EDITORIAL

Goodbye Earth House

The Bombacaceae was in full bloom when we got the news; its pink blossoms scattered across the front doorstep of the house JET has called home for the past fourteen years. We had to vacate Earth House. We always knew that occupying Earth House was one of the biggest blessings JET had and that one day it would come to an end.

Change is inevitable. During the next few months, JET will undergo a lot of change. Moving to a new location and smaller space will be an adjustment for everyone who works here, and for all of our members. The big old Earth House and its huge lawn at Waterloo Road where we come to work every day, will become a part of JET’s history.

We will miss the pink blossoms of the Bombacaceae in February; the bright green jewel bugs that live in its hollows. We will miss the mango season; juicy Bombays. We will miss all the space! For a small staff complement, we certainly have a large office and as such, have amassed a lot of stuff over the years. Open days on the front lawn and members meetings on the veranda will be a thing of the past. Maybe so too will be the recycling shed. We wonder who Gertie, the resident duppy, will call to in the middle of the afternoon when none of us are around...

Moving affords you the chance to shed dead weight. It also results in sentimentally sifting through old photographs and project materials. As we mull over photos and posters and educational materials it is clear that JET’s achievements over the years are worth more than any building. Nevertheless, Earth House, its lawn, its trees, its occupants (of this life or the next) its character and charm will all be sorely missed. Thank you Gorstew and Hon. Gordon ‘Butch’ Stewart, for lending us Earth House.

Listen out for more news on our move.

Suzanne Stanley, Programme Director
March 2014

Formed in 1991, the Jamaica Environment Trust is a non-profit nongovernmental environmental organization in the island of Jamaica. We are a membership organization and anyone who supports protection of the environment can join. Our activities are focused on education and advocacy.

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Open Day at Earth House 2011; Cover photo: Earth House – Adrian Creary©
SPECIAL EDITORIAL
FROM THE CEO

At the time of completing this issue of The Jetter, the main dump for the city of Kingston, Riverton, caught fire. This has been a near-annual event for the past decade – burning every year since 2004 (except 2013), bringing severe distress to residents of Kingston and environs. This particular fire has been the worst in memory – causing closure of 50 schools, 30-odd businesses, a run on hospitals and health clinics, disruptions at the port of Kingston and a postponement of the GSAT Entrance Examination for thousands of students. Seven days after the fire started, the effects are still being felt in large areas of Kingston, St. Andrew and St. Catherine.

JET’s first newsletter in 1991 had a section on the Riverton dump and I quote sections of it here: The infamous Riverton City Dump is the only authorized dump for the entire city of Kingston. It is located in the middle of a residential area, and lies directly on the Kingston Harbour. The dump is regularly set afire by arsonists. These fires can rarely be brought under control and quickly they cause serious air pollution problems. In addition, rain water and toxic substances seep through the dump into Kingston Harbour. JET has proposed that the Riverton City Dump be closed for good, and that an engineered landfill be created in St. Catherine. An international agency has indicated to us that it may be willing to fund a study on solid waste management for the Kingston-Spanish Town area and we are pursuing this with them. JET is also promoting the establishment of a small pilot project refuse sorting station, modelled on several in profitable existence in the US. At such a station, refuse is initially sorted into three categories – recyclables, organic and “other”. The recyclables are sorted and sold, the organic materials are treated and sold, and only the “other” is dumped.

It is sobering to realize that 24 years later, the disgraceful situation at the Riverton dump continues and the health of over one million people remains threatened. JET calls on the Government of Jamaica to take immediate steps to find an alternative site for municipal solid waste, to construct a properly engineered and managed sanitary landfill and close the Riverton site. We ask all our members and friends to support us in this call.

Diana McCaulay, Chief Executive Officer
March 2015
JET, TEF LAUNCH NUH DUTTY UP JAMAICA CAMPAIGN

“Each Jamaican produces an average of one kilogram (1Kg) of waste per day. With a population of 2.7 million people, we generate about 2,700 tonnes of waste every day - the equivalent of 2,000 SUVs!” This statistic comes from the 2014 International Coastal Cleanup Day Jamaica report launched on Wednesday, February 4th, by the Jamaica Environment Trust (JET).

