



UKOTCF

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Editorial

This issue of the WCWG eNewsletter includes summaries of many projects focusing on species and habitats of concern, from the green turtle and seagrass beds in Bermuda to the Caicos pine yards in TCI via declining sharks and the threatened Cayman Brac parrot in Cayman. Without these sorts of studies, maintaining the biodiversity value of the UKOTs would be even more of a challenge. However, the availability of funding sources for these type of studies and for biodiversity conservation in UKOTs appears to be lessening, with the ending of the OTEP small grants programme and the change of emphasis of the Darwin Initiative, following DFID joining the funding, to more of a focus on alleviating poverty. Whilst the latter is laudable in itself, most UKOTs, despite the reality on the ground, are not classed as low-income countries, and become ineligible for DFID (and hence now most Darwin Initiative) funding. As Beth Barry notes in her interesting progress reports on the Anguilla Renewable Energy Initiative, UKOTs are not direct members of the United Nations and therefore not eligible for membership in the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS), although they share most characteristics with the other Small Island Developing States of the world. Her suggestion that UKOTs work with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and each other towards a goal of gaining membership under their current status is one which UKOTCF supports, and indeed has also been highlighting for some time.

Tourism is a mainstay of most economies of the Caribbean UKOTs, but inappropriate built developments have contributed to a great deal of biodiversity loss in the Caribbean. So the IUCN publication on *Building and operating biodiversity-friendly hotels in the Caribbean* is timely. The high value to tourism of the sharks around Cayman add to the economic argument for sustainable development. The Turks and Caicos Reef Fund's snorkel trail restoration project, off the high-density tourist beach of Grace Bay, is educating residents and visitors about the coral reef habitat, while providing a high-quality tourist experience and protecting this near-shore reef.

Many NGO organisations in the UKOTs have a responsibility for historic and cultural sites, as well as natural ones, and at present the funding opportunities for work in these areas are perhaps even more limited than for biodiversity conservation. The Bermuda National Trust annual report demonstrates how the use of volunteers, and the identification of compatible commercial opportunities, can support the maintenance of historic and cultural sites.

Comments and news items for future issues, and WCWG meeting discussions, are very welcome. Please email apienkowki@ukotcf.org

Ann Pienkowski, Secretary UKOTCF Wider Caribbean Working Group.

Bermuda

Bermuda National Trust (BNT) Annual Report 2011

In July 2012, the Bermuda National Trust published its Annual Report for 2011. This report summarises a year of great achievement and progress, despite challenging economic times.

Bermuda

Bermuda National Trust Annual Report 2011-2012



Bermuda Conservation Department news

Green turtles and their habitats



Turtle exclusion cage 1 year after initiation of the experiment. Note the short seagrass leaves outside the turtle exclusion cage compared to the long, denser canopy of the seagrass (Thalassia testudinum) inside the cage. Photo taken by James Fourqurean.

Bermuda Plant Finder now available

BNT is responsible for a number of historic properties. The report notes that short-term rental units at 18 of the historic building sites generate more than a third of BNT's annual revenue. The report notes a number of major renovation projects carried out over the year.

BNT cares also for 14 military cemeteries and historic memorials. In 2011, students from Bermuda High School took part in site improvement work at the Royal Naval Cemetery and the Convict Cemetery. Unfortunately, future funding for the upkeep of these cemeteries is uncertain, as the Government has withdrawn its long-standing annual grant of \$29,000 for cemetery upkeep.

Additionally, BNT is responsible for more than 250 acres of open space and farmlands. Dealing with invasive species is a major concern. Activities on this, and other conservation projects, are described, and the importance of volunteers to this work is acknowledged.

BNT is ever-watchful for potential developments that could have a significant detrimental impact on Bermuda's natural or historic environment. In 2011, BNT was engaged actively in the protests about the granting of a special development order (SDO) for Tucker's Point (previously reported in *WCWG eNewsletters 8 and 9*). However, the annual report also details other development proposals which BNT has highlighted as being of concern.

BNT runs a series of successful education programmes and is involved in teacher training. The programmes include tours of historical homes and nature reserves, backed up by lesson plans and teaching resources which link science, social studies and other core subjects to the Cambridge International Curriculum.

The Annual Report highlights also the contribution made by Dace McCoy Ground to the BNT, for which she was awarded the Trust's highest honour, the Silver Palmetto Award.

