



**Review of Local Watershed
Management Committees and
Governance Mechanisms**

Ridge to Reef Watershed Project

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Review of Local Watershed Management Committees In Jamaica

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Preface

The Ridge to Reef Watershed Project (R2RW) is a five year (with an optional sixth year) activity contributing to the achievement of USAID/Jamaica's SO2 – "improved quality of key natural resources in areas that are both environmentally and economically significant". R2RW comprises three Components contributing to the achievement of the results under SO2. Component 1 will assist targeted organizations identify and promote sustainable environmental management practices by resource users. Component 2 focuses on identifying and supporting solutions to improve the enforcement of targeted existing environmental regulations, primarily in the Great River and Rio Grande watersheds. Component 3 provides assistance to key organizations to support, coordinate, and expand watershed management efforts in Jamaica.

Current trends in resource management demand the active participation of local communities in planning and implementing activities. In Jamaica, resource management programs employ a number of approaches to organize local groups with a view to facilitating these inputs. In addition, other mechanisms to enhance citizen participation in the planning, implementation and management of local initiatives are being established. These include the Parish Development Committees established by the GOJ's Local Government Reform Program and the Community Development Committees established under the Integrated Community Development Program of the Social Development Commission.

Notwithstanding these initiatives, it is felt that community participation in resource management in general and in watershed management in particular is not sufficiently institutionalized. The local governance structures as they exist are insufficiently integrated into the watershed management framework and in the absence of significant and targeted external inputs, community based groups remain peripheral to the management process, with their chief function being advisory and consultative.

The R2RW Project has commissioned this study to understand better some of the strategies which have been employed in establishing local resource management groups, linkages with existing governance structures and the National Integrated Watershed Management Council, and to receive recommendations on group establishment, appropriate governance strategies and institutional linkages for improving participation in an integrated, effective, locally driven watershed management system.

This study follows on from several reports and studies undertaken on the issues of governance, policy and legislation as they relate to watershed management in Jamaica. Notable among these are the studies: *Governance and Watershed Management*, ARD (2001) which examined issues and options available for integrating watershed management into the governance process underway in Jamaica; the report *Policy and Legislative Framework for Watershed Management in Jamaica-a Review of Existing Laws and Regulations* ARD (2001) and the study *Changing the Culture of Forestry in Jamaica: the Role of Local Forest Management Committees* Geoghagen and Bennett (2002).

The Report is in two parts. Part 1 includes:

- A review of the strategies and methods employed for establishing resource management user groups, linkages with governance structures and participatory mechanisms
- Recommendations for a generic methods of establishing LWMCs including recommendations on mandate, governance and participation strategies, linkages with the NIWMC and policy and legislation issues.

- A review of the Draft concept papers “National Integrated Watershed Management Council: Strategic Directions for the future” and “Criteria for the registration of Local Watershed Management Committees”

Part II consists of a Procedures Manual for establishing and operating effective, integrated local watershed/forestry management committees.

Executive Summary

Globally, there has been an increasing recognition of the importance of citizen participation in planning and management of natural resources. Initially part of a thrust started by the development of Local Agenda 21 plans, the trend has led to various forms of collaborative and participatory management.

In the 1990's Jamaica undertook a number of initiatives which saw the management of significant tracts of protected areas being delegated to NGOs. Since that time a number of other initiatives has come on stream to enable increased civil society participation on governance, planning and decision making at the local level.

In respect of natural resources management, the Draft Watershed Policy (2001), the Forest Act (1996), Forest Policy (2001) and Water Policy (2001) all make provisions for local participation in management and advisory activities. Several groups have been established with a mandate to manage/ provide advice on the management of watersheds and related resources. These include: The Rio Grande Watershed Management Committee (RGWMC), the Great River Watershed Management Committee (GRWMC), the Local Forestry Management Committees (LFMCs) of the Pencar/ Buff Bay Watershed; Water User Associations (WUAs); farmer groups in eastern Jamaica supported by the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and the Eastern Jamaica Agricultural Support Project (EJASP); and the National Sanitation Task Force.

A review of these groups according to: Mandate; Legislative/policy framework; Legal status; funding and Institutional support; extent of linkages with governance and other structures; lessons learned; elements of group formation had the following findings:

- The groups shared **common elements** of group formation including donor/ government agency led support for the process; steps taken toward group establishment; method of awareness raising, capacity building and project planning
- There were **common constraints** which included the absence of resources to sustain local management efforts; insecurities regarding the sustainability of the process once external funding ceased; irregular attendance at meetings due to conflicts with time necessary to earn a living; fatigue – frequently the same persons involved in most community activities are called upon to serve on these committees; lack of land tenure and a resulting lack of few incentives to invest time and effort to contribute to a long term process of stewardship ; inadequacy of financial and human resources to facilitate the participation of local authorities and the Social Development Commission and low level of literacy among community members particularly among deep rural and farmer groups.
- Among the **lessons learned** were: the process of group formation is involved and the length is determined by the capacity of the community to organize around common issues; the process requires the skills of a social organizer or skilled facilitator; there is need to build technical capacity in watershed management at the local level; land tenure and access are important to engendering stewardship responsibilities within communities; there is much latent talent among communities; it is important to meet people where there needs are; public recognition of successes is critical to building esteem; illiteracy is a significant impediment to development; PDCs and CDCs need to have more autonomy and resources to fulfill their mandate; there is need for a national mandate for institutional actors; there is a need for improved coordination especially among community stakeholders and institutional actors to reduce overlap.

In proposing a mechanism by which LWMCs can be established, the following are considered: LWMC functions, Policy and Legislative framework, Institutional Framework and optimum linkages; and levels at which LWMCs are developed.

Appropriate functions for LWMCs may include:

1. Mobilization and facilitation of community participation.
2. Development and implementation of income generating and other project activities to conserve and protect watersheds in collaboration with local and national public and private sector agencies.
3. Public awareness within the designated areas and linking the community with other agencies concerned with watershed management.

Supporting enforcement and compliance of relevant laws and regulations, and advocacy on behalf of local watershed area interests.

4. Provision of advice to relevant authorities and field staff, and monitoring of activities of watershed users.

The Policy Framework for the management of watersheds by local management entities is captured in several documents including a Cabinet Order, (July 2001) establishing the National Integrated Watershed Management Council, the Local Watershed Management Committees and the Local Forestry Management Committees as mechanisms to contribute to watershed management in Jamaica; The Draft Watershed Policy Paper: "Towards a Watershed Policy for Jamaica (2001)" which mentions LWMCs as part of the strategy for implementation of WM at the local level; the Forest Policy (2001) which includes community participation as a major strategy for implementation of local forest management; the Forest Act which speaks to the appointment of LFMCs with specific advisory and monitoring roles in local forest management; other national initiatives such as the process to modernize the planning framework to incorporate citizen participation in local level planning and implementation; local level initiatives to improve the performance of local authorities in undertaking a greater role in local level management; and the framework for Local Sustainable Development planning which incorporates notions of governance and local participation in a new framework for planning.

The institutional framework governing watershed management includes the following categories of stakeholders: regulatory; custodial; technical information, advisory, extension and research; coordinating committees; NGO's and external agencies; and local level support. The linkages between the stakeholders are complex (Fig 1) but are characterized by reciprocal links between: the LWMCs (all levels) and the NIWMC via the LGCWG; between the various levels of LWMC ie community, sub-unit and WMU level; between LWMCs and the technical agencies who provide advice and guidance and who are also advised by the LWMCs; and links with the SDC and PDC structures which provide local level support to facilitate participatory processes.

There are different levels at which the LWMC can be established One is at the **Watershed Management Unit Level**, where the interest of the entire watershed is the focus of the group; the second level is the **sub unit level** where the watershed is broken down into smaller units which may be based on geographical integrity, and the third level is the **community level** where one or two communities take responsibility for the watershed area most closely related to their community. The high cost of establishing and supporting activities at the watershed wide level is of concern because of the implications for the sustainability of the effort following the end of the respective projects. It may be prudent to break down the larger watershed wide management groups into smaller units which can more easily be managed without large amounts of financial

resources. This is an alternative which the R2RW should explore within the last two years of the project.

There are a number of gaps in the various pieces of policy documentation related to local watershed management. Chief among these gaps are the following:

1. **The Watershed Act (1963)** which has no regulations and makes no mention of LWMCs. As such, it is in need of considerable updating to reflect among other things, the new participatory approach to watershed management,
2. **The Draft Watershed Policy** whose review and finalization has been overtaken by several events, the most significant of these have been the establishment of the National Integrated Watershed Management Council (NIWMC) and the establishment of several local resource management groups in watershed areas. There are therefore gaps related to local watershed management, the role and function of the NIWMC, the role and function of LWMCs and relationships between the two entities.
3. Despite the naming of these committees as management committees, their roles as outlined in the Forest Act for example, appears to be more advisory.
 - a. The mandate and role of the main institutional players differ considerably in the respective policy documents. For example, while the Draft Watershed policy asserts that the Forest Department has “overall responsibility for the implementation of watershed protection and conservation”, the Forest Policy and Forest Act does not reflect this view.
 - b. Official recognition of LWMCs. There are no provisions in the current Draft Watershed Policy for the recognition of the LWMCs as legal entities capable of operating bank accounts and entering into legal agreements with other partners.

It is recommended that the Draft Watershed Policy document and Watershed Protection Act be modified to:

- Clarify the role of the NIWMC.
- Address the role of LWMCs and their linkages with community level structures such as PDCs, CDCs etc.
- Address the issue of registration of LWMCs with the NIWMC to facilitate their independent operation as legal entities.
- Define arrangements where other groups such as LFMcs, WUAs etc can be designated to operate as LWMCs in specified areas.

