



**ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**Public Awareness on Watershed Management:
Workshops for Media Practitioners**

REPORT

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Public Awareness on Watershed Management in the OECS Workshops for Media Practitioners

A. Summary

Four workshops for media practitioners on management of watershed and water catchments were held in four OECS Member states during the period March 9th to April 19th 2001. The main objectives of the workshops were to sensitise media practitioners on watershed management issues enhance the environmental reporting skills of media practitioners and develop working relationships between the watershed management agencies and the national media.

The series of workshops was one component of the public awareness campaign, which included the dissemination of information through the mass media, and to selected publics using small media.

Senior officers of the departments made the main presentations on watershed management issues in the respective countries, responsible for forestry and the environment. The sessions on environmental reporting were led by a consultant/facilitator. In all cases the workshop programmes included field trips to areas and projects which presented lessons in best practices as well as practices which threaten the sustainability of the water catchments. The participants also examined the potentials and constraints of the use of the mass media through discussions and exercises. A selection of publications and materials on natural resources management and environmental reporting were distributed to the participants. (The list is attached as appendix 1).

There was generally a low level of attendance by media practitioners. The sessions on reporting techniques were thus adjusted to address the communications needs of the technical officers.

The recommendations reflected the level of existing relationships between the media and watershed managers. However in all cases participants recognised the need to establish mechanisms to increase the access of technical officers to journalists and reporters. Participants also recommended the review of existing methods of information dissemination from public sector agencies to the media. In view of the limitations of the capacity of the media agencies, participants recommended increased training in the development of information products for natural resources managers.

In view of the problems of mobilising the media practitioners at the national level, training must be provided for resources managers in information management, while efforts are made to develop strategic links with selected media practitioners in the various OECS Member States.

The workshops were organised by the local agencies responsible for watershed management, with assistance from the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit. The local print and electronic media reported on the workshops. (Selected clippings are attached).

B. Country Reports.

Public Awareness on Watershed Management Workshop for Media Practitioners

Grenada

1. Summary

The two day workshop on watershed management for media workers in Grenada was held at the conference room of the Agency for Rural Transformation (ART) from March 8th – 9th 2001. In addition to the presentations and discussions, participants were taken to the Grand Etang watershed (Belvedere) for first hand examination of the characteristics, uses and problems related to watershed management. A total of twelve persons representing the print and electronic media and NGOs involved in environmental education participated in the workshop. In addition to the general discussions, recommendations were made aimed at improving the public awareness on watershed management through the use of the mass media. The workshop was organised by the department of Forestry and National Parks with assistance from the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit.

2. Presentations.

In his welcome remarks, workshop coordinator Wilan Hamilton of the Forestry and National Parks department stated that the workshop was timely since the department was in the process of trying to develop positive relations with the media. The department is charged with the task of protecting the watersheds in Grenada.

Mr. David Popo, programme officer of the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit stated that the workshop was part of a watershed management initiative for the OECS territories. This called for partnerships between the public sector agencies and the mass media. He questioned whether people individually or as part of civil society organisations understood the importance of the environment. Mr. Popo further stated that the public awareness campaign was based on the needs of the member states and was endorsed by the network of OECS foresters at their last meeting in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in December 2000. He said that the OECS is a participant in the public awareness process and hoped that the participants would feel the impact of the workshop

Mr. Aden Forteau of the department of Forestry and National Parks made the main presentation on watershed management in Grenada. In the overview, he stated that there were seventy-one watersheds and thirty-two dams in Grenada. The presentation examined the contrasting scenarios of the effects of large areas without forest cover and those with forest cover. He also reviewed the responsibilities of the main agencies involved in watershed management in Grenada. (The notes of the presentation are attached as appendix V).

In the follow-up discussion, the participants commented on the specific cases of polluted water and questioned the public sector agencies' ability and willingness to inform the public on issues related to the watershed and water. It was also suggested that the categorisation of watersheds based on levels of threats and uses should be used as a tool of management. The participants also noted that their use of information from public sector agencies was determined by their perception of the relationship of the agency with the watershed and in particular, water. Most participants noted that prior to the workshop they were inclined to give greater credibility to National Water and Sewerage Authority (NWSA) on information related to water and the watershed.