The Annual Report contains much more interesting information than could be summarised here, and it can be downloaded at:

www.bnt.bm/News_and_Events/documents/BNTAnnualReportJuly2012.pdf

Bermuda Conservation Department news

Green turtles and their essential habitats on the Bermuda Platform

The Bermuda Conservation Department has reported on its research on the effects of sea turtle grazing on seagrass beds. The research project included placing exclusion cages in a heavily grazed seagrass meadow, to prevent turtles from feeding, to find out if the seagrass under the cages would recover.

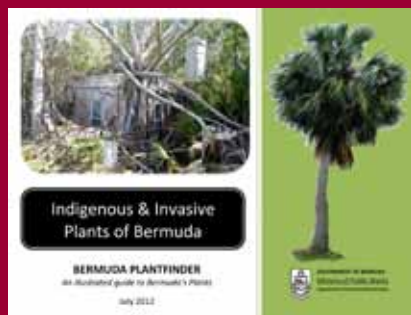
After one year, the seagrass leaves were as long as those in a nearby ungrazed meadow. This summer, after 4 years, the exclusion cages were removed, and video cameras placed to observe turtle behaviour in these areas. After twelve days there was no evidence of turtle grazing in the previously caged plots, but turtles were seen to be grazing outside the formerly protected seagrass plots. Previous studies have suggested that green turtles prefer the new growth on grazed shoots, and it appears that turtles in Bermuda may too.

The studies this summer also included satellite tagging, and skin and carapace sampling to investigate the turtles' diet. The full report can be read at:

www.conservation.bm/news-hot-topics/

Bermuda Plant Finder now available

The Bermuda Conservation Department has made the Bermuda Plant Finder available via its website www.conservation.bm. To access the plant finder, simply click on 'Plant



Finder' in the side bar to the left and you will be directed to download the 40mb PDF file.

This comprehensive guide covers native habitats (woodland and man-made), native and endemic plants, and invasive plants. The guide was developed following requests from landscape architects, planning officers and home owners for an easy-to-use guide for determining which plants are best suited for their particular landscaping project or management plan. Each record describes the plants maximum height, type and growth rate, expected tolerances for wind, salt and sun, suggested uses and habitats where the plant is best suited. It is hoped that that this guide will provide inspiration for the protection and enhancement of Bermuda's biodiversity, through better management of Bermuda's coastal areas, woodlands and managed landscapes. This attractive guide, illustrated throughout with colour photographs, will also be a valuable reference book for anyone interested in the botany of Bermuda. The table of contents is reproduced below. A completely online version of this guide will be available soon.

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Bermuda's Plantfinder: *Invasive and Indigenous Plants*

Department of Conservation Services

Bermuda Audubon Society



Bermuda Audubon Society

At the recent Bermuda National Trust environmental awards, the Bermuda Audubon Society was recognised for its efforts in running the Nonsuch Island nature history camp almost every year since 1971. In recent years, it has been run jointly with the Bermuda Zoological Society and with the assistance of the Department of Conservation Services. Receiving the 'Patsy Phillips Bermudiana Award' are (from left to right): Lynda Johnson (BZS), Minister Marc Bean, Andrew Dobson (BAS), Andrew Pettit (Director Conservation Services).

British Virgin Islands

News from the National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands

British Virgin Islands

News from the National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (NPTVI)

NPTVI has recently updated its website, and Facebook page, which can be accessed from the main website www.bvinationalparks.org/. News items posted here include one about the work done recently by some crew members of the *Royal Fleet Auxilliary Argus* and the Rotary Club Sunshine at Gorda Peak National Park on Virgin Gorda, as part of a community project. Activities included pruning the top of several tall trees that were obstructing the panoramic view from the tower at the top of the peak. Two picnic benches were built and installed near the lookout tower, and some repairs were carried out to the structure itself. Users will now enjoy the unobstructed



News from Jost Van Dykes Preservation Society

Nature and art



Erosion problems on Great Tobago

Cayman

National Trust for the Cayman Islands update



Tree-top pruning at the tower at the top of Gorda Peak National Park.