The Forest Act, Watershed Protection Act and the respective policies need to be harmonized to reflect a common view of the identity and role of the institution responsible overall implementation of watershed management.

The essential steps in establishing an LWMC are:

1. **Preparatory** – involves assessment of the available institutional and financial resources, build public awareness of benefits of organization; identify issues and organizing them to meet a common end.

2. **Group formation and action planning** - involves developing group vision, objectives, scope and mechanisms of operation. Culminates in group establishment by way of democratic elections, and
3. **Learning by doing** - Implementation of project activities identified collectively by the group; monitoring of project activities, evaluation of results; testing of policy
4. **Policy Review and Adaptation** - involves the transmission of information and results from the LWMCs (field) to the NIWMC to facilitate national level coordination, policy review and adaptation.

1. Review of Existing LWMCs and Other Resource Management Groups

Globally, there has been a concerted move toward including ordinary citizens in the planning and management of natural resources. This paradigm shift had its genesis following the Rio Conference in 1992 when Local Agenda 21 plans were identified as an important mechanism to achieve sustainable development through local participation in planning and development. The trend has led to what is now known as collaborative management or participatory management. This mode of citizen interaction is differentiated from consultative processes where citizens are only consulted, but have no real say in the decision making and management processes.

In Jamaica, the 1990's marked the genesis of the process of delegation of management responsibilities of significant areas of protected areas to non-government organizations. Among these delegations were the Blue and John Crow Mountain National Park to the Jamaica Conservation Development Trust (JCdT), the, Montego Bay Marine Park to the Montego Bay Trust and the Negril Environmental Protection Area, to the Negril Environment Protection Trust.

Concurrent with these natural resource centered initiatives have come the Local Government Reform Program which among other things, seeks to significantly increase the participation of civil society and the citizenry at large in governance and local government decision-making. A critical component of this initiative is the establishment of Parish Development Committees a parish based multi-stakeholder forum. These structures together with the Community Development Committees (CDCs) and Development Area Committees (DACs) established by the Integrated Community Development Program of the Social Development Commission (SDC) and the Local Sustainable Development Planning process initiated by the ENACT Program represent opportunities to firmly ground resource management initiatives within local community based institutions.

In respect of the island's watershed areas, the issue of garnering local participation in management has been identified as a critical activity for some time. The Draft Watershed Policy 2001, the Forest Act of 1996 and the Forest Policy of 2001 address the need for local management structures in the respective areas. As such, a significant amount of effort has gone into establishing such groups. The Rio Grande and Great River Watershed Management Committees supported by the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) and the Ridge to Reef Watershed (R2RW) Project and the Local Forestry Management Committees (LWMCs) of the Pencar/Buff Bay Watershed are examples of these. Similarly, a number of user groups have been formed to undertake management of other natural resource assets. These include Water User Associations (WUAs) supported by the National Irrigation Commission (NIC) to manage distribution of irrigation water; farmer groups in eastern Jamaica supported by the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and the Eastern Jamaica Agricultural Support Project (EJASP) to manage farming inputs; and the National Sanitation Task Force supported by Ministry of Health and UNDP/LIFE to advise on sanitation policy and low cost, local sanitation solutions.

These are the groups which the present report focuses on and seeks to characterize along the following lines.

- Mandate
- Legislative/policy framework
- Legal status
- Funding and Institutional support
- Extent of linkages with governance and other structures
- Lessons learned
- Elements of group formation

A more detailed analysis of each of the groups follows in Table 1.

Table 1 Analysis of Groups Involved in Local Watershed Management

Local management body	Organizing/ supporting body	When established	Mandate	Policy/ legislative context	Linkages with SDC, PDCs	Lessons learned	Elements in group formation
1. Buff Bay LFMC	Forestry Dept/ TFT Incorporated by means of Constitution sanctioned by Forest Act;	2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor the condition of the natural resources in the relevant forest reserve, management area or protected area ▪ To convene discussions public meetings and like activities relating to such natural resources ▪ To advise the Conservator on matters relating to the development of the Forest Management Plan and the making of regulations 	Forest Act 1996, Forest Policy 2001; Forest Management and Conservation Plan 2001; Also by Cabinet order, July 2001	Not significant but developed where relevant	Group formation has enhanced local understanding of the elements of good watershed and forest management CBOs probably not the best link in forest areas Training of agency staff in participatory techniques is very important	Preexisting studies forest inventory, socioeconomic and agro-forestry. Meetings with potential stakeholders; Provision of training; demonstration plots at schools and on farms Provision of resources to facilitate travel
2. Pencar LFMC	Forestry Dept/ TFT Incorporated by means of Constitution sanctioned by Forest Act;	2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To propose incentives for conservation practices in the area in which the relevant forest reserve, forest management area or protected area is located ▪ To assist in the design and execution of conservation projects in the area ▪ To do all such lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects 				

Local management body	Organizing/ supporting body	When established	Mandate	Policy/ legislative context	Linkages with SDC, PDCs	Lessons learned	Elements in group formation
3. Rio Grande LWMC	NEPA/ R2RW Unincorporated committee	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and recommend project proposals for funding by the R2RW small grants fund; establish sub committees to deal with the issues affecting the watershed; and to provide technical advice and support to the Parish Development Committee 	Draft Watershed Policy; Cabinet order July 2001; Forest Management and Conservation Plan.	Significant largely because of pre-existing initiatives to institutionalize local governance structures. MOU signed with Portland PDC	<p>Task of institutionalizing LWMC easier when governance structure in place.</p> <p>The same players in too many roles lead to non-performance; improved chances of continuity by integrating with SDC development areas; some uncertainty about future.</p>	<p>Significant civil society involvement in environmental management activities and the emerging local governance framework simplifies the process of group formation.</p> <p>Stakeholder planning workshop helped to focus on issues with a solution development perspective</p>
4. Great River LWMC	NEPA/R2RW Unincorporated committee	2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and recommend project proposals for funding by the R2RW small grants fund; establish sub committees to deal with the issues affecting the watershed; and to provide technical advice and support to the Parish Development Committee 	Draft Watershed Policy; Cabinet order July 2001; Forest Management and Conservation Plan.	Significant links with St James PDC, SDC, NEPA wardens Public Heath inspectors, CBOs, police youth clubs	Need to build on previous community animation/ engagement initiatives	Process built on community animation by NEPA, and SDC animation around solid waste.

Local management body	Organizing/ supporting body	When established	Mandate	Policy/ legislative context	Linkages with SDC, PDCs	Lessons learned	Elements in group formation
5. Water Users Associations: Hounslow Seven Rivers Pedro Plains	Inter American Development Bank/ National Irrigation Commission To be incorporated as Benevolent Societies	2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To maintain and operate an inter-farm irrigation system ▪ To independently manage water from the intake through to its drainage system ▪ To assure the equitable and timely supply and delivery of water based on a system of water shares ▪ To be financially self sustaining ▪ To govern the process through democratic processes 	National Water Policy; Master Plan for Irrigation; Water Act	Specific linkages with SDC for some training; RADA for technical support, no linkages with PDC or other local governance institutions	Groups used to patronage are difficult to cohere, field trips socials and cultural activities valuable to pull group together;	Need to define area of designation early; emphasis on pre-assessment of group; culture and heritage powerful influences. Training in group dynamics, participatory workshops. Build trust and cooperation; training in how to keep meetings, record minutes etc
6. Local Watershed committees in Redwood, Retrieve Bangor Ridge and Mamee River	UNDP/NRCA (NEPA) No legal status	1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vaguely articulated in policy ▪ To advise on and coordinate environmental activities in watershed areas 	None at the time of formation; Currently falls within Draft Watershed Policy; Cabinet order July 2001;	Linkages established between NRCA, Forestry Dept, WRA, RADA and some parish councils	Process of group formation is lengthy and involved. Intervention must have a tangible economic benefit to group to justify investment of time and effort.	Led by UNDP project team in collaboration with NEPA; consolidated in some areas by later efforts e.g. Retrieve in Great River watershed.
7. Farmers groups in Eastern Jamaica	RADA/ EJASP No legal status	2001	Generally to undertake poverty alleviation via rural development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To initiate and implement income generating and market led agricultural sub-projects ▪ To establish sustainable agricultural production systems 	No specific policy	Not significant. RADA main interlocutor, links also with beekeepers, Poultry, goat, dairy assoc's.	Group formation is lengthy process-groups require a lot of handholding. Field days and outings are useful in pulling group together and getting sharing going	Process builds on where the farmers interest lie and facilitates them to do what they decide to do.

Local management body	Organizing/ supporting body	When established	Mandate	Policy/ legislative context	Linkages with SDC, PDCs	Lessons learned	Elements in group formation
8. National Sanitation Task Force	UNDP/LIFE No legal status; not seen as a long term organization	1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To coordinate interagency action on sanitation policy and programs for local solutions Islandwide. 	Comprised of a number of policies relating to the health and environmental impacts of sanitation. Relevant laws and regulations include the Public Health Act; the NRCA Act, the building code; Water policy (1998)	Linkages with public health departments (within parish councils)		

1.1 The Buff Bay and Pencar Forestry Management Committees

The Buff Bay/Pencar Watershed comprise two major drainage systems which run from more than 200m up in the north Blue Mountains down to Annotto Bay on the Pencar side and the Buff Bay on the Buff Bay side. The upper reaches of the watershed are part of the Blue and John Crow Mountain National Park, and is comprised of forest reserves and coffee plantations, whereas the middle and lower reaches comprise mainly mixed farming. The steepness of the slopes and poor development practices make the area prone to flooding and land slippages which damage crops and infrastructure.

