homepage

including the main menu, the newsflash, the latest news and a search engine. A list of items is provided on the website including the background information on SEDU, graduate research areas, conferences, reports, web links, contact information for SEDU, priority research areas, completed studies, and information on Caribbean Sustainable Economic Development Network (CSDNET).

DAY 2: POLICY ORIENTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Day 2 focused on current studies in sustainable development which was entitled “Policy Oriented Research in Progress.” These included:

- Mr. Christian Posthoff, (Dept. of Mathematics and Computer Science, UWI, St Augustine)
Title of Presentation: **The significant role of computing –related education for interdisciplinary research and application of advanced technologies**
- Dr. Marlene Attzs (SEDU)
Title of Presentation: **Slow-Onset disaster and Sustainable Tourism Development: Exploring the Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Tourism in selected Caribbean destinations.**
- Mrs. Sarah McIntosh: Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
Title of Presentation: **Developing a region wide agenda for research and communications on climate change**
- Mrs. Sarah McIntosh: Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
Title of Presentation: **Tools for Environmental Mainstreaming**
- Ms. Simone Mangal, (PH.D. Candidate , University College of London)
Title of Presentation: **Research and Policy: Pathways of Uptake in the Context of Sustainable Development**
- Mr. Jason Alexander, (SEDU)
Title of Presentation: **A feasibility Study on the use of structural mitigation to reduce then economic vulnerability of Caribbean Small, Island Developing States (SIDS) to natural disasters.**
- Ms. Donna Ramjattan, (SEDU)
Title of Presentation: **The Role of Community Based Organizations in Poverty Reduction Efforts and Environmental Management in Soufriere, St. Lucia**

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Day 1, Friday March 27th, 2009</i></p> <p>8:30 am: Registration 9:00 am: Opening Session Chair: Dr. Mariene Attrix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Dennis Paulin, Coordinator, SEDU, Overview of Conference & Presentation of SEDU Strategic Plan • Prof. Clement Salsbit, Pro-Vice-Chancellor- Campus Principal, UWI, St. Augustine, Welcome Remarks. • Mr. Daren Dhooray, CITS, Demonstration of New SEDU Website including the use of UNESCO's MOST Tool <p>9:45 am: Coffee Break.</p> <p>10:00 am: Session 1 : <i>Ending the gaps between Public Policy and Research</i> Chair: Dr. Mariene Attrix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Colin Bullock, Former Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Jamaica & currently Senior Lecturer, Dept. Of Economics, UWI, Mona • Mr. Aaron Moses, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Grenada • Mr. Navin Chandarpal, Advisor to the Prime Minister, Guyana • Mr. Anthony Bartholomew, Former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment, Trinidad and Tobago. • Dr. Christopher Cox, Ag. Programme Director Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI) <p>11:30 am: General Discussion 12:00 pm: Lunch</p> <p>1:15 pm: Session 2 : <i>The Role of Research in Civil Society decision-making processes</i> Chair: Mr. Winston Rennie (SEDU)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Judy Williams, GRENOCODA, Grenada • Ms. Cecilia Babo, Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), Barbados • Mr. Dennis Jones, Belize Enterprise for Sustainable Technology • Ms. Judith Wedderburn, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Jamaica <p>3:15 pm: General Discussion</p> <p>4:45 pm: Book Launch: <i>The Economics of an Integrated (Watershed) Approach to Environmental Management in Small Island Developing States (SIDS): From Ridge to Reef</i>, UWI-SEDU: Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Greening Policy Publication Series No.1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">End Day 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Day 2, Saturday March 28th, 2009</i></p> <p>9:00 am: Recap of Day 1 Activities 9:30 am: Session 3: <i>Policy Oriented Research in Progress</i> Co-Chair: Mr. Judith Wedderburn (Friedrich – Ebert-Stiftung)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Christian Forthoff, (Dept. of Mathematics and Computer Science, UWI, St. Augustine) - "The significant role of computer-related education for interdisciplinary research and application of advanced technologies" 2. Dr. Mariene Attrix, (SEDU) - "Slow-onset disasters and Sustainable Tourism: Developing Exploring the Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Tourism Industry in selected Caribbean Destinations." 3. Mrs. Sarah McIntosh: Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) - "Developing a region wide agenda for research and communications on climate change" <p>10:35 am: General Discussion 10:45 am: Brunch</p> <p>11:45 am: Session 3 continued Co-Chair: To be confirmed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Mrs. Sarah McIntosh, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) - "Tools for Environmental Monitoring" 5. Ms. Simone Mangal, (Ph.D. Candidate, University College of London) - "Research and Policy Pathways of Uptake in the Context of Sustainable Development" 6. Mr. Jason Alexander, (SEDU) - "A Feasibility Study on the use of structural mitigation to reduce the economic vulnerability of Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to natural disasters." 7. Ms. Donna Ramjattan, (SEDU) - "The Role of Community Based Organisations in Poverty Reduction Efforts and Environmental Management in Soufriere, St. Lucia <p>1:00 pm: General Discussion 2:00 pm: Closing Remarks</p> <p style="text-align: right;">End Day 2</p>
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APPENDIX 2: List of Participants