The facilitator Mr. Embert Charles made a presentation on environmental reporting. The presentation focused on the characteristics of environmental reporting, the factor which facilitate reporting, and activities which would strengthen the “environment beat”. (See appendix II for details of the presentation).

In the discussion, the participants presented their experiences of environmental reporting in a media environment, which gives high priority to news about national politics. Participants expressed the need to ensure that facts are presented before opinions.

On the field trip to the Grand Etang watershed, participants were invited to focus on the following areas of information:

- The physiological features of the area.
- Land use particularly for agriculture and housing
- End Problems - the effects of inappropriate use
- Solutions and best practices.

3. Exercises

During the workshop participants did two exercises. In the first exercise, participants were asked to recall issues on the first day, which had greatest impact on them. Most persons recalled some of the concepts and facts related to watershed management in Grenada. Some issues related to media practice such as gate keeping were also recalled.

In the second exercise, the participants were asked to prepare a news report or feature on the presentations and the field trip. The stories were discussed with specific focus on the choice of leads, verification of information from interviews, and proper attributions. In the discussions, the following sources of information which would assist journalists in the preparation of reports, were listed as:

- The Land Use Division.
- Extension Division.
- NAWASA
- The staff of the Forestry and national Parks department
- Agency for Rural Transformation

- GRENCODA
- IICA
- The Commodity Board
- The Banana Society
- The Pesticides Control Board.

4. Information needs and concerns of the media practitioners.

- New development and trends in watershed management.
- Status reports on the watersheds and uses of the resources.
- Status of implementation of recommendations from workshops and studies.
- Contact information on the individuals and communities directly affected by the use of the resources.
- The impact of the dry season on the watersheds.

5. Recommendations.

Participants made the following recommendations to be implemented by the Forestry and national parks department:

- A special workshop for broadcasters particularly persons employed with the new FM radio stations.
- The media should establish a regular contact with the staff of the public sector agencies responsible for watershed management.
- The Forestry and National Parks Department should “sell” itself.
- The creation of a database of the media agencies.
- The need to clarify the type of information, which can be released by the staff of the Forestry and National Parks department without the complicated clearances from senior public sector officials.
- The need for an internal protocol at the Forestry and National Parks department on the management of information.
- The development and dissemination of a glossary of terms on watershed management.
- The quarterly media briefings by the Minister responsible for the Environment.
- The dissemination of the OECS newsletter “Natural Resources News” to the media.

6. Conclusions

Participants made the following comments on the workshop:

“I will never look at a mountain the same way I did”

“Informative and insightful”

“Feel at advantage when I have more information”

“Watersheds means one thing for trades unions, but something else for people”

7. List of Participants.

Rawyl Titus	Caribbean News Agency (CANA)
Jamila Lewis	Grenada Broadcasting Corporation
Wilan Hamilton	Forestry and National Parks Department
Aden Forteau	Forestry and National Parks Department
Linda Straker	The Grenadian Voice
Alpha Farray	The Grenada Today
Rebecca King	Ocean Spirits
Francis A. Robertson	Agency for Rural transformation
Denis Thomas	The Grenada Informer
James Mahon	Ministry of Agriculture
David Popo	OECS Natural Resources Management Unit

Public Awareness on Watershed Management Workshop for Media Practitioners.

Dominica

1. Summary

The workshop on watershed management for media workers was held in Dominica at the conference room of the department of Fisheries, March 28th –29th 2001. In addition to the presentations and discussions, participants toured the water catchments in Springfield and River Duce in order to view some of the issues related to watershed management. A total of twelve persons representing the media, NGOs and public sector agencies participated in the sessions. One of the main recommendations was that mass media should review their placement/broadcast of public service announcements in order to grant more favourable treatment to public information on watershed management. The workshop was organised by the Forestry Department with assistance from the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit.

2. Presentations.

David Williams, Chief Forestry Officer welcomed participants on behalf of the local coordinating agency and the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit. He stated that watershed management was important because water will soon become a critical resource, because sources of water may soon run dry. Water is also important and forty five percent of the energy used in Dominica is generated through hydro-electricity. He said that while participants must understand the value of water for industrial and commercial activities, as well as domestic consumption, there are issues such as deforestation, squatting and improper waste disposal which require urgent attention.

