

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Roadmapping - Two Different Approaches

Introduction

In December 2006 the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI) and the United Nations Environment Programme Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit (UNEP-CAR/RCU), under the auspices of the Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management (IWCAM) Project, convened a meeting of the IWRM Informal Working Group in Kingston, Jamaica. This resulted in a collaborative effort which aims to provide assistance to governments in the region to accelerate the achievement of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation target of Integrating Water Resources Management and Efficiency Plans by 2005; in particular, ensuring that environmental aspects and public participation are adequately incorporated in the roadmaps and plans produced. The United Nations Environment Programme Collaborating Centre on Water and Environment (UNEP-UCC), the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) emerged as partners working with CEHI and IWCAM to develop IWRM Roadmaps for Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Grenada

The Grenada IWRM Roadmap is being developed in tandem with the National Water Policy as the two processes are interlinked. The situational assessment and strategic planning elements of the road mapping process are being used to inform the policy development process. This process is being led by a multi-sectoral Cabinet-appointed Steering Committee, referred to as the Water Policy Steering Committee (WPSC). The work of the WPSC is being carried out under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands,



Halifax Bay, Grenada

Forestry and Fisheries. The Government of Grenada expects to complete the National Water Policy within the next six months.

The UNEP-UCC supported IWRM planning process is a multi-stage

undertaking that includes the following:

Data gathering and situational analysis to provide the necessary scientific, socio-economic data required for preparation of the National Water Policy and IWRM plan development; in two stages: 1) Information gathering using a data capture template 2) Preparation of a Situation Analysis.

Development and distribution of Public Education and Awareness materials such as brochures, posters, presentations and video shorts.

Preparation of an IWRM monitoring framework for Grenada



based on the GEF International Waters indicators proposal.

Presentation of the Situation Analysis to stakeholders.

Preparation of the Roadmap and National Water Policy by the WPSC as shaped by the situation analysis, visioning exercise, stakeholder input, focus groups and technical stakeholder inputs and followed by IWRM Plan validation and ratification through national stakeholder workshops and policy-level input followed by formal endorsement and adoption.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)

The approach adopted in SVG focused upon a specific geographical area. Using criteria developed by project partners, and taking into consideration the enthusiasm and commitment of stakeholders on the island, the acute water management issues (in particular water scarcity), and its relative lack of development activities, Union Island, the southern-most

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island in the St. Vincent Grenadine chain, was selected. It is very small, both in terms of population (estimated at just under 2,000) and size (8.5 square kilometres). Its economy is based primarily on tourism and fishing with small-scale commercial and agriculture activities also taking place.

IWRM has not been addressed previously on Union Island, either through public education, application and enforcement, regulations, or utilization of traditional knowledge. Traditionally, Unionites have not considered management of their water resources in an integrated manner given the extreme acuity of their water scarcity and quality. As a result, the approach taken in this roadmapping was to show the clear linkage between that issue and IWRM in general. This approach consisted of the following activities:

The UNEP-UCC and NOAA supported IWRM planning process is a multi-stage undertaking that includes:



National-level Stakeholder Consultations.

Data gathering, situational analysis and water resources mapping, as in the case of Grenada, but in three stages: 1) Collection of data using the template. 2) Preparation of a situation analysis. 3) Mapping of the water resources of Union Island using GIS tools to provide information that would constitute an inventory of the water resources on the island.

Development and dissemination of Public Education and Awareness materials: Brochures, posters, presentations, and video shorts

Local community sensitization workshop to raise local awareness on the roadmapping initiative and also to gather direct feedback from the local community on the issues related to water resources management, the challenges, and gain preliminary consensus on the strategic directions for IWRM on Union Island.

Community-Based Water Resource Assessment Workshop which was undertaken with schools, volunteer groups and other service organizations based in Union Island in order to demonstrate the link between the process of IWRM planning and development and the status of the environmental quality of fresh and coastal waters. The workshop focused on assessment of upland land degradation, coastal water quality and coastal

ecosystem health. It was essentially a 'train-the-trainers' exercise.

Presentation of the Situation Analysis to stakeholders at a one-day strategic planning workshop, as part of CEHI's ongoing activities in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, at which the results of the analysis will be presented to stakeholders and followed by discussion. Facilitation of the discussion towards reaching consensus on strategic directions for decision-making for consideration in preparation of the IWRM Roadmap. It is

Union Island stakeholders, SVG



anticipated that the roadmap will be formally tabled to all national stakeholders jointly by the Environmental Services Unit of the Ministry of Health and Environment and the Ministry for Grenadine Affairs. This information and recommendations from these consultations will inform the roadmapping document, leading to the eventual development of an IWRM plan for Union Island.

Lessons Learned

Partnering: Partnering with other agencies, activities, and organizations will help to ensure long-term sustainability of IWRM initiatives. Partnering with local groups will assist significantly in implementation and logistics.

Stress health and economic impacts of poor WRM: It is important to make the link between poor management of water resources and health impacts in particular. People in affected communities as well as decision-makers are likely to pay more attention when their health is threatened.

Public Education and Awareness is important: If people understand the negative effects of their activities they are more likely to want to change them, particularly if their role in mitigating impacts is described and good practices demonstrated and practiced.

In small places (as are SIDS) the empowerment of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) is particularly important: Empowering local NGOs and CBOs through the process of consultation as well as through the provision of information and training (capacity building) will help to ensure greater sustainability.

Lack of financial resources are a serious limitation: In the case of Union Island, for instance, fencing of a newly constructed rainwater catchment would provide significantly more drinking water and storage for the community, but the catchment was constructed over two years ago and this has, to date, not been completed due to lack of funds.

For more information, contact:
IWCAM Project Coordination Unit
C/O Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
The Morne, P.O. Box 1111
Castries, St. Lucia
Phone: 1 (758) 452 2501; Fax: 1 (758) 453 2721
E-mail: dspencer@cehi.org.lc
[http:// www.iwcam.org](http://www.iwcam.org)