The LFMCs were established in 2000 following work carried out in the watershed by the Forestry Department, led by its Rural Sociologist and supported by the Trees for Tomorrow project. While it is essentially one watershed, two sub-units were established because of the geographic isolation of the one portion of the watershed from the other.

The mandate of the LFMCs is articulated in the Forest Act (1996) and expanded in the Constitution for the Buff Bay and Pencar LFMCs.

It is to:

- Monitor the condition of the natural resources in the relevant forest reserve, management area or protected area.
- Convene discussions, public meetings, and like activities relating to such natural resources.
- Advise the Conservator on matters relating to the development of the Forest Management Plan and the making of regulations.
- Propose incentives for conservation practices in the area in which the relevant forest reserve, forest management area or protected area is located.
- Assist in the design and execution of conservation projects in the area.
- Undertake other functions which may be provided for under the Forestry Act.

The initial composition of the LFMCs included local police, citizens associations, NGOs, local chapters of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, business interests (St Mary Banana Estates, Coffee Industry Board), RADA, NEPA, Public Health Department, National Water Commission etc.

While membership in the LFMC is open to “all community groups, NGOs and private sector entities present in the Buff Bay and Pencar sub-watersheds whose members are willing to participate” individuals must be nominated, their names submitted to the Conservator who recommends to the Minister of Agriculture that the individual be appointed to the committee. These stipulations are outlined in the Constitutions which the LFMCs developed in collaboration with the Forestry Department and under which they presently operate.

Among the challenges facing the LFMCs is poor attendance at meetings, lack of ownership of the process by the stakeholders –much of the activities particularly in the Pencar LFMC are very much Forestry Department-led; lack of representation of private sector interest, particularly large agriculture interests, and inadequate participation by other state organizations.

The poverty and high levels of illiteracy within the watershed, particularly in the upper reaches, makes wider participation on the part of ordinary citizens difficult, and these voices are largely absent from the Committee.

Meetings are held every two months although; initially the timing of these meetings was intended to be monthly. However, the adjustment has been made given the realities of other demands on the committee members, many of whom have difficulty balancing the time demands of their job or other livelihood responsibilities with their work on the LFMC. As activities to date regarding the formation of the LFMC have been largely supported by the Trees for Tomorrow project, which provides support for meetings including travel stipends for members, there are concerns regarding the sustainability of the effort beyond the Project period, particularly in light of the very limited budget of the Forestry Department. It has been reported that currently, there is tension between field staff and management of the department because of inadequate compensation for travel and overtime work related to field activities¹.

In response to the economic needs of the area, both LFMCs are working to develop opportunities for improved livelihoods through forest resources, with the Pencar LFMC establishing a plant nursery in the Enfield area and the Buff Bay LFMC moving to develop an eco-tourism and forestry project to include cabins, nature trails and recreational areas.

1.2 The Great River Watershed Management Committee

The Great River watershed links the four parishes of Hanover, St James, Westmoreland and St. Elizabeth, has an area of 34,000 acres and supports a population of approximately 85,000 persons.

The GRWMC was established to:

- Advise R2RW, NEPA and other state agencies.
- Address identified and prioritized actions.
- Monitor grants projects procurements and other related project expenditures.
- Promote R2RW and other environment activities.
- Provide a forum for sharing lessons learned and for influencing national level policies (such as at the level of the NIWMC).
- Monitor environmental activities in the watershed.
- Provide medium for addressing and integrating local community concerns and other relevant stakeholders.
- Facilitate coordination and collaboration of state agencies and private sector input and activities in the watershed.

The group comprises representatives of state agencies, NGOs and CBOs, and meets on a quarterly basis.

The establishment of this management committee in 2001 with the support of the R2RW project, benefited from earlier efforts by the National Environment and Planning Agency (then the Natural Resources Conservation Authority) in the late 1990's to establish a watershed committee in the Retrieve area under the UNDP Watershed Management Program. In addition, the Social Development Commission had also been working in the area, building organizational capacity

¹ Tighe Geoghagen and Noel Bennett. June 2002. Changing the Culture of Forestry in Jamaica: The role of Local Forest Management Committees.

among groups around the issue of solid waste, and establishing Community Development Committees.

R2RW project-led Rapid Rural Appraisals and Strategic Action Planning workshops held early in the early developmental stages of the committee and facilitated the identification of a number of environmental and economic issues facing the area. Among these were sanitation and water and the need for income generating activities and marketing of craft and other products from the area. As a result, four task forces were established including:

- Production and marketing
- Water and sanitation
- Compliance and enforcement and
- Public Awareness.

A number of activities have been undertaken through the task forces and their achievements to date are commendable.

The fact that the Great River watershed area encompasses four parishes presents a challenge as four local authorities and Parish Development Committees need to be involved in the management/operational structure of the committee. To facilitate this, the meetings of the GRWMC are rotated from parish to parish. However, to date participation by these parties has been less than optimum.

Nonetheless, several other state agencies are integrally involved and their representatives have taken a number of leadership roles on the executive and in the working groups. These agencies include the National Water Commission, Rural Agricultural Development Authority, St James Health Department, Social Development Commission and NEPA to name a few.

In fact, concern has been expressed in some quarters regarding the predominance of state agency representatives in the leadership positions of the Committee. It can be appreciated, however, that given the current capacity on the ground, and the low attendance by community representatives, the accomplishments of the group to this time would be significantly less had it not been for the state agencies. The challenge remains, therefore, to build more capacity on the ground among the local groups, generate increased interest and participation so that local representatives can fill more leadership as the committee evolves.

Concern has also been expressed regarding the scale and scope of the current committee. Considerable expense is incurred in planning and convening the quarterly meetings to facilitate representation from the entire watershed area. In addition to planning and underwriting the rental cost of meeting facilities, the R2RW project also stands the cost of transportation for community participants. While the need for this support is appreciated given the economic circumstances of some members, there are clear implications for the sustainability of the committee in this present form and mode beyond the R2RW project period which is already at the halfway mark.

A critical evaluation needs to be undertaken to determine how best to sustain and develop on the initiatives undertaken by the Committee with a more cost effective mechanism. This mechanism could well involve the formation and strengthening of a number of smaller management units around the community development committees (CDCs) or other existing community based structures. The scope of the activities undertaken and the convening of meetings would be such that a well organized community structure, with some state support and guidance and local authority input could manage a sub watershed management unit. These would meet quarterly and a larger meeting with representatives of all the sub units could be held twice yearly.

1.3 The Rio Grande Watershed Management Committee (RGWMC)

The Rio Grande Watershed unlike the Great River Watershed, is confined within one parish. Agriculture is the main activity in the watershed and chief among the environmental problems are soil erosion due to land clearing for agriculture, poor road construction, legal and illegal river sand mining, poor sanitation and pollution from illegal informal settlements. Other issues include disaster and flood management, solid waste management and sustainable livelihoods for youth.

The Rio Grande area and Portland parish as a whole has benefited from substantial development assistance support over many years. Most recently, this support has included CIDA's Environmental Action Program (ENACT) which is working to establish a Local Sustainable Development Planning Framework for the parish; CIDA's Trees for Tomorrow forest management project; the European Union's National Environment Action Plan and the Eastern Jamaica Agricultural Services Project (EJASP); and USAID's Coastal Water Quality Improvement Project (CWIP) which is involved in improving environmental conditions along the coast of Port Antonio.

The RGWMC was established in mid 2002 with the support of the R2RW project and NEPA. It is designated as a special task force of the Portland Parish Development Committee and has a mandate to:

- Review and recommend project proposals for funding by the R2RW small grants fund;
- Establish sub committees to deal with the issues affecting the watershed; and
- Provide technical advice and support to the Parish Development Committee.

The process of establishing the Committee was facilitated by prior activities to develop capacity to institute improved governance at the local level and participatory development planning in the parish. This has facilitated a fairly seamless incorporation of the LWMC into existing structures as follows:

- The Parish Development Committee organizational plan developed with the assistance of ENACT offers a framework into which the LWMC can fit.
- The PDC fiscal year is synchronized with the fiscal year of the Parish Council to facilitate the planning cycles of development partners.

The establishment of six development areas by the Social Development Commission coincides with five watershed management units and the Port Antonio area.

- The forty-two (42) Community Development Councils established in Portland present a possible structure by which to undertake community level watershed management.

The RGWMC meets on a monthly basis, and has working groups and task forces some of which meet monthly. The groups are:

- Public Awareness Working Group
- Water and Sanitation Task Force
- Land and Conservation Task Force
- Compliance and Enforcement (parish wide) Task Force

The Compliance and Enforcement Task Force was formed as part of a previous initiative and co-opted as part of the RGWMC.

1.4 Water Users Associations (WUAs)

In an effort to find more participatory and efficient ways of delivering and managing irrigation water, the National Irrigation Commission has since 2000 moved to establish a number of Water User Associations. The mandate of the program is ***to ensure that water for rural development be provided in a cost effective manner to facilitate development with due regard to health and environmental considerations at a price based on economic considerations.***

The specific mandate of the WUAs is to:

- Maintain and operate an inter-farm irrigation system.
- Independently manage water from the intake through to its drainage system.
- Assure the equitable and timely supply and delivery of water based on a system of water shares.
- Be financially self-sustaining.
- Govern the process through democratic processes.

The activity is supported by the Inter American Development Bank and forms part of the National Irrigation Development Plan. The policy context for the activity comes out of the Water Policy (1998) and the Master Plan for the Water Sector which has mandated a participatory approach for the management, supply and delivery of water.

The pilot groups in St Elizabeth are located in Seven Rivers, Hounslow and Pedro Plains. A social organizer was hired to work with the groups that comprise mainly farmers, and the activity has extended over a period approaching 14 months. The extended length of time to get the groups to a state of readiness is due to the fact that there was very little tradition of community based action in the areas, and in one particular area, the task was particularly challenging given a tradition of political patronage and handouts to farmers over many years.