National Park and provides views of the entire British and US Virgin Islands from its summit on a clear day.

views which were previously available at the site. The tower at the top of the peak is available through the upper trail at Gorda Peak

News from Jost Van Dykes Preservation Society (JVDPS)

Nature and art

This July, JVDPS teamed up with Isah Chinnery (of Chinnery's Unique Designs) to run a Nature Art Programme workshop focusing on Wetland Birds. The workshop was held at Ivan's Stress Free Bar and Campground, in White Bay. JVDPS thanks Ivan and Darlene and the staff at Ivan's for hosting and supporting this workshop. Isah guided the children in their artistic endeavours, with support from Lorraine Callwood. The children were shown how to mix colours and sketch, and encouraged to make careful observations of birds in the field. Some fantastic artwork was produced, some of which can be viewed on the JVDPS Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/#!/media/set/?set=a.10151039087627230.460715.50919362229&type=1

Erosion Problems on Great Tobago

This photo, from the JVDPS Facebook page, shows what used to be a healthy sea-grape tree on Great Tobago Islands, that used to hold about 40-50 frigatebird nests. The tree was uprooted during a landslide in 2010. The remains of many nests and about 15 dead bird carcasses are still visible. Overgrazing by feral goats has caused severe erosion and unstable soils, and this is the most likely cause of the landslide. The root structures of several of the existing trees are currently undermined, and could be at risk in the 2012 hurricane season.



Cayman

National Trust for the Cayman Islands update

This is the 25 Anniversary of the founding of the Trust. The latest copy of its newsletter, *The Trust Times*, contains a number of interesting articles celebrating the achievements of the Trust, and reporting new initiatives.

The Trust has launched the 10 x 20 Challenge, to achieve protected status for 10% of the land mass of the Cayman Islands by 2020. Currently, approximately 5% of Cayman's land mass is protected. In September 2001, the Cayman Islands Government and the United Kingdom signed an Environment Charter, under which both governments committed to the preservation of Cayman's environment. The Cayman Islands is also specifically included in UK's ratification of a number of multilateral environmental agreements, notably the Convention on Biological Diversity (the "Rio Convention"), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance ("Ramsar Convention"), the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife protocol to the Cartagena Convention (the "SPAW Protocol") and Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals ("Bonn Convention"). These agreements place obligations on the Cayman Islands Government to protect the environment and require the establishment and maintenance of a system of protected areas, in order to safeguard the country's biodiversity. In accordance with the Rio Convention, the Department of Environment has developed a National Biodiversity Action Plan (reported in *WCWG eNewsletter 9*), which calls for the protection of certain native species of flora and fauna and their habitats. The Trust has taken the lead in managing and expanding

Cayman Brac parrot study



The Cayman Brac parrot is one of the world's rarest.
Photos in article by M. Christine Rose Smyth and Stuart Mailer

2012 release of blue iguanas to the wild



A frame from the video showing a blue iguana being released into a wooden shelter.

Cayman DoE sharks and cetaceans report and policy survey

Nurse shark during underwater camera surveys.
Photo: Cayman DoE



Cayman's land-based protected areas. Over the past 7 years, the Trust has raised approximately CI\$ 6 million through grants and private donors for land purchase at prevailing market values, increasing the protected areas.

This year, support from the Tourism Department has enabled improvements to several Trust sites, including improvements to the southern end of the Mastic Trail, at Governor Gore's Bird Sanctuary, and to the Guard House Park (see the NTCI summer newsletter *Trust Times* for a full report on Guard House Park).

Cayman Brac parrot study

Thanks to an award from the Darwin Initiative Overseas Territories Challenge Fund, the National Trust for the Cayman Islands, in partnership with RSPB, is studying the nesting of Cayman Brac parrots. A subspecies of the rose-throated Amazon parrot *Amazon leucocephala*, Cayman Brac parrots *A. l. hesternus* are only found on the Island of Cayman Brac, and are a different subspecies from the parrots on Grand Cayman, *A. l. caymanensis*. Due to the Brac's small size, the Brac parrot has the most restricted range of all the parrots in the Caribbean. Scientists are worried about the birds' low resilience to extinction since the favoured nesting habitats are threatened by both development and hurricanes.

The Cayman Brac parrot population is tiny, with less than 500 individuals with a range of 38 sq km. The unprecedented loss and fragmentation of Cayman Brac's forest due to poorly planned development makes the parrot population extremely vulnerable to the impact of events such as the catastrophic damage of Hurricane Paloma in 2008. The fact they no longer exist in the wild on Little Cayman highlights the extinction risk.

The work currently being done is the first step in safeguarding the Cayman Brac Parrot and establishing the bird as a conservation flagship species for Cayman Brac, much as the Blue Iguana is for Grand Cayman. See the summer issue of *The Trust Times* for the full article about this work.

