



THE FORCE PROJECT

FUTURE OF REEFS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

THE PROJECT

The FORCE project, a five-year initiative funded by the European Union, commenced in 2010 and brings together a team of researchers from 20 organisations based in 10 countries within the Caribbean, Europe, the US and Australia.

Caribbean people rely heavily on coral reefs, which contribute billions of dollars each year through tourism, fisheries and coastal protection. Coral reefs are being damaged by activities such as unsustainable fishing and pollution, and face an uncertain future with global climate change.

The FORCE project will address important questions about how changes will affect coastal communities and livelihoods such as fisheries and tourism. The project will identify ways of managing reefs that are best suited to regional and local contexts. Recommendations will be disseminated to stakeholders through-out the Caribbean on how to protect the reefs.

The FORCE social science team will be conducting work in a total of four countries: Barbados, Honduras, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Belize.

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

NATIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING

April 3rd, 2012, NEMA Building, St. Kitts

NATIONAL CONSULTATION

A national consultation meeting was held at the NEMA building in St. Kitts, April 3rd 2012. The objectives of this meeting were to:

- Explore key changes in St. Kitts and Nevis with respect to the environment, society, economy, and the policies and management systems.
- Talk about the relationship between these changes and people's use of reef resources and services.
- Discuss the formal and informal groups and organisations involved in reef governance and management.

In order to address these objectives, participants at the meeting were asked

to take part in two activities: a historical scan to explore changes in St. Kitts and Nevis and a policy cycle review to facilitate a discussion on the organisations involved in reef management. This report presents some of the results of the national level stakeholder consultation.

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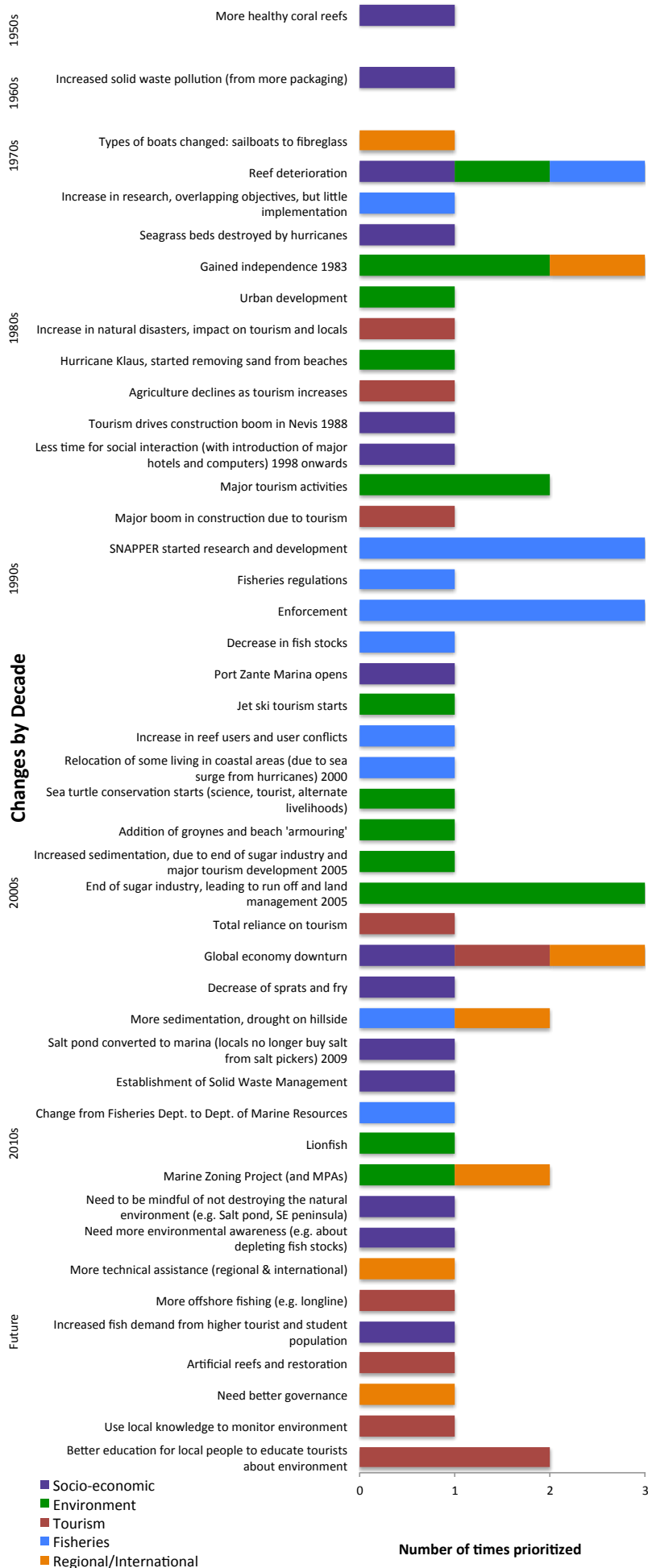


