

CEHI *news*

Newsletter of the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute

Volume 10.2/2003



Challenges, Issues

and solutions



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Executive Director Reports on Board Meeting

CEHI's Annual Board Meeting was held in Washington D.C on September 21. Executive Director, Vincent Sweeney, presented a report on the activities of the Institute, which highlighted a period he described as both "busy and fruitful."

The Executive Director stated that the Institute continued, "to focus broadly on environmental management issues and specifically on environmental health areas such as water and waste management."

He reported that the objective of providing needed technical and advisory services to countries of the region was achieved, with the concentration being on "co-ordination, collaboration, capacity building and field activities."

"CEHI," the Executive Director said, "was also able to step outside the daily routine of service delivery to examine the regional, hemispheric, and international agendas to which our Member States subscribe, and to programme for our future involvement in advancing those various agendas. "

According to Mr Sweeney, over the period 2002-2003, CEHI supported the region in responding to environmental and environmental health management issues through capacity building activities such as training (in-country, at the Institute and regionally); provision of relevant information in useable forms; undertaking specialised consultancies; resource mobilisation, project formulation and implementation.

Through CEHI's largest asset, its laboratory, the Institute was also able to respond to specific requests for specialised laboratory analyses, which could not be conducted at the country-level.

The Executive Director said the future work of the Institute will see continued implementation of the Project on *Integrating Watersheds and Coastal Areas Management in Caribbean SIDS* which is to be submitted to the GEF Council for further approval in 2004; initiation of Cleaner Production activities focusing on small, medium, and micro-enterprises (and eventually leading to the establishment of a Regional Cleaner Production Centre); development of programmes for waste and pesticide management; and a new focus on occupational health issues, including risk assessment.

He added that notwithstanding these on-going activities and programmes, CEHI must remain aware of the external imperatives that will drive the region's development agenda. Among those imperatives are regional integration and globalisation.

As such, Mr Sweeney added, CEHI will continue "to monitor the critical factors affecting environmental and environmental health management within the region, from a human health and ecosystem perspective, but also from a trade and economic development perspective."

He identified the following as guiding principles in the future work of the Institute:

- Protection and promotion of health and the environment is in the best interest of the Caribbean population and should be one of the main issues guiding decision makers
- Prevention of health problems and degradation of the environment is more effective than healing of the population and restoration of the environment
- Socio-economic development requires healthy human beings with the capacity to satisfy their basic needs and those of society in general
- Public participation constitutes one of the pillars of democratic society and is fundamental in solving environmental problems that affect the health of the Caribbean population.

CEHI Sub-Committee Meets in Castries

The Sub-Committee of the Board of Directors of CEHI met at the Institute's St Lucia headquarters on July 18, 2003.

The meeting was chaired by Hon. Dr Douglas Slater, Minister of Health of St Vincent and the Grenadines.

Other Ministers in attendance were Damien Greaves, St Lucia; John Junor, Jamaica; Dr Jerome Walcott, Barbados and Herbert Sabaroche, Dominica.

The Bahamas was represented by Michael Turner, Under Secretary in the Ministry of Health while Dr Rampersad Parasram, Chief Medical Officer, represented Trinidad and Tobago.

Jacquelyn Joseph, Director of Human Development at the CARICOM Secretariat was also in attendance together with a team of senior CEHI officers led by Executive Director, Vincent Sweeney.

Minister Slater opened the meeting by complimenting CEHI for the strides made in promoting improvements in environmental health of the region. He also called on his regional colleagues to collectively mobilize national and international support so that CEHI's objectives can be met.



Caribbean Ministers of Health tour CEHI's labs

The meeting also received a status report on the work of the Institute delivered by Mr. Sweeney. The report identified follow-through activities related to the Institute's Work Plan, including ad-hoc requests, project implementation, follow-up on and coordination of regional and international initiatives, revenue generation and capacity building.

