



# STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT – A CASE STUDY OF JAMAICA

ELIZABETH EMANUEL  
GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA  
ADVISOR



# KEY FOCUS OF PAPER

- Profile of Jamaica
- The Rationale for the Implementation of a SEA Process in Jamaica
- Factors Enabling the Development of a SEA Process
- Key Elements of the SEA Process
- Lessons Learned





# PROFILE OF JAMAICA

- Third largest island in the Caribbean
- It is an archipelagic state with the marine space 24 times larger than the total land area of the country
- Total population 2.5 million
- 55% of population live in urban areas



# OVERVIEW OF THE ECONOMY

- GDP growth – 1.7% in 2001; 0.8% in 2002
- High interest rates
- Pressured, sliding exchange rate (US\$1 = J\$61, March 2004)
- Depends heavily on tourism and bauxite
- A high external debt of US\$5.3 billion (2002)
- Growing internal debt





# OVERVIEW OF THE ECONOMY

- 70% of public expenditures will be used for debt servicing in 2004
- Decline in poverty from 44.6% in 1991 to 19% in 2002
- Widening merchandise trade deficits
  - exports –US\$1.4 billion, imports US\$3.1 billion





# JAMAICA'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 84% of freshwater is derived from underground water sources
- Water production is 23% of total exploitable water
- 30% of water extracted is used to meet demand for potable water while 70% is used for irrigation
- 60% of available ground water in the capital city Kingston is contaminated by high amounts of nitrate





# JAMAICA'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Jamaicans generate about 1kg/per person/day of waste
- Total waste generated is 836,000 tonnes per annum
- 70% of waste disposed off is collected by municipal systems
- 70% of waste generated is organic and can undergo biological degradation







# JAMAICA'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 10,000 tonnes of hazardous waste generated per annum
- The island has 9 official disposal sites and one landfill
- 30% of the island is classified as forest
- Up to 1997, 41% of the population was still using charcoal as the main source of fuel for cooking
- Jamaica ranks 5<sup>th</sup> amongst the islands of world with respect to endemic plants





# ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



- Various initiatives (policy, laws, legislation) to protect the environment
- The Natural Resources Conservation Authority Act
- Beach Control Act
- Beach Policy etc.

# RATIONALE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SEA

- Two-fold
  - To enable the better development of policies, plans and programmes within GOJ
  - To attain significant benefits with respect to ecosystem well-being



# FACTORS FACILITATING/IMPEDING IMPLEMENTATION OF SEA

- Strengths
  - GOJ understands importance of SD
  - Extensive policy framework to protect the environment
  - Various policy reforms towards improving policy development
  - A well- defined Greening of Government Programme in place



# FACTORS FACILITATING/IMPEDING IMPLEMENTATION OF SEA

- Weaknesses



- Absence of overarching environmental objectives that have set goals guiding policy development
- Paucity of environmental data
- Lack of clear policy development guidelines resulting in weak policy development

# FACTORS FACILITATING/IMPEDING IMPLEMENTATION OF SEA

- Challenges

- Changing attitudes towards environmental protection and policy coordination
- Tightening the rigour of the policy making process
- Increasing the accountability of officials and ministers for the environmental implications of their decisions



# KEY ELEMENTS OF THE GOJ SEA PROCESS

- Review of the integration of environmental considerations into decision-making within GOJ
- Formation of a GOJ SEA Steering Committee
- Development of training materials and delivery of training in SEA
- Comparative Analysis of Review of International Experience in SEA
- Development of design and implementation issues in introducing SEA in Jamaica



# KEY ELEMENTS OF THE GOJ SEA PROCESS

- Drafting of GOJ SEA Policy
- Government Wide Review of Draft SEA Policy
- Promulgation of SEA Policy

# LESSONS LEARNED

- Using training to raise skills and knowledge of individuals in SEA
- Creating an atmosphere of trust amongst stakeholders
- Linking the SEA intervention to existing primary processes
- Ensuring that the timing is right and fits in with the introduction of other reforms