

Coastal Zone Management in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique

A brief from the Integrated Climate Change Adaptation Strategies (ICCAS) Programme

Vision: “A Coastal Zone that is well- managed, sustains livelihoods, supports the country’s socio-economic development, contributes to ecological sustainability and is resilient to environmental risks.”



Challenge

The tri-island state of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique is facing considerable challenges due to the effects of climate change such as sea-level rise and increased sea surface temperatures. Sea level rise is linked to increased coastal flooding, salt water intrusion and coastal erosion. Higher sea surface temperatures contribute to increasingly powerful hurricanes and associated storm surges which have the potential to devastate the coastline. The majority of the country’s population lives in low-lying coastal areas susceptible to many of these threats. Most of the development and infrastructure in the tri-island state are also concentrated on the coast including roads, important towns, hotels, marinas, fishing villages and valuable agricultural lands. As such, the coastal zone is an increasingly vulnerable area which needs proper management to address these ongoing climatic stresses.

Objective

As part of the Integrated Climate Change Adaptation Strategies (ICCAS) programme, with support from the Caribbean Aqua-Terrestrial Solutions (CATS) programme, a coastal zone management policy has been developed for Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. It provides a vision for the future use, development and protection of the nation’s coastal zone by setting out policies to guide relationships among resource users, community facilities and activities, as well as physical development and infrastructure.

Approach

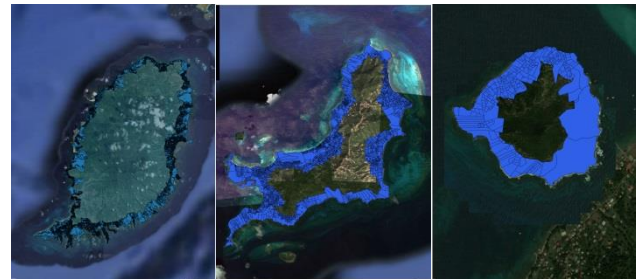
The policy was developed through numerous field visits, consultations and inputs from more than 100 stakeholders, including government and non-government entities across the tri-island state. Grenadian stakeholders contributed through one-on-one interviews, round table consultations, community consultations and focus group discussions to ensure that the important coastal issues of the state were addressed. The result was a truly stakeholder driven policy with a shared vision for the future of the coast.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the policy are: 1) ‘Good Governance’ which calls for transparency; allowing for the participation and integration of all sectors and the avoidance of conflicts. 2) ‘Sustainability’ which calls for heightened environmental awareness and community stewardship. 3) ‘Equity’ which refers to fairness in decision making and the provision of public access to coastal areas. The ‘precautionary principle’ states that there should be no hesitation in taking action to protect our important ecosystems despite gaps in the existing data.

The Coastal Zone Management Area

The policy is accompanied by the delineation of the Coastal Zone Area. This is the area which the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy will govern. The delineation was guided by numerous coastal surveys and available data on flooding, storm surges, sea level rise and the location of important zones and infrastructure. The terrestrial border of the zone is demarcated by contour elevation lines and includes important wetland area, areas of biological significance, areas of major socio-economic activity and also areas and activities which have the potential to heavily impact the coast.



The coastal zone for Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique

The zone encompasses Carriacou and Petite Martinique as well as all smaller offshore islands. All marine ecosystems are incorporated including coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves. The marine limit of the coastal zone is guided by the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).



The Coastal Zone Task Force

A coastal zone task force has been established and is comprised of representatives from various government divisions, statutory bodies and civil society which share responsibility in the management of the coastal zone. This task force was instrumental in reviewing the policy and in the designation of the coastal zone management area. The task force meets monthly and their duties also include assisting with the development of EIAs for coastal development and supporting the Environment Division with coastal issues. In the absence of a dedicated coastal zone unit, the multi-stakeholder task force is foreseen to be the nexus for integrated coastal zone management in Grenada.



Members of the Task Force surveying the coastal area

Monitoring the Coast

The comprehensive monitoring and regulation of all activities taking place in the coastal area is a major goal of integrated coastal zone management. This includes the need to oversee coastal development, prevent destructive practices such as mangrove deforestation, careful use and supervision of coastal engineering and tackling negative farming practices such as the overuse of pesticides and fertilizers.

Data collection of the various coastal processes is critical for monitoring and understanding the state of the coast. This calls for the implementation of a robust biophysical monitoring programme which would oversee the collection of data through methods such as beach profiling and water quality monitoring.

Beach profiling workshops were held in January 2016 to train stakeholders on how to properly profile and monitor the beaches around the country. Equipment was procured and handed over to the various Government divisions in order for this data to be continually collected. Priority beaches have been selected for regular monitoring and beach monuments have been established on these beaches.



New equipment being used to conduct beach profiling in Carriacou

Next Steps

- The task force will spearhead the development of appropriate coastal zone legislation including the development of a Coastal Zone Management Act. This will ultimately be used to develop a management plan which will address the outstanding monitoring, enforcement and data collection processes. These are necessary to form the proper groundwork for sustainably managing our coast.

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Government of Grenada

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