There were also discussions on the Institute's Work Programme and Budget for 2004 including the key areas of the Caribbean Cooperation in Health (CCH) Initiative; the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Programme of Action, the Health and Environment Ministers of the Americas (HEMA) Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals.

There was agreement that CEHI needed to continue performing its role as the premier regional environmental health institution.

Enhancing Resilience in Small Island Developing States

Government trade officials, educational institutions, tourism officials, private business, non-governmental organisations and other community based organisations from the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and the Pacific met in Dominica from September 29 to October 3, as part of preparations for next year's SIDS Plus 10 Conference to be held in Mauritius.

Meeting under the banner of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), delegates focused on the role of the private sector, civil society and trade in enhancing resilience among SIDS in pursuit of sustainable development.

The meeting was officially opened by Prime Minister Pierre Charles who urged participants not to lose sight of the larger picture of sustainable development for SIDS, and to seek solutions for island countries such as Dominica, in particular, in relation to the economic well being of the country.

Presentations were made by a number of leading experts including Michael Witter (Jamaica); Cletus Springer (St Lucia); Leonard Nurse (Barbados); Assad Bhuglah (Mauritius); Kassiap Deepchand (Mauritius); David Smith (Barbados); Rosemary Taufatofua (Fiji); Lino Briguglio (Malta); Eisenhower Douglas (Dominica); Moelagi Jackson (Samoa); Yvonne Ueda (Palau); Ruth Pune (Papua New Guinea); Carol James (Trinidad and Tobago); Jocelyn Dow (Guyana) and Albert Binger (Jamaica).

The general conclusions of the presentations and ensuing discussions were that SIDS share a number of characteristics that affect their vulnerability. The factors include: limited internal markets; lack of economies of scale; very high transportation costs resulting from relatively small quantities; grave vulnerability to natural disasters; significant difficulties in attracting foreign direct investments; limited availability of human and institutional capacity; and the high cost of domestic capital.



Dominica's Prime Minister Pierre Charles addressing AOSIS delegates

For SIDS, the nexus between energy services and economic development is further complicated by four factors: (a) heavy dependence on imported petroleum for commercial energy needs, (b) ongoing loss in preferential access to OECD markets, (c) vulnerability to natural disasters and the adverse impacts of climate change, resulting primarily from the growth of fossil fuel related emissions, and (d) limited integration of the energy sector with the other sectors so as to maximise synergies and the efficient use of financial resources.

It was noted that the discussion within the AOSIS territories focus on the building of resilience, as a practical step towards sustainable development, while at the same time seeking to manage vulnerability and exposure.

The international meeting that is being organised in Mauritius in 2004 to review the progress in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) represents another major opportunity for SIDS to explain again to the international community the challenges to their efforts toward sustainable development. The requests for international co-operation in the building of resilience in SIDS are expected to come against the background of assessments of the achievements in implementing the BPOA in the past 10 years as well as in recognition of the new challenges SIDS face in engaging successfully with the rapidly changing global economy and the changes in the global climate.

The consensus within SIDS based on the AOSIS Summit of August 31st 2002 held in Johannesburg, South Africa, is that much is at stake, and the opportunity presented by the Barbados + 10 international meeting must be utilised to make a positive contribution, to reduce vulnerability in SIDS as it could be the last such opportunity for quite a while. A major reason for this is that SIDS seldom have their voices heard during the major negotiations associated with the processes such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), where the agenda is dictated by the industrialised countries and the larger members of the G77.

Often times SIDS are at odds with positions in key areas like environment, trade, and energy. For example, several interpretations of the results of the Johannesburg conference point to the less than satisfactory attention in the major discussions to the interests of the SIDS, in part due to the inadequate preparation of the SIDS. Participants noted that while a plan of implementation was approved at the WSSD, there was significant disappointment with the content, and extent of action. One shortcoming of the process was the limited space provided for innovative thinking about solutions to issues that are responsible for the less than expected progress with the Implementation of Agenda 21.

