



Sectoral Integration in Barbados

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1. Introduction

Barbados reported¹ that the need for the integration of biodiversity considerations into overall national policy frameworks has been emphasized by the Convention on Biological Diversity. In this regard, the Government of Barbados recognizes that biodiversity is critical to the overall development of the country and has sought to include the mainstreaming of biodiversity into the national policy framework.

Barbados has made some progress in relation to the mainstreaming of biodiversity and this chapter examines the sectoral and cross sectoral plans, policies and programmes into which biodiversity management and conservation have been integrated.

Overview of biodiversity management framework

In Barbados, the responsibility for the management of biological resources is distributed across several Government Ministries. There are also a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other entities involved in the conservation of biodiversity. Due to the decentralized approach to biodiversity management, a myriad of institutions and agencies have their own legislative mandate, administrative procedures, resources, work programmes and priorities.

The management of biodiversity in Barbados is guided primarily by a number of policy documents (i) The National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2006-2025, (ii) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (iii) Barbados Sustainable Development Policy (2004) and (iv) Physical Development Plan.

2. National Strategic Plan of Barbados: 2006-2025

The National Strategic Plan (NSP) of Barbados 2006-2025: Global Excellence, Barbadian Traditions sets out Governments main development agenda for the 20 year period 2006-2025. Goal 4 “these fields and hills” is aimed at strengthening the physical infrastructure and preserving the environment. Objective 1.1 of Goal 4 seeks to promote and facilitate the environmentally sustainable use of our natural resources. The NSP sets this out for terrestrial and marine ecosystems through the following strategies:

- Integration of environmental considerations into all aspects of national development;
- Encourage the participation of civil society and the private sector in environmental management;
- Ensure that the integrity of natural features, wildlife habitats, significant flora and fauna, and important landscape and seascape features and protected areas are maintained during the process of development;

¹ Barbados (2011). Barbados’ Fourth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Natural Heritage Department, Ministry of Environment and Drainage, 6/24/2011, 155 pp.

- Promote public education awareness and appreciation of the direct inter-relationships among the three pillars of economic growth, social justice and equity and environmental management;
- Ensure effective conservation of the islands coastal and marine ecosystems and living resources, improving their quality;
- Promote sustainable land management practices;
- Promote the development of green and open spaces throughout the island

3. National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2002

The Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan presents an overall goal with specific objectives and affiliated strategies and actions which should be applied to the various components of biodiversity i.e. Natural Vegetation, Agriculture, Land Resources, Terrestrial Fauna, and Marine and Freshwater species.

The overall goal, specific objectives and strategies which form the foundation of the Strategy and Action Plan attempt to address the range of issues relevant to the management of biodiversity, from the development and implementation of a national biodiversity policy to research requirements for specific species.

The strategies and actions that will be implemented to achieve the stated objectives are described in the Action Plan. The plan also identifies the priority of the proposed actions and the various institutions that will be potentially involved in the implementation of the strategy and action plan.

4. Barbados Sustainable Development Policy 2004:

The overarching goal of the Policy is “to ensure the optimization of the quality of life for every person by ensuring that economic growth and development does not occur to the detriment of our ecological capital.” The major objectives of the Policy are:

1. to formulate a national definition of sustainable development;
2. to provide a national framework for decision-making based on our principles of sustainable development;
3. to promote principles of sustainable development and encourage all persons to adopt and apply these principles in every aspect of decision-making; and
4. to sensitize and educate all persons in Barbados about key issues and conflicts between development and environment and the need to make wise consumption and production choices.

The Barbados Sustainable Development Policy defines the overarching framework that promotes the development of the economic and social capital while ensuring the wise and proper stewardship of the environmental capital. The objectives of this plan will be achieved through a number of strategies including bio-physical “limits to growth”. These limits include the

- Finite supply of some resources;
- Natural carrying capacity of ecosystems;
- Fragility and vulnerability of some ecosystems;
- Finite resilience of ecosystems to resist and recover from exploitation and
- Limited waste assimilation capacity of the natural environment

The Action Plan details the way forward and reference to biodiversity are found in a number of sections:

Agriculture:....”in pursuit of sustainable agriculture consideration will be given to biodiversity preservation”

Terrestrial Biodiversity....”ensure sustainable use of terrestrial biodiversity in part through the implementation of a strategy which preserves, conserves and sustainably uses the island’s terrestrial \resources of flora and fauna.

Fisheries:.....” preserve rare or fragile ecosystems, ecologically sensitive areas and endangered species.....

