



A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AGENCY

Customs gets New Weapon to fight Illegal Wildlife Trade



Yvette Strong (left), Senior Manager, Conservation and Protection Sub Division at the National Environment and Planning Agency presents Claudette Hill of the Jamaica Customs Agency with a new electronic tool kit containing information on local laws and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

The Jamaica Customs Agency is now better equipped to prevent the illegal trafficking of wildlife.

This, as the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) in collaboration with the Scientific Authority of Jamaica

handed over an electronic tool kit to the Jamaica Customs Agency on March 3.

The tool kit contains information on local laws and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Commissioner of Customs, Major Richard Reese said that the new resource would act as a guide to the Agency's officers who are often on the front line in the fight against illegal trade in endemic and endangered animals and plants.

"When poachers trade endangered animals and plants, the point of entry or exit is usually from one of the island's ports. This tool kit provides customs officers with a comprehensive refresher course on the detection of infractions and the requirements of the proper reporting procedures" said Major Reese.

The tool kit handover took place as part of NEPA's activities to celebrate World Wildlife Day.

This year's theme for the internationally recognized calendar day is '*The future of wildlife is in our hands*'.

THE NEPSETTER

Wildlife Issue

APRIL 2016

IN THIS ISSUE

Peter Knight, Chief Executive Officer at NEPA said that the Agency had in recent years dealt with many reports of illegally traded endemic animals and plants, particularly the island's birds.

Mr. Knight further stated that in addition to sensitizing customs officers, the Agency would be heightening its public awareness and education campaign regarding environmental laws and would continue with its thrust to enforce these laws.

Winners of WWD Photography Competition

Jamaicans showcase wetlands for World Wetlands Day Photo Competition

Page 2



Drive for Community Renewal

New Development Orders offer incentives to developers

Page 3

Snapshots for Wetland Conservation

An Information Technology Specialist, a Medical Doctor and Corporate Planner are the winners of the 2016 World Wetlands Day Photography Competition, which was organized by the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) to sensitize the public about Jamaica's wetlands.

First place was awarded to Debbie-Ann Powell for her photograph, **"Fisherfolk Tours"**, second place went to Sherard Little for his photograph, **"Shared Resources"** and third place was awarded to Damion Cameron for his photograph **"You have my back, I have yours"**.

Ms. Powell said, "The competition was fun for me. It required that I educate myself on what bodies of water are considered wetlands; it sent me hunting a bit to find suitable locations here in Jamaica that satisfied the definition and it allowed me to display my work to a number of persons beyond my immediate network, which is indeed priceless."



Winners of the World Wetlands Day (WWD) Photography Competition show off their trophies. Sharing in the moment are: Dionne Rose (extreme left), Manager of Public Education & Corporate Communication Branch at NEPA and Phillippa Mills (extreme right), Graphic Artist and Chair of the WWD Photography Competition.

The second place winner, Sherard Little, Medical Doctor, said his love for nature and the outdoors drove him to enter the competition, a decision which brought winning rewards.

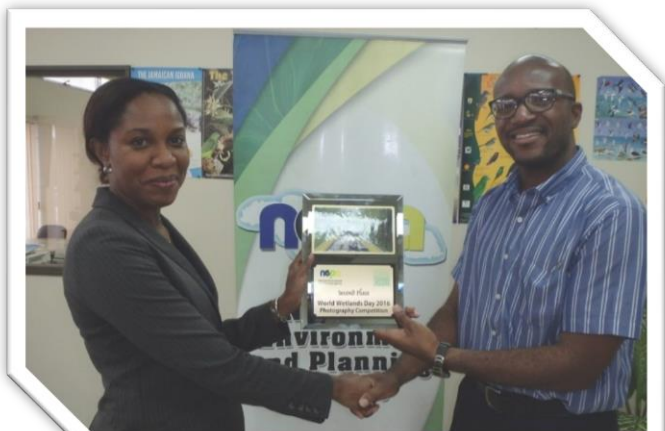
Meanwhile, third place winner, Damion Cameron, a Corporate Planning Manager at the Norman Manley International Airport, said of his entry, "when I examined all the images I took, the photo of the birds was one of my immediate favourites. I think the positioning of the birds was interesting. It says in the struggle to survive "you've got my back I've got yours". The irony of the shot is that just beneath the tree, which was filled with birds, were crocodiles lying in wait, if any were to fall from the tree."