The highlight of the launch was the introduction of Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica, a new public education campaign component of the Clean Coasts Project, a programme being spearheaded by JET with funding from the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF). The TEF has provided $34.5 million to support the Clean Coasts Project. The project, launched in August 2014, brings together stakeholders from across Jamaica – schools, citizens, government, and tourism industry players – with the aim of tackling poor solid waste management and marine debris in Jamaica. Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica is geared at improving knowledge and attitudes with regard to waste and its impact on public health and the environment.

“Poor solid waste management is one of the most challenging environmental issues that Jamaica faces. Every individual in Jamaica has a role to play in changing our practice of carelessly disposing of garbage in gullies, drains and on the streets, leaving it to wash down to become litter on our beaches and in the sea,” said Suzanne Stanley, Programme Director at JET.

In lauding the campaign, Executive Director of the TEF, Mr. Clyde Harrison said, “The Tourism Enhancement Fund is pleased to be the main sponsor of this very important venture. We have had a long and very fruitful collaboration with the Jamaica Environment Trust, on programmes such as International Coastal Cleanup Day.”

The Jamaica Environment Trust has coordinated the annual International Coastal Cleanup Day in Jamaica since 2008, with a consistent year-on-year increase in the level of participation across the island. The 2014 report reveals that a record 7,403 volunteers cleaned up 101 miles of coastline collecting 5,970 bags of garbage weighing over 85,000 pounds. Plastic bottles, caps, bags, cups and plates represented the majority of items collected, highlighting the fact that the majority of waste on our beaches originates on land.

Mr. Harrison added, “What I appreciate most about the Clean Coasts Project is that it brings together stakeholders from all across Jamaica. The campaign forms part of our ongoing effort to heighten the public’s appreciation of the importance of our natural environment and the need for us to be environmentally conscious in our behaviour to preserve Jamaica’s natural assets. I urge every Jamaican to take up the challenge to keep Jamaica clean for all of us.”

Corporate Jamaica has already begun pledging its support for the Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica campaign, recognizing the importance of conveying the message of proper solid waste management locally. Commitments have been made to the campaign by Diageo, Island Grill, Agricultural Chemicals and Bacchanal Jamaica.

“We are absolutely pleased to partner with JET on this groundbreaking initiative and believe strongly in protecting our beautiful country’s ecosystems and particularly our unmatched coastline for which tourists the world over come to enjoy,” said Dianne Ashton-Smith, Head of Corporate Relations at Red Stripe, a Diageo company. “To preserve this for years to come, each of us has a role to play; it cannot be the sole onus of Government. As corporate entities and citizens of Jamaica we all can do our part.”

International Coastal Cleanup Day Jamaica and the Clean Coasts Project are initiatives implemented by the Jamaica Environment Trust with funding from the Tourism Enhancement Fund. In addition to the Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica campaign, the Clean Coasts project is delivering environmental education programmes in primary and secondary schools to raise awareness about solid waste management, and carrying out underwater cleanups in Jamaica’s major resort areas. Follow Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica on Facebook http://fb.com/NuhDuttyUpJamaica and on Instagram @nuhduttyupjamaica
Scenes from the launch of Nuh Dutty Up Jamaica in February 2015
UPDATE ON SAVE GOAT ISLANDS CAMPAIGN

