

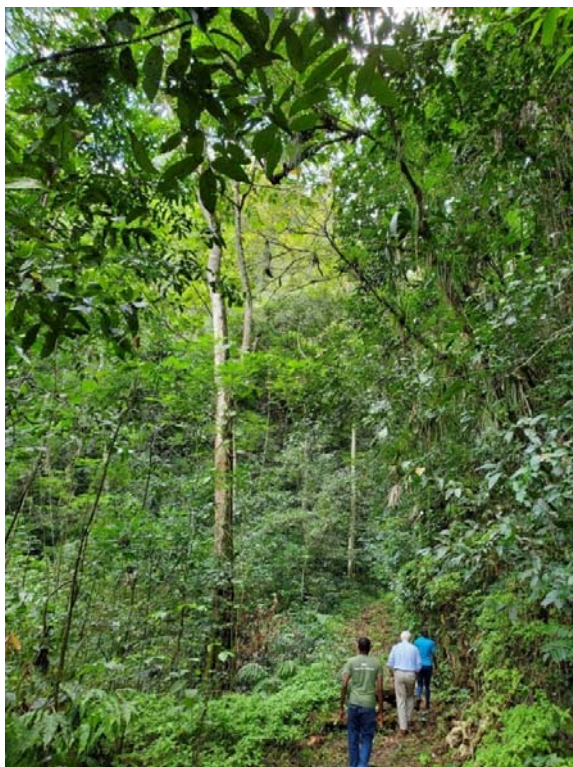


Participatory budgeting and financial management of the forest sector in Jamaica

Final technical report

Prepared by
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for the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute

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Credit: Marilyn Headley



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The technical study and report were done by Marilyn Headley for CANARI.

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Acronyms

ATI – Access to Information
CANARI – Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CAPRI – Caribbean Policy Research Institute
CBO – Community Based organisation
C-CAM – Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation
CDC – Community Development Committee
CDF – Constituency development Fund
CEO – Chief Executive Officer
CSO – Civil society organisation
EFJ – Environmental Foundation of Jamaica
EoRE – Estimates of revenue and expenditure
EU – European Union.
EUBSP – European Union Budget Support Programme.
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation
FD – Forestry Department
FFF – Forests and Farm Facility
FS – Forest Service
GCF – Green Climate Fund
GEF – Global Environment Facility
GEFSGP- Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme
GoJ – Government of Jamaica
IAF – Inter-American Foundation
IDB – Inter-American Development Bank
IIED – International Institute for Environment & Development
IITF – International Institute for Tropical Forestry
INTPA – International Partnerships
JAMP – Jamaica Accountability Meter Portal
JCDT – Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust
JET – Jamaica Environment Trust
JIS – Jamaica Information Service
JNHT – Jamaica National Heritage Trust
KFS – Kenya Forest Service
LIFE – Local Initiative for Environment
LFMC – Local Forest Management Committee
MDA – Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MEGJC – Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation
MoFPS – Ministry of Finance and the Public Service
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
MP -Member of Parliament
NCCLFMC – Northern Cockpit Country Local Forest Management Committee
NCTFJ – National Conservation Trust Fund of Jamaica
NEPA – National Environment and Planning Agency
NEPT – Negril Area Environment Protection Trust
NFMCP – National Forest Management and Conservation Plan
NGO – Non-government Organisation

NRCA – Natural Resources Conservation Authority
NTPI – National Tree Planting Initiative
PA – Protected Area
PASMP – Protected Areas System Master Plan
PDC – Parish Development Committees
PEA – Political economy analysis
PEX – Public Expenditure Division
PFM – Public Finance Management
PIOJ – Planning Institute of Jamaica
PMC – Parish Municipal Corporation
SDG – Sustainable Development Goals
SGP – Small Grants Programme
SLFMC – Sawyers Local Forest Management Committee
STEa – Southern Trelawny Environment Agency
STePA – St. Thomas Environmental Protection Agency
SFC – Standing Finance Committee
TNC – The Nature Conservancy
UDC – Urban Development Corporation
USA – United States of America
USFS – United States Forest Service

1 Introduction

The Government of Jamaica (GoJ) has undertaken a programme to strengthen the public finance management (PFM) to improve covenants, governance, accountability, fiscal control, efficiency and effectiveness in resource use. With funding from the European Union (FED/2021/428-620), the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), in partnership with the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation and the Jamaica Conservation Development Trust (JCDDT) are co-implementing the project, “*Participatory budgeting and financial management for the forest sector in Jamaica*” over two years from December 2021 to November 2023.

The project’s main objective is to enhance the awareness and capacity of the Jamaican civil society to engage in participatory budgeting and public finance management (PFM) for the forest sector. It will also build capacity of a national coalition of at least 25 Civil Society Organisations (CSO) in Jamaica, to engage in collective analysis, advocacy, and dialogue with key government agencies to promote development of mechanisms for participatory budgeting/ PFM for the forest sector.