Biotechnology.....”continued support for research into the national status of biodiversity resources to develop a comprehensive database/inventory. Articulation of management plans for all species especially those which are unique, exotic or of particular value for use in biotechnology.”

Coastal and Marine Resources” designating specific marine areas for protection and preservation. Providing for maintenance and/or rehabilitation of coastal environments and their resources”

5. Physical Development Plan Amended 2003

The Government of Barbados has recognised the importance of protected areas and under the Environmental Management and Land Use Planning for Sustainable Development Project a National Park Development Plan was prepared which seeks to promote conservation, management and ecosystem enhancement. The plan sets out the National Park and its boundaries as well as Natural Heritage Conservation Areas.

The National Physical Development Plan for Barbados therefore recognises a system of parks and open spaces for Barbados through a National Park Plan. One important component of this system for biodiversity conservation is identification of National Forest Candidate sites.

(i) The plan utilizes an ecosystem approach with the primary objectives of protecting the quality and integrity of ecosystems and to focus on the linkages and relationships among the ecosystem components. The maintenance and promotion of viable species population is another objective

6. Medium Term Development Strategy – Building the Green Economy

Government's Medium Term Development Strategy 2010 – 2014 makes provision for building a green economy. The notion of a green economy is nothing new since the Government of Barbados has been pursuing various elements of a Green Economy throughout the country's development. The Green Economy has been defined as an emerging global marketplace model that seeks to respond to the world's major environmental problems by optimizing social, economic and environmental value- this is most commonly referred to as the "triple bottom line" or the three pillars of Sustainable Development. Greening the economy requires the reconfiguring of business and infrastructure to deliver better returns on natural, human and economic capital investments, while at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions, extracting and using less natural resources, creating less waste and reducing social disparities. Significant achievements at the national level in this respect include, among others:

1. The design of Barbados' finance and institutional structures to support environmental management and restoration. Most notable is the annual estimates process that provided in excess of US\$70,000,000.00 equivalent to support programmes geared towards the preservation of the environment in 2009 -2010 estimates via the Ministry of Finance
2. Large scale investment in protecting ecological infrastructure via the Soil Conservation Programme for the Scotland District
3. The establishment of a network of managed zones, parks and the preservations of coastal seascapes maintained under the aegis of the NCC
4. Instituting Environmental Impact Assessment tools into the development planning and control process
5. The national consensus among government, the private sector and members of civil society to adopt core principles for sustainable development as articulated by the National Commission on Sustainable Development in the 2004 Barbados Sustainable Development Policy
6. Commitment to global environmental partnerships via bilateral cooperation programmes, multilateral environmental agreements and intergovernmental sustainable development governance processes
7. The articulation, debate and approval of the financial and economic statement in 2007 to stimulate private sector involvement in the pursuit of the Barbadian Green Economy

7. National Park Plan

The Barbados National Park Plan establishes policies to guide future land use and development within the boundaries of the National Park. The main objective of the National Park is the "conservation and enhancement of the biodiversity in the terrestrial and marine ecosystems, habitats and species".

International Commitments

Barbados became a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1995, in addition to a number of other regional and international treaties.

8. Institutional Arrangements

In Barbados, the management of biological diversity is the responsibility of several Government Ministries. There are also a number of non-government organizations and entities involved in the conservation of biodiversity. The decentralized approach to biodiversity management has resulted in a situation whereby a myriad of institutions and agencies have their own legislative mandate, administrative procedures, resources, work programmes and priorities. This has led to some apparent direct conflict between the various mandates of the respective Ministries or departments. For example the Town and Country Development Planning Office which administers the Physical Development Plan is more focused on physical development compared with the Ministry of Environment whose primary mandate relates to the protection, conservation and management of the environment. Table 1 shows the mandates of the various Government Agencies as in relation to biodiversity management.