The process employed in formation of the groups followed the process: Public awareness; identification of champions who can sell the concept to others; community assessment/appraisal; establishment of ad hoc and management committees; capacity building workshops and the convening of meetings.

The strength of this process is the significant emphasis on pre-assessment of groups and capacity building. This is particularly important where there has been no previous community based development activity in the area. There is also systematic assessment of progress via Capacity Progress Reports which feature the following Indicators:

Phase	Indicators
Preparatory phase	Formation of organizing committee, keeping of minutes of meetings maintenance of accounting records; collection of dues
Formation	Establishment of Ad Hoc committee; management committee, advisory committee; holding of AGM; democratic election of executive; drafting of by laws and legal incorporation of entity

Phase	Indicators
Social capacity Indicators	Relates to participation of women as members and in senior decision making roles; strength of group autonomy; strength of leadership; ability to resolve conflicts; strength of links to SDC; ability to apply creative solutions to problems.
Agricultural planning Indicators	Planning of crop production; establishment of farmer database; strength of links to marketing outlets; strength; design and compliance with irrigation schedule; development of credit management mechanisms
Technical and management indicators	Design for irrigation system developed via a participatory mechanism; negotiation of contract with engineers and technicians; irrigation system installed; MOU with service provider signed; technical and maintenance training provided; strong links to NIC; monitoring and evaluation committee trained and in place; environmental quality control established; environmental committee established.

The establishment of clear relevant indicators to objectively track the capacity and general progress of groups over time is very effective, and a useful tool to identify areas requiring strengthening.

The main weakness of the process is the inability of the public sector agencies to deliver inputs required to have the groups move forward in a timely way. This created a hiatus which resulted in the loss on several of the members and necessitated redoubled efforts to bring them back into the process.

As in other groups, there are challenges regarding irregular attendance at meetings, low level of literacy, skepticism regarding the process, inadequate capacity of government agencies (in this case RADA) to service the needs of the farmers; and the NIC to provide irrigation systems in a timely manner. In addition, the lack of titles, and in one community an expectation of handouts proved to be an impediment to timely progress.

1.5 Community Level Watershed Management Committees

Local watershed management committees were established in three communities Retrieve, St James (Great River Watershed); Redwood, St Catherine (Rio Cobre Watershed); and Mahoe/Bangor Ridge, Portland (Buff Bay/Pencar Watershed) as part of the UNDP sponsored Capacity Building for Watershed Management project in 1999. In Retrieve, several public education meetings were held; signs were erected with a watershed message and a filter strip was established along the riverbank. In Redwood, public education activities were channeled through the school, churches and via tree planting exercises. Some preliminary work was done in the community of Mamma River (Hope Watershed) however the LWMC establishment activities were not completed.

An evaluation carried out at the end of the project reflected that while there was not a great deal of time and resources available to attend to these LWMCs, there had been some impact in terms of increased public awareness of watershed management and opportunities for community participation in the process. In the various communities, there was a high level of interest,

activities such as river stabilization tree planting, soil conservation and public awareness were carried out and in the process, strong linkages were established between the NRCA, the Forest Department, the Water Resources Authority, RADA, some parish councils, CBOs and NGOs. In the process also, the capacity of the Watershed Protection Branch of the NRCA to undertake Rapid Rural Appraisals, to work closely with community groups and organize community events was created and/or sharpened.

As was expected, the ability to sustain the results of the project following the period of support was difficult without the time and resources to plan and implement follow-up activities. As such, the groups have not been able to accomplish much in the way of watershed management in the years that followed. Since the inception of the R2RW project, the Retrieve community has been able to participate in the activities of the GRWMC; and similarly the Bangor Ridge community is able to participate in, and benefit from the activities of the Buff Bay/ Pencar LFMC.

1.6 Eastern Jamaica Agricultural Support Program (EJASP)

The European Union (EU) -supported and RADA-implemented EJAS Program was established in January 2000 and is expected to end in 2004. The objective is to establish and support farmers' groups in the parishes of St Mary, St Andrew, St Thomas and Portland by delivering training in order to sustain the impact of agricultural inputs also provided by the Project.

The Program follows on from another EU supported agricultural project-the Morant Yallahs Development Program which provided agricultural inputs to farmers in the eastern parishes over a 5 year period. An evaluation of the Program revealed a number of weaknesses, not least of which was the non-sustainability of the overall program impact, and it was determined that another approach be taken. The present approach works through farmers groups identified through RADA's Area Development Committees, and the inputs are delivered via existing mechanisms of the Jamaica Agricultural Society.

Once the groups are identified or formed they are facilitated to develop bylaws and a constitution. They are also trained in various management skills and facilitated to develop sub-projects. Once the sub-projects are developed, a feasibility study is done and a letter of agreement is drawn up which outlines the obligations and responsibilities of the parties i.e the farmers' group, RADA and EJASP.

The process of group formation and capacity building among these groups has been found to be longer than anticipated. One of the major impediments is the low level of literacy among the farmers. Efforts are now being made to deepen the capacity building process by way of an institutional strengthening program carried out in collaboration with the Jamaica Business Development Centre. There is a significant effort to focus on business development within the sub-projects so as to ensure sustainability when the Program ends. There are significant linkages with the RADA, SDC, and the JAS. Some 74 sub-projects have been identified by the groups over the four parishes since the Program's inception.

The strength of the process is that groups which are formed or identified are immediately engaged in activities which put their newly learned skills to the test- a case of learning by doing. However, there seems to have been little assessment of group needs at the outset which could have informed more effectively the specific training needs of the groups. This assessment is just now being done by the Technology Innovation Centre.

1.7 National Sanitation Task Force

This Task Force is a multi disciplinary committee which first convened in 1997 to address the recommendations coming out of a National Sanitation Seminar convened earlier the same year.

The task force was to design a sanitation policy framework, and develops strategies to improve the availability of low cost sanitation to target groups. In addition they were to incorporate sanitation standards into building codes and adjust the sanitation regulatory system to the case of servicing for poor areas.

The group has had some successes and has acquired considerable knowledge and credibility over the period, to the extent that public agencies solicit technical advice from them when necessary.

The process of group formation and the activities of this group differs from the others in that their scope of operation is not geographic, but thematic i.e. low cost sanitation solutions with an island-wide relevance. Further, because of the manner in which the Task Force convened and evolved, the process was not resource intensive and has not benefited from long term development support as with the local management groups. While the Task Force was intended to be a short term mechanism to address a particular need, they continue to exist as their relevance persists.

2. Assessment of Group Formation Process

2.1 Common Elements

The group formation process for most of the groups described above have common elements which include:

1. Initiation of the process by a government agency with the support of external donor funds.
2. Initial community meetings for sensitization of the community.
3. Contacts with pre-existing groups in the area including CBOs, NGOs; involvement of local authorities was emphasized by some groups e.g. in the R2RW and CWIP processes, not much by others.
4. Assessment activity by way of Rapid Rural Appraisal, community mapping etc.
5. Awareness raising on the issue being addressed and the anticipated role of the community.
6. Visioning exercise which culminates in articulation of mission, vision and objectives of the group.
7. Provision of travel support and subsistence to facilitate member participation.
8. Capacity building of the group to take control of the process - this occurred to a greater extent in some groups than in others.
9. Project planning by means of various methods eg in the R2RW Program, this is done via Strategic Action Planning workshops.
10. Most initiatives do not include the Parish Development Committees in a significant way with the significant exception of Portland where the LWMC is a task force of the Portland PDC. The lack on involvement of the PDC is largely due to the fact that in most parishes the PDCs are still in an early stage of development and have poorly defined roles, no resources and little capacity to add value to the process.

2.2 Constraints

Common constraints to the process were found to be:

1. Absence of resources to sustain local management efforts.
2. Insecurities regarding the sustainability of the process once external funding ceases.
3. Skepticism about the process – some persons are disenchanted with interventions due to their experiences with other projects which promised much but delivered little.
4. Expectation of immediate financial gain from project activity – the history of patronage in some areas has left a legacy of expectation of handouts in these locations. This was apparent in Water Users Association in Hounslow, St. Elizabeth and resulted in an increase in the amount of time taken to form the group. At the very least, there is usually the expectation of jobs as was the case in the watershed areas of Pencar and Buff Bay where farmers used to be employed by FIDCO in the 1980's.

5. Irregular attendance at meetings – this is due to conflicts with time necessary to earn a living. Most of the areas in which these projects are implemented are poor, so financial constraints and cost of transportation limits people’s ability to get to meetings.
6. Fatigue – frequently the same persons involved in most community activities are called upon to serve on these committees.
7. Lack of land tenure – where farmers and residents have no land tenure, there are few incentives to invest time and effort to contribute to a long-term process of stewardship.
8. Shortage of financial and human resources – to facilitate the participation of the requisite government agencies, particularly local authorities and the Social Development Commission in activities within their purview.
9. Low level of literacy among community members particularly between deep rural and farmer groups.

2.3 Lessons Learned

Some of the lessons learned were:

1. The process of group formation has to take into consideration the stage at which the community is. For example in Portland which has benefited from several capacity building and participatory exercises, the process is much less lengthy than in Seven Rivers where there is no history of community groups and participatory management.
2. The process requires the skills of social organizers sensitive to the insecurities of persons who for the main part, have been marginalized from any kind of participation in the development process.
3. It is necessary to build technical capacity in watershed management at the local level.
4. Land tenure and access are important to engendering stewardship responsibilities within communities.
5. People have much more to offer than they think they are capable of. The process should bring out nascent talents of the participants and empower them to own it.
6. It is important to meet people where there needs are- assisting them to organize around an issue of concern, even if not directly relevant to resource management, builds valuable trust and team values.
7. Public recognition of successes is critical to building esteem.
8. Illiteracy is a significant impediment to development.
9. PDCs and CDCs need to have more autonomy and resources to fulfill their mandate.
10. There is need for a national mandate for institutional actors.
11. There is a need for improved coordination especially among so many community stakeholders and institutional actors to reduce overlap.