Throughout 2014, JET continued to advocate for greater transparency with regard to plans for a transshipment port and/or industrial facility in the Portland Bight Protected Area (PBPA), near to the two Goat Islands. In February 2014, Jamaica's Minister of Transport and Works, the Hon. Omar Davies gave an update in Parliament on the Goat Islands project. He stated that an initial Framework Agreement had been settled with CHEC and discussions were ongoing. He outlined what the development would include: an industrial park, container terminal, construction of infrastructure, dredging and land reclamation to create the port and a coal-fired electricity plant. JET did ATI requests to the Port Authority of Jamaica for the draft and final Framework Agreement and all Memoranda of Understanding between the GOJ and CHEC. Our requests were denied. We had also filed an appeal to the Access to Information Appeals Tribunal and while we were awaiting a hearing date, several Certificates of Exemption relating to the documents requested were issued by the Minister of Finance, the Hon. Peter Phillips who claimed that disclosure of the information would have a substantial adverse impact on the Jamaican economy. The issue of the Certificate effectively denied JET of the right to challenge Port Authority’s refusal before the ATI Appeals Tribunal. With the assistance of Hugh Small, Queen’s Counsel, JET applied to the Supreme Court for leave to seek Judicial Review of the first Certificate of Exemption and the Port Authority’s refusal, and this was granted in May 2014. The hearing on this matter began in October 2014, during which the GOJ conceded that the Certificate of Exemption had been issued by the wrong Minister who did not have portfolio responsibility for the Port Authority to whom JET had directed its request for information. A consent judgment was arrived at between the parties on this point, but the other arguments were not heard and the case was adjourned to June 2015. The court also awarded half of JET’s legal costs in respect of the claim against the Minister of Finance and Planning to be paid by the GOJ. Following the court hearing, a new Certificate of Exemption was issued by the Hon. Dr. Omar Davies, Minister of Transport, Works and Housing and JET has sought the permission of the court to file another application for judicial review of the decision to issue this new Certificate.

In short, there has been a lot of legal back and forth, but to date, the GOJ has not released any of the detailed information requested.

Having learned of the proposal for a coal-fired plant in Jamaica’s most protected area of land and sea, JET built a cardboard coal plant on the front lawn of Earth House and we hosted an Occupy event under our big mango tree over three days in March. We invited experts and the public to attend to discuss the many issues raised by the Goat Islands development. Attendance was not large – but the gathering was lively. Our CEO has continued to take groups and individuals to tour the area and people are often amazed by the size of the two islands and the beauty of the rivers.

Using the Access to Information (ATI) Act, we obtained a copy of the beach license and monitoring reports issued to China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) to carry...
out geotechnical surveys in the area. We reviewed the beach license application and made a written submission to NEPA – no response was received. The April and May monitoring reports stated that there were to be changes to the location of the boreholes but that no drilling had yet been undertaken. A large dredge was seen in the area, but JET does not know the results of the geotechnical survey – more ATI requests need to be done.

In July 2014, coral reef surveys in the PBPA began, carried out by the University of the West Indies. JET will partner with UWI to release the results of these studies in February 2015.

Also in 2014, the Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM), the managers of the Portland Bight Protected Area, released a new study done by the Conservation Strategy Fund to assess alternative sites for the transshipment port. JET partnered with CCAM to advise the public of the findings of this study at Redbones in November. The study found that if the port were built in Macarry Bay, on the western edge of the PBPA, this would be both cheaper and less environmentally damaging. Copies of the report were sent by CCAM to all Members of Parliament and CHEC but there has been no reaction from the GOJ on this proposal.

The fate of the Goat Islands and parts of the Portland Bight Protected Area continues to hang in the balance.

**TAKE A STAND FOR OUR ISLAND**

**JET AND THE PEDRO BANK AND CAYS**

JET started working to improve conditions on the Pedro Cays and management of the South West Cay Special Fisheries Conservation Area (Bird Cay fish sanctuary), after learning of the disgraceful sanitation situation on the Cays. We conducted clean ups and education programmes for fishers in 2012, and then when The Nature Conservancy (TNC) scaled down their involvement in the Pedro Bank Management Programme in March 2013, contracted Llewelyn Meggs and Jaedon Lawe to continue to coordinate the patrols and monitoring of the Bird Cay Fish Sanctuary. We received support from TNC and three local private sector donors – Ronald E. Schrager and Wendy Hart Foundation, Mayberry Investments and Rainforest Seafoods. During 2013 and 2014, we trained and paid community wardens to patrol the fish sanctuary, Messrs. Meggs and Lawe conducted a monthly supervisory and monitoring trip to the Cays, identified, repaired and transported a patrol boat (SeaJET) to the Pedro Cays, tested new buoy designs and maintained the sanctuary demarcation buoys, kept the field station in good repair, carried out educational activities for fishers and law enforcement personnel on the Cays, monitored the biological resources by doing fish and bird counts, conducted lionfish culls, monitored and reported on the sanitation challenges on the Cays, and liaised with GOJ officials on the management and protection of the Pedro Bank and Cays. JET has also been engaged to provide logistical support for the development of a Marine Spatial Plan for the Pedro Bank, funded by TNC and led by Dr. Kim Baldwin.