At the 22nd Special Session of the United Nations (UN) on the Implementation of the BPOA in September 1999, there was disappointment with the reaction of donors to hundreds of proposals prepared by SIDS. There was disappointment by SIDS with how the process of proposal development and submission and follow-up was managed. And in general there was disappointment with the limited progress which the Secretary General explained was a result of limited capacity and financial resources. It is possible that from the perspective of SIDS the most important decision was to convene an International Meeting to review the implementation of the BPOA in 2004 (BPOA+10).



UWICED Director Prof. Al Binger in discussion with Prime Minister Pierre Charles

Lessons of past preparatory processes were drawn from to make the current process as efficient as possible and allow for maximum participation of stakeholders or their representatives. One such lesson, it was noted, was that information on the implementation of the BPOA must be researched and packaged to inform broad stakeholder participation in national and regional discussions.

The presentations from the SIDS experts helped to illustrate the growing vulnerability of the SIDS, well demonstrated by the near economic collapse of the host country, Dominica, resulting from the implementation of World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules under which it lost market access for its major exports.

The presentations further identified the urgent need for SIDS to take comprehensive action to build resilience in order to reduce future vulnerabilities. It was clear that SIDS must be better prepared and focused if the International Meeting is to be a success.

It was noted that the level of preparedness and the availability of key information to the negotiators would be crucial.

Global Challenges ... Caribbean Solutions

Following on the heels of the immensely successful 11th Annual Conference and Exhibition of the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA) held in collaboration with the First Caribbean Environmental Forum in St Lucia last year, the 12th edition was held on September 29 to October 3 at the Atlantis Resort in The Bahamas.

The Caribbean Environmental Health Institute was represented by Executive Director, Vincent Sweeney, and Sanitary Engineer, Camille Roopnarine.

The theme of this year's Conference was "Global Challenges ... Caribbean Solutions." Conference organisers noted the event was being held "during a time when the Caribbean water, wastewater, and solid waste sectors face a myriad of challenges."

The Conference featured more than 50 technical papers related to the water sector with presentations focusing on local, international and regional challenges and trends facing the industry.

There were also presentations which focused on commercial activities, operational issues, disaster management, public/private cooperation, advanced technologies, and tourism, the economy and the environment.

Some issues addressed in detail included: Building a strong Institutional Capacity in the Solid Waste Sector - a move for Sustainable Development; A Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy for the Caribbean; Non Revenue Water - International Best Practice For Assessment, Monitoring and Control; Strengthening Institutional Arrangements in the Caribbean for Disaster Reduction in Water & Sanitation and the Recycle, Reuse and Recovery of Waste By-products.

Several country-specific case studies were also presented for Barbados, Belize, Cayman Island, Suriname, St Lucia, Montserrat, The Bahamas, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago. There was also a presentation on Solid Waste Privatisation in Dar Es Salaam City: Experiences and Challenges.





CEHI in Coastal Cleanup

On September 20, CEHI staffers took to the beaches of St. Lucia for more than just the fine weather and a swim. They, in fact, formed part of International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) activities organised each year for the past 18 years by the U.S based Ocean Conservancy.

The St Lucian edition of the cleanup was a joint effort of the Solid Waste Management Company, the National Trust, CEHI and the local chapter of the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN).

Team CEHI collected over 177 kg. of debris from Edgewater Beach. This popular 900 metre-long beach is situated along the east north-eastern coast of the island. The bulk of the material collected comprised plastic plates, cups, bags and nylon nets.

The ICC is the world's largest one-day effort to clean up the marine environment. Thousands of volunteers assembled on beaches in the Caribbean and all over the world to play a part in cleaning up the coastal environment.

Last year, CEHI teamed up with the Ocean Conservancy to host a Coastal Cleanup Workshop in St Lucia. The event helped add new vigour to the cleanup efforts in the Caribbean.