3. Establishment of Local Watershed Management Committees

3.1 Functions of a Local Watershed Management Committee

Core functions of LWMCs may include the following:

1. Mobilization and facilitation of broad community participation in the planning and management of designated watershed management units or sub units
2. Collecting and maintaining local information on the social cultural and economic attributes of the watershed management unit (WMU)s and sub-units where these exist
3. Development and implementation of project activities to conserve and protect watersheds in collaboration with local and national public and private sector agencies
4. Encouragement of general stewardship of watershed management areas
5. Development and implementation of income generating activities which make sustainable use of watershed resources
6. Undertaking public awareness within the designated areas and link the community with other agencies concerned with watershed management
7. Supporting enforcement and compliance of relevant laws and regulations
8. Supporting advocacy on behalf of local watershed area interests and resolution of conflicts relating to uses
9. Provision of advice to relevant authorities and field staff, and monitoring of activities of watershed users.

3.2 Policy and Legislative Framework

The Policy framework for the management of watershed areas by local management entities is articulated in:

3.2.1 A Cabinet Order

July (2001) establishing the National Integrated Watershed Management Council, the Local Watershed Management Committees and the Local Forestry Management Committees as mechanisms to contribute to watershed management in Jamaica.

3.2.2 The Draft Watershed Policy Paper: Toward a Watershed Policy for Jamaica (2001)

Section 3.3b: Strategies for Implementation at the local level

- (1) Encourage/facilitate the work of existing NGOs and CBOs and the formation of Local Watershed Management Committees

NGO's and CBOs with activities focusing on watershed protection and management will be supported and encouraged through the provision of technical and financial assistance where possible. These organizations will play a major role facilitating the involvement of communities in the management of watersheds, in mobilizing local support for watershed protection and

management and in the dissemination of information. They will also be expected to collaborate and supervise watershed activities where possible and to forge strategic linkages with school, churches and other organization.

(2) Establish linkages with the local government system

Linkages will be established with local government to ensure that there is adequate levels of support for and coordination of watershed of watershed protection and management activities taking place within each parish. These will include the Parish Councils, the Parish Development Committees (PDC), and the Integrated Community Development Program being implemented by the Social Development Commission.

And **Section 3.4 Supporting Strategies**

(7) People Participation

Efforts will be made to involve stakeholders NGOs decision makers and concerned individuals in the process of managing the watersheds and to ensure a broad- based representation at the community level. Where community based organizations are absent, alternate mechanisms will be established to facilitate effective and sustainable intervention in the management of watersheds at the community level. These Committees will ensure sustainable community action and will facilitate the inclusion of indigenous technical and cultural knowledge in identifying and solving problems within watersheds. They will also strengthen the link and assist in promoting the required behavioral and attitudinal changes among watershed users.

(8) Monitoring

A Watershed Monitoring Program is to be developed for use primarily by the NEPA This program will include the impacts and interaction of both human and natural factors on watersheds. It will provide information which will enable the NEPA to develop a national watershed program; identify issues and problems in the watersheds; identify issues and problems in the watersheds; make sound decisions; and carry out appropriate actions and track progress. **It is envisioned that local residents through the forestry and watershed committees of Community Development Committees (CDCs) will assist in monitoring the impacts of relevant factors on watershed.**

3.2.3 The Forest Policy (2001)

Section 2. Strategies and Tools for Implementation

2.1 Community Participation

Sustainable use, management and protection of the nation's forest resources require the participation and co-operation of local communities, particularly those living on the fringes of the forest. Community-based organizations, schools churches and local parish councils will be encouraged to promote and support forest development protection and conservation.

The Forest Act provides for the formation of Local Forest Management Committees for forest reserves, forest management areas and protected areas. These committees will be the institutional bodies for enabling the direct participation of communities in forest management. The functions of the committee will include monitoring forest conditions, providing input to Local Forest Management Plan and land use regulations; identifying incentives for conservation practices; and the design and implementation of conservation projects. The Forestry Department will provide such assistance as may be necessary to support the committees in undertaking their functions.

3.2.4 The Forest Act (1996)

12. Appointment of local forest management committees

- (1) For the purposes of this part the Minister may after consultation with the Conservator appoint a forest management committee for the whole or any part of a forest reserve, forest management area or protected area.
- (2) Whenever possible, each forest management committee shall include at least two members having local knowledge of the area, or part thereof in which the forest reserve, forest management area or protected area is located.
- (3) The Conservator shall, from time to time, make available to any forest management committee such technical advice and assistance as may be necessary to assist the committee in its functions.

13. The function of a forest management committee shall include:

- a) Monitoring of the condition of the natural resources in the relevant forest reserve, forest management area or protected area.
- b) Holding of discussions, public meetings and like activities relating to such natural resources.
- c) Advising the Conservator on matters relating to the development of the Forest Management Plan and the making of regulations.
- d) Proposing incentives for conservation practices in the area in which the relevant forest reserve, forest management area or protected area is located.
- e) Assisting in the design and execution of conservation projects in the area.
- f) Such other functions as may be provided by or under this Act.

Other initiatives and activities are moving apace to establish governance structures which will facilitate increased community participation and enhanced local level management. Among these are:

3.2.5 National level Initiatives

Recently the Public Sector Modernization Program commissioned a discussion paper on Modernizing the Planning Framework for Jamaica.² The Paper recognizes the inadequacies of the current planning system, and makes recommendations which support the emerging thinking regarding planning and participation at local levels in the process. Specifically, the document identifies among the Key Elements of a modernized approach:

- The development of community/local plans. These plans should be developed in a participatory process with community residents and business under a legislative framework within which communities can plan, and manage change in their communities.
- The PDCs have been encouraged as a community based mechanism to gather inputs on community concerns and provide leadership toward their resolution. The absence of a legal framework within the PDC can operate must be addressed within a new planning framework.

² KPMG Consulting (2002) Modernizing the Planning Framework for Jamaica

- Citizen participation to ensure public input into development applications and participation in the preparation and ongoing management of local plans.

Under the Issue of planning capacity, the document identifies among the issues:

- The need to arrive at consensus on what needs to be done regarding capacity building in local government without which there is little hope of facilitating community planning.
- Community resource potential which needs to be tapped and identifying innovative mechanisms to engage participation in the development of community plans.

3.2.6 Local Level Initiatives

The Ministry of Local Government has identified development control and local sustainable development planning as some of the areas to improve the performance of the local authorities under local government reform. To this end, a capacity building program is being undertaken to improve the planning capability of local authorities to prepare them for new roles in the planning and local level management process.

3.2.7 The Emerging Legal Framework for Facilitating Local Sustainable Development³

A number of issues relating to governance and local participation in the emerging new planning framework are referred to in various sections of the report of the National Consultation on Local Sustainable Development (LSD).

Among the Key Vision Outcomes in the framework are the following:

- The strengthening of local authorities in their capacity to plan, regulate and finance sustainable development initiatives and actions.
- The integration of principles of sustainable development into local government and planning policy reforms.
- Build capacity of local stakeholders to translate sustainable development into specific programs or projects.

Among the key strategic directions for guiding the process towards LSD are:

- Establishment of a governance model/ philosophical framework which is conducive to LSD.
- Articulation and adoption by the Cabinet on a National policy on decentralization, as the broad policy framework within which devolution of functions and authority from national; to local level structures will be pursued.
- Establishing and giving status to participatory processes and institutions.
- Building the capacity of participatory institutions and community based organizations.

Establishment of an appropriate legal framework for facilitating LSD.

³ Excerpted from: Miller, Keith (2002) A Review of Day One of National Consultation on LSD: Strategic Directions and Next Steps.

3.3 Institutional Framework and Linkages

The institutional framework governing watershed management has several categories of stakeholders as follows:

- Regulatory
- Custodial
- Technical information, advisory, extension and research
- Coordinating committees
- NGO's and external agencies
- Local level support

The table below identifies the main stakeholders involved in local watershed management and the roles they play.

Table 2 Main Stakeholders in Watershed Management

Agencies, institutions	Regulatory, Policy	Custodial	Technical info, advisory, extension	Coordinating committees	NGOs/ external agencies	Local level support
NEPA	•		•			
Forest Dept	•	•	•			
WRA	•				•	
RADA			•		•	
LWMC	•			•		
LGCWG				•		
NIWMC				•		
TFT					•	
R2RW					•	
PDC						•
SDC						•

There is a complex set of linkages between the various stakeholders to contribute to sustainable watershed management at the local level. Figure 1 represents some of these linkages.

The current link between the LWMCs and the NIWMC is via the Local Group Coordination Working Group. The LGCWG is one of several working groups of the NIWMC and its role is to coordinate the groups working at the local watershed management level. The Sustainable Watershed Branch of NEPA is the secretariat of the group. Currently the membership of the LGCWG includes LWMCs, LFMCs, the relevant PDCs and the SDC. Other potential members are the WUAs, and the advisory groups under RADA. The Group meets on a quarterly basis, receives reports from the member groups and prepares a compiled report for the attention of the NIWMC. In similar fashion, information from the NIWMC is passed to through the LGCWG to the local groups.