HISTORICAL TIMELINE

The purpose of the timeline was to learn more about the history of the country and the changes that have been important. The timeline shows events and changes in St. Kitts and Nevis as identified by people at the meeting.







KEY EVENTS

Changes identified in the historical scan that were prioritised by participants as being most significant in affecting the relationship between people and reefs. Colours reflect the theme of the table on which participants were working.

DOT PRIORITISATION EXERCISE

A wide range of changes were prioritised as having an impact in St Kitts and Nevis, influencing the coral reef and how people use this resource. Some of the changes highlighted were negative, including deterioration of the reefs and decline in fish, the impacts of natural disasters such as hurricanes, the closure of the sugar industry, which had socio-economic impacts and led to greater run-off from the land, and the recent global economic downturn. Positive changes highlighted included the introduction of fisheries regulations and their enforcement, aquaculture research, the current efforts towards marine zoning, and the prospect of improved environmental education for local people and tourists in the future. Major societal shifts such as gaining independence in 1983 and the growth of the tourism industry in the 1980s were also commonly prioritised.



REFLECTION ON THE HISTORICAL TIMELINE

As participants reflected on the timeline a consensus was reached about key turning points over the years. Turning points were defined as time periods when the country went from certain practices or ways of being to new or different practices. The group noted five key shifts:

1983 INDEPENDENCE

The independence of St. Kitts and Nevis in 1983 was a major shift, and marked the start of a greater presence in the world market through regional organisations and links with countries such as Taiwan. Independence also led to greater self-reliance as subsidies on food and medicine were reduced; this was followed by greater importation of food and other goods.

1990 PORT ZANTE

The development of Port Zante led to improvements in trade and was seen as a 'gateway to tourism' through cruise ships. However there were concerns that the costs of restructuring the port after hurricane damage may outweigh the benefits from the cruise ship tourism industry.

1991 FOUR SEASONS

The construction of the Four Seasons hotel sparked an economic shift towards tourism, particularly on Nevis. The construction and operation of the hotel provided employment and attracted wealthy tourists. However, participants also noted negative impacts such as environmental problems and reduced access to the beach and sea for recreation by local people.

2005 END OF SUGAR INDUSTRY

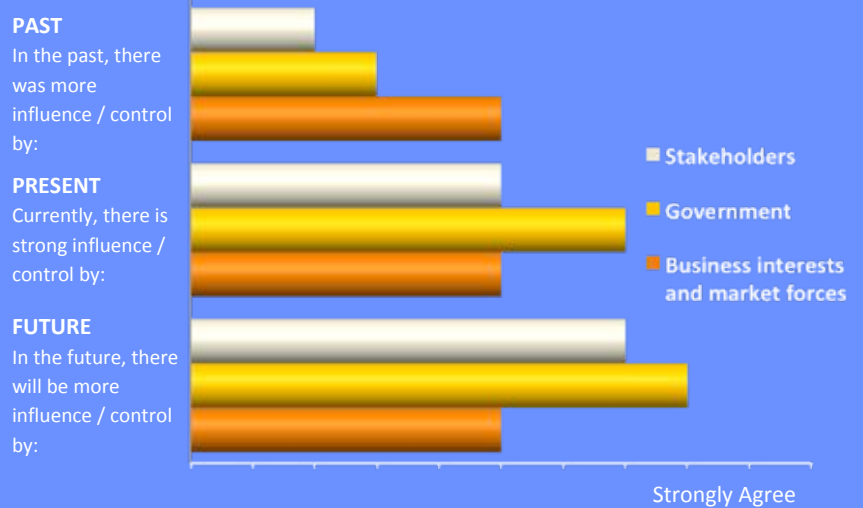
The closure of the sugar industry was a major shift in the economy, leading to shifts in employment towards fishing, farming, construction and other jobs. The abandoned cane fields also led to some environmental problems such as increased run-off from land.

