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Youth Attend 5th Caribbean Environmental Forum

Youths from various high schools and community college came together for a **Caribbean** Environmental Forum that took place in Jamaica from June 21st-25th, 2010. The five day forum featured youths from the different schools engaging in quite a number of activities such as debating, presenting environmentally sustainable project, interpreting the environment with creative arts etc.

Two youths Tashana Clemings and Tanashay Cheddesing presented the environmentally-friendly project termed "Conserving energy with Green Roof Technology". A project which previously received the Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd Environmental Award.

Both Tashana and Tanashay demonstrated the possibility of growth of vegetation on roofs with the aid of five models by:

1. Water-proofing the area
2. Choosing the appropriate soil and
3. ensuring adequate drainage

However the students outlined the benefits which are:

- (a) A cooler house
- (b) Income from sale of plants and
- (c) Reduction of theft of plants due to their high placement

The youths were also given the opportunity to meet with Prime Ministers Honourable Stephenson King of St. Lucia and Dr. Horace Chang Jamaica's Minister of Water and Housing and have their voices heard.

The youths also participated in a Tree Planting Ceremony held at the Old Hospice Site in Montego Bay, Jamaica to mark the first ever Youth Environmental Forum. The first tree was planted by Montego Bay Community College Bay students along with their mayor Charles Sinclair and executive of the **Caribbean** Environmental Health Institute, Patricia Aquing. The second tree planted by the students of Mannings High School was assisted by Regional Project Coordinator Vincent Sweeney of the Global Environmental Facility-Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management. The final tree planted by accompanying teachers of the other schools attending the Forum, Ava Tomlinson of the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) and Nadia Deen Ferguson of the United Nations Environment Programme- **Caribbean** Regional Coordinating Unit (UNEP-CRCU).

The students also visited Montego Bay, Marine Park where they were able to identify environmental issues as well as offer solutions. Also an environmental group known as "Project wet" led the youth group in a "Blue Planet Activity" which helped them to identify water sources on the globe.

The youths kept a daily journal termed "Youth Commitments" which is to aid them in their keeping a record of their thoughts and experience of the Forum.

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