3.4 Levels of operation for LWMCs

There are different levels upon which the LWMCs can operate. One is at the **Watershed Management Unit Level**, where the interest of the entire watershed is the focus of the group, the

second level is the **sub unit level** where the watershed is broken down into smaller units which may be based on geographical integrity, and the third level is the **community level** where one or two communities take responsibility for the watershed area most closely related to their community.

3.4.1 Watershed Management Unit level

The island is divided in 26 Watershed Management Units, and as such there could potentially be 26 such watershed-wide LWMCs. This level of LWMC is represented by both the RGWMC and the GRWMC.

3.4.2 Sub Unit level

Another level is typified by the Buff Bay/ Pencar watershed where the WMU is separated into two sub-units, largely because of the geographic barrier between the two sides of the watershed. Watershed sub units could also be defined according to upper region, mid region, and lower region of the watershed. Based on the differing functions of each of these regions, there will be specific types of relationships which the communities in a particular region will have with the watershed. For example in the upper reaches, the role may be one of forest resources use and management, while in the mid and lower reaches it may be water abstraction for domestic and farm use, recreational uses etc.

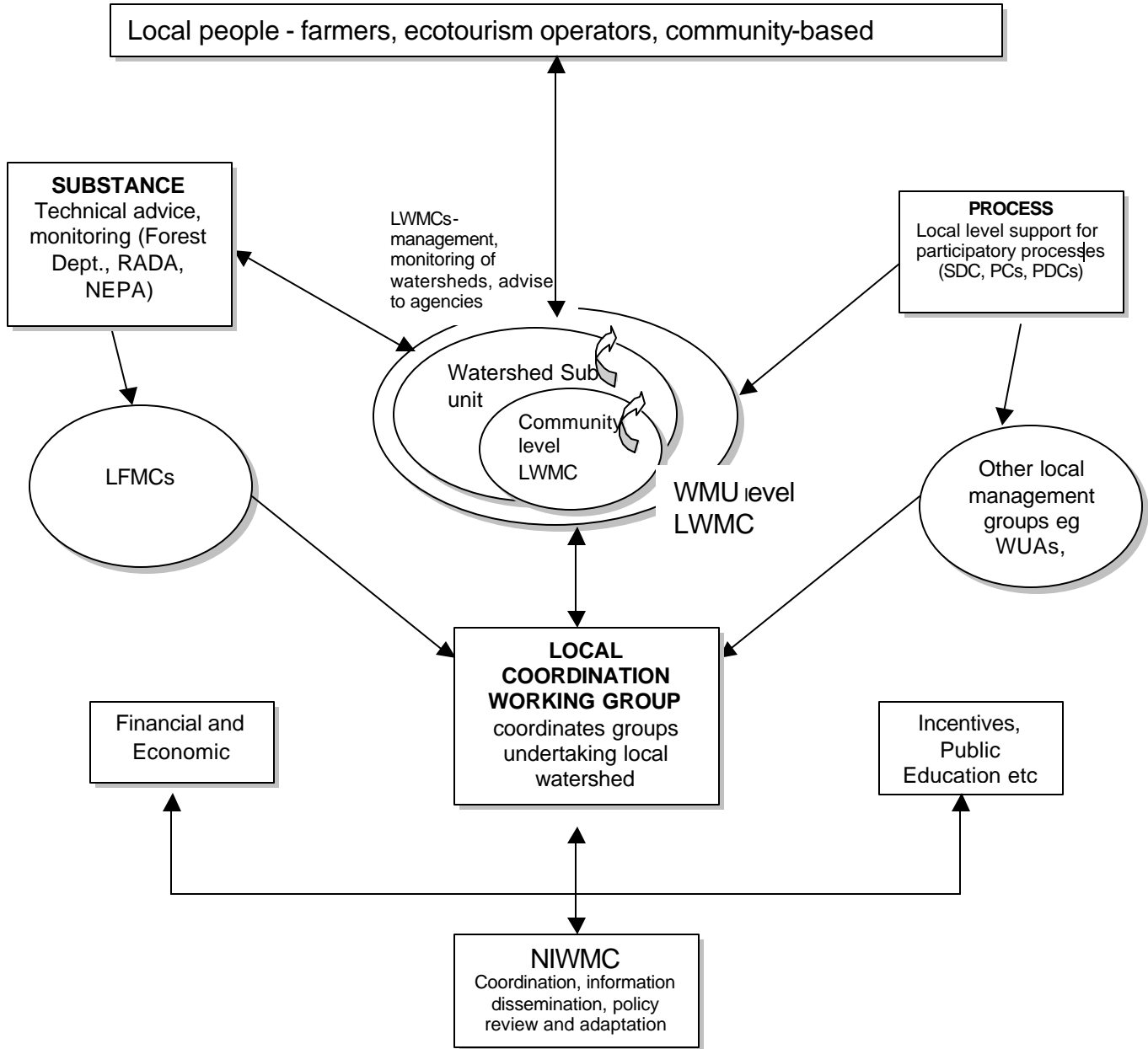
3.4.3 Community Level

Yet another level is at the community level where a particular area of the watershed associated with one or two communities could be designated a sub unit and be managed by a community level LWMC. This was the case with the LWMCs established by the NRCA/ UNDP watershed management project of the late 1990's. These represent more manageable units which, had they received even a fraction of the support that the current watersheds currently receive under the R2RW/NEPA or under the TFT/ Forestry Department programs, it is a good chance that they would have had greater sustained success.

The high cost of establishing and supporting activities at the watershed wide level is of concern because of the implications for the sustainability of the effort following the end of the respective Projects. The R2RW Project estimates a cost of \$14,000 per quarterly meeting of the LWMCs. This cost includes meeting venue, refreshments and stipends for travel for Committee members; it does not include the cost of the R2RW staff in making the necessary arrangements for the meetings and the time and cost of travel for both the R2RW team and NEPA staff. In addition to these meetings are the meetings of the various Task Forces, the capacity building workshops which took place earlier in the process, and the cost of the social organizer employed to get the respective groups started. Similar costs are faced by the LFMCs and the WUA groups.

It has been suggested that a critical look be taken at breaking down the larger watershed wide management groups into smaller units which can more easily be managed without large amounts of financial resources. This is an alternative which the R2RW should explore within the last two years of the project.

Figure 1 Relationships between different levels of LWMCs and other stakeholders in watershed management



Implementation takes place at the local level under the management of the LWMCs or LFMCs with technical support from agencies such as Forest Department, NEPA, RADA, PDCs, PCs and SDC within a participatory framework. These activities can serve as policy experiments and lessons learned can be transmitted to the NIWMC via the Local Group Coordination Working Group. At the level of the NIWMC, policy is reviewed, information is harnessed and disseminated and management activities are coordinated.

4. Policy Gaps in Local Watershed Management

There exists a number of gaps in the various pieces of policy documentation related to local watershed management. Chief among these gaps are the following:

1. **The Watershed Act (1963).** The Act has as its main focus, the conservation of water resources by protecting land in or adjoining the watersheds. It has no regulations and makes no mention of LWMCs. As such, it is in need of considerable updating to reflect among other things, the new participatory approach to watershed management,

The process involved in the development of the Draft Watershed Policy and review was inordinately long and since the policy's acceptance as a White Paper, several events have overtaken the policy. The most significant of these have been the establishment of the National Integrated Watershed Management Council (NIWMC) and the establishment of several local resource management groups in watershed areas.

This means that there are a number of gaps in both the Draft Watershed Policy and the Watershed Act particularly as they relate to local watershed management, the role and function of the NIWMC, the role and function LWMCs and relationships between the two levels.

There appears to be some reluctance to further amend the Draft Policy given that it has already benefited from public input, and further amendments will require a similar consultation process. Nonetheless, the document must be amended to reflect the new developments.

2. The mixed messages regarding the role of local management committees. Despite the naming of these committees as Management Committees, their roles as outlined in the Forest Act for example, appears to be more advisory. It is a contention of the FD and others that the Forest Act, as it currently exists, is a constraint to the implementation of the Forest Policy and Forest Conservation and Management Plan, as these documents indicate a management role for the LFMCS. As a result, the FD is looking to the early amendment of the Forest Act to reflect the new reality. This seen as a positive dynamic between legislation, policy and experience on the ground, where experience informs review and amendment of policy and law. It is expected that the same dynamic will obtain relative to the Watershed Act and Policy once these are updated.
3. The mandate and role of the main institutional players differ considerably in the respective policy documents. For example, the Draft Watershed policy asserts that while "the management of watershed protection is vested principally in the NRCA(NEPA)", the Forest Department has "overall responsibility for the implementation of watershed protection and conservation". It also states that "due to budgetary constraints, it (the FD) has difficulty fulfilling its mandate especially in areas related to watershed management". That there are budgetary constraints in the FD is irrefutable, however the responsibility for overall management of watersheds does not seem to be one that sits easily with the Department. First of all, nowhere in its own legislation or Policy is this view regarding overall responsibility for watershed held. In fact, where the Act and the Policy document mention watersheds they are specific in stating the Department's responsibilities with respect to *forested areas* of watersheds. For example in the Act, Section 4 which addresses the functions of the Forest Department states:

Section 4

"...(n) protection and preservation of watersheds in forest reserves, protected areas and forest management areas".

Also, the Goals and Priorities of the Policy,

Section 1.2 Management of Forested Watersheds states that " forested watersheds must be conserved and managed so as to:

- Minimize the effects of flooding on communities, farms roads and bridges;
- Minimize soil erosion, siltation of rivers and sedimentation of nearshore marine environments to protect coral reefs and sea grass beds; and
- Ensure an adequate supply of quality of water for domestic consumption and other purposes".

The Forest Management and Conservation Plan however mentions that the FD is named as the implementing agency for watershed protection and conservation and states that "when a national watershed policy is adopted the FD will review the activities of the Forest Plan as they relate to its new watershed management duties".