This final technical report includes findings from desk research on the budgeting processes for the forest sector, and information gathered from interviews with government agencies as well as members of the CSO Coalition for Forests established under the project (see Appendix 1) about the budgeting and planning processes in the forest sector in Jamaica and reflects input from the stakeholders’ workshop held in January 2023.

Box 1: What is participatory budgeting?

In the literature, participatory budgeting is seen as a means for:

- advancing democracy by increasing citizen engagement in government decision-making
- helping marginalized citizens and communities increase the share of public spending that benefits them/addresses their needs
- in local settings as an element of devolved governance

This report documents the methodology, conducts an analysis of the processes, identifies the impacts on the different group of stakeholders and assesses the capacity of these groups to participate in the budgeting processes. The draft technical report was presented to the CSO Coalition on Forests at the workshop January 25, 2023. This final technical report includes comments and recommendations from the stakeholders.

2 Methodology

2.1 Documents reviewed and stakeholders engaged.

The key stakeholders involved in the forest sector in Jamaica are in three main groups: the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) entities, the CSOs and the private forest owners. For the technical study the first two groups were interviewed, i.e., the GoJ entities and members of the CSO Coalition for Forests.

The desk research, which was completed in October 2022, identified the GoJ entities involved in the budgeting process for the forest sector in Jamaica. It also outlined the processes and all the key players involved.

The GoJ entities were identified during the review of the project document, project launch report plus utilisation of information gathered at the CSO Coalition for Forests workshop held in September 2022. The updated CSO Coalition for Forests list provided the names of the CSO stakeholders.

2.1.1 Documents reviewed

The following documents relevant to the budgeting and planning process in the forest sector in Jamaica were identified and reviewed:

- Constitution of Jamaica
- Financial Administration and Audit Act
- Financial Administration and Audit Act (Fiscal Responsibility Framework) Regulations 2015
- Financial Administration and Audit Act – Financial Instructions
- Financial Management Regulations
- Minimum Standards and guidelines for the development of Strategic Business plans for MDAs
- Vision 2030 Jamaica: National Development Plan
- Draft Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework for 2021 -2024
- Medium-Term Results-based Budgeting
- Medium-Term Strategic Priorities of the Government (2023/2024 to 2026/2027)
- Performance Management Operating Policy and Procedures
- Budget Preparation and Management System Manual
- National Forest Management and Conservation Plan
- Forward Estimates Tool (recurrent) for budget year and three following years
- Stakeholders’ engagement plan to implement the NFMCP and its PMER
- Forestry Department Stakeholder analysis matrix
- Forest Policy for Jamaica (2017)
- Protected Area System Master Plan
- Caribbean Policy Research Institute – Following the Money 2022: Transparency and Oversight in the Government Budgeting Process
- The Citizens’ Guide to the 2022-2023 Budget

2.1.2 Government of Jamaica stakeholders in the budgeting process for the forest sector in Jamaica.

The key GoJ entities involved in the budgeting process in the forest sector in Jamaica are listed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Governmental stakeholders involved in the budgeting process in the forest sector in Jamaica

Ministry/ Department/ Agency	Role and function in the forest sector	Key persons	Role in the budgeting process
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Forestry Department (FD) Executive Agency	The lead agency in the forest sector, manages 117,000 hectares of government owned forest estates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – The Head of the FD 2. Senior Director Finance and Accounts 3. Senior Director Strategic Corporate Planning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Accounting Officer and signs off on the budget estimates and plans for the agency 2. Responsible for the preparation of the agency's Budget 3. Responsible for the preparation of the Strategic Business and Operational Plans
National Environment & Planning Agency (NEPA) Executive Agency	Primer environment and planning agency, with responsibility for the management of the 2 main terrestrial/forested protected areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CEO – The Head of the NEPA 2. Director Planning, projects monitoring evaluation and Research Division 3. Director Environment Management and Conservation Division 4. Manager Finance and Accounts 5. Manager Protected areas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Accounting Officer and signs off on the budget estimates and plans for the agency 2. Responsible for planning and monitoring of projects in the agency 3. Has overall responsibility for the environment portfolio in the agency including the terrestrial protected areas 4. Responsible for developing the draft budget for the agency 5. Responsible for the management of the protected areas declared under the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) Act.
Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC)	Has portfolio responsibility for the environment, is the parent ministry for FD and NEPA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Permanent Secretary – the administrative head of the MEGJC 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Accounting Officer for the MEGJC, ensures that the Strategic Business and