Heading the 10 most frequently found items on clean-up day are cigarettes and cigarette filters (25.2%). This is followed by food wrappers/containers (10.8%); caps/lids (8.0%); plastic beverage bottles of 2 litres or less (6.8%); cups, plates, forks, knives, spoons (5.8%); beverage cans (5.7%); beverage bottles - glass (5.5%); bags (5.4%); straws/stirrers (4.1%) and cigar tips (2.4%).

Other items found include: balloons, fish traps, fishing lines, rope and syringes. In 2002, discarded fishing lines and nets were responsible for 65% of total animal entanglements.



Weighing the day's "Catch"



Hauling in their "bounty" which was partially buried in the sand



Our actions will help improve the health of our oceans and waterways

Focusing on Water Issues

CEHI joined with its regional and hemispheric counterparts in observing Inter-American Water Day (IAWD) on October 4.

For this event, CEHI came together with several local partners led by the Water Resources Management Unit (WRMU) of the Ministry of Agriculture, St. Lucia and including the Water and Sewerage Company, Solid Waste Management Company, several schools and private businesses.

CEHI's booth, at the Alliance Francaise building in Castries, focused on water quality testing and highlighted the full range of CEHI's professional services.

The IAWD 2003 theme, "Water, let's not take it for granted," was a call on the public to promote the importance of water management and prevent this valuable resource from becoming a source of disease or death.

In addition, the objectives of the IAWD included highlighting the relationship between water and good health, promoting public awareness about its efficient use and fostering water-related activities in the school age population and the community at large.

The declaration of an annual Inter-American Water Day (IAWD) in 1992 was initiated by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering (AIDIS) and the Caribbean Water and Waste Water Association (CWWA), with the signing of a declaration at the XXIII Inter-American AIDIS Congress in Havana Cuba.



CEHI's Lab Technician Alvin Lewis explains the work of the Institute to students

In April 2001, the Organization of American States (OAS) joined the initiative. The organisers affirmed that the commemoration should be viewed as a "celebration of water" by the public.

IAWD collaborators maintain that while, in general, the countries of this region are abundantly rich in water resources, water is not uniformly distributed, managed nor protected. In many areas also, access to clean drinking water or water service is problematic for many of the poorest members of the population.

"Access to clean drinking water in sufficient quantities is a right, not a privilege, and all citizens should be afforded this right", affirms the IAWD declaration.

Rapid Needs Assessments for Flood Preparedness

Between April 8 and 30, 2003, four national workshops were conducted on Environmental Health Contingency Planning and Environmental Health Rapid Needs Assessment for floods in St Lucia, St Kitts & Nevis, St Vincent & The Grenadines and Guyana.

These were organised by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in collaboration with the CEHI as well as the Ministries of Health of the respective countries.

These workshops were part of a Caribbean Flood Mitigation project, funded by the Disaster Preparedness Program of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (DIPECHO).

The project aims to strengthen the capability of the health sector to deal with environmental health issues related to floods due to hurricanes or torrential rain. Its two main components are: Environmental Health Contingency Planning and Environmental Health Rapid Needs Assessment for Floods.



Source: The Jamaica Observer
Photo: Bryan Cummings

Toward achievement of the latter goal, CEHI developed a rapid assessment tool and during the four national workshops basic training for environmental health officers in the rapid assessment of damage and needs after floods was being provided. The rapid needs assessment training materials addressed the issues: Water; Sanitation in Shelters; Solid Waste and Excreta Disposal Methods after Floods; Food Safety; Vector Control and Chemical Hazards.

One hundred persons were trained at the respective workshops.

Taking Water Issues to the People

World Environment Day (WED) - June 5 - is a special day in the annual calendar of events for the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI).

Under the internationally-designated theme: *Water - Two Billion People are Dying for It!*, CEHI in collaboration with the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN) St. Lucia Chapter, hosted two days of activities in celebration of World Environment Day on June 5th and 6th at the Castries Town Hall. Agencies, organizations, community groups and the private sector involved in environmental management and sustainable development were invited to participate, focusing on the theme. The celebrations were open to the general public and activities had a youth focus. Students and teachers from all schools on the island were invited to attend and participate in the activities.