Name	Organization
ATTZS, Marlene	SEDU
BULLOCK, Colin	Department of Economics, UWI, Mona
CHANDERPAL, Navin	Office of the President, Guyana
COX, Christopher	Programme Director, (CEHI)
MOSES, Aaron	Office of the Prime Minister, Grenada
BABB, Cecilia	Caribbean Policy Development Centre, Barbados
JONES , Dennis	Belize Enterprise for Sustainable Technology (BEST)
WEDDERBURN, Judith	Director, Frederich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)
WILLIAMS, Judy	Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA)
ALEXANDER, Jason	SEDU
RAMJATTAN, Donna	SEDU
MANGAL, Simone	Ph. D. Candidate, University of London
MCINTOSH, Sarah	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
POSTHOFF, Christian	Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
ALI, HALEEMA	Health Economics Unit (HEU)/UWI
ALLAHAM, Aabida	MEDIA(EXPRESS)
ARJOON, Cindy	Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (MEEI)
BAIN, Adel	Department of Liberal Arts
BONNET, Judy-Ann	
BUCKMIRE, S.	MEDIA(TV6)

Name	Organization
COZIER, Arnim	
DENNIS, Kwesi	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
DRAYTON, Josh	Behavioural Sciences, UWI
EUGENE, Jeanine	UWI.PLANTERS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
EUGENE, Jeanine	Faculty of Science and Agriculture, UWI
FORTUNE, Stefan	UWI(STUDENT)
FOSTER, Juliana	Office of Deputy Principal
FRANKLIN, MARTIN	UWI LECTURER
GIBSON, Keith	Ph.D. Student University of Calgary
GODDARD, Glenn	Environmental Management Authority (EMA).
GREGOIRE, Corinne	Cipriani Labour College
GRIFFEN, John	Professor, University of Trinidad and Tobago
GUY, Louis	Caribbean Forest Conservation Association (CFCA)
HARRYPERSAD, Dhanraj	UWI, Open Campus/ Arthur Lok Jak
HAYNES, Jeremy	SEDU
HEWITT, LINDA	Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies (SALISES)
HOPE, M.	MEDIA(TV6)
HOSEIN, Irfan	UWI (student)
JAGESSAR, Patricia	Behavioural Sciences, UWI
KALPATO, Thomas	Mediation Association Limited
KOYLASS, Wayne	Ministry of Works and Transport
LEWIS , Diedron	UWI, St. Augustine

LIVERPOOL, Crystal	UWI.(student)
LLANOS, C.	UWI, REGIONAL SEMINARY
LUCIO, Kerry	UWI.(student)
MAHARAJ, Malini	UWI, St. Augustine
MCLEAN, ROGER	Health Economics Unit (HEU)/UWI
MOHAMMED, Najma	Faculty of Science and Agriculture, UWI
NEWTON, Mandilee	ACLA Works (architects and urban planners)
OSUALA, Doue	UWI.(student)
OWEN, Darren	Environmental Management Authority (EMA)
PANTIN, Machel	Health Economics Unit (HEU)/UWI
PETERS, Everson	Department of Civil Engineering, UWI.
POLLARD, Gene	Faculty of Science and Agriculture, UWI
ROOPLAL, Vishram	Research Assistant, DOE (UWI)
SANKAT, Clement	Principal, UWI
SEEPERSAD, Stephen	Research Assistant, DOE (UWI)
SIRJU-CHARRAN, Grace	Ag. Head, Gender and Development Studies
SOOKRAJ, Rishi	British Petroleum of Trinidad and Tobago (BPTT)
THOMAS, Petal	Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment
THORNE, Elizabeth	ECLAC (representing Neil Pierre)
TINTO, Marcia	Environmental Management Authority

TONEY, Hayden	MCT Consultants
WALLACE, Gregory	Department of Economics, UWI
WILSON, KEREN	UWI.(student)
YOUNG, Simone	