4. There is a widely held view that it is mandated that where LFMCs exist, they will act in the place of LWMCs. In the case of the Buff Bay/ Pencar watershed, it was expected for some time that the LFMC would be incorporated into a LWMC for the area. This did not occur, and the LFMC in that watershed is accepted as the LWMC.

It makes sense that in a situation with scarce human and financial resources, such a scenario could obtain where another delegated entity takes on the role of a LWMC. Neither the Forest Act, the Forest Policy nor the Draft Watershed Policy makes mention of this possibility. The Forest Management and Conservation Plan however mentions it.

Section 8.1.2 Functions of LWMCs

"...The operations of the LFMCs will benefit overall watershed protection and management. The role of the Committee may be expanded in the future to take in watershed responsibility as a result of changes in the structure of national watershed administration and management."

This is probably alluding to the situation where LFMCs could take the place of LWMCs in areas where they exist. However, the respective policy documents should be harmonized to reflect this more clearly.

5. Official recognition of LWMCs. There are no provisions in the current Draft Policy for the recognition of the LWMCs as legal entities capable of operating bank accounts and entering into legal agreements with other partners. It should be that once the LWMCs register with the NIWMC, this should eliminate the need to be registered by some other mechanism such as the Companies' Act or the Friendly Societies Act. This is the case with the LWMCs which are enabled to act as a legal entity by a Constitution mandated in the Forest Act; and with the CDCs established by the SDC.

4.1 Recommended changes to Draft Watershed Policy document as it relates to LWMCs and the NIWMC

The role of the NIWMC needs to be clarified.

Section 3.3a(2) Establish a National Integrated Watershed Management Council (NIWMC)

*should say "...The NIWMC is intended to overcome the constraints of previous approaches to watershed management, and to improve cohesion in planning, **fund raising**, resource allocation, coordination, **monitoring and evaluation** of watershed management programs and projects"*

Instead of:

"... The NIWMC is intended to overcome the constraints of previous approaches to watershed management, and to improve cohesion in planning, resource allocation, coordination, and implementation of watershed management programs and projects"

Section 3.3 b Strategies for Implementation at the local level

- (1) Encourage/ facilitate the work of existing NGOs and CBOs and the formation of Local Watershed Management Committees to spearhead work at the community level.

NGOs and CBOs with activities focusing on watershed protection and management will be supported and encouraged through the provision of technical and financial assistance where possible. **Local Watershed Management Committees comprising local and national NGOs, local community organization, public and private sector interests and local authorities will be established. Where LFMCs or other appropriate organisations exist, they may be designated the authority to act as LWMCs**

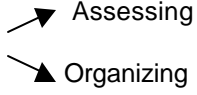
Also under part (2) entitled "**Linkages with Local Government systems**" the draft policy should say

Linkages will be established with local government to ensure that there is adequate levels of support for and coordination of watershed protection and management activities place within each parish.

The LWMCs will, where appropriate be integrated into the relevant PDCs as task forces or as subcommittees. They will link with community level structures such as Community Development Committees, Area Development Committees as well as with the Local group coordinating group within the NIWMC, so as to ensure two way flow of information from the project (field) level to the policy review and coordination level"

5. Essential Stages in Establishing and Managing a LWMC

The process by which LWMCs can be established and sustained is based on the review of the experiences of the local groups currently managing watershed and/or related resources. It can be broken down into four main stages as follows:

1. Preparatory 
 - ▶ Assessing
 - ▶ Organizing
2. Group formation and action planning
3. Learning by doing
4. Policy Review and Adaptation

5.1 Preparatory

This stage involves **assessing** the human, institutional and financial resources available, and **organizing** them toward the common end.

Tasks to be undertaken include:

1. Identification of need – is this the best mechanism for soliciting true participation from the public? Do the current conditions in the watershed area demand this type of intervention? What is the cost /benefit of the intervention?
2. Collection of baseline information and tools (eg maps). What are the main ecological and social issues at stake in the area?
3. Identification of appropriate institutional actors. What are their concerns, relative strengths and weaknesses?
4. Contacting the institutional actors eg PDC, SDC, RADA etc, facilitating the appraisal exercises with them and integrating them in the ecological, social and stakeholder analysis
5. Identification of existing community based groups - are they already equipped and willing to undertake the task?
6. If they are not equipped, what are the skills required? How can these be provided?
7. Identification of the material resources available for the process/how can these be leveraged from existing sources?
8. Assessment of political feasibility. Is the political environment conducive to supporting a LWMC?

Once these questions are answered and the players find that the establishment of a LWMC will address the issues identified, then they commit to establishing the group. The next stages will enable them to define their purpose and objectives, establish a framework within which the group can work and develop action steps toward achieving their goals..

5.2 Group formation and Action Planning

This stage involves a great deal of interaction between the parties, and is essentially the stage at which the LWMC as a distinct entity is established, and a framework within which the group will operate is developed. It involves several meetings and workshops which demand the attention and participation of those players who will form the core of the group and drive the process forward.

The tasks to be undertaken include:

1. Working out and forging agreements concerning the vision and objectives of the LWMC.
2. Determining strategies toward accomplishment of the vision.
3. Determination of objectives, scope of activity and scope of the area the Committee intends to impact.
4. Formal establishment of the group by way of democratic election of an executive responsible for carrying out the group's mandate, and accountable to the wider membership.
5. Development of protocols for decision-making, conflict management, communication with the wider community, and relationships with Local Group Coordination Working Group (LGCWG) and the National Integrated Watershed Management Council (NIWMC)
6. Determination and agreement on the rights and responsibilities of stakeholders.
7. Negotiation of specific working relationships via MOU's etc.
8. Development of strategic plans/action plans/local management plans.
9. Review of current socio-ecological situation and trends.
10. Legitimizing and publicizing the establishment of the LWMC, plans for co- management of the watershed and the organizations involved.

5.3 Learning by Doing

Learning by doing or action learning involves the implementation of project activities identified collectively by the group. It is important to undertake small manageable activities in order to build trust, self-esteem and cohesiveness among the group. Leaders will emerge and the strengths and weaknesses of the group will become apparent. As such, evaluation of the activities and documentation of lessons learned should be a major part of every activity.

Tasks to be undertaken include:

1. Implementation of the action plans developed in stage 2;
2. Participatory monitoring of activities, timelines and budgets;
3. Collection of data and information on results and process;
4. Participatory evaluation of the results and process - what were the strengths and weaknesses;
5. Evaluation of individual and institutional actors- recognize talent, strengthen;
6. Weaknesses; and

7. Documentation and dissemination of information on results, process, lessons learned.

5.4 Policy Review and Adaptation

To transmit information via the LGCWG to the NIWMC to facilitate national level coordination, policy review and adaptation.

1. Inputs into NIWMC via LGCWG on policy implications of lessons learned and relevance of institutional and operational frameworks.
2. Modification of plans, agreements and organizations as necessary.
3. Integration of innovations.

Table 2 Summary of the Group Formation Process

Inputs		Purpose	Desirable Attributes
Preparatory	Pre assessment	To identify human financial and institutional resources available for the process	Requires inputs from local and central government agencies, community, donors and other supporting players
	Establish ad hoc committee	To publicize the purpose of the group, raise awareness of the benefits and responsibilities, bring in new people, organize meeting	Committed persons, diverse in skills and disciplines; credible, respected with high degree of personal motivation and excellent communication skills
Group formation and action Planning	Identify facilitation team; elect leaders	To manage daily activities, mobilize resources, facilitate capacity building, group formation and institutional strengthening	Requires persons familiar with area; able to motivate people to work together, and facilitate group processes
	Workshops/ Meetings	To facilitate community mapping, collective visioning, problem identification; action planning	Must ensure dialogue and linkages between actors; build team spirit, trust, self esteem
Learning by doing	Project/ Activity design and implementation	To maintain momentum, facilitate learning by doing, test policy	Small manageable activities using leveraged inputs
	Monitoring	To keep activities on track within budget, deadlines and in line with expected outputs	Must involve project beneficiaries implementers and technical support team (NEPA. FD)
	Evaluation	To collectively take stock of achievements; lessons learned; show strengths, weaknesses; provide information for decision-making	Must involve project beneficiaries and implementers; need to celebrate and publicize successes
	Information dissemination	To report and share experiences with wider community, other local resource management groups	Reports should be clear and to the point, highlighting successes and failures, mitigative measures, innovative approaches

Inputs		Purpose	Desirable Attributes
Policy review and adaptation	Policy review and adaptation	To transmit information via the LGCWG to the NIWMC to facilitate national level coordination, policy review and adaptation	Requires skill to draw out policy issues raised in the process of project implementation

Review of Concept Paper “Strategic Directions for the Future”

By way of a Background, the Draft Concept Paper outlines the purpose of the NIWMC, its overall and short-term goals, expected results, and mode of operation. It also provides an overview of the scope of the Council which includes: Development, Funding, Implementation, Assessment, Monitoring and Ongoing Revision. It goes further to highlight the following:

- The membership of the Council which is multidisciplinary and cross sectoral.
- The role of the Sustainable Watershed Branch of NEPA which is Secretariat to the Council and responsible for ensuring coordination and integration of the Program.
- The working groups as implementers of Council functions and activities.
- The local groups affiliated with the NIWMC including LWMCs, LFCs, Parish Councils/ Parish Development Committees and their Environment sub-committees.

The report then looks at the Status of the NIWMC: its Strengths, Weaknesses and Constraints, and by way of introduction, mentions that because of the high level of many of the representatives on the Council, there is a tendency for the body to want to be involved in all aspects of watershed management, from the broad policy aspects to the implementation of activities. It states that this however, may not be within the manageable interests of the Council.