The summer newsletter, *The Trust Times*, is available to download at:
www.nationaltrust.org.ky/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter-Q2-2012-Final.pdf

2012 release of blue iguanas to the wild

The release of blue iguanas to the wild began at the end of June. The captive-bred youngsters had been declared healthy and fit for release by the veterinary team from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

The young blue iguanas are released into the wild, towards the end of the day, into wooden artificial retreats, so they sleep the night inside and wake up feeling secure. Next day and for months after, they use the retreats as their safe havens as they gradually adjust to life the wild. These wooden shelters mimic the rock holes and tree cavities where they naturally shelter from predators. This method results in a high survival rate for the young iguanas.

A fascinating video of this release can be viewed at
www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_IBma5F9qw&feature=plcp

Cayman Department of Environment sharks and cetaceans report and policy survey

In 2009, the Department of Environment and partner organisations Marine Conservation International and the Save Our Seas Foundation, with funding from the Overseas Territory Environment Programme, and with the involvement of the Guy Harvey Research Institute, undertook to investigate both the status and value of sharks and rays (elasmobranchs), and of whales and dolphins (cetaceans) in Cayman waters. This summer, the first stages of this research have been completed and a report synthesising the results has been produced for the public in downloadable pdf form at
www.doe.ky/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Shark_Research_Report_as_of_14_August_2012.pdf

Research on lionfish distribution



Lionfish in seagrass bed

Montserrat

UKOTCF secures funding for Montserrat National Trust



Feral livestock project update

In view of these findings, the research partners have developed policy recommendations that seek to protect elasmobranch and cetacean populations around the Cayman Islands, and especially around Little Cayman. The public have been asked to review the report and tell the Department of Environment what they think of the policy options.

TV news items about this project, the decline in shark numbers, the DoE public awareness programme, and the huge value of sharks to the tourism economy can be viewed at:

www.cayman27.com.ky/2012/08/20/environment-break-shark-and-dolphin-project

and

www.cayman27.com.ky/2012/08/16/decline-in-cayman-sharks-continue

Research on lionfish distribution

The Cayman Department of Environment and Bangor University are investigating the distribution of lionfish in different habitats in Grand Cayman, such as mangroves, seagrass beds, and different reef areas. Any lionfish seen are culled, then measured and stomach contents examined to determine feeding. The study is still in its early stages but, so far, lionfish on the shallow and deep terraces of the patch reef are found to be generally smaller than lionfish in other areas. This research is valuable because of the importance of the seagrass and mangrove areas for the survival and growth of juvenile reef fish. So, if lionfish are in these habitats, there is likely to be a large impact on reef fish populations.

A video interview about this project can be seen at

www.cayman27.com.ky/2012/08/13/environment-break-lionfish-in-our-waters

Montserrat

UKOTCF secures funding for Montserrat National Trust

UKOTCF has secured some funding for the Montserrat National Trust to extend and update its rainwater harvesting and irrigation system in the Botanic Garden. As well as increasing the efficiency of the irrigation system, this funding will enable the National Trust to reduce the water costs associated with irrigating the garden, especially during the dry season.

The MNT botanic garden was planned by RBG Kew, and includes many different areas which have differing water requirements. So an efficient and cost-effective irrigation system, based on rainwater harvesting, is very important.

Part of the seasonal ghaut area under construction.

Photo: Dr Mike Pienkowski



Feral livestock project update

The Department of Environment has provided Mr Anderson Kirnon with support to construct a model farm at Gerald's, to increase the productivity of his current livestock unit and promote semi-intensive livestock farming practices.

This initiative is part of the OTEP-funded project "Conserving the Centre Hills in Montserrat through the effective control of feral livestock populations". The project is designed to: (i) build local capacity to manage effectively feral and loose livestock populations, (ii) reduce these populations to a level where they do not significantly impact the biodiversity of the Centre Hills and (iii) ensure that domesticated livestock do not contribute to the feral animal population.



*The early stages of construction of Mr Kirnon's model farm.
Photo: Andy Kirnon*

The model farm will include a pen divided into 6 areas: 3 small isolation or lambing areas; 2 medium-sized weaning or communal areas and 1 large holding area, with a capacity for approximately 20 sheep. A fenced paddock adjacent to the pen will provide fodder and exercise for the animals.

Demonstration sessions will be held for other farmers and interested persons, to encourage others to adopt this method, thereby resulting in increased production and improved quality of meat, while reducing the need for culling of feral and loose livestock.

The Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr Selwyn Maloney, explained that this system enables daily inspection of livestock, thus improving the health of the animals, and facilitates record-keeping and effective breeding.

Livestock owner Mr Anderson Kirnon stated that, in addition to improving the way his animals are kept and improving the breed, he would now be able to convert land currently used for rough grazing into fodder banks, and thanked the Departments of Environment and Agriculture for giving him the opportunity to develop the model farm.

The Director of Environment, Mr Gerard Gray, affirmed that, amongst all the benefits already described, this kind of system decreases the negative impact of livestock on the environment, particularly on Montserrat's national and globally important biodiversity. Another benefit would be on improved road safety, as the animals will no longer be on the streets.

Turks and Caicos Islands

TCNM Caicos dwelling exhibit in Providenciales



A typical Caicos Island house in the 1800s. Photo copyright Turks & Caicos National Museum.

Turks and Caicos Islands

Turks and Caicos National Museum Caicos dwelling exhibit in Providenciales

The Turks and Caicos National Museum were pleased to announce, this August, the start of its first exhibit at its new facility in the Village at Grace Bay, Providenciales – which will complement its established museum at Grand Turk. This will be a historically correct recreation of a typical 1800s Caicos dwelling. Plans were recently approved by the Physical Planning Board. Jeff Lee of JAL Consultants Ltd., the Architect and Development Consultant for the project stated: "The Caicos Heritage House was meticulously researched through numerous site visits to North and Middle Caicos and interviews with Islanders. This first Museum exhibit will be a Caicos family home that existed during the 1800s, complete with outdoor cooking area, traditional furnishings, and even boat-building." It is hoped that the construction will be completed by the end of the year.

An anonymous donation has made the Caicos Heritage House possible. It will occupy part of a 1-acre parcel adjacent to a 1.6 acre lot where the main Providenciales Museum will be built. The Heritage House will feature "living history" demonstrations and learning exhibits. The donor hopes that the prompt completion of this project will draw attention to the Museum's presence on Providenciales and demonstrate its importance.

Dr Donald H. Keith, Chairman of the Museum's Board of Directors said: "Visitors and Islanders who come to see this exhibit will leave with a new appreciation for what life in the Islands was like for most of the past 160 years. The Caicos Islanders were in tune with and adapted to the climate and environment on land and in the water. Much of their knowledge about past lifeways and traditional use of foods and medicinal plants is slipping away as the oldest residents pass away. We hope that Islanders will come forward with their knowledge and stories so that the Museum can save them and share them with visitors and the public."

For more information about the Caicos Heritage House project and the Turks & Caicos National Museum contact Patricia Saxton, Director, at +1 649-946-2160

TCI Caicos pine recovery project at pine conference in Miami



B. Naqqi Manco, CPRP project manager, in the pine rockland habitat, Miami, during a conference field trip.
Photo: Dr Eric Salamanca

TCI Caicos pine recovery project at pine conference in Miami

The Caicos Pine Recovery Project (CPRP) has been reported in previous *WCWG eNewsletters*, including the last issue (9), which covered the controlled burn, demonstrating the feasibility of this method in controlling the invasive pine scale insect and managing the pine-yard habitat.

Following the controlled burn exercise, personnel from the CPRP, the Department of Agriculture (DoA) and the Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs (DEMA) attended a two-day conference hosted by the Miami-Dade County Parks, the Nature Conservancy and the Everglades National Park. The conference was held at the University of Florida-Miami Dade Extension Office on June 14-15, 2012.

Bryan Naqqi Manco (CPRP manager) presented an update of the Caicos Pine Recovery Project's challenges and accomplishments from 2010 to present. Dr Eric Salamanca (Senior Scientific Officer, DEMA) presented a poster on TCI's first controlled burn and subsequent monitoring. Both presentations well received by the two hundred participants. Some participants from academic and research institutions in the US have expressed interest in collaborating with TCI to address various basic and applied researches in the Caicos pine ecosystem.

Conference organisers also facilitated several field trips which Dr Salamanca said cemented the value of controlled burning. Areas visited included the Pine Rocklands in the Everglades National Park, which has been actively managed since the 1950s, and newly acquired conservation lands where there is a great deal of work to be done on invasive plant removal and controlled burning.