Embert Charles, workshop facilitator, informed participants that the main objectives of the workshop were to inform participants on watershed management issues in Dominica, share skills in environmental reporting, and discuss mechanisms for enhanced relationships between the agencies engaged in the management of watershed and water catchments on the one hand and media practitioners and media agencies on the other. The workshop for media practitioners was part of a regional public awareness campaign on watershed management in the OECS, which targets other publics including students and young people, farmers, households, and extension officers.

Mr. Adolphus Christian of the Forestry and Wildlife division made the main presentation on watershed management in Dominica. A wide range of issues were presented, using a lecture format, and the use of illustrations on a white board:

- There are both natural and artificial catchments in Dominica
- The Forestry Act gives powers of law enforcement to all forestry officers.

- The Dominica Water and Sewerage Company (DOWASCO) should introduce user fees for use of the resources in the water catchment.
- The tourism department can assist in the management of watersheds.
- There is need for the support of all public sector agencies in public awareness campaigns on watershed management.
- Among the main problems confronting watershed management include squatting, lands sales near riverbanks and activities of individuals near the rivers.

The full text of the presentation is attached as appendix IV to the report.

In the follow-up discussion, participants expressed concern on the impact of dredging in the rivers, and the breaching of buffer zones along riverbanks. Some of the issues, which required further elaboration, were the role of the national planning division, the impact of global climate change on water resources, and the pollution of river water by manufacturing companies. Participants agreed that public and private sector collaboration was necessary to effectively manage the forty-two watersheds in Dominica.

Additional discussions were held on the communication methods utilised in the main presentation. Participants ranked the presentation very high for the volume and quality of information, but lower ratings for the communications skills and understanding of the audience respectively. The facilitator summarised the discussions noting that presenters should focus on the key areas of the subject, and should always be cognisant of the characteristics of the audience. The facilitator also invited media practitioners and representatives of agencies engaged in watershed management to consider themselves as mediators in the process of information dissemination. Effective mediators should possess skills in effective message design.

The facilitator led the session on issues and techniques of reporting on the environment. The main points of this presentation are documented as appendix II to the report. The follow-up discussions identified the differences in perception of “good news” by the media practitioners and the watershed managers.

In preparation for the field trip, the participants were invited to focus on the following areas of information:

- The physiological features of the watershed and water catchment.
- The use of land for farming housing.
- The conflicts related to use of the resources
- The current best practices being used as solutions to the problems.

The staff of the Forestry and Wildlife division coordinated the field trip to the water catchment in Springfield and River Duce. Springfield is a very important catchment producing approximately four million gallons of water daily.

3. Exercises.

In attempt to assess the levels of information and impact of issues discussed during the first day of the workshop, participants were engaged in an exercise to recall the key

issues of the first day. The majority of the responses reflected the importance of watershed management and the negative effects of inappropriate individual and commercial activities on the water resources.

Participants presented news reports of the field trip. The reports were reviewed for the effectiveness of leads, and the use of sources of information to prepare the story. Participants noted:

- Leads could be catchy but not necessarily sensational.
- Supporting data should be used in addition to information from interviews.
- Factual news reports should be separated from opinions and commentaries.
- Reporters must always acknowledge their sources.

Some of the issues which emerged out of the field trips and the news reports, included the security of the water intakes, the liability of the agencies responsible for the production of water, and the negative impact of cultural practices on watershed management initiatives.

Sources of information on watersheds for media practitioners were listed as:

- The staff of the Forestry and Wildlife and Fisheries divisions.
- The Environmental Coordinating Unit.
- Caribbean Environmental Health Institute.
- The Library at the Ministry of Agriculture.
- The publications and audio-visual outputs of the Forestry and Wildlife division.

The staff of the Forestry department and DOWASCO identified their needs as:

- Understanding the specific interests of the media practitioners.
- Information on the editorial policies of the media houses.
- Environmental issues of interest to the media practitioners.

4. Recommendations.

Participants made the following recommendations to be implemented by the Forestry and Wildlife division:

- Watershed management agencies should provide information to the media agencies on a regular basis.
- Mass media agencies (newspapers and radio/television stations) should review their placement/broadcast of public service announcements in order to grant more favourable treatment to public information on watershed management.
- Natural resources management issues should be regarded as major national concerns and information/promotion related to this subject should receive concessions by the media.
- Free airtime should be granted to the Forestry and Wildlife division.