World Environment Day 2003: Students participated in full force

The activities included an exhibition, lecture series, and environment-based entertainment by a number of St. Lucian schools. Key persons in related organizations and government ministries were invited to make presentations, as part of the lecture series.

June 5th was devoted to a series of lectures focusing on the World Environment Day and International Year of Freshwater. Lectures topics included: *The Role of Youth in Water Resources Management; Policy Framework for Water Resources Management: the Case of the St. Lucia Water Sector Policy; Forests and Water: Interrelationships; Production and Conservation of Drinking Water; and Water: Human Health Implications.*

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On June 6th, the exhibition sought to provide a wealth of environmental information, services and technologies for environmental management, in particular water resources. It also highlighted what agencies and organizations are doing to conserve and protect water resources.

The events were officially launched by Minister of Health, Human Services and Family Affairs, Hon. Damien Greaves who noted the involvement of the youth and pledged his government's support for activities which could have the effect of raising public awareness on matters of long-term concern to his country and the Caribbean as a whole.



World Environment Day 2003: Dr. Oplet poses with students

The opening ceremony also featured a cameo appearance by Dr Oplet - a character created by students of the Providence Girls High School in Trinidad to promote notions of conservation and an appreciation of the value of water.



Inter-American Water Network to meet in St. Lucia

Thirty Central American and Caribbean focal points from within the Inter-American Water Resources Network (IWRN) will assemble in St Lucia on January 26-27, 2004 to explore new areas of cooperation among members of the 10-year old initiative.

CEHI, which serves on the Project Steering Committee representing the Caribbean, is teaming with its Central American counterpart organisation, the Regional Committee on Water Resources (CRRH) of Costa Rica to host the event.

The IWRN was established at the Inter-American Dialogue on Water Management in Miami in 1993. It has since become an important regional effort that joins governmental, non-governmental, academic, and international organisations with research groups, industry, and the private sector to share information and technology, provide partnerships, and promote training opportunities.

The Deltamerica Project is the centre-piece activity of the IWRN. It is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) of the World Bank and is implemented by the Organization of American States (OAS). This meeting is being convened under the Deltamerica banner.

IWRN is a network of networks developed to build and strengthen water resource partnerships in the Western Hemisphere that address issues of public health, water supply, sanitation, the protection of ecosystems, and the management of water resources in the context of sustainable development.

The network promotes horizontal collaboration among member countries of the OAS, academic institutions, non-governmental organisations, water user associations, the private sector and individual practitioners throughout the water resources community of the Americas.

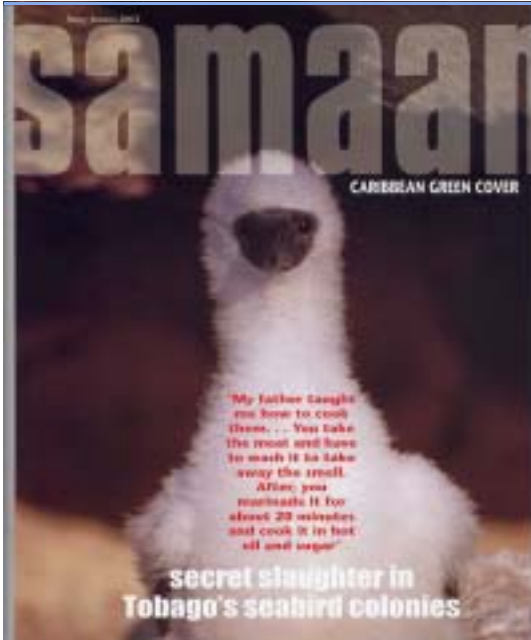
It also facilitates technological cooperation and information and data sharing; develops opportunities for education, training, and international water management internships; and brings together partnerships to investigate and manage water resources. The IWRN uses existing networks and organisations to accomplish its goals and objectives.