The main successes of this period included two successful enforcement actions concerning fishers found illegally fishing in the sanctuary and the increasing number of fish inside the sanctuary. See [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mrs61jhTJlw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mrs61jhTJlw).

Along with the successes, there were also many challenges. Despite our best efforts, many of the demarcation buoys were cut. The sanitation conditions on Middle Cay especially remain entirely unsatisfactory. The fines under the Fishing Industry Act remain far too low to present a real deterrent and the Government of Jamaica has yet to commit funds to Jamaica’s most lucrative fishing grounds.

TNC has been successful in securing major funding from US AID for continued work on the Pedro Bank and with our agreement, this will be carried out by a different local partner, the Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM). Our direct involvement in monitoring and enforcement on the Pedro Bank came to an end on December 31, 2014. We will, however, continue to work with all Pedro partners in our role as educators and advocates to ensure the best possible management and protection of the significant marine resources of the Pedro Bank and Cays. We will also support the Marine Spatial Plan project until completion.
JET HOLDS REGIONAL MEETING AND PUBLISHES STUDY ON ACCESS RIGHTS

On November 20 and 21, 2014, JET launched The Access Initiative (TAI) Jamaica Report on Access Rights at a regional meeting held at the Terra Nova Hotel in Kingston, Jamaica. The report, entitled Environmental Information, Participation and Justice: An Assessment by The Access Initiative Jamaica is the only study of its kind on Jamaica’s progress on access rights - access to information, public participation and access to justice. The meeting brought together 11 local and overseas experts and 38 Caribbean participants from civil society, government and the media met to share and disseminate the findings of the report, and identify priorities, gaps, challenges and actions to improve access rights in the Caribbean region.

The published report is the outcome of a partnership between JET, Windsor Research Centre, Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM) and the North Cockpit Country Local Forest Management Foundation. Together these groups conducted the assessment over the period November 2013 to June 2014, based on research using eighteen case studies that involved the use of access rights. The case studies covered a wide range of issues such as emergency events as in the case of the fires at Riverton waste disposal site, air and water quality testing in facilities such as JAMALCO Alumina Refinery in Clarendon, approval process for projects such as the proposed Transshipment Port at Goat Islands and reporting from facilities such as Monymusk Sugar Factory. These case studies were chosen for their relevance to areas of important biological diversity such as Cockpit Country, the Portland Bight Protected Area and Black River.

The report reveals that while Jamaica has made significant strides in enacting laws on Access to Information, and establishing independent and impartial courts and tribunals, there are severe limitations in the laws and practice in granting rights to the public to learn about and participate in projects, environmental policies and plans. A worrying issue uncovered is the delay in receiving decisions of courts and tribunals on environmental matters. This was highlighted in the case study of a request for information regarding the lease agreements for the Falmouth Cruise Ship pier made in September 2012. The request was denied by the Port Authority of Jamaica and an appeal was filed by JET to the Access to Information Appeals Tribunal. The appeal was heard on November 25, 2013 and December 3, 2013 and over one year later, the parties have not yet received the Tribunal’s decision.

The report was funded by the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund through a grant to the World Resources Institute (WRI) which is the secretariat for The Access Initiative (TAI). Hard copies of the report were circulated to key GOJ stakeholders and civil society partners and it can also be downloaded on JET’s website at www.jamentrust.org.
RECORD TURN OUT FOR INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP DAY JAMAICA 2014

On Saturday, September 20, 2014 JET led 74 groups to stage 113 beach cleanups marking International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Day Jamaica 2014. Over 7,400 Jamaicans volunteered their time and efforts to clean beaches and waterways across the island on ICC Day this year. Included in that number are the 1,900 volunteers who assisted JET in the flagship cleanup of Fort Rocky Beach and the surrounding wetlands on the Palisadoes Strip in Kingston.