5. Conclusion.

The media practitioners and the staff of the Forestry and Wildlife division agreed that their roles should not be adversarial. Media practitioners were encouraged to establish an informal group to promote coverage of environmental issues in general and watershed management in particular.

6. List of Participants.

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Public Awareness on Watershed management Workshop for Media Practitioners

Tortola, British Virgin Islands

1. Summary.

The workshop on watershed management for media practitioners, was held in Tortola March 28 –29, 2001, at the conference room, Ministry of Natural resources and Labour. Participants included technical officers of public sector agencies, representatives of non-governmental organisations, and journalists from the local media houses. Presentations on issues affecting the management of watersheds were made by the staff of the Conservation and Fisheries Department and the Water and Sewerage Department. A working session on techniques of environmental reporting was also held. The participants were engaged in a field trip to get a first hand experience of the issues being discussed. Among the recommendations of the workshop were reviews of existing procedures for information dissemination, and the enhancement of the communications skills of the staff of the public sector agencies engaged in watershed management. The workshop was organised by the staff of the Conservation and Fisheries Department, with assistance from the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit.

2. Presentations.

Workshop coordinator Lynda Varlack welcomed participants. The head of the Conservation and Fisheries Department (CFD) Bertrand Lettsome, also welcomed participants to the workshop emphasising that water is important for sustaining human life. He stated that human beings can live without food, but not without water and that public opinion was an important tool in shaping watershed management.

Workshop facilitator Embert Charles sated that the goals of the workshop were:

- Dissemination of information on watershed management.
- Presentation of the issues related to the practice of environmental reporting
- Development of strong relationships between the media and the CFD.

The facilitator noted that the workshop should be viewed both as news event, and a training exercise.

Representatives of the CFD, the Water and Sewerage Department, and the department of Agriculture made the main presentation on watershed management in the BVI.

The Conservation and Fisheries Department.

Through the use of excerpts from the United States Environmental Protection Agency website, Lynda Varlack presented the general definitions and functions of watersheds, the

impact of activities in the watershed on the coastal resources, and the courses of action for the public. It was specifically emphasised that soil erosion in the upper areas of the watersheds have major negative effects on coral reefs and the habitats of marine species.

Bertand Lettsome highlighted the following issues:

- Wetlands are important for filtering waste from watersheds and for monitoring marine water quality.
- There is the need to weight the use of natural resources for infrastructure versus supply of water.
- Public education must target workers engaged in excavation.
- The negative impacts on watersheds have a direct impact on public health.
- The constitutional right to private property has an impact on watershed management and this should be reviewed. Most lands in the BVI are privately owned, thus public sector agencies cannot control some activities in the watersheds.
- Soil and Water conservation legislation dates back to 1944 and does not contain provisions to prevent the cutting of mangroves.
- It is important for the mass media to investigate all the issues.

The Water and Sewerage Department.

- Watershed management in the BVI must be placed in its proper context, because of the long history of ground water supply. At present twenty percent of the water supply is from ground water sources.
- Desalination started in 1989, and 80% of the water supply comes through desalination. Present output is 900,000 gallons per day. Cruise ships purchase a total of 35,000 gallons per day at \$25.00 per 1000 gallons. There is minimal impact of cruise ship demands on domestic consumption.
- There isn't any legislation governing ground water supply in the BVI.
- The lining of guts with concrete reduces the filtration of surface water into the ground.
- BVI has a shallow water table, approximately 60 feet deep.
- A combination of technology (desalination) and natural supply (roof runoff and cisterns) is the best arrangement for water supply.
- Public distribution of water started in 1957.

Some of the general comments made by the representatives of other agencies included

- Government agencies are engaged in activities, which have a negative impact on the watersheds.
- There is need for greater sensitivity to the environment by all publics.

Environmental Reporting.

Workshop facilitator Embert Charles led the session on environmental reporting. The main issues in the slide presentation are attached to the report as appendix II. The facilitator also introduced the concept of mediation as a guide to understanding the roles

of both media practitioners and public sector agencies, in the dissemination of information to their respective publics. Effective communication of messages is determined by the level of knowledge of the issues and the characteristics of the audience, and the quality of communication skills of the presenter.