The Network was charged with the following objectives:

1. To improve the capacity of nations to communicate, to cooperate on technology and information exchange, and to coordinate water and management policies.
2. To promote the use of the principles of watershed management in ecosystem planning and management.
3. To encourage communications and exchanges of information between nations.
4. To facilitate horizontal collaboration and the formation of partnerships between nations and institutions in the Americas.
5. To strengthen the capacity of institutions to manage and protect water resources under conditions of uncertainty and complexity.
6. To encourage public participation in making decisions and to empower all stakeholders involved in water issue.
7. To strengthen partnerships among water resources organisations and professionals in the Western Hemisphere.

Trinidad launches its first Environmental Magazine

By: Ryan Gilkes, CERN Correspondent, Barbados



Cover of premier edition of Trinidad's first environmental Magazine, Samaan

The Samaan. It's an enormous, tropical, mushroom-shaped tree which provides plenty of shade. Quite common throughout Trinidad and Tobago and other islands, it is a quite common landscaping feature.

At night, and also when it rains, its leaves close to allow watering of the earth which it covers. Samaan. A beautiful tree with a lovely name: for a magazine editor, it also has great typographical design possibilities. In Trinidad and Tobago, Samaan may well come to be known as an original magazine that celebrates the natural environment with a campaigning effort to arrest its decline.

Samaan's primary goals, says journalist Mark Meredith, the magazine's editor-in-chief, is to instill in Trinidadians an appreciation of what they have with an awareness of the consequences of human actions on the environment and children's future.


"It's a voice for our environment," says Meredith. "We believe in a proactive approach, not only us as a media publication ourselves, but by the people who read Samaan. We want to encourage volunteerism as an ethical imperative for sustainable development; encourage people to get up and do something."

So the magazine has issued a challenge to Trinidad and Tobago's legislature to use its political muscle to preserve the off-island of St Giles and Little Tobago as eco-destinations using local boatmen, guides and guest-houses.

"The seabirds of those colonies are the most important seabird colonies in the entire south east Caribbean," Meredith adds. "Adult seabirds, chicks and eggs have been plundered for generations, including boobies, frigate birds, terns and pelicans. The islands could be a major ecotourism attraction for Tobago providing employment in the form of guides, boatmen, guesthouses etc. But the birds get no protection."

According to him, wardens are needed with working boats and equipment along with guides who could be trained by local NGOs (non-governmental organisations), potential guest house operators given fiscal incentives. "The Tobago House of Assembly and central Trinidad government could facilitate it all, if they really wanted to," he adds.

At present, Samaan's distribution list is wide and varied with many bookshops selling the magazine, and still copies are being mailed free to chambers/associations of trade, tourism and industry, government ministries, agencies and foreign embassies in Trinidad and Tobago, NGOs and selected people in the



environmental field locally. Meredith says they've consciously tried to make the magazine visually attractive and striking.

“3,500 copies are being sent to tomorrow’s decision makers, our secondary school students. We are trying to reach anyone that makes decisions about our patrimony, now or in years to come. It is only if voters decide that their environment is an issue precious enough to determine their vote will politicians take them on. So it's a long road.”

The magazine's 80 pages are packed with diverse information and include commentary, features on the environment, natural history, entertainment, travel, hiking guides and outdoor recreation. And there are investigative reports.

As for Caribbean readers, they too could soon have the opportunity to get a taste Samaan. Says Meredith: “We are limited by our print run in this first issue. We will send copies abroad to those who request it while stocks last. If we get the support to finance an increased print-run for distribution throughout the English-speaking Caribbean for future issues we will do so, broadening our editorial scope to suit.

After all, SAMAAN's slogan is "Caribbean Green Cover".



Greening making sense in Barbados for Green Expo 2003

By: Joanne C. Hillhouse, CERN Correspondent, Barbados

Schools, oil companies, hotels, artists and artisans, water treatment companies, landscapers, museums, airlines and a regional publishing giant may not, at a glance, seem to have much in common.