			Operational Plans for the agencies are submitted to the Cabinet Office
Strategic Planning, Performance Monitoring Evaluation and Risk Management Division in the MEGJC		1. Senior Director Strategic Planning, Performance Monitoring Evaluation and risk Management	1. Responsible for the preparation of the Strategic Business and Operational plans for the MEGJC and reviewing and monitoring the plans for its agencies
Environment and Risk Management Branch in the MEGJC		1. Senior Director Environment and Risk Management	1. The Operational Focal Point for the Global Environment Facility, prepares endorsement letters for all GEF projects
Climate Change Division (CCD) in the MEGJC		1. Principal Director	1. Focal Point for the Green Climate Fund. (GCF)
Ministry of Finance and the Public Service (MoFPS)	Has overall responsibility for developing the government's fiscal and economic policy framework; collecting and allocating public revenues in the socio-economic development of Jamaica	1. Minister of Finance 2. Financial Secretary – the technical and administrative head of the MoFPS	1. Develops the fiscal policy framework and presents the Budget to the House of Representatives 2. Sends out the Budget Call to all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)
Public Expenditure Division (PEX) in the MoFPS	Responsible for the preparation and planning of the country's budget and fiscal policy. Provision of warrants	1. Deputy Financial Secretary, PEX 2. Director of PEX	1. Overall responsibility for the PEX Division. 2. Works directly with the agencies to ensure that their budgets are prepared. Reviews budget proposals to ensure they reflect the priorities in the Strategic Business plans. Advises on

			the likely budget needs of MDAs in a manner which supports the efficient allocation of resources and on a basis which reflects national and sectoral policies.
Economic Management Division in the MoFPS	Assist with the prudent fiscal policy management and provision of sound economic analysis to the GoJ for development programmes	1. Deputy Financial Secretary - Economic Management Division	1. Overall responsibility for the Economic Management Division. Determines the amount the GoJ can afford to spend each financial year
Executive Agency Monitoring Unit (EAMU) in the MoFPS	Monitors the Executive Agencies	1. Director	1. Monitors the progress of the agencies in achieving their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Public Investment Appraisal Branch (PIAB) in the PEX	The single point of entry for all projects intended for the PSIP. It is responsible for the pre-investment project appraisals; and performs a technical advisory function to the PIMC		Responsible for the appraisal of all projects
Public Investment Management Committee (PIMC)	Responsible for creating appropriate policies and procedures for effective and efficient operation of the Public Investment Management system (PIMS)	1. Minister of Finance	1. Chairs the committee
Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)	The foremost planning agency of the GoJ that seeks to initiate and	1. Director General – Head of the PIOJ	1. The Accounting Officer and has full responsibility for the PIOJ

	coordinate policies, plans and programmes for sustainable development for Jamaica	2. Deputy Director General Sustainable Development	2. Responsible for liaising with both the International Development Partners (IDPs) and the agencies in the identification and development of projects and programmes for the forest sector
Office of the Cabinet	The principal instrument of policy and is charged with the general direction and control of the GoJ and is collectively responsible to Parliament	1. Cabinet Secretary – Head of the Office of the Cabinet & head of the civil service	1. Secretary to the Cabinet, responsible to all ministers for the running of the Cabinet
Cabinet	Made up of the Prime Minister and Ministers. Responsible for government policy and is collectively responsible to the Parliament. Cabinet considers issues that have national impact and debate	Prime Minister – Head of the Cabinet	Selects the ministers. Decides on the annual estimates to be presented to the Parliament
Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament	The legislative arm of Government	1. Speaker of the House 2. President of the Senate	1. Overall responsibility of the lower house 2. Overall responsibility of the upper house
Standing Finance Committee of Parliament	Made up all the 63 Members of Parliament. Reviews the Estimates of Expenditure after it is tabled by the Minister of Finance and the Public Service	1. The Speaker of the House	1. Chairs the Standing Finance Committee

2.1.3 The Government of Jamaica stakeholders engaged

Key persons from the various GoJ entities were identified as primary players in the budgeting process in the forest sector. Requests for meetings were sent out and the majority of the persons identified responded and agreed to meet. However, it was not the ideal time for many of them as they were currently preparing their budgets and strategic business plans for the 2023/2024 financial year. Some were conducting their planning retreats and/or had unscheduled meetings which at times resulted in the cancellation or postponement of the meetings. Mr. Andre Fache, Attaché/Programme Director at the Delegation of the EU to Jamaica and Ms. Susanne Wille, International Partnerships (INTPA) in the EU were also interviewed. Mr. Fache is the focal point for the project *Building civil society awareness and capacity to engage in participatory budgeting and financial management for the forest sector in Jamaica*.

The persons who were interviewed from the GoJ entities are listed in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Persons interviewed from the GoJ entities

