



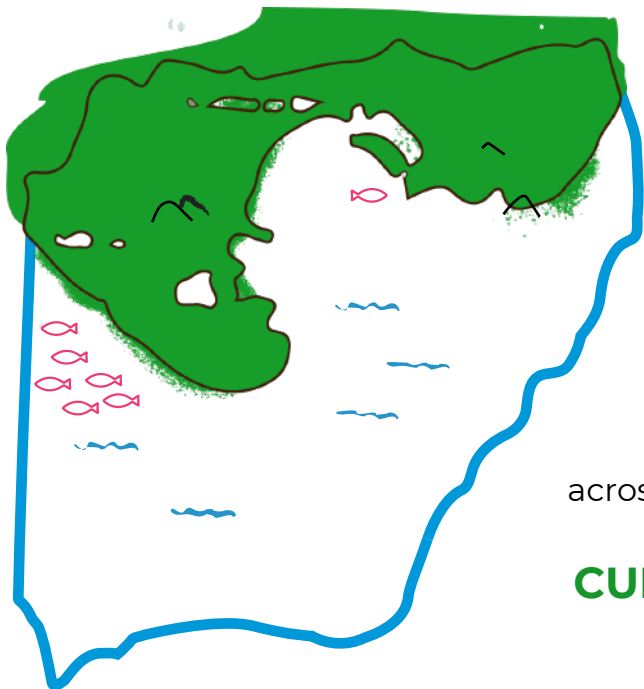
Locals speak:

Vulnerability of women's livelihoods and welfare to climate change in the Portland Bight Protected Area (PBPA)

INTRO

The Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (C-CAM) developed this photostory to highlight and share local knowledge on coastal marine environmental issues in the Portland Bight Protected Area (PBPA). The focus will be on highlighting the vulnerability of women's livelihoods and welfare to climate change in the PBPA.

Local knowledge was gathered via a recent workshop facilitated by C-CAM on January 26, 2021. C-CAM collated the information from the workshop and other related work in the PBPA, to showcase some of the key issues faced by local women related to climate change as well as suggestions for improvement.





BACKGROUND ON THE PBPA


The PBPA encompasses 49 communities, with a total population of about 50,000. Its three main coastal communities, which are around Special Fishery Conservation Areas, are the **Old Harbour Bay**, **Salt River** and **Mitchell Town**.

Poverty and unemployment rates in the communities within the PBPA are high (e.g. 39% unemployment rate across the three coastal communities and **70%** for females).

CURRENT CONDITIONS/CHALLENGES


 Fish needed for healthy reefs are absent or very small


 Some areas of the reef are totally overgrown with seaweed (fleshy algae)

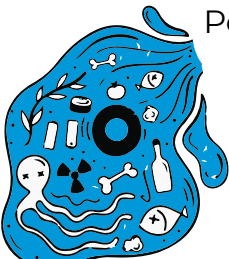
 Low numbers of urchins



KEY THREATS

 Air pollution from industrial operations and power stations.

 Climate change and natural disasters (including hurricanes, storms and flooding)

 Pollution of water and soils by sewage, chemicals, garbage and solid wastes.

Unsustainable development (including expansion of housing and urban areas and industrial development, fish and shrimp farming, quarry zones and infrastructure, poor agricultural practices, expansion of unsustainable tourism and recreation).

The WOMEN of PBPA



Traditionally the main source of income in these 49 communities is fishing, but due to climate change and hurricane damage, fish populations are declining. Most of the fishing is done by men, while **women sell the fish**. The men are going further and staying out longer to fish, but their catches are declining. Women have to go outside the area (as far as Manchioneal in St. Thomas on the eastern side of the island) to purchase fish to sell.



Points from the workshop

funded by the Global Partnership Network (GPN)



1

Risks of loss of life, houses, income and livestock, damage to mangroves and food shortages due to drought were all concerns stated.

2

Price increases following natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic which began affecting Jamaica in March 2020 meant that women could not buy as much food as before. At the individual household level these challenges faced by women were not always understood or taken into account, for example, by increasing allowances to compensate for shortfalls.

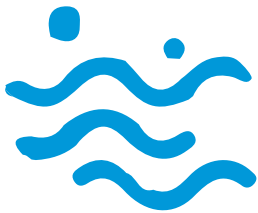


The participants assessed their **vulnerability and their capability to take action** to address these issues

Mean score: Very bad 1.6

Table 1: Scores for climate change vulnerability

Score	Category	# Responses	Weighted response	Average
Very bad	1	7	7	
Bad	2	3	6	
Moderate	3	2	6	
Good	4			
Very good	5			
TOTAL		12	19	1.6



The availability of **potable water** is a major issue in these communities. Water has to be purchased from a central location sometimes outside of the community. Women usually pay for it. Men will help by driving to the water sources to collect water. This has caused additional strain in their households given they already have reduced incomes from fishing/selling activities.



The drought has caused a decline in flowering plants, reduced flowering and shorter flowering seasons. This has affected **honey production**. Apiarists (in which women are also involved) have to buy sugar to feed their bees, and this reduces profits. Sometimes they have no honey to sell as they have to leave it for the bees. Nevertheless they think that there is a future in bee keeping, and they would encourage others to get into it.



Recommendations for addressing impacts from climate change





Improving Education & awareness

Improved education and awareness – increase awareness of PBPA stakeholders of climate change and its causes and impacts

Enhancing and diversifying community livelihoods

Support for business development and community livelihoods related to farming (livestock and cash crops) including training (such as customer service training, and beekeeping training) and provision of materials (such as top soil, seeds or fencing material)

Improving water security

Recommendation to explore potential for rainwater harvesting, as obtaining water is increasingly difficult because of declining rainfall and more frequent and severe droughts. Suggestions included installation of community tanks with larger catchments, as well as introducing legal requirement that new houses should include water tanks.

Other suggestions for improvement in management and governance of the PBPA

Shelter Management:

Shelters (used during disasters) need better security. They should also provide areas for separation of males, females and families.

Planning:

No build zones should be clearly defined and enforced by the Municipal Corporations in order to stop people building in risky areas.

Enforcement:

They would like to see stronger enforcement of environmental laws. This could mean more Honorary Game Wardens and community monitors. However they noted that provision of stipends to voluntary enforcement officers was desirable, at least to allow them to cover their costs. They also asked for more Conservation Officers (C-CAM's Enforcement Officers) to allow C-CAM to lead education and enforcement in the communities.

Informer culture:

There is a need to get people to support community leaders and not fight against them or denigrate them as informers.

Waste management

There is need for better garbage collection (to discourage community members from burning their garbage).



Why local knowledge matters?



This information can be used to support advocacy and more sustainable use, management and governance of the PBPA and its resources. It highlights the point that local communities and particularly local women’s perspectives play an important role in management and governance of coastal and marine resources, especially in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) & Marine Managed Areas (MMA); integrating their local knowledge on the key issues and priorities for action is important for more inclusive, participatory decision making and action in environmental matters. C-CAM’s intent is to use the information from the workshop to inform future actions of sustainability.



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