Table 1: Agencies Responsible for Biodiversity Management in Barbados

Agency	Responsibilities
Natural Heritage Department	Protecting the quality and integrity of ecosystems including air, water, land and animal components. ii. Focus on the linkages and relationships among the ecosystems, with special attention to human activities, and consider these components beyond their immediate environs to the broader National Park system, and to the Island system as a whole. iii. Promote the protection, conservation and wise use of Barbadian flora
National Conservation Commission	Conservation of the natural beauty, topographic features, historic buildings, sites and monuments of Barbados. ii. Development of a network of protected areas, both marine and terrestrial. The National Botanic Garden, Conducting silvicultural and dendrological research on indigenous, naturalized, endangered, rare and endemic plant species existing on open spaces across Barbados ii. Develop the nature tourism potential of green spaces for integration into the national tourism product
Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU)	To develop standards for water quality in coastal and marine areas to effect the maintenance, rehabilitation and enhancement of coastal and marine habitats. ii. To determine temporal changes in coral reef communities, and to develop necessary measures to protect, rehabilitate and enhance coastal and marine habitats.
Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture	The Fisheries Division is responsible by law for fisheries management including conservation of resources and development of the fisheries.
Town & Country Development Planning Office	The Town and Country Development Planning Office (TCDDPO) has the responsibility for the orderly and progressive development of Barbados. In an effort to meet this challenge and to ensure that development is sustainable, the TCDDPO uses the Physical Development Plan as a broad administrative policy tool to chart settlement, growth patterns and the allocation of land to various uses

Existing Legislation

Barbados has no overarching legislation designed specifically to deal with biodiversity conservation and management. Applicable environment legislation currently in force in Barbados is dispersed across several statutes and departments of government. These pieces of legislation were all enacted over a long period of time. Some legislation were prepared long before the modern environmental movement and therefore were not intended to address current issues and environmental concerns. There is a need therefore to modernize the legal framework governing conservation and protection of biological diversity. In addition, there is also currently no comprehensive legislation in Barbados governing

terrestrial protected areas. Marine protected areas were described under the Marine Areas (Preservation and Enhancement) Act (Cap 392) but this Act has been repealed and incorporated into the more all-encompassing Coastal Zone Management Act . The most prominent pieces of legislation providing statutory protection of the environment are described in the following section.

9. Land use

The Town and Country Planning Act (cap.240) makes provision for the orderly and progressive development of land. The Act provides for the preparation of a Physical Development Plan by the Chief Town Planner (CTP) which may make provision for: (i) allocation of lands as open spaces, communal parks, bird and other sanctuaries, protection of marine life; (ii) preservation of sites of artistic, architectural, archaeological or historical interest; (iii) preservation or protection of forests, woods, trees, shrubs, plants and flowers; (iv) regulation and control of the deposition of waste materials, refuse, sewage and the pollution of rivers, lakes, ponds, gullies and the seashore.

The Land Acquisition Act (cap. 228) makes provision for the acquisition of land for public purposes, such as the development of parks or caves.

The Constitution (Section 16) provides for the protection from deprivation of private property. The establishment of protected areas or the imposition of planning restrictions that deprives the land of its value could attract legitimate claims for compensation. S.16 allows for the confiscation of property in circumstances where the environment is threatened.

10. Protected areas/habitats

The Soil Conservation (Scotland District) Act (cap.396) restricts the use to which land can be put in the Conservation Area known as the Scotland District. The Scotland District comprises both the hinterland and the coastal zones in the parishes of St. Peter, St. Andrews, St. Joseph and St. John.

The National Conservation Commission Act (cap.393) establishes the National Conservation Commission (NCC) which has, as one of its main functions to conserve the natural beauty of Barbados; control and develop public parks; public gardens, beaches and caves; advise on the removal of coral from the ocean bed; and regulate commercial activities in public parks, gardens, caves, and on beaches.

The Trees (Preservation) Act (cap.397) provides that the killing of any tree one metre or more in circumference is an offence unless a permit has been obtained from the Chief Town Planner (CTP). The Act also empowers the CTP to require the owner of vacant land or land adjoining or near a public road to plant or replant trees and to clear land of weeds or overgrown grass.

The Cultivation of Trees Act (cap.390) promotes the cultivation of certain species of trees through the financial incentive of receiving a tax contribution payment equivalent to the amount of taxes payable in respect of the land so cultivated, the payment of a fruit tree subsidy or subsidy payment. Species currently approved for the incentive scheme are mahogany, casuarina, teak, tamarind and coconut. This piece of legislation only stresses however non-native species and efforts should be made to promote incentives for the cultivation of species, which are indigenous to Barbados.

11. Agriculture/livestock

The Town and Country Planning Act (cap.240) contains some provision relevant to agriculture and livestock. These include the use of any land for the purposes of agriculture or forestry, including forestation and the use of any agricultural purpose, other than dairy farming and the breeding and keeping of livestock, including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skin or for the purpose of its use in farming the land.

The Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation Act (BADMCA) (12/1993) establishes the BADMC with responsibility for the stimulation and development of agriculture. The Corporation is mandated to develop and manage, on a commercial basis, such plantations and other agricultural land that may be vested in it and to stimulate and encourage the private sector.