Name	Entity	Position	Responsibility in the budgeting process
1. Conrad Russell	FD	Senior Director, Finance and Accounts	Responsible for the preparation of the budget for the FD and submitting monthly reports on expenditure to the MFPS
2. Davia Carty	FD	Senior Director Strategic Corporate Planning	Responsible for the preparation of the Strategic Business & Operational plans and submission of quarterly and annual performance reports to the MEGJC
3. Claire Bernard	PIOJ	Deputy Director General, Sustainable Development	Identifies external funding for projects in the forest sector
4. Carolyn Campbell	MoFPS	Director, Public Expenditure Division MoFPS	Ensures that the annual budgets for the FD and NEPA are properly prepared
5. Monique Gibbs	MEGJC	Senior Director, Strategic Planning, Performance Monitoring Evaluation and Risk Management	Responsible for the preparation strategic business plan for the MEGJC. Ensures that the agencies' Strategic Business plans are submitted to cabinet. Monitors the implementation of the agencies' plans
6. Carla Gordon	NEPA	Manager, Protected Areas	Responsible for the management of the Protected Area under the NRCA Act
7. Ainsworth Carroll	NEPA	Director- Planning, Projects, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research	Responsible for the development and implementation of projects and plans in NEPA
8. Gillian Guthrie	MEGJC	Actg. Chief Technical Director and Operational Focal Point for GEF	Responsible for overseeing the development of GEF projects. Prepares the endorsement letters for all GEF proposals
9. UnaMay Gordon	Senior Climate	Former Principal Director CCD and Focal	National Focal Point for the GCF

	Change Expert	Point for the GCF (up to July 31, 2022)	
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2.1.4 CSO stakeholders engaged in the process.

The CSOs identified for the study were selected from the updated list of the members of the Coalition for Forests which was provided by CANARI. The full list of all the members is in **Appendix 1**.

A thorough review and assessment of the members of the Coalition was conducted. The CSOs were selected and grouped depending on their mandates and the size of the organisation. Of the 26 organisations in the CSO Coalition for Forests, members from 13 of these entities were engaged either in focus group meetings or in meetings by themselves if they were unable to participate in the focus groups discussions. Some persons had internet issues which affected their full participation in the meetings. Meetings were canceled on a couple of occasions due to unplanned scheduling issues. A total of 16 persons were interviewed. The list of CSOs identified for the focus group meetings is shown in **Table 3** below. The list of participants in each of the five-focus group is shown in **Table 4** below.

Table 3: CSOs engaged

	Organisation	Key persons
1.	Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM)	1. Ingrid Parchment – Executive Director 2. Ta’Chala Joevanka 3. Venece Brown
2.	Northern Cockpit Country Local Forest Management Committee (NCCLFMC)	Lorna Williams Christie – President
3.	Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ)	1. Allison Rangolan – Chief Technical Director 2. Mark Constable – Programme Officer
4.	Hanover Bee Farmers’ Cooperative Society Limited	Winfield Murray – General Manager
5.	Jamaica Conservation Development Trust (JCDT)	Dr. Susan Otuokon – Executive Director
6.	Jamaica Environment Trust (JET)	Dr. Theresa Rodriguez Moodie – Chief Executive Officer
7.	Local Initiative for Environment (LIFE)	Velva Lawrence – Executive Director
8.	Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT)	Keisha Spencer – Executive Director
9.	Sawyers Local Forest Management Committee, (SLFMC)	Toussaint Brown – President
10.	Southern Trelawny Environment Agency (STEA)	Hugh Dixon – Executive Director
11.	The Nature Conservancy (TNC) (Jamaica)	Donna Blake – Jamaica Director
12.	St. Thomas Environmental Protection Association (STEPA)	Appollionia Davidson Onfroy – President

13.	Jamaica Accountability Meter Portal (JAMP)	Jeanette Calder – Executive Director
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Table 4: CSOs assigned in the five focus groups

1.	(i) Jamaica Environment Trust (JET) (ii) Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ) (iii) The Nature Conservancy (TNC) (Jamaica)
2.	(i) Jamaica Conservation Development Trust (JCDDT) (ii) Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM) (iii) Southern Trelawny Environment Agency (STEA)
3.	(i) Sawyers Local Forest Management Committee (SLFMC) (ii) Local Initiative for Environment (LIFE)
4.	(i) Hanover Bee Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited (ii) Northern Cockpit Country Local Forest Management Committee (NCCLFMC)
5.	(i) Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT) (ii) St. Thomas Environmental Protection Association (STIPA)

The questionnaire used in the engagement with the CSOs was developed in consultation with the consultant conducting the political economy analysis (PEA); the final list of questions is in **Table 5**. The questionnaire was sent to stakeholders for review prior to the meeting. Some persons submitted their responses prior to the meeting, which improved the discussions.

Table 5: Questionnaire administered to the CSOs

1.	How is your organisation involved in the forest sector of Jamaica?
2.	Do you manage any Government of Jamaica (GoJ) Forest estates?
3.	What do you know about the budgeting processes and public finance management in the forest sector in Jamaica? Give details.
4.	Are you/your organisation involved in any of these processes?
5.	If not, would you/your organisation wish to be involved in the process?
6.	If yes, how did you get involved in the process, were there any obstacles?
7.	At what stage/s in the process do you think you or other CSOs should be involved?
8.	If you have no knowledge, would you like to be made aware of these processes?
9.	Are you aware of the National and/or strategic planning processes for the forest sector?
10.	Have you ever been involved in the preparation of the forest sector plans, policies or legislation?
11.	Have you ever been involved in the strategic business planning process in the forest sector?
12.	If not, would you like to be a part of the planning processes in the forest sector?
13.	Do you currently have participatory budgeting processes in your organisation?
14.	If yes, which organisations/ GoJ agencies are involved in your budgeting process?
15.	Do you seek funding from entities other than the GoJ?
16.	What are your expectations from this project?
17.	How do you see the CSO Coalition for forests beyond the life of this project?