International Coastal Cleanup Day was started 29 years ago by the US-based NGO the Ocean Conservancy, and is the largest one day volunteer event in the world, taking place in over 100 countries annually. JET is the National Coordinator of ICC activities in Jamaica, which are funded by the Tourism Enhancement Fund. The national summary report for 2014 can be found on the JET website: www.jamentrust.org

Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr. Hon. Wykeham McNeill with JET CEO Diana McCaulay at the JET Fort Rocky Beach Cleanup in Kingston

HEART College of Hospitality cleaned up Flavours Beach in St Ann

Annotto Bay Police Youth Club cleaned up Annotto Bay Beach in St Mary

HEART Trust NTA Culloden Training Centre cleaned up Bluefields Bay in Westmoreland
JET, the World Resources Institute (WRI) and The Access Initiative (TAI) have teamed up to create a new website called Development Alert! The website is the first of its kind in the Caribbean, using an interactive web-mapping interface which provides easy-to-understand information highlighting proposed major developments in Jamaica and their potential environmental impacts.

New and existing development proposals which require permits and licenses under ten categories are presented using their geographic location on a map of Jamaica. This was achieved using a Geographic Information Systems platform which allows users of the site to view the proposed developments alongside various layers including satellite imagery of Jamaica, roads, vegetative cover, protected areas, fisheries, and forest reserves. Mapped projects include major development such as highways, housing developments, hotel developments, energy projects, water abstraction, forest removal, and mining which are likely to have significant health, environmental, social or cultural impacts.

Users of Development Alert! can view mapped projects in detail to access more information, including the name of the developer, the development’s precise location, a project description, permit/license applications, status and approvals. The website also provides contact information for government agencies who can be contacted with questions, comments and concerns about projects.

Development Alert! is the people’s platform. Leave comments and also interact with one another through the designated forum sections on each project page - we want to hear from you. You can also make reports about developments you see. Is there something suspicious about an existing development or an entirely new project starting? Let the public know!

Find out more at http://www.developmentalert.org/

UPDATE ON TRAINING OF MINING & QUARRYING COMMUNITIES

In February 2014, JET, in collaboration with Global Community Monitor (GCM) and the US based World Resources Institute (WRI) began training communities affected by mining and quarrying on how to test for air, water and soil pollution. The initiative is part of a larger project being implemented by JET with funding from the Inter-American Foundation (IAF) aimed at strengthening the capacity of Jamaican mining and quarrying communities to protect their health and quality of life.

JET provided training and legal assistance to community organizations in Bull Bay, St. Andrew, Hayes and New Town, Clarendon, Nine Miles, St Ann and the Cockpit Country in a series of workshops and public meetings between March and November 2014. Community members were trained in using the Access to Information Act to obtain official documents from regulatory bodies, and were given the opportunity to meet regulators face-to-face and advocate for more effective regulation and improved public consultation within the mining and quarrying industries.

Of the five communities trained under the IAF project, three (Bull Bay, Hayes and New Town) received training on how to test air, water and soil pollution levels. Between April and September 2014, the New Town Phase 2 Citizens Association collected 14 samples of underground and surface water, four soil samples and five air quality samples in Hayes and New Town, Clarendon. The Ten Miles Citizen Council collected four water samples, three soil samples and five air quality samples in Bull Bay, St. Andrew. Communities also received specialized equipment known as Particulate Matter (PM) Monitors in July 2014 to assist with testing air quality.
To date, lab results from a US based laboratory have confirmed elevated levels of aluminium and sodium contamination in groundwater and wells in the Hayes/New Town communities. Also, air pollution levels in Bull Bay are higher than that of Hayes/New Town. Particulate Matter levels (<10 µm) in Bull Bay exceeded the short-term (24-hour) World Health Organization ambient air quality standard of 50 µg/m³ in two locations. Notwithstanding this, they did not exceed the recommended local and US EPA (United States Environmental Protection Agency) standard. Also, despite very high silicon (silicate) levels there was not much exposure to toxic metals such as Cadmium, Manganese, Lead, Arsenic and Nickel.