But companies and agencies of this type, and myriad others, were all part of Green Expo 2003, an environmental showcase held in Barbados in October.

Their efforts underscore the point that ‘greening’ isn’t an esoteric notion, the exclusive domain of environmentalists, but the business of everyone in any given community.

Harold Hoyte, chairman of the Greening Barbados Committee and president of the Nation newspaper group, stresses that the expo took some doing – three years and a lot of convincing.

“Getting here involved navigating through a lot of traffic, and overcoming a lot of smog in the planning and the execution,” says Hoyte, even as he spells out his hopes for the long-term impact of the fair.

In the long-term, Hoyte sees the need to alter the perspective of prospective exhibitors. “Many of the persons whom we approached about participating in this exhibition say they did not have any environmental products,” Hoyte adds.



“In their narrow understanding of the environment, they meant to say that what they do had nothing to do with greenery, or growing trees, or garbage disposal, or protection of the reefs or fuel efficiency, or waste management or whatever.”

But the range of exhibitors at the Expo belied that notion.

“We were able to prove to them,” Hoyte says, “that everything we do impacts on our environment.”

More than that, the exhibitors captured the theme ‘Greening Makes Sense’, by showing not just how the environment benefits but how businesses and individuals can and have saved money by utilizing products that are more environmentally friendly, and applying best practices to reduce all kinds of waste.

Hotels, like Amaryllis Beach Resort, for instance, can proudly boast of reducing water consumption from 220 gallons per guest to 133 gallons per guest due to its water conservation initiatives. This includes foot pedals at the kitchen sinks, draining pools only when necessary, and placing a filled pet bottle in the tanks of toilets to displace the excess water used in flushing.

Toilets were a recurring image, given the amount of water guzzled by them in most households and businesses. Of all household water uses, this was found to account for the highest percentage. Models, of not only toilets but also urinals – that use limited or no water were on show and, clearly, in practice, at some Barbados hotels.

One of the hotels on location was Southern Palms Beach, which has achieved Green Globe Certification.

“The theme that I’ve chosen for this particular expo is the littering on the beach and the danger to the sea turtles, our endangered Hawksbill turtles, and other marine life,” says Southern Palm’s Jenni Wilson. “We realize that Barbados is a small island, that we’re limited in our resources and we want to try and help protect and preserve as much as possible, and get as many people on board so that the island is around for a lot more years for people to enjoy it.”

The creative displays of the various exhibitors and their enthusiastic approach to the theme bodes well for the future. From the hemp clothes manufacturers to the solar water heater distributors, they showed not only how money could be saved but also how money could be made by creatively investing in the environment.

Z. Philips, for instance, through her Heartworks Inc. brand, markets clothing and body care products made from Hemp. “It has over 25,000 uses,” she says. “So, it can replace pretty much anything that is done with plastic. So, what we’re doing, because we don’t really hear too much about it in the whole environmental movement, we’re trying to introduce it so that people see there’s an alternative.”

If it is, as some say, “All about the Benjamins” (100 dollar bills), then clearly some are already exploring and finding ways to get paid. But that it’s about more than that – about companies treating the environment responsibly even in the pursuit of the almighty dollar – also came through.

“The main reason we’re here,” says the representative from the Barbados National Terminal Company



Limited, “[is that] we’re dealing with oil, and oil can get into the water system, also it can get into the sea. We collect our oil via the tankers from the sea, and they’re pumped underground. So, one of the main reasons we’re here is to let the public know that we think about the environment.

“We’re going to build the lines with the double-lined pipes; in case there’s a rupture, the lines [are] protected with another level. We’re also going to [ensure] that [if] there’s an oil spill it wouldn’t get back onto the beaches, which would have great impact on the tourist industry.”