The Executive Director of JAMP was interviewed in a separate meeting.

3 Analysis of the budgeting process for Jamaica's forest sector

3.1 *The budgeting and planning processes in Jamaica's forest sector*

The budgeting process in Jamaica is led by the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service as stated in the Constitution. The Minister is responsible for the development and implementation of a fiscal policy framework for Jamaica. He also ensures that the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure (EoRE) are tabled in both Houses of Parliament. Prior to the preparation of the EoRE, the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) provides the MoFPS with information on the macro position of the GoJ. This includes the projected growth for the country, current and projected inflation rate and other macro information. The information on the inflation rate is very important; the MoFPS takes that into consideration to create the forward planning. If the rates are increasing or increased over the year, they will increase the amounts allocated for goods and services to the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA). The Economic Management Division in the MoFPS uses the information provided by the PIOJ to develop an Economic and Financial Programme for the upcoming financial year, which indicates what the GoJ can afford to spend during the financial year. The Public Expenditure Division (PEX) determines the amount to be allocated and sets the expenditure ceilings for the various MDAs in a manner which supports the efficient allocation of resources and on a basis which reflects national and sectoral priorities. The Financial Secretary (FS) sends out the budget call to all the Accounting Officers in the various MDAs including the Forestry Department (FD) and the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA).

The decision on the amounts allocated to the FD and the NEPA are made in the MoFPS. This is influenced by the total sum available to the GoJ for the financial year and demands from the other competing sectors. Ministries responsible for health, education and security are usually prioritised to get the majority of the funds and the forest sector usually ranks low down on the list. The availability of external funding can positively influence the amounts allocated to the sector e.g., in 2018 the European Union (EU) agreed to provide budget support to the GoJ of approximately US\$14 million over four years. During this period the budget allocation for the FD increased significantly to accommodate the EU budget support programme (EUBSP). The FD also got additional funding in the supplemental budget for the National Tree Planting Initiative (NTPI), which was launched by the Prime Minister in 2019, to plant three million trees by 2022.

The agencies do not have a big say in the amount of money they receive each year. However, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has the opportunity, when submitting each year's estimates to the MoFPS, to justify why he/she would need additional funds to undertake activities which the agency determined was a priority for the sector. If the justification finds favour with the MoFPS they will recommend to the Cabinet an increase in the budget for the agency for that year. It should be noted that this increase in allocation to the forest sector will mean a reduction of another MDA's budget.

The CEO decides on the priority activities for the agency each year during their budgeting and planning process. Both the FD and NEPA will review their national plans, which include the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP), Biodiversity Action Plan and the Protected Areas System Master Plan, to determine which activities in these plans will be undertaken during the next financial year (FY) and the following three FYs. This is usually done at a planning retreat with the agency's management team. Once these are agreed on, the budget estimates will be prepared and submitted to the MoFPS.

The preparation, and in some cases the implementation, of the national plans involve other GoJ agencies, CSOs and the private sector. The FD and NEPA only involve a few key GoJ entities (e.g., MoFPS, Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation [MEGJC] and the Planning Institute of Jamaica [PIOJ]) in the actual prioritisation, planning and budgeting processes. Most of the CSOs indicated that they have been involved in the preparation of the national plans and a few in the implementation, but they are not involved in the planning and budgeting processes at the FD and NEPA. CSOs are in the dark as to what is in the three-year strategic plans. However, CSOs agreed during the focus group meetings that they should be involved in the strategic planning processes of the FD and NEPA. They also think that since most were involved in the preparation of the sector plan/NFMCP, they should be involved in prioritising which activities from the NFMCP and other plans should be in the three-year strategic plans. What was not clear from the CSOs is exactly how and when they would participate in the preparation of these strategic plans. They also differed in opinion as to what stage they should be involved.

4 Recommendations for stakeholders' engagement in the budgeting process

Prior to finalising the EoRE and before the debates in the houses of parliament, the MoFPS produces the Citizen's Guide to the budget¹. The guide is a less technical version of the EoRE is published in the Sunday Gleaner and the Sunday Observer newspapers, and on the MoFPS website. The document is posted on the MoFPS website after the Minister of Finance makes his speech on the budget. As of March 1, 2023 the Citizens' Guide is not available to the public. The public is encouraged to review the draft EoRE and submit comments to the MoFPS before the debate in the House of Parliament ends.

Not many persons are aware of the Citizens' Guide and do not actually submit comments on the draft EoRE to the MoFPS. The Citizens' Guide has information on the estimates for the Ministries, however, it does not have any information about the budgets for the FD and NEPA. It also has information on the preparation of the budget, key achievements for previous year, the size of the national budget and the source of funding for the budget. The CSOs can get background information but not a lot of details.