Between November 14 and 18, 2014, representatives from the Hayes/New Town communities attended a Community Based Science for Action workshop hosted by GCM in New Orleans, USA. Mr Leon Swack, Mr Errol Josephs and Ms Carmetta Kirlew reported that the conference exposed them to more advanced methods of pollution testing, and inspired them to continue the work they are currently doing in their community. They hope that an extensive environmental education plan can be implemented within the community in collaboration with the organizations they interacted with at the conference.

SEP UPDATE

The theme for the 2014/15 Schools’ Environment Programme (SEP) is ‘Marine debris: a legacy of litter’. It is in line with JET’s new Clean Coasts Project, funded by the Tourism Enhancement Fund, which seeks to build public awareness on the impacts of littering on the marine environment especially in resort areas. The Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) funded SEP for the third consecutive year.

School visits were conducted in the months of October, November, February and March with 32 schools, all of which are at the primary and all age level. Two teacher training workshops were held in Kingston and Montego Bay in November. There were 45 attendees representing 26 schools in addition to representatives from the Gleaner and the National Environment and Planning Agency. Both workshops had a field trip component. In Kingston, the Palisados Go-Kart track and strip was visited for persons to see first-hand the level of marine debris that exists on land and in the sea. In Montego Bay, the Montego Bay Marine Park located at Pier One was visited. Jaedon Lawe and Llewellyn Meggs from JET’s marine division was on hand to show the boom design which will be used in the Clean Coast project. A boom is a device which is installed in the ocean and used to collect floating garbage on the surface of the water. The workshop feedback was positive based on the evaluations submitted. Comments received include:

‘Eye-opening experience’

‘The field trip provided first-hand experience and served as an eye-opener. I was able to relate to what was happening and so the problem was made real for me’

Overall, participants found the workshop informative and the information useful and they look forward to future workshops.
NAZLI WILLIAMS & FELICIA WONG

At the end of 2014, JET welcomed two new members to our team – Nazli Williams and Felicia Wong. Nazli is JET’s new Administrator and Felicia works part time as a Project Coordinator.

Where were you born?
FW: Kingston, Jamaica
NW: Clarendon, Jamaica

Where did you go to school and what did you study?
FW: I went to Holy Childhood High School and then did my undergraduate degree at Florida Southern College. I have a Bachelors of Science Degree in Chemistry with a double Minor in Business and Biology.
NW: I attended Glenmuir High and then the University of the West Indies, Mona, where I received my Bachelors in History and Minor Philosophy

How did you learn about JET?
FW: Each year, I kept hearing about JET because of the buzz around beach cleanup.
NW: My sister works for another environmental NGO called Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation and so she was the one that first told me about JET.

How did you become interested in working at JET?
FW: I heard that they were looking for someone with a scientific background to work on a pollution project with a few communities that have been affected by mining and quarrying and I felt that it would be an interesting project to be a part of.
NW: I have always wanted to do something to assist in helping with the environment and preservation of Jamaica, and when I saw the position opened up I applied.

What have you found to be the most interesting part of your job so far?
FW: There’s always some new challenge to face whether it’s helping various communities overcome environmental issues or finding creative ways to promote the environmental causes we support.
NW: My job is multifaceted and so it keeps me on my toes. I have to multi-task and manage my time efficiently as well assist my coworkers and other individuals who contact JET.

What environmental issue in Jamaica is of greatest concern to you?
FW: There’s a great disregard of proper waste disposal practices across the island. It’s an important issue because it not only affects the terrestrial environment but also the marine environment.
NW: The protection of the Portland Bight Protected Area and the proposed trans-shipment port on the Goat Islands. I am from Clarendon and I have seen what the storm surges have done when there is a hurricane. It’s heart rendering to see people helpless in the face of natural disasters and I am very concerned that this development would expose the residents of the area to this type of danger.

DANIELLE IS LEAVING JET

JET’s Legal Director, Danielle Andrade will be leaving JET after nine years of service. The work she has done to build environmental jurisprudence in Jamaica and the Caribbean has been an invaluable contribution to our organisation and society. We know that wherever life may lead her, she will continue building on the ground-breaking work she has begun while working at JET. We will miss Danielle and wish her continued success.