12. Marine resources

The Barbados Territorial Waters Act 1977 (1977-26) which defines the territorial waters of Barbados as existing within 12 nautical miles around the island. Section 3 (2) provides that these waters, including the underlying seabed and subsoil, form part of the territory of Barbados and are, therefore, subject to full territorial sovereignty. Foreign vessels have a right of innocent passage through the territorial waters but not if the captain or other person in charge of the ship engages in any calculated act of pollution or acts likely to cause harm to Barbados' resources or its marine environment.

The Marine Boundaries and Jurisdiction Act 1979 (cap. 387) establishes a 200 mile EEZ in which sovereign rights are vested in the Government of Barbados in respect of the exploration, exploitation, conservation, protection or management of the natural living and non-living resources of the sea-bed, subsoil and superjacent waters; and the preservation and protection of the marine environment and the prevention and control of marine pollution. Barbados has all other rights in and jurisdiction over, the EEZ recognized in international law.

The Fisheries Act 1993 (cap. 391) addresses the provision for the management and development of fisheries (including protection of endangered and critically endangered sea turtles from exploitation) in Barbados.

The Fisheries Management Regulations (1998) address closed areas and seasons, fishing methods and equipment to be adopted, and protective measures for lobsters, turtles, sea eggs and tuna.

The Marine Pollution Control Act Cap 392 (1998) focuses on the quality of the marine waters on the south and west coasts of the island. The legislation has been approved to help combat the steadily deteriorating coastal water quality in some locations that has resulted due to the increased physical development occurring along the coastline over the last three (3) decades. As in all coastal island states dependant on marine resources, poor water quality poses a serious threat to human, fisheries and marine ecosystem health. Overall, the legislation seeks to prevent, reduce and control pollution from its various sources. It recognizes that much of the marine pollution affecting coastal waters originates from land based sources and activities

The Coastal Zone Management Act (1998-39) provides a comprehensive statutory basis for coastal management and planning in Barbados. It seeks to coordinate and update the existing fragmented statutes relevant to coastal management and makes provision for critical areas of concern not covered by current legislation. The Act provides the legal basis for the preparation of a Coastal Management Plan, which establishes and clearly sets out Government's coastal management policy and technical guidelines for the use and allocation of coastal resources. The Act specifically deals with protection of marine resources, for example destruction of corals and fouling of the foreshore. It also encompasses the designation of Marine Protected Areas and Marine Parks. This Act repealed the Marine Areas (Preservation and Enhancement) Act (cap.392).

13. Protection of wild flora and fauna

The International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Act 2006-3

The Act applies to species listed in the CITES appendices as well as to the export of species native to Barbados that may be adversely affected by trade. For the purpose of administering the requirement of the Convention, the Act establishes, a Management Authority and a Scientific Authority for the purpose of establishing control over the international trade in any specimen of species listed in the Second Schedule. The Act also applies to all plant and animal species listed in the Second and Third Schedules of the Act.

The Management Authority has a number of responsibilities, including, inter alia, issuing and/or suspension of permits and certificates in respect of the importation, exportation, and re-exportation of endangered species of wild fauna and flora in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and stipulating any conditions that may be attached to the permits or certificates; promoting public awareness; assessing whether an importer can adequately provide necessary accommodation and providing adequate accommodation for a seized or forfeited animal. It is also required to maintain records of international trade in the species prepare annual reports for species listed in the Second Schedule and their submission to the Convention within a specified period. The Act also makes provision for the establishment of a the Scientific Authority, which is charged with the responsibility, among others, of advising the management authority on whether any species is vulnerable, threatened, endangered or extinct as well as on matters in respect of which advise is sought by the Management Authority.

The National Conservation Commission Act 1982 (cap. 393) addresses the protection of flora and fauna found in caves.

The Wild Birds Protection Act Cap 398 (WBPA) provides for the protection of some forty-six (46) species of wild birds specified in the schedule. Any person who knowingly kills or wounds or attempts such an act is liable to a fine, one-half of which is payable to the informant. Possession or export of the skin or features of any wild bird is also an offence, which is punishable by a fine. The only exception is the killing of wild birds for the purpose of obtaining specimens for natural history provided a licence has been obtained by the Minister (not defined) to do so.

The Protection of New Plant Varieties Act (2000-17) was formulated because of legal obligations imposed by the World Trade Organization. It basically addresses, amongst other issues, the qualification of rights of plant breeders, their