2008 GLOBAL DOWNTURN

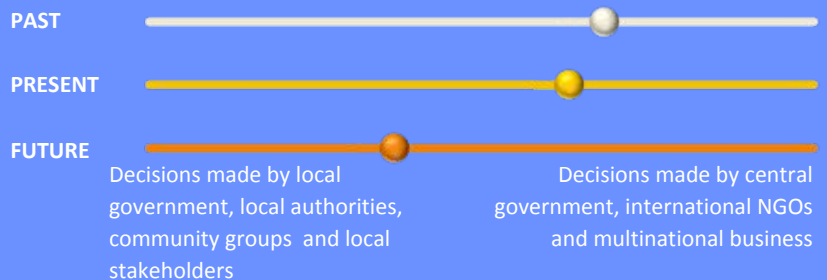
The global economic downturn was considered a major shift, forcing people to find ways of diversifying their income and reducing their spending. The recently introduced Air Passenger Duty (APD) tax was felt to have compounded these changes by increasing the cost of travel for British tourists coming to the Caribbean.

REEF GOVERNANCE

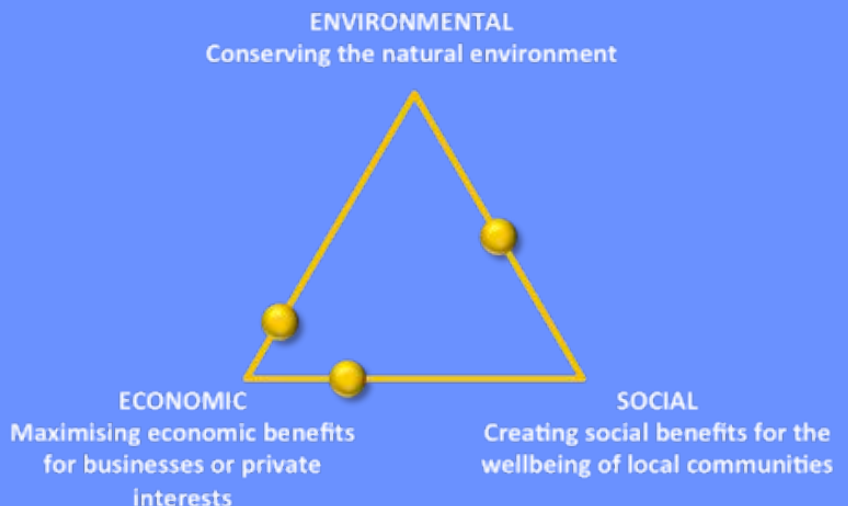
Results of a short questionnaire illustrated participant's views on reef governance in St. Kitts and Nevis:



Participants felt that in the past there had been high influence by business interests and market forces, but that there has been a trend towards greater influence of stakeholders and government. Participants thought that this trend would continue in the future, with greater involvement of both local stakeholders and government in decision-making.



Participant's perceptions of the trade-offs between the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social and environmental) in reef-related decision-making in St. Kitts and Nevis show a trend towards prioritisation of economic interests over social and environmental goals.