The Competition was held under the theme, **Wetlands for Sustainable Livelihoods**. Thirty-eight persons entered the Competition, submitting a total of 69 photos from all across the island.

World Wetlands Day, celebrated on March 2, 2016 marked the anniversary of the signing of the Ramsar Convention, signed on that day in Ramsar, Iran in 1971. During the final judging period, the photos were displayed on NEPA's various social media platforms for the general public to view and voted on.

Dionne Rose, Manager, Public Education & Corporate Communication said, "this is the first year we are having a Competition of this nature. The response has been overwhelming. I think we have achieved our objective, which was to raise public awareness of the value of our wetlands."

The winners were announced at a ceremony held at the Institute of Jamaica, on Thursday, March 3, 2016 which was attended by many of the Agency's partners and industry shareholders, the awardees and various well-wishers.



Kay-Ann Miller, Senior Librarian (left) at NEPA presents plaque to second place winner, Dr. Sherard Little.



Phillippa Mills (left), Graphic Artist at NEPA presents Damion Cameron, third place winner with his plaque.

Incentives for Developers Focused on Community Renewal

Developers who invest in housing projects in communities that need regeneration stand to benefit from government incentives through new Development Orders being drafted for Kingston and St. Andrew.

Leonard Francis, Director of Spatial Planning Division at the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) said through the Development Order process NEPA is creating policies that encourage redevelopment in these areas by permitting increased densities.

Mr. Francis said that requirements for facilities such as parking and recreational green spaces may also be relaxed for housing developments in areas where such infrastructure already exists in close proximity and is accessible to the public.

He added that special concessions are being made for developers who engage in mixed income and mixed use developments.

"Other incentives included in the Development Orders are allowances for smaller lot sizes and narrower set-backs. This means that developers will be able to maximize the use of the land and ultimately provide more affordable housing solutions for low to middle income Jamaicans," explained Francis.

According to NEPA's Director, Downtown Kingston in particular has been earmarked in the draft Development Order for Kingston and St. Andrew, as one of the areas that will benefit from the relaxed planning policies.



An Ariel shot of Downtown, Kingston



An Ariel shot of residential community, Kingston

DID YOU KNOW?

A Development Order is a legal document which is used to guide development in the area to which it applies.

It is used to ensure proper conditions and conveniences, the coordination of roads and public services and the conservation and development of natural resources.

SARGASSUM FACTS - BE IN THE KNOW!

What is Sargassum?

Sargassum is a brown alga, or seaweed that floats free in the ocean and never attaches to the ocean floor. These free-floating forms are only found in the Atlantic Ocean.



For some species, these Sargassum mats are home...

Sargassum provides refuge for migratory species and essential habitat for some 120 species of fish and more than 120 species of invertebrates. It's an important nursery habitat that provides shelter

and food for endangered species such as sea turtles and for commercially important species of fish such as tunas.



Did you know?

There are two species of Sargassum involved in the sargassum influx: *Sargassum natans* and *Sargassum fluitans*.



SARGASSUM REMOVAL IN FOUR EASY STEPS

1. Stockpile the seaweed at a designated location
2. Turn the material occasionally to encourage the drying of the material and the ultimate removal of sand
3. Dispose the organic material at an appropriate off site location
4. Bury the seaweed on the beach where practical



QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Contact us:

National Environment and Planning Agency

10 & 11 Caledonia Avenue

Kingston 5

Telephone: 1 (876) 754- 7540

Email: pubed@nepa.gov.jm

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Editor-in-Chief

Dionne Rose

Executive Editor

Deleen Powell

Writer

Malcolm Forbes

Proof Readers

Jennifer Rankine

Layout

Phillippa Mills

Photographer

Kenta Morishima