Bryan Naqqi Manco commented "The conference allowed us to network with a wide variety of intrepid and undauntedly enthusiastic researchers, conservationists, and stewards of pine rocklands. We have gleaned valuable management capacity experience from this network, and will continue to use these contacts in the development of our pineyard management in the long term. Support for our programme – as well as genuine interest in helping us on the ground in TCI – was universally echoed from conference participants. We stand to gain a great deal of important field research and training from these colleagues, who are fascinated by our disjunct little pine habitat in the Turks & Caicos Islands."

TC Reef Fund install new signage



The new signs are attractive and informative.
Photo: Turks & Caicos Reef Fund

TC Reef Fund install new signage

In August, the TC Reef Fund completed the installation of new informational signage on the beach by the Bight Reef. The signs replace previous signage installed by the former Department of Environmental and Coastal Resources, which were destroyed by storms over the past few years. The new signs are made of durable aluminium and should last for years. The Bight Reef is probably one of the most visited tourist sites on the island of Providenciales. The new informational signage will help ensure the health and longevity of this important island asset.

The installation of the signage is one of the final stages of the TCRF effort to improve and upgrade the Bight Reef Snorkel Trail, and was supported by the Turks and Caicos Hotel and Tourism Association. The first phase of improvement was the cleaning and replacing of the underwater snorkel trail markers, which occurred in December 2011.

The signs provide visitors with information about the snorkel trail, including a map of the locations of the underwater trail markers. They also provide information about reef etiquette, and are easily viewable by visitors walking either direction on the beach. The Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs reviewed and approved of the installation of the signs on the beach, which is public property.

TCRF Deputy Chairman, David Stone, said, "It is important for visitors to this lovely near-shore reef to understand that they can help maintain this reef for the enjoyment of others through careful interaction with the coral and animals that inhabit the reef. It was very interesting to see how many people stopped to read the information provided, even as we were installing the signs, a clear indication of how much visitors

Anguilla

Anguilla renewable energy integration project (ARIEP) update

want to learn about our reefs.”

Anguilla

Anguilla renewable energy integration project (AREIP) update

Previous *WCWG eNewsletters* have reported on the Anguilla Renewable Energy project being undertaken by the Anguilla Renewable Energy Office (*WCWG eNewsletter 7*).

At the moment, Anguilla provides electricity across the island through a central plant fuelled by imported diesel. This is bought on the global market, and the cost is very volatile. On a monthly basis, the utility company looks at how much fuel has been burned, at what cost, and that fee gets spilt up among the consumer base. Although consumers pay a base rate covering overheads, the bulk of their bill is for the cost of fuel. Anguilla’s present electricity act allows islanders to use electricity from their own diesel generators only if the grid goes down. However, individuals are allowed to use energy generated by wind or solar power at any time. The plan for the future is to install a utility-scale solar farm, but also to encourage individuals to invest in solar panels so they can generate their own energy.

The Anguilla Renewable Energy Integration Project has the aim of promoting the use of renewable energy generation.

This project continues to make good progress, as reported by the renewable energy co-ordinator, Beth Barry.

In early May, the project co-ordinator attended an international meeting (with the too-long title: High-Level Conference of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) “Achieving Sustainable Energy for All” (SE4ALL) and Rio+20 Informal Ministerial Meeting and the SIDS Dock National Coordinators Meeting”). Beth notes that AREO’s participation in the conference was part of the outreach programme to communicate Anguilla’s efforts to foster renewable energy generation under the ARIEP, funded under the Climate Development and Knowledge Network (CDKN <http://cdkn.org/>). Her report includes also a telling comment about the issue of UKOT ineligibility to participate generally in such programmes. She says: “Beyond being an excellent opportunity for Anguilla to network with other SIDS countries, Anguilla’s attendance at the conference highlighted the fact that there are currently no UK Overseas Countries or Territories involved in the SIDS Dock programme. This is because UK-OCTs are not direct members of the United Nations and therefore not eligible for membership in the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS), which is a prerequisite for SIDS Dock membership. Anguilla was invited to participate in the conference as a result of the strong international network built by Anguilla over the past several years and its current RE [Renewable Energy] integration work with CDKN. It is very clear that, whilst UK OCTs are formally viewed as part of the United Kingdom, an Annex 1 country, they share most characteristics with the other Small Island Developing States of the world. As such, membership in SIDS Dock would be of great use to both the programme and the UK OCTs. A positive path would be for UK OCTs to work with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and each other towards a goal of gaining membership under their current status.”