The achievements of the Council over its 1.5 years of existence are noted as:

- Meeting monthly over the past several months, leading to increased coordination and communication of watershed management (WM) activities;
- Establishment of working groups, each with a Terms of Reference;
- Strong activity from the working groups for Incentives, Local Group Coordination and Programs and Projects;
- Completion of a status report on all watersheds in Jamaica;
- Report on Incentives for WM;
- Database of all watershed projects being developed as a tool to harmonise activities and fill gaps; and
- A thorough picture of WM in Jamaica made possible through meetings held and reports developed.

The weaknesses of the Council were identified as:

- Poor attendance of official representatives and delegation of representation to low level officials; and
- Slow start to working groups.

Among the Constraints identified was the fact that, following the Feb 2002 Retreat intended to clarify the mandate of the Council, develop strategies for achieving the mandate, and achieve

consensus on a operational time frame for the Working groups, issues discussed prior to, and during the retreat continued to emerge. Among these issues are:

- Uncertain funding for WM activities;
- Lack of coordination and communication among stakeholders, beneficiaries and local institutions and people;
- Lack of capacity at the local level to implement and manage WM activities, and lack of community-driven initiative to sustain interest in projects; and
- Lack of enforcement of regulations, and lack of incentives for WM.

The Concept Paper further reflects on the constraints facing the NIWMC as highlighted in the Chambers Report (1999) as:

- Financing;
- Continued political will and support;
- Beneficiary commitment and support;
- Continued donor/lender commitment;
- Timely legislative upgrading;
- The attainment of effective planning, executing and implementing mechanisms;
- The absence of major socio economic disequilibrium; and
- Absence of natural disasters and reduction in praedial larceny.

The last three are noted as being outside of the manageable interest of the NIWMC, in addition to the strengthening of local level capacity to enforce regulations; the exploration of incentives; and the identification for other institutions for enforcement.

The Recommendations are made within the context of the fact that the NIWMC was designed to overcome the lack of coordination among the various players (GOJ, private sector, CBOs NGOs donors) and that it should employ its powers to addressing the most serious constraints to WM in Jamaica.

Specifically, the Paper recommends that:

- Working from “top to bottom”, the NIWMC can attract donors and high level players in government to direct funding to WM and communicate the importance of WM; and
- Working from “bottom to top” the NIWMC can communicate the importance of WM at the local level with the goal of developing local capacity.

The Paper states that to achieve this, there should be an adjustment in the strategic direction of the Council to incorporate a streamlined, demand-driven approach with local communities as the engine; the LGCWG as the conduit from communities to resource links; and the NIWMC working to strengthen the engine (local capacity).

Three Strategic directions/functions of the NIWMC are identified as:

1. A Community Focused Demand Driven Approach to WM

Requiring the NIWMC to focus on building local capacity, and public education as well as developing innovative partnerships between local groups and private sector, and between local groups and government. The LGCWG's role would be to catalyse the community and identify resource links to assist the communities in achieving WM.

2. Fund Raising

The NIWMC should focus on attracting funding sources by providing donors with a basis for prioritizing interventions and devising a scheme to track WM interventions. This will provide the donors with a level of comfort regarding their investment.

3. Information Dissemination/Communication/Coordination

The NIWMC should serve as a high level coordinating body, a clearinghouse for information/lessons learned in the process of WM intervention. In addition, it should focus on specific cases eg in the Great River where there are likely to be good lessons. Communication should flow from Council to high level of government and from council to local entities.

Finally, the Paper lists Potential indicators of NIWMC Successes as number of CBOs, local groups undertaking WM activities; new funding sources to support WM; number of innovative partnerships developed as a result of NIWMC input; number of private sector entities assisting with WM; number of high level GOJ players requesting information on WM activities; GOJ commitment level as reflected in high level representation on Council and funding allocated.

Commentary

Generally, the recommendations for the strategic directions/functions are sound, although given the current conditions under which the Council operates with so few human and financial resources, implementing them will present a challenge.

Specifically however within the section on the **Community-focused demand driven approach**, it is not clear which *resource organisations* the NIWMC should get *commitment from*.

This section could also include recommendations as follows:

The NIWMC should...

- Facilitate local level action by sourcing operational funds for the LWMCs.
- Facilitate a process by which local management plans feed into a national watershed plan.
- Should convene an annual forum at which reports from the LWMCs are taken, lessons learned documented and successes publicized and rewarded – eg a national award similar to the Michael Manley award for community development. This would be good publicity for the group and the Program at large.

Within the section on **Fund raising**, an amendment to read “Fund raising *and Resource allocation*” is suggested.

The points raised here regarding means by which to attract donors are sound. The location of the NIWMC makes it eminently suitable to undertake this role once transparency and evaluation protocols are clear.

Information Dissemination/Communication

Another critical role for the NIWMC is the documentation and clearinghouse function. Local management of natural resources is a very dynamic field and in order to maximize learning opportunities and innovativeness it is necessary to institutionalize the documentation and dissemination of new knowledge. This new knowledge is also critical to policy development and review and this must keep pace with the other change processes. As such, policy review should be another strategic function of the NIWMC

Hence two additional functions are suggested as follows

4. Policy Oversight and Review

The process to amend the Watershed Act and update the Policy should be validated by the NIWMC. The Council should also drive the process to have regular updates and amendments based on evolving knowledge from the field

5. Public relations

One of the weaknesses of the NIWMC is dwindling attendance and representation at meetings. A concerted effort needs to be made to publicize the work of the Council and the Council members. Keeping them in the spotlight (especially for under represented private sector interests) may be an incentive to remain in the process and leave less room for negligence. The Council should maintain a high public profile on activities and create a hype that persons and organizations will want to be associated with.

The National Consultations and National Awards for achievement can generate much publicity especially if private sector agencies are asked to award particular areas of achievement.

Review of Concept Paper “Criteria and Procedures for Registration of Local Watershed Management Committees”

The Criteria and Procedures for Registration concept paper starts by referring to the relevant section of the Draft Watershed Policy Section 3.4 as the basis on which the minimum conditions for the requirements of a LWMC are developed.

The main criteria for registration are listed as follows:

The group must...

- Be an CBO or part of a recognized umbrella group or organization with regular minutes and records;
- Have an Executive or Committee with President/ Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary;
- Have a current list of members and other organisations linked with them;
- Keep basic financial records including a properly administered bank account;
- Have a defined geographic area of focus with approximate acreage and identify the WMU in which it is located;
- Clearly identify the relevant issues to be addressed and these should be part of their mandate;
- Clearly state their objectives and vision;
- Identify program areas of concern; and
- Provide a basic description of proposed action including basis of action, role of players, methodology and timing.

The benefits of registration are listed as:

- Membership on a national network for WM with a directory listing.
- Participation of in annual or biennial networking seminars.
- Receipt of a membership certificate.
- Access to external help to:
 - Enlist support of government agencies
 - Suggest direction of action and provide technical advice
- Access to documentation of experience of other groups through compilation of success stories.
- Provision on Manual on Procedures to establish and run a LWM.
- An annual visit for the NIWMC.

The Obligations of the groups who register are listed as:

- Submission of an annual report;
- Implementation of activities stated in the program work/action plan; and
- Payment of an annual.

The points under the respective headings Criteria, Benefits to LWMC registration and Obligations are well articulated and comprehensive. They can most appropriately be incorporated into the Manual outlining Procedures for LWMC establishment and operations. The Criteria could be included as part of the general text and a form derived from the Criteria can be included as an Annex so as to facilitate easy filling out by groups.

The following are some additional items which could be added under the respective sections:

1. Criteria for Registration

- The group should have a basic system for financial procedures inclusive of a properly administered bank account – Add ***with designated signatories who have been vetted and approved by the group***

Under the Section “What are the benefits to LWMC registration”, the following could be considered for incorporation:

- ***Access to the NIWMC via the LGCWG to influence programs and opportunities and make input into deliberations at the policy level.***
- ***A recognized stake at the table with other watershed and area interests.***
- ***Recognition at national level by the NIWMC, the Ministry of Land and Environment, and the OPMs office.***
- ***Opportunities for exchange visits to other watersheds.***

Under the section “What are the Obligations of the LWMC registration” the following could be considered for incorporation:

“ The groups registered in the National network should:

- Submit an annual report of activities at the end of every calendar year. ***The report should include a financial report which also reflects income generated by group, fund raising etc.***

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25. Documents outlining rationale and criteria for the establishment of local management groups
26. Terms of reference or mandates of existing LWMCs/ LFMCs/other local management groups
27. Paper on Capacity of the SDC by Trevor Spence

Interviews were conducted with the following:

1. Dan Streete Chair person, Great River Local Watershed Management Committee
2. Thera Edwards, NEPA contact person for Rio Cobre/Hope Watershed Project user groups, Chair of the Local Coordinating Group Working Group
3. Franklin McDonald, CEO, Natural Environment and Planning Agency
4. Noel Bennett, Renee Oliphant, Forestry Dept/ Trees for Tomorrow
5. Steve Atkins, Sonia Warmington, Eastern Jamaica Agricultural Support Project contact
6. Janet Bedasse, Social Organiser of Water User Associations
7. Alex Lanigan, Friends of the Sea, Ocho Rios
8. Harvey Webb, Chairman, Rio Grande Local Watershed management Committee
9. Ian Gage, Special projects, Environmental Foundation of Jamaica
10. Trevor Spence, Mark Nolan, Ridge to Reef staff
11. Beverly Perriera - legal expert working on Watershed Policy
12. Christopher Miller, Social Development Commission
13. Shiela Grant, Coordinator of UNDP /LIFE Project