In the discussions, the participants, most of who were representatives of public sector agencies, noted that the existing arrangement of mandatory dissemination of information through the Government Information Service department was not effective. It was agreed that:

- The CFD should develop its own information products such as newsletters, as a means of getting information out to its publics.
- All public sector agencies collaborate in the preparation of a set of guidelines or protocol on information management.
- Public sector agencies should ensure that current efforts at public sector reform which address public awareness and information be highlighted.

Field Trip

The field trip included a visit to Brewer's Bay where issues such as waste management, clearing of guts, hillside clearing and use of the natural resources for tourism, were observed. In other watersheds, participants observed hillside farming, construction and irrigation programmes of the Agriculture. department. The negative practices observed in the watersheds highlighted the need for more information sharing among the public sector agencies and other publics.

3. Exercises.

In an attempt to review the levels of awareness and importance of the issues discussed during the first day of the workshop, participants were invited to recall three key issues. Among the issue recalled by most persons were:

- The importance of watershed management in the BVI.
- Lack of integrated planning
- The issue of waste management and the need for a proper landfill.

Due to the absence of media practitioners, at the beginning of day two of the workshop, there were no written news reports of the field trip. The group however discussed their approach to presenting reports. All the agency representatives presented approaches and opening statements, which reflected their interpretation of what they encountered. On the other hand, two journalists (who only attended the morning session, but did not participate in the field trip) indicated that their reports would be descriptive. The discussion, which followed, illustrated the differences in perceptions of the agencies on the one hand and the media practitioners on the other.

4. Media needs.

Some of the concerns and needs of the media practitioners and media agencies are listed below:

- Media practitioners and reporters are not respected in the BVI
- Reporters generally find senior public sector officials inaccessible.
- There are few journalists in the BVI. Due to the small size of the staff of media houses, some reporters also function as sales persons.
- The information sources on watershed management in the BVI include:
 - The staff members of the Community College who are engaged in environmental management programmes. The holdings in the college library.
 - Island Resources Foundation (Bruce Potter, Edward Towle)
 - The Association of Reef Keepers (ARK)
 - Dive Operators Association of the BVI.
 - Conservation and Fisheries Department (Bertrand Lettsome, Lynda Varlack, Mervyn Hastings, Rosemary Delaney, Donalyn Charles, Tessa Smith)
 - Agriculture Department (Leyland Denis, Bernice Freeman)
 - ICLARM
 - Water and Sewerage Department
 - Environmental Health department (Aubrey George)
 - Town and country planning department (Louis Potter)

The agencies engaged in watershed management listed their concerns and needs as follows:

- Information on the operations and constraints of media houses.
- Guidelines for developing effective working relations with the media.
- Guidelines on the preparation of effective press releases.
- Autonomy for the CFD to disseminate some “basic” information on watershed management issues.
- An integrated system for information dissemination by the public sector agencies.

The agencies were concerned that the central role of GIS in the dissemination of information from all public sector agencies has some drawbacks. Thus there is the need to explore other options for information dissemination. Environmental issues require immediate attention by the mass media.

5. Recommendations.

The participants made the following recommendations to be implemented by the Conservation and Fisheries Department.

- Media houses and journalists should always verify the credentials of “environmentalists” before carrying their stories.
- The CFD prepare a list of environmental issues of national importance together with the corresponding list of experts/authorities, and disseminate this information to the media.

- The CFD and other agencies engaged in watershed management should host periodic brief lunch time/lecture sessions for the mass media.
- Media agencies are invited to field trips organised by the watershed management agencies. Special field trips should be mounted occasionally for the media.
- Each agency engaged in watershed management should engage or identify one individual who will have full responsibility for information dissemination and communications.
- Existing personnel with responsibility for communications should be trained in new communications technologies, the packaging of information for the mass media, and mechanisms for effective relations with the media.
- The role of the GIS should be reviewed to ensure more sustained and effective dissemination of information by the CFD.
- The responsibilities of the media practitioners and the CFD staff should be clearly documented and distributed to all parties.

6. Conclusions

Workshop facilitator Embert Charles thanked participants for their attendance and input, noting the high level of discussions and commitment. Bertrand Lettsome of the CFD invited the media agencies to get involved in disseminating information on the extensive programme of the CFD. He noted that the new thrust towards public sector reform encourages public sector agencies to provide information to the public on a regular basis and in a user-friendly manner. Workshop coordinator Lynda Varlack also thanked the participating agencies. She stated that reports would be sent out. Participants expressed their thanks to the CFD on the importance of the workshop and stated that they would endeavour to work together to ensure the public is educated on watershed management issues in the BVI.