Beth Barry’s full progress report from this event (on which this summary is based) can be read at:

www.icontact-archive.com/nvEFhVN4bHaD6gpXrL9oBR8X5yMmT3d5?w=1

[Editorial note: SIDS Dock is an initiative among member countries of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS <http://aosis.org/>), to provide the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) with a collective institutional mechanism to assist them transform their national energy sectors into a catalyst for sustainable economic development and help generate financial resources to address adaptation to climate change. It is called SIDS DOCK because it is designed as a “DOCKing station,” to connect the energy sector in SIDS with the global market for finance, sustainable energy technologies and with the



**Solar intallations at the Hughes Medical Centre: top - roof-mounted, bottom - ground mounted.
Photo: ARIEP**

Cross-Territory and General

UKOTCF Virtual Tours

UKOTCF Forum News 40 available to download



UKOTCF at Bird Watching Fair

European Union (EU) and the United States (US) carbon markets, and able to trade the avoided carbon emissions in those markets. Estimates place the potential value of the US and EU markets between USD 100 to 400 billion annually.

SIDS DOCK has been developed jointly by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (5Cs) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the two regional government institutions with foremost responsibility for assisting the SIDS in the Pacific and Caribbean regions to address the impacts of climate change, working in cooperation with AOSIS. More information is available at www.sidsnet.org/news/sids-dock-launched-catalyze-renewable-energy]

Beth Barry's August progress report notes the installation of a large solar system at the Hughes Medical Centre. A local company (Comet Energy Systems) recently completed a 60kW solar system at the Hughes Medical Centre. The first phase, completed in January under a special pilot agreement with ANGLEC, was comprised of a 30kW roof-mounted solar system. As there was not enough roof space left for expansion of that system, Dr Hughes installed a further 30kW on the land behind the clinic. Chris Mason of Comet Systems designed a ground mount system to withstand the high winds expected in Anguilla.

The full August progress report can be read at www.icontact-archive.com/nvEFhVN4bHaD6gpXrL9oBbUq9VoZF8ht?w=1

Cross-Territory and General

UKOTCF Virtual Tours

The British Virgin Islands virtual tour is now live, to add to the virtual tours of Montserrat, TCI and Pitcairn, mentioned as a stop-press in the previous *WCWG eNewsletter* (no. 9). The virtual tours are accessed from the UKOTCF website home page (www.ukotcf.org) from either the news item section, the Territories and Tours tab on the left hand side, or from the territory pages themselves. The virtual tours will be updated periodically, and comments and suggestions are welcome.



The TC Reef Fund page of the TCI virtual tour

UKOTCF Forum News 40 available to download

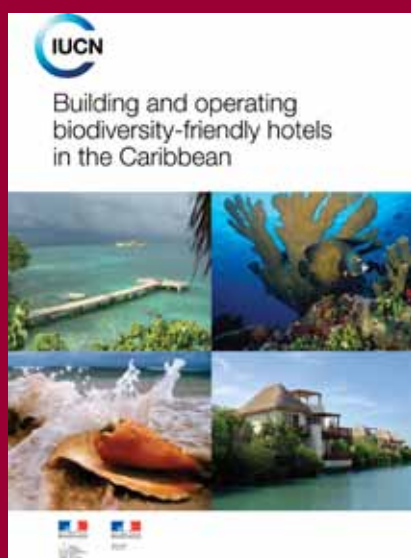
The latest colour edition of *Forum News*, number 40, can be downloaded from the UKOTCF website (2MB pdf). The leading article is "Moving Backwards in Conservation of the UK Overseas Territories: Comments by UKOTCF on UK Government's White Paper" (and a fuller version of this analysis is available to download separately from www.ukotcf.org). This edition includes also articles on the future of the BEST EU funding programme and the possibility that UKOTs will be written out of successor funding; environmental initiatives by Gibraltar's new Government; the importance and vulnerability of woody species and habitats in the UKOTs; the Bermuda Ombudsman's conclusion that Environmental Charters are binding, confirming that Bermuda Government acted unlawfully; the UKOTCF/TCI "Wonderful Water" curriculum and courses project for Turks & Caicos schools; the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Isle of Man, and the UKOTCF Virtual Tours.

