



## Participatory budgeting and financial management for the forest sector in Jamaica

**Port-of-Spain, March 9, 2022** – Enhanced management of Jamaica’s forest resources and capacity building of the civil society organisations (CSOs) involved in doing so are two of the expected benefits of the new two-year project, “Participatory budgeting and financial management for the forest sector in Jamaica”. The project is being funded by the European Union (FED/2021/428-620) and implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and its co-executing partners, the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation, and the Jamaica Conservation Development Trust (JCDT).



***Community members and civil society groups on a nature trail in the Buff Bay Valley, Jamaica. CREDIT: CANARI***

The project targets Jamaican CSOs that have interests, rights, and responsibilities in forest research, conservation and management, including the co-management of forested protected areas, or advocate for sustainable forest management, conservation and restoration.

Speaking about the expected benefits of the project, C-CAM Executive Director, Ingrid Parchment, said this “is a good opportunity for stakeholders involved in the management and use of the forest to be involved in the decision making about how funds are allocated and budgeted to conserve those resources.”

The project will support recommendations outlined in a 2017 report on updating Jamaica’s Public Finance Management Reform Action Plan to increase public access to fiscal information. This is part of the approach to strengthening the government’s public finance management to improve governance and accountability, fiscal

control, efficiency and effectiveness in resource use. The project will raise public awareness of public finance management issues and ensure that civil society groups can play a role in the budgetary cycle and delivery of Jamaica’s National Forest Management and Conservation Plan.

During the period December 2021 to November 2023, CANARI, C-CAM and JCDT will spearhead the establishment of a coalition of Jamaican CSOs, and work with them to ensure they have the skills, abilities and resources to engage in collective analysis, advocacy and dialogue with key government agencies to promote the development of mechanisms for public finance management for the forest sector.

A public awareness campaign will be developed under the project, as well as research and training by CANARI and its partners to ensure key CSOs working in the forest sector can continue to engage relevant government agencies and play a role in formulating and executing national budgets that support forest management. These activities will greatly improve citizens' engagement in, and support for, the sustainable management of forest ecosystems and biodiversity in Jamaica to benefit livelihoods, socio-economic development, and human well-being.

Additionally, the project will engage public sector forest managers, policy makers and budget decision-makers, including key government agencies such as the Forestry Department and the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA).

Reflecting on the objectives and activities of the project, JCCT Executive Director, Dr. Susan Otuokon, said it "has the potential to change the way we think about and manage our forest resources in Jamaica, in addition to building capacity to better address national issues impacting our forests."

Project activities will, by extension, benefit the Jamaican public that relies on forest ecosystem services through improvements in conserving, protecting and financing those services.

For more information on this project, visit: <https://canari.org/green-economy/jamaica-participatory-budgeting/>