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Public Awareness on Watershed Management Workshop for Media Practitioners

St. Lucia

1. Summary

The workshop on watershed management for media practitioners was held at the conference room of the Caribbees Hotel in St. Lucia from April 18th to 19th 2001. Senior staff members of the Forestry department made presentations on watershed management issues in St. Lucia. The workshop facilitator led sessions on environmental reporting and new trends in media practice, which have implications for reporting watershed management issues. The participants were taken on field trip to the Talvan water catchment, facilitated by the staff of forestry department and members of the Talvan Water Catchment Group. Thirteen persons attended the workshop including three media practitioners, staff of the department of forestry, members of community based water catchment groups and communications staff of the Ministry of Health. Among the recommendations were the establishment of a team of foresters to facilitate dissemination of information to the mass media and dissemination of updated information on watershed management issues in St. Lucia. The workshop was organised by the Forestry department with assistance from the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit.

2. Presentations.

Workshop coordinator Christopher Cox welcomed participants stating that the main goal of the workshop was to highlight the watershed management programme of the Forestry Department. He said that the mass media was instrumental in putting a shade on the public perception of issues, and has the capacity to reach masses of people. The media must assist in articulating the goals of watershed management to the general public.

Acting Chief Forestry Officer, Michael Andrew, who spoke on behalf of the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, also welcomed participants. Among the points made by Mr. Andrew in his address were:

- The workshop comes at an appropriate time because media houses have what it takes to reach the public.
- What is needed today in watershed management is collaboration and an integrated approach. Working together as a team is the best way to manage the resources of the watershed
- Public awareness campaigns should last more than two months.
- The workshop will assist in building partnerships between the media houses and the Forestry department.

Embert Charles, workshop facilitator, stated that the workshop for media practitioners was part of a regional public awareness campaign, which includes other activities, targeting other publics such as the youth, extension officers and heads of households. He

stated that the OECS-NRMU had already developed other information products, which will be available to media and public sector agencies throughout the region. He said that the workshop was both a news event and a training activity and urged participants to come up with recommendations for better relationships between the media and public sector agencies engaged in watershed management.

Watershed Management in St. Lucia.

Mr. Cornelia Isaac of the Forestry department delivered the main presentation on watershed management in St. Lucia. He stated that there are thirty-seven watersheds in St. Lucia. About fifty-five percent of the land was under agriculture, thirty five percent in non-agriculture activities and about thirteen percent reserved as forests. The presentation examined the definitions of watersheds and water catchments, and also identified deforestation as a major challenge to watershed management. Mr. Isaac also emphasised on the need for an integrated approach to watershed management. “A group of trees not necessarily function as a forest,” he concluded. The text of the slide presentation is attached as appendix III to the report.

In the discussions which followed the presentations the following points were made:

- Community based projects which are geared toward people participation in watershed management need financial support as most of the persons involved are self-employed farmers who do not have additional income to fund group work.
- The Forestry department’s approach is to provide as much technical support as possible to community groups. This includes developing the capacity to carry out educational activities.
- The media can help increase public participation in watershed management.
- The public need to understand that the water sources and supplied will not be restored through planting of trees only.
- The education of farmers has to be done in collaboration with the Ministry responsible for education.
- Effective management programmes must be community based, and government must recognise the role of community groups.

Environmental Reporting.

The facilitator made the presentation on key issues in environmental reporting. The first part of the presentation examined some of the factors, which make reports and messages effective. These include the knowledge of the subject, knowledge of the audience and the use of the best communication skills available to the presenter or the reporter. The text of the slide presentation is attached as appendix II to the report.

The Field Trip

David Lewis of the Forestry department and Mr. Laurent David of the Talvan Water Catchment Group facilitated the field trip to the Talvan water catchment. The facilitators described and displayed the technologies used in riverbank stabilisation. These included, tree planting, grass barriers, wattle and stake, and geotextile mats. The efforts of the water catchment groups have resulted in the reduction in the levels of sediment getting into the water intake. The group, along with the Forestry department, has stabilised approximately 1.2 km of riverbank with the different technologies. The Talvan watershed is approximately 500 acres with 200 landowners. The participants also visited the water treatment plant at Hill 20 in Babonneau, where a staff member of the Water and Sewerage Company explained the process involved in collection, treatment, testing and distribution of water.

