



IWCAM Project Coordination Unit

C/O Caribbean Environmental Health Institute, The Morne, P.O. Box 1111, Castries,
St. Lucia Tel: 1 – (758) – 452 – 2501, 1412; Fax: 1 – (758) – 453 – 2721
URL: www.iwcam.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Management of water is everybody's responsibility says Prime Minister of Antigua & Barbuda

St. John's, Antigua & Barbuda, 4th February 2008: Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, the Honourable Baldwin Spencer, last week called for increased public participation in water conservation to ease water stress in the island.

Baldwin, while addressing the Opening Ceremony of a National Symposium on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) which took place on 30 January, said that IWRM is “an essential approach that needs to be adopted by our water-stressed country in order to sustain our enviable development”.

“We in Antigua and Barbuda look forward to advancing the development of IWRM Plans. We recognize that the principles of IWRM are important and relevant to our country. We need greater involvement of all stakeholders, both in the planning for and conservation of our water resources,” he said while noting that public participation is essential in grappling with these important water management issues. He added that citizens must not continue to believe that water management is the responsibility of others, emphasising that it is everybody's responsibility.

Prime Minister Spencer applauded the organisers of the symposium and said that he looked forward to ongoing dialogue and collaboration to advance the process of improving water resources management in Antigua & Barbuda. He was optimistic that progress would be made and expressed appreciation for the support being received by Antigua & Barbuda, along with the rest of the Caribbean, from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and specifically the project on “Integrating Watershed & Coastal Area Management (IWCAM)”. In this regard he thanked UNEP, the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI) and others for their efforts.

At the same time Minister of Health, John Maginley in his remarks said that his Ministry, along with fellow Ministries and the wider Community, remained ready to actively participate in the process of Integrated Water Resources Management, recognising the nexus between water and human health.

“We cannot divorce safety from conservation or from supply,” he said while adding that this shows the need for a multi-sectoral, integrated approach to the management of water.

The National IWRM Symposium was organised by the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute and UNEP, with support from the Antigua Public Utilities Authority and the GEF-IWCAM Project¹. It took place in St. John's, Antigua & Barbuda from January 30-31, 2008.

¹ *The Global Environment Facility-funded Integrating Watershed and Coastal Areas Management (GEF-IWCAM) Project, is co-implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and co-executed by the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention, UNEP Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit (UNEP-CAR/RCU) and the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI)*

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For more information, please contact the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (cehi@candw.lc) or the GEF-IWCAM Project Coordinating Unit (ds Spencer@cehi.org.lc), or call 758-452-2501