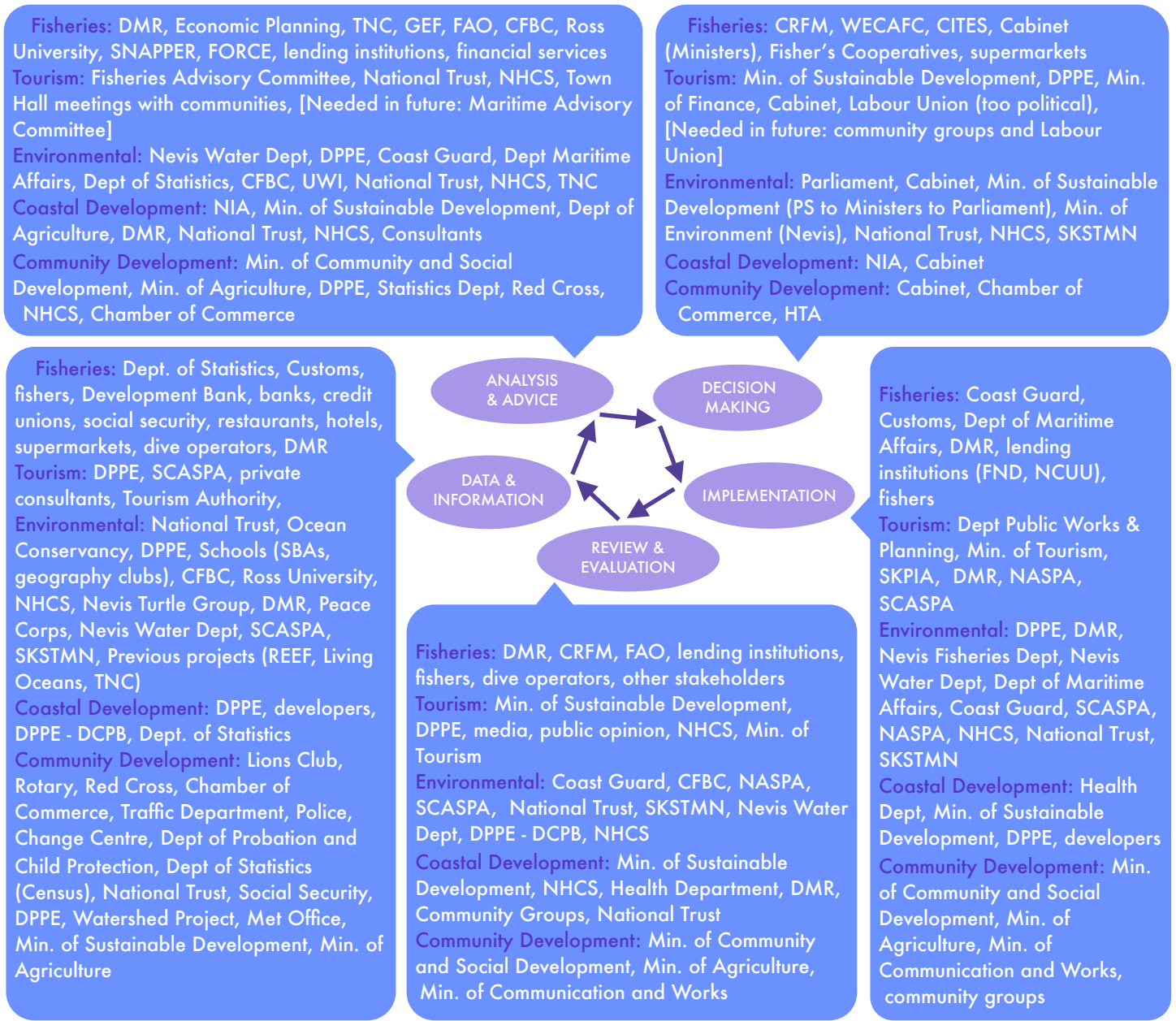
THE ACTORS IN THE POLICY CYCLE

The policy cycle review explored the organisations involved in reef management and governance in St Kitts and Nevis. Participants identified the government, non-government and private sector groups involved in the formal and informal structures governing natural resource use and dependent livelihoods, and mapped out where each group is involved in the policy cycle.

The exercise highlighted that some of the main challenges were in the implementation and the review and evaluation phases. Participants noted that while St Kitts and Nevis has received funding, they have not always achieved the desired environmental outcomes, with projects being duplicated and implemented in haphazardly. However it was also noted that the project implementation may depend on what funding is available, and the overlapping objectives of funding agencies and lack of a thematic platform to ensure research is not duplicated were recognised as problems.

Participants recognised a weakness in transparency and collaboration between departments. There is no standardised data collection or management system, making it difficult and time-consuming to share data between agencies. It was hoped that the National Maritime Policy currently being developed will help bring agencies together. The 'watering down' of the environment in the loss of a dedicated Department of Environment (environment now comes under the Department for Physical Planning and the Environment) was also perceived as a problem. It was noted that greater capacity building, training and resources could help address some of the limitations in the policy cycle. Participants perceived a need for greater involvement of stakeholders at all levels in the policy cycle, and thought that environmental education mainstreamed in the curriculum and encouraging people to experience the local marine environment (first-hand) could help with this.

Participants listed the organisations and groups involved in each stage of the policy cycle:





POLICY CYCLE

Data and Information

Research and assessment, including social, environmental and economic at all scales.

Analysis and Advice

Analyses that can lead to advice that is useable by decision makers, such as local groups and national committees.

Decision Making

International and national organisations with a mandate to review advice and make decisions, such as government and NGOs.

Implementation

Primarily national and local agencies with a mandate to put decisions into action, e.g. capacity building, new legislation or direct enforcement.

Review and Evaluation

Similar bodies to those that are responsible for analysis and advice and that often oversee the policy cycle.