Green Expo and the Greening Barbados Programme was a project of the Nation and sister company, Starcom Network radio, which also run a health promotion fair. The idea behind Green Expo is to create a meaningful legacy by pursuing a project likely to fundamentally impact Barbados. The project has the potential to reach beyond Barbados’ borders, having attracted participation of exhibitors from Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Dominica, Jamaica, Canada and England.

“We thank them,” Hoyte says, “for turning an exciting idea into reality.”

Windows of opportunity

- ◆ **Caribbean Health Research Council 49th Annual Scientific Meeting**, April 22 – 24, 2004, Grenada.

Call for Papers. Submit papers for oral and poster presentations. Deadline for receipt of papers is **December 1, 2003**.

Criteria for selection include scientific merit and relevance to priority health areas of the region. POSTER rather than ORAL presentations are preferable for papers which contain large amounts of data, deal with particular techniques or report highly specialized work.

As with other international meetings, the number of posters being accepted is increasing. Note that posters are not “second rate” – indeed, second rate papers are not accepted. Authors whose papers are accepted, as oral or poster presentations, but who do not present, will not have their papers considered in the next two years. **Note:** Prizes are awarded for the best posters. The Edward Kass Memorial Research Prize for oral presentations will be awarded to a Caribbean investigator who is not a well established researcher. The prize will normally be used for a visit to a scientific meeting or laboratory of choice to a value of not more than US\$2,000.00.

Contact: Dr. Donald T. Simeon, Director of Research, CHRC, 25A Warner Street, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago, Tel: (868) 645 -3769; 7421; Fax: (868) 645 -0705; e-mail: chrc.tt@trinidad.net; Website: www.chrc-caribbean-org

- ◆ **From Crisis to Opportunity. . .Strengthening Your Utility's Assets**, February 3-6, 2004, Loews Santa Monica, Los Angeles, California

The conference will explore organizational dynamics that, without action, have the potential to become organizational crises. Conference sessions will identify ways in which these potential crises can instead create opportunities to improve and strengthen a particular asset of a utility – or an entire organization. Issue areas to be examined include:

Strengthening Your Workforce: expert speakers will focus on generational and changing workforce issues and succession planning; *Strengthening Your Facilities:* discussions will address issues related to security and our nation's aging infrastructure; *Strengthening Your Relationships* — experts will examine communication issues and strategies to better both internal communication and external communication.

Visit our website at www.amsa-cleanwater.org/meetings/ for the latest information on AMSA's 2004 Winter Conference

- ◆ **Coastal Environment 2004:** 5th International Conference on Environmental Problems in Coastal Regions. 26 - 28 April 2004, Alicante, Spain

The Conference will address the subjects of monitoring, analysis and modelling of coastal regions, including sea, air and other phenomena. This conference will deal with topics that are related to the prevention, alleviation and minimization of the adverse effects of environmental problems, to seek a balanced use of the coastal regions. The meeting will also cover a series of related topics including the practical applications of computer modelling of sea and coastal areas. There will be mini-exhibition space available for organisations wishing to exhibit hardware, software, products, services and literature relating to the theme of the conference.

Contact: Conference Secretariat, Rachel Green, Senior Conference Co-ordinator, Coastal Environment 2004, Wessex Institute of Technology, Ashurst Lodge, Ashurst, Southampton, SO40 7AA; Telephone: 44 (0) 238 029 3223; Fax: 44 (0) 238 029 2853; Email: rgreen@wessex.ac.uk

- ◆ **Air & Waste Management Association 97th Annual Conference & Exhibition**, Jun. 22-25, 2004. Indianapolis, IN, USA.

The Air & Waste Management Association's Annual Conference and Exhibition is one of the world's premier events for environmental professionals. A&WMA has provided this forum to encourage sharing of information among representatives from government, industry, consulting and academia.

Contact: Gene Garbowsky, Tel: 412-232-3444, ext. 3102; Fax: 412-232-3450, E-mail: ggarbowsky@awma.org; Web: <http://www.awma.org/ACE2004>

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- The institution represented; and
- Telephone and fax numbers, postal address and email address.