In discussions with stakeholders in the forest sector in various countries only three out of the eight entities/countries which provided responses have any example of CSOs participating in the budget preparation for the forest sector. In two cases CSOs lobbied at

¹ <https://www.mof.gov.jm/resources-citizens-guide-to-the-budget/>

the ministerial/congress level. In one case it is noted that the lobbying efforts mainly influenced the policy agenda rather than the budgetary process, although the two are linked when it comes to bidding for financial resources. In the second case the lobbying efforts have mixed success, however with the recent upsurge in forest fires in the United States of America (USA), the United States Forest Service (USFS) saw an increase in its budget due in part to the lobbying efforts of the CSOs. In the third, the Kenya Forest Service does not include the CSOs in the preparation of their budget, but programmes for the forest sector are designed to facilitate participation of the CSOs, private sector and farmers in the implementation of the programmes. In the preparation of the national budget the public/stakeholders (including CSOs) are invited by the National Treasury to scrutinise and contribute to the budget proposals prepared by the national government before these are presented to Parliament. This also happens in the regions where county governments engage in a similar process.

Examples of participatory intervention in other countries could be examined and adopted in Jamaica. The approach of the Kenyan National Treasury in inviting the public to scrutinise and contribute to the national budget before it is presented to the parliament is one the MOFPS could adopt.

Using the same Citizens' Guide, the MOFPS should make greater effort to involve the public, instead of just publishing it in the Sunday newspapers, and on their website. The contents of the Guide should include the budgets of all agencies, not just the ministries. The guide should be promoted through the Jamaica Information Service (JIS) and on all social media platforms. Before the EoRE is tabled in Parliament or during the week when the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) of Parliament meets to discuss the draft estimates the JIS could be running awareness messages encouraging the public to read the document and send in their comments. The Minister of Finance should also inform the public about the Citizens' Guide when he makes his budget speech.

The public should also be encouraged to make suggestions to their Members of Parliament (MPs). All 63 MPs are members of the SFC in parliament. They are the persons questioning the ministers as they defend the budgets of their various ministries. Individual CSO members should make their MPs aware about their concerns and encourage him/her to raise them when the Minister for the MEGJC comes before the SFC.

One suggestion from the Executive Director of JAMP is that since the MPs are required by law to meet with their constituents to discuss proposals/projects under the CDF, the Coalition members should attend these meetings and discuss forest issues with them. They could encourage MPs to request additional funds for the two agencies or they may be able to develop some forest related projects in their constituencies.

Some form of lobbying could be adopted by members of the Coalition. If not the whole Coalition, a representative or two, or an executive from one of the larger CSOs, should seek audience with the Minister of the MEGJC to make representation on behalf of the forest sector. This would not only be just requesting additional funds for the agencies but would also discuss ways CSOs and the GoJ can work together in developing and protecting the forest sector.

The members of the CSO Coalition for Forests had a number of suggestions on how they could be engaged in the budgeting processes of the forest sector in Jamaica:

- The FD and NEPA should involve the CSOs in deciding which activities should be included in the annual budget, not just in the preparation of the national plans. If the CSOs were involved in the actual prioritisation there would be dialogue and exchange of ideas on which entity will undertake which activities. It should also be noted that national plans tend to be static whereas the reality on the ground is dynamic. Priorities laid out in the five-year or 10-year plans may have changed, and this should be taken into consideration when the agencies are planning for the year.
- The members of the CSO Coalition for Forests should discuss as a group what are their priority areas. After they have agreed on the priority areas, one or two representatives would meet with the agency and present their proposal.
- There should be stakeholders' meetings to coordinate and share information, not only on the priorities of the GoJ but should also include CSO priorities. During the meetings the CSOs would share information on what CSOs are doing or plan to do in the budget year. Some of the activities planned by the GoJ may have been done by the CSO or are in the CSOs' annual plans; changes in budget estimates could be made by either group.
- The CSOs could seek external funds to undertake some of the activities that cannot be covered with GoJ funding. This could happen if CSOs knew how much funds the GoJ entities were getting for the year, and they agree on what can be done.
- Consensus from the base is important in the management of the forest estates in Jamaica. There is a part to play by all through collaboration and real conversations, and dialogue.
- Budget preparation for specific forest areas (e.g., the cockpit country) should involve the Local Forest Management Committees (LFMCs) located in the areas. The LFMCs indicated that they should be involved in the early stages of the strategic planning process. The LFMC members feel that as the entities on the ground they could input a lot more information on what is really needed to be done, which is critical to the management and protection of the forest estates. As it is now the plans are prepared by the FD then the groups are advised on what is in the plans.
- Another CSO proposed that in addition to giving comments on the project budget that is developed for the Port Royal Protected Area, NEPA should involve the community members in the design of projects, and in the allocation of the funds for the various activities in the projects. The CSO and the community should also play a greater part in the implementation of projects in the protected area (PA).

