

## **Commitment to increase support for conservation in the Caribbean**

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**Port of Spain, Trinidad (IUCN Caribbean Regional Committee) 18 September 2012** – The world’s largest conservation organization, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) has committed to increase its support for and engagement of the Caribbean in its work.

At the IUCN’s World Conservation Congress held in Jeju, Korea September 5<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> 2012, IUCN Caribbean members submitted motion 12, which was passed by the Members Assembly. This motion calls for IUCN to “Consolidate its presence in the insular Caribbean, through an enhanced regional implementation of the relevant components of the IUCN Programme 2013-2016, including the possibility of the establishment of a Caribbean IUCN office located in the insular Caribbean.”

The IUCN Caribbean Regional Committee will be working closely with the Secretariat to implement the motion, which also highlights the importance of “Enabling participation of the insular Caribbean into existing and new IUCN activities”. This includes the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) project, a 20 million Euro project launched in Jeju, to be implemented in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

The Caribbean was well represented at the World Congress in Jeju by eighteen Caribbean representatives, including Spencer Thomas of Grenada who serves on the IUCN Council. IUCN Caribbean member organizations participating were:



IUCN Caribbean members participating in the Members Assembly (Photo Credit: CANARI)

- Bahamas National Trust
- Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
- Caribbean Research and Management of Biodiversity (CARMABI) from Curacao
- Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE) from the Dominican Republic
- Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD) from the Dominican Republic
- Environmental Foundation of Jamaica
- Fideicomiso de Conservación from Puerto Rico
- Fundación Antonio Núñez Jiménez de la Naturaleza y el Hombre (FANJ) from Cuba

- Fundación para el Mejoramiento Humano (Progressio) from the Dominican Republic
- Grupo Jaragua from the Dominican Republic
- Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCdT)
- Jamaica Environment Trust (JET)
- National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) of the Government of Jamaica
- Saint Lucia National Trust
- Trust for Sustainable Livelihoods



Susan Otuokon presents a poster on JCdT's work to manage the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park in Jamaica (Photo Credit: CANARI)

The Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area (SIOBMPA), a community organization from the Grenadines, also participated.

IUCN Caribbean members worked very closely together to develop and lobby for the motion with key partners. Eric Carey, Executive Director of the Bahamas National Trust, said that he felt that "this was an important and hugely successful week for the Caribbean" and that it is "not often in these huge international forums that the Caribbean gets the chance to network and effectively advance common positions and to look out for their interests."

The IUCN Caribbean members presented at a variety of sessions at the Congress to share the Caribbean experience and achievements. CANARI presented at a workshop on green economy and at a Knowledge Cafe on community-based climate change adaptation. CARMABI and FANJ presented at the Blue Planet Pavilion on coastal and marine research and management initiatives. Grupo Jaragua presented at a workshop on participatory approaches to protected area management. The Trust for Sustainable Livelihoods presented at the Jeju Pavilion on national biodiversity planning efforts in the Caribbean. JCdT presented a poster on its work managing the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park in Jamaica.



Roberto Perez presents on FANJ's work on coastal and marine conservation in Cuba (Photo Credit: CANARI)

Nicole Leotaud, Executive Director of CANARI which is Chair of the IUCN Caribbean Regional Committee, noted that she was very pleased with the collaboration among IUCN Caribbean members and the progress being made. She said that the regional network of IUCN Caribbean members and Caribbean experts on IUCN Commissions offers "a unique opportunity to build partnerships among Caribbean

stakeholders from civil society and government working for biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods across all of the islands of the Caribbean, despite our political and language differences.”

Fernando Lloveras San Miguel, Executive Director from the Fideicomiso de Conservación de Puerto Rico, echoed this sentiment stating that “Our diversity is our strength: we now have unique local cultures, many languages and relationships with many parts of the world. Let’s take advantage of such strengths.”

IUCN launched its Caribbean Initiative at the Barcelona World Congress in 2008, prepared a Situation Analysis of how IUCN could best contribute to the region, and developed the 2009-2012 IUCN Work Programme in the Insular Caribbean. Several projects have been implemented under this Programme, which has been updated and focused in the 2013-2016 Work Programme. Work implemented in the Caribbean will contribute to IUCN’s overall Global Programme, which focuses on valuing and conserving nature, effective and equitable governance of nature’s use and deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development.

#### About the IUCN Caribbean Regional Committee

IUCN’s mission is “To influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.” The IUCN Caribbean Regional Committee was established in 2010 to facilitate cooperation among IUCN government and non-government members in the Caribbean and with the IUCN Secretariat and Commissions. The Committee is facilitating networking among members in the Caribbean and the development and implementation of collaborative programmes and projects. The IUCN Caribbean Programme and Regional Committee work across all the islands of the Caribbean.

#### **For further information, please contact:**

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