UKOTCF at Bird Watching Fair

The British Bird Watching Fair was held at Rutland Water, England, on 17-19 August 2012. This year, as well as making people aware of the important biodiversity of the UKOTs, and the funding challenges they face, UKOTCF put a spotlight on the



IUCN sustainable hotels publications



environmental shortcomings of the FCO White Paper *The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability* issued in June 2012 (see the article in *Forum News* 40 which can be downloaded at www.ukotcf.org). There was a lot of interest in this, and concern about the lack of funding opportunities for environmental work in the UKOTs. On a lighter note, the traditional Caribbean rum punch hour at the end of each day was welcomed by weary fair-goers and stand-holders alike, and gave another opportunity to inform people about the biodiversity importance of the Caribbean UKOTs.

IUCN sustainable hotels publications

UKOTCF has highlighted on previous occasions the impact on biodiversity conservation of inappropriate built development (for example the article "Still paving paradise?" in *Forum News* 39. So the recent publication of IUCN's *Building and operating biodiversity-friendly hotels in the Caribbean* is welcome.

Key recommendations for tourism stakeholders in the Caribbean include:

- Governments should have a clear and explicit vision of sustainable development that informs appropriate tourism and hotel development choices.
- Biodiversity issues should be considered early on in planning, assessment and authorization processes, especially with regards to EIA procedures and controls.
- Greater awareness should be promoted within the hotel sector, architects, designers, and the construction sector in general, about biodiversity impacts from poor siting and design choices and the implications of these choices for the prosperity of the whole sector and the risks to their product.
- Hotel management and development companies should be guided by a long-term vision that incorporates ecosystem and biodiversity impact; this vision should not stop at hotel siting and design but continue into hotel operations and renovations.
- Greater innovation should be employed within the sector to better integrate biodiversity conservation into vacation accommodation developments.
- Information on sensitive and critical biodiversity resources and areas, including threatened or protected species, should be made available to planners and decision-makers, for example through access to web-based resources such as the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT - www.ibatforbusiness.org).

The *Building and operating biodiversity-friendly hotels in the Caribbean* document can be downloaded at:

www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/business/bbp_work/tourism/hotels___resorts/publications/?uPubsID=4618

IUCN have developed five biodiversity principles for siting and design of hotels and resorts. These are:

1. Adopt an ecosystem-based approach in tourism development planning
2. Manage impacts on biodiversity from hotel development and attempt to achieve an overall positive contribution
3. Design with nature and adopt nature-based solutions
4. Respect, involve and support local communities
5. Build collaboration among stakeholders

The *Siting and Design of Hotels and Resorts* publication presents some case studies to illustrate these principles. They include, for principle 3 (design with nature and adopt nature-based solutions), an example from the US Virgin Islands, at Maho Bay and Concordia. This example is included as an example of tourism accommodation development designed to have minimal impact on ground vegetation, through use of platforms and walkways, as well as low-impact materials and technologies.

None of the examples given are from the UKOTs, and it would be interesting to gather information on hotels and resorts in the Caribbean UKOTs which demonstrate one or more of the five IUCN biodiversity principles for siting and design of hotels and resorts. One development of which UKOTCF is aware, which was designed to have minimal impact on ground vegetation, uses rainwater harvesting and some solar power is Blue

UK signs MOU on conservation of migratory sharks



Basking shark

Horizon Resort on Middle Caicos. It would be good to hear of other examples.

This publication can be downloaded at:

<http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2012-013.pdf>

UK signs MOU on conservation of migratory sharks

In June 2012, UK Minister Richard Benyon signed the MOU on shark conservation agreed under the Convention on Migratory species. The UK is the 24th signatory to this MOU, and the signing extended the agreement to Bermuda in the wider Caribbean. [The other UKOTs which were included are: the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, British Indian Ocean Territories and Crown Dependency of the Isle of Man.]

Under the agreement, work will focus on improving fisheries data for threatened shark species to help inform conservation and management actions. It will see better co-ordination of shark management and conservation measures at regional and international levels, including proposals to limit the catch or trade in endangered species of shark.

The species covered under the agreement are whale shark *Rhincodon typus*, basking shark *Cetorhinus maximus*, great white shark *Carcharodon carcharias*, short fin mako shark *Isurus oxyrinchus*, longfin mako shark *Isurus paucus*, porbeagle shark *Lamna nasus*, spiny dogfish *Squalus acanthias* (Northern Hemisphere populations)

More information can be found at:

http://www.cms.int/species/sharks/sharks_bkrd.htm

The text of the MOU on Conservation of Migratory Sharks can be found at

http://www.cms.int/species/sharks/MoU/Migratory_Shark_MoU_Eng.pdf