How will some of these recommendations to include the CSOs in the preparation of the strategic business plans be accommodated by the agencies in their annual planning processes? The agencies begin their planning with a review of their previous strategic business plan by the management team; at this stage they start to look at which activity may not be completed and has to be carried over into the new year. A few weeks before their annual planning retreat the divisions in the agencies commence their divisional plans for the next financial year. At their annual planning retreat all the divisional plans have to be combined and decisions made as to which activities will be included in the agency's strategic business plan, which is constrained by the budget ceiling set by the MOFPS. The Coalition

members will have to make their presentations to the agencies on what their proposals/priorities are prior to the annual retreat for them to be considered by the agency during the annual planning retreat. Considering that the allocations from the MOFPS are never sufficient to cover all the activities the agencies have in their plans or would like to include in their plan, it may be difficult for the CEO to add activities recommended by the CSOs. One recommendation is that the agencies and the CSOs identify activities that all agree are priorities and seek external funds to implement these as projects.

All this will require a great deal of trust from both sides. It is important in the proposed participatory process, to note that stakeholders need to identify ways to work together for the good of the forest sector.

4.1 Recommendations from the CSO Coalition for Forests

The CSO Coalition for Forests discussed the findings of the technical study at a workshop held January 25, 2023 and identified the following recommendations for what actions they could take moving forward:

- Target the Members of Parliament with personalised requests/petitions for specific geographical areas.
- Develop stronger relationships with MDAs especially FD & NEPA.
- Engage in the annual planning and budgeting processes in the FD and NEPA
- Engage with the Councilors in the Parish Municipal Corporations (PMCs) during their budgeting and planning processes highlight the environmental issues.
- Work closely with the active Parish Development Committees (PDCs) on forest sector matters.
- The CSO Coalition for Forests should become significant players in the forest budgeting process.
- Begin action/advocacy in the year before the targeted financial year.
- Examine the forest sector budgets for FD and NEPA to determine what are the GoJ priority areas.
- Develop a Coalition-wide forest management budget for various forest areas ready to be presented to the GoJ and for external funders.
- Use the Coalition as a tool to bring local issues to the FD and NEPA. CSOs will have to determine and agree on the priority issues. Use the SDGs and Vision 2030 to support and justify these priorities.
- Coalition members should share information among the different groups and be reliable resources for each other.

5 Capacity of the stakeholder group to participate in the budgeting processes

5.1 Relevant recent and current CSO capacity building initiatives

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) hosted in November 2022 a short version of legislative advocacy training and invited some of the Coalition members, other CSOs and GoJ partners. Similar training sessions would be useful to build the capacity of the individual organisations

and for collective action towards developing an advocacy strategy and single message for the targeted persons or organisations.

JAMP will offer capacity building for the Coalition members on how to get information from the GoJ agencies using the ATI Act. They will offer tips on how to increase the turnaround time for information requested. With the access to additional information from the GoJ the CSOs will have a better understanding of how GoJ works and get to know the persons involved.

JAMP facilitated a webinar for members of the CSO Coalition for Forests on December 6, 2022. JAMP's Executive Director pointed out that generally across the world, it is difficult to get citizens involved in a country's full budgeting process, especially in the allocation of budget funds to the different sectors. As the Minister of Finance pointed out in the JAMP webinar, it would not be practical have citizens participate in the preparation of the full budget for Jamaica which is approximately JA\$800 billion (US\$5.2 billion). Even in the few countries that have participatory budgeting (e.g., Brasil, Mexico and the Netherlands) it involves small fractions of their local budgets. He said in the case in Jamaica, the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) could be improved. JAMP's Executive Director suggested that in Jamaica citizens can become involved in the fourth stage of the budgeting process, i.e., in the oversight of the activities which were included in the annual estimates, before the citizens start to get involved in the planning stage.

JAMP has also created a "Member of Parliament (MP) Tracker" on their website². This has information on the MP including information on when he/she meets with his/her constituents. CSOs can attend these meetings which usually discusses CDF proposals/projects and what the CDF funds can cover. This way the groups can get to know their MPs and start lobbying for additional funds/projects for the forest sector.

5.2 Capacity building approaches

All the members of the CSO Coalition for Forests are in favour of participatory budgeting for the forest sector and have made recommendations on how they could be involved in the process. The majority of the members also indicated that they have little or no knowledge about the budgeting processes in the GoJ. Some of the members indicated in the focus group meetings that their organisations are small and they only have a few active members and in some case only one or two. It will be difficult for these smaller CSOs to participate fully in the participatory process for the forest sector. They may only be able to concentrate on the activities within their particular forest area and its environs. Some of the LFMCS had indicated that they wanted to be engaged in the development of the budget for their area (e.g., cockpit country). The strength of the CSOs will be in maintaining the Coalition and speaking with one voice. The difficulty may be agreeing on which priority area/s the Coalition would like to support in the forest sector. The different CSOs in the Coalition have varying interests in both forest activities and forest locations. Each CSO cannot focus just on their area but on the sector as a whole. They must agree and present to the GoJ as a unified group.