3. Exercises

In the first exercise, participants were asked to recall in writing three issues of the session on the first day. Among the issues recalled most were the availability and quality of water, the requirement of effective communication skills and the effect of bad practices on the resources of the watershed.

The second exercise was the preparation of a report for various publics on the field trip. The reports ranged from news stories for the electronic media, to commentaries, and human interest features to be used in print or electronic media. One report was prepared for a group of co-workers. The reports were generally well prepared with effective leads, and focused on the subject of the field trip. In the review the following issues were noted for attention:

- The need to establish the premises and facts on which the opinion pieces will be prepared.
- Avoiding assumptions and references, which did not reflect the facts of the field trip.
- The use of terms such as water intake and catchment in their proper context.
- Minimal use of loaded and ambiguous words.

The discussion, which followed, examined the trends in media development and their impact on reporting on watersheds and the environment. The facilitator noted that the mass media should continue to set agendas for the society, and they may not respond to the request for coverage because changes in the environment are not seen immediately. While anecdotes are important as human-interest attention getters in stories, statistical data is still required to help shape public opinion. It is important that the resource managers recognise that the media practitioners operate under some constraints, and should endeavour to maintain links with sympathetic reporters at the media houses.

4. Recommendations.

The participants made the following recommendations to be implemented by the Forestry department.

- The Forestry department should update its facts and information on some programme areas and issues and distribute this data to the media houses.
- The Forestry department should launch (perhaps with some fanfare) a “green team” which will be established to feed information on a regular basis in a wide variety of ways to the media practitioners. This team would be a listing of persons with their area of expertise and contact information. The “green team” should also include community development officers.
- The forestry Department should market nature trails to local residents, as a method of increasing environmental awareness, and building specialised audiences.
- Social activities with an environmental focus should be organised of media workers.
- The implementation of a programme to enhance the capacity of the forestry officers to develop and disseminate information products.
- The review of current procedures of information dissemination which require prior clearance from the Permanent Secretary. The current practice has negatively affected the volume and flow of information to various publics.
- The media houses should be invited to review the public awareness components of the work programme of the Forestry department, in an effort to assist in dissemination of information.
- The Forestry department should explore ways of accessing free airtime and space from the mass media.

6. Conclusions.

Forestry officers Michael Bobb and Cornelius Isaac thanked the participants for their attendance and inputs. They both stated that the recommendations are valuable to the department, and the follow-up work required, will be undertaken by the staff of the department

7. List of Participants.

Phillip Phillip	Ministry of Health, Human Services, etc. (Tel: (758) 452 2859)
Mervyn Charles	Ministry of Health, Human services etc.
Anthony Sammie	Government Information Service
Jerry George	St. Lucia Media Workers Association (Email: zakky@candw.lc . Fax: (758) 452 2637)
Nicole Mc. Donald	STAR Newspaper (Fax: (758) 450 8690)
Michael Andrew	Forestry Department (Tel: (758) 450 2078)
Christopher Cox	Forestry Department (Fax: (758) 450 2278)
Cornelius Isaac	Forestry Department (Tel: (758) 450 2231)
Michael Bobb	Forestry Department
David Lewis	Forestry Department
Laurent David	Talvan Water Catchment Group
Innocent Roserie	Talvan Water Catchment Group
Urban Glace	Tomazo Water Catchment Group (Tel: (758) 453 3538)

C. General Conclusions and Recommendations.

In all four cases, the discussions and presentations at the workshops reflected a high level of knowledge and understanding of the issues related to watershed management in the OECS. Media practitioners welcomed the large volume of new information particularly statistical data on the watersheds in general and water resources in particular. The resources managers on the other hand developed a better appreciation for the constraints under which the media practitioners operate.

The low turnout by media practitioners at the sessions illustrated some additional shortcomings of the resources management agencies at the national level. These include:

- A lack of understanding and knowledge of the options available for attracting the media to the workshops.
- Weak mobilisation skills and the inability to promote and “sell” the workshops effectively.

The agencies involved in resources management need to address the shortcomings identified. In addition, the need to prepare and present information in a user-friendly manner cannot be over-emphasised.

Every effort should be made to ensure the recommendations are implemented and the report sent to participants of the workshop.

APPENDICES.

I. Documents distributed to participants.

1. OECS Forester – A Handbook on Forests in the Eastern Caribbean. OECS-NRMU 1996.
2. OECS Forester - Watershed Management Issues in the Eastern Caribbean. OECS-NRMU, 1999
3. OECS Fisher, OECS-NRMU 2000.
4. Natural Resources News – The Newsmagazine of the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit. OECS-NRMU, ISSN 1026-1273.
5. Media and the Environment – Proceedings of a Regional Workshop, Kingstown St. Vincent and the Grenadines, April 21-2, 1998. “Ethics in Environmental Reporting” by Lennox Grant. Pages 52 –54.
6. “ Can Television tell the Environment Story” from Visual Media and the Environment, Report of a Seminar, Kingston, Jamaica 1993.
7. “Public awareness Programme on Watershed Management in the OECS” Summary of the campaign.

II. Presentation on Environmental Reporting

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

- Questions current development.
- Broad definition of “environment”.
- Advocacy role.
- Independent research.
- Solutions oriented.
- Preventative.

INFLUENTIAL FACTORS

- Gate-keeping policies/politics
- News in the marketplace
- Challenge of heavy Public Relations
- Constraints of “national interest”
- Professional opportunities

STRENGTHENING THE BEAT

- More information from E-NGOs.
- Use NGO outlets for dissemination.
- INTERNET for input and output.
- Walk the beat as often as possible.

- Establish links with scientific sources.
- Report the community/local angles.
- Develop networks of practitioners.

BASIC RULES REMAIN

- Interest getters
- Clarity, no jargon.
- Technical information into accessible English.
- Describe the solutions.
- Remember the target

GENERAL ISSUES OF PRACTICE

- **News** today - more supposition than substance.
- The **story** - fact, agenda or ideas
- Events ecology or **politics**.
- Can technical subjects make **leads**?
- **Ethics** of Advocacy - support, fairness, confidentiality, accuracy, trust.

TRENDS?

- Are the resources for research sufficient?
- Are the sources accessible?
- Are the sources unbiased?
- Is space/air time shrinking?
- Are gatekeepers changing?

AREAS OF COVERAGE

- Institutional & Administrative
- Geographical - locations
- Thematic - subject areas

ANGLES AND PERSPECTIVES

- Ecological
- Social
- Economic
- Political

III. Presentation on Watershed Management in St. Lucia.

INTRODUCTION

- Growing concern about Environment
 - Pollution
 - Climate change
 - Habitat

Water supplies

Demography & Land use

Need for informed decisions

Need for integrated approaches

DEFINITIONS

- Watershed
- Water catchment
- Coastalshed
- Watershed Management
- Water balance
 - $P = Et + R + S$
- Erosion

ELEMENTS OF A WATERSHED

Human

Demography

Land ownership & use

Infra-structure

Physical

Topography

Soils

Climate

Runoff

Biological

Flora (Wild & cultivated)

Fauna (Wild & Domesticated)

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Physical Status of watersheds

37 watersheds

Roseau – largest

55% under agriculture

35% under non-agricultural use

13% Forest Reserve

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Deforestation

- Soil loss

Development

- Loss of diversity
- Habitat (Life zones)
- Flora & Fauna

Pollution

- Agro-chemicals
- Solid waste
- Sewage outflow

Industrial

- Loss of diversity
- Habitat (Life zones)
- Flora & Fauna

ORGANIZED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

- Education
- Management
 - Forestry
 - Land & Water Use Unit
 - Watershed Projects
 - Drainage & conservation
 - Watershed & Environmental Project
 - MVDP
 - WMAF
 - SMMA
 - Water catchment groups

CURRENT EFFORTS

- Forest Management Plan
- Land conservation Authority
- Water Resources management Project
- Coastalshed Management

CURRENT EFFORTS

- Integrated Watershed Management is needed
- Objectives may include soil, water, bio-diversity, or coastal conservation
- Ecosystem integrity
- A group of trees may not necessarily function as a forest

Appendix IV: Presentation by Aden Forteau.

Appendix V: Presentation by Adolphus Christian.