PARTICIPANTS

Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College

Dr Leighton Naraine

Coast Guard

Lynn Wilkin
Linceil Hughes

Department of Community and Social Development

Josette Pemberton
Jacquelin Christopher

Department of Cooperatives

Clyde Thompson

Department of Marine Resources

Randel Thompson
Sam Heyliger
Marc Williams

Ralph Wilkins

Department of Maritime Affairs

McClellan Hobson

Department of Physical Planning and Environment

Graeme Brown

Dieppe Bay Fishers Cooperative

Lorna Warner

Ministry of Agriculture

Ashton Stanley

NASPA

Audra Barrett

NEMA

Perry Peets
Telca Wallace

Nevis Department of Physical Planning

Claudia Walwyn

Nevis Department of Social Services

Sandra Maynard

Nevis Historical and Conservation Society

Miriam Knorr

Nevis Ministry of Tourism

Vanessa Webbe

Nevis Public Works Department

Dillon Webbe
Raoul Pemberton
Lillith Richards

Nevis Tourism Authority

Devon Liburd

Nevis Water Department

Marsha Smith

Parks and Beaches Unit

James Liburd
Travis Lake

Ross University

Dr Emma Grigg
Dr Tammi Krecek

SCASPA

Royden Herbert

SNAPPER

Dr Barrington Brown

St Christopher National Trust

Natasha Leader

St Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network

Kate Orchard

St Kitts Tourism Authority

Randolph Hamilton

Urban Development Corporation Port Zante

Chevaughn Richards

Special Guest:

Minister of International Trade, Industry, Commerce, and Consumer Affairs; Agriculture, Marine Resource and Cooperatives; Constituency Empowerment

Dr Timothy Harris

ACRONYMS

CARICOM	Caribbean Community	NCEPA	National Conservation and Environmental Protection Act
CARIFTA	Caribbean Free Trade Association	NCUU	National Cooperative Credit Union
CFBC	Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College	NHCS	Nevis Historical and Conservation Society
CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species	NIA	Nevis Island Administration
CRFM	The Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism	OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
DCPB	Development Control and Planning Board	PS	Permanent Secretary
DMR	Department of Marine Resources [previously Fisheries Department]	REEF	Reef Environmental Education Foundation
DPPE and	Department of Physical Planning Environment	SBA's	School based assessments
EAF	Ecosystem approach to fisheries	SCASPA	St. Christopher Air and Sea Ports Authority
EBM	Ecosystem based management	SKPIA	St. Kitts Promotional and Investment Agency
EU	European Union	SKSTMN	St. Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network
FADs	Fish aggregating devices	SNAPPER	St. Kitts & Nevis Aquaculture Pilot Project & Environmental Research
FAO	Food & Agriculture Organisation	TNC	The Nature Conservancy
FND	Foundation for National Development	UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
FORCE	Future of Reefs in a Changing Environment	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
GEF	Global Environment Fund	UWI	University of the West Indies
HTA	Hotel and Tourism Association	WECAFC	Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission
MPAs	Marine Protected Areas	WTO	World Trade Organization
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement		
NASPA	Nevis Air and Sea Ports Authority		



The Future of... FORCE

The project ultimately aims to identify ways of managing reefs that are best suited to regional and local contexts. Recommendations will be disseminated to stakeholders throughout the Caribbean on how to protect their reefs. Fieldwork is planned for the final study site, Belize, to commence in June 2012.

2013/2014

Presentations of project findings at the national level in each of our study countries.

WWW.FORCE-PROJECT.EU

C/O CERMES
UWI CAVE HILL CAMPUS

TEL: 246.417.4339
FAX: 246.424.4202

CONTACT:
DR. RACHEL TURNER
EMAIL: RACHEL.TURNER@CAVEHILL.UWI.EDU
TEL: 246.417.4830

FORCE SOCIAL SCIENCE TEAM MEMBERS

FIELD TEAM

Dr. Rachel Turner
Dr. Johanna Forster
Mr. David Gill
Ms. Angelie Peterson
Mr. Rohan Ford
Mr. Sherverne Gardiner
Ms. Judette Pollock
Ms. Katie Hogg

CERMES, UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

Professor Robin Mahon
Professor Hazel Oxenford
Dr. Peter Schuhmann

UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE, UK

Professor Selina Stead
Dr. Clare Fitzsimmons

INTERNATIONAL MARINE MANAGEMENT, UK

Mr. Philip Townsley
Ms. Francesca Booker

THANK YOU!

Many thanks to all that attended this meeting or took the time to contribute information to our research.