² <https://www.jampja.org/>

If the CSOs are to participate fully in the process they will have to be fully aware of all aspects of the budgeting process in Jamaica, not just in the forest sector but the whole process. The director of the public expenditure division (PEX) could be approached to make a presentation to the Coalition outlining the process step by step, including how the decisions are made in allocating the budget ceilings for the different MDAs. This would be enhanced with flyers/brochures from the MOFPS with the information. Copies of the Citizens' Guide should also be shared with the members.

JAMP would like to work with CANARI and use JAMP's Accountability Tool to track what GoJ agencies said they would do and what they actually accomplish at the end of each financial year. For the new financial year 2023/2024 cell groups can be created to monitor the forest sector. They should look backwards, start with the fourth stage, oversight of the activities. The groups will get the operational plans of both FD and NEPA and monitor the implementation of the plans during the FY then send a report to JAMP. The oversight of these groups will involve the use of the Access to Information (ATI) Act to get information from the agencies. This way the groups will get to know the GoJ stakeholders during the first year, by the second year the groups will be ready to participate in the planning stage of the budget process. They will be a greater trust factor between the two sets of stakeholders. JAMP is offering capacity building for the groups through a webinar on how to get information needed from the GoJ using the ATI act. They will share tips on how JAMP has been able to improve their turnaround time for information requested from 44% to 78%. When persons/groups access the information, they get a better understanding of how government works. By the time they are ready to join in the planning and formulation of the budget and plans, the GoJ persons may be more accommodating and willing to work with the CSO in the prioritisation activities.

CAPRI has offered to assist CSO members with building capacity in policy development.

6 Changes needed in policy and practice to support participatory budgeting for the forest sector

The following recommendations emerged from the research:

- MOFPS should involve the agencies earlier in the budgeting process before the PEX decides how much money is allocated to each MDA. Input from the Heads of MDAs, including the CEOs of the FD and NEPA, justifying their proposed activities for the upcoming FY should be considered before the decision is made on the allocations, instead of after the budget estimates are sent in by the agencies.
- The MOFPS needs to improve on/increase their public education programme, including public education on the budget and the budgeting processes. Clarifying how the budgeting process works before it is presented to parliament is important. By the time the citizens hear about the budget it is in its final stages; not many significant changes can be made to the budget at that time. In the short term the contents of the Citizens' Guide produced by the MoFPS should also include the budgets for all the agencies, not just the ministries, and the document should be made available to a wider cross section of the public. Citizens should be encouraged to review and comment on the document.

- A public awareness campaign on the parliamentary processes should be launched to provide the public with information. This will give them a better understanding of how and when they can get involved.
- MPs need to show more interest in the budgeting processes in the MDAs and meet with their constituents get information the issues and concerns in the forest sector and make representations on their behalf.
- Preparation of national plans, policies and legislation requires that the MDAs have stakeholder involvement, which is done by most GoJ entities now at varying levels. This policy should be reviewed to stipulate the minimum level of participation to ensure all interests are included. Additionally, the involvement of stakeholders in the annual prioritisation of activities to be undertaken should be considered to ensure that stakeholders are included in the process. The agencies could share with the CSOs their list of prioritised activities for the year and request comments and or suggested changes. These would then be considered by the agencies while preparing their budgets. The stipulated budget ceiling will be an issue, but dialogue will benefit all.

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Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI) – Following the money 2022: Transparency and Oversight in the Government Budgeting process. Available at: <https://www.capricaribbean.org>

Jamaica Accountability Meter Portal – MP Tracker – Available at : <https://www.jampja.org>

Appendix 1: CSO Coalition for Forests members (January 2023)

1. Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (C-CAM)
2. Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
3. Clarendon Parish Development Committee Benevolent Society
4. Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI)
5. Cockpit Country North Local Forest Management Committee
6. Constitution Hill Local Forest Management Committee
7. Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ)
8. Hanover Bee Farmers' Co-operative Society Limited
9. Jamaica Accountability Metre Portal (JAMP)
10. Jamaica Coffee Growers Association (JCGA)
11. Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDDT)
12. Jamaica Environment Entrepreneurs' Advocacy Network (JEEAN)
13. Jamaica Environment Trust (JET)
14. Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement (JOAM)
15. Local Initiative Facility for Environment (LIFE)
16. National Conservation Trust Fund of Jamaica (NCTFJ)
17. Nature Preservation Foundation
18. Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT)
19. Northern Rio Minho Local Forest Management Committee
20. Rise Life Management
21. Sawyers Local Forest Management Committee
22. Southern Trelawny Environmental Agency (STEA)
23. Spring Dunrobin Local Forest Management Committee
24. St. Thomas Environmental Protection Association (STEPA)
25. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) (Jamaica)
26. The Sustainable Livelihood Network Ltd.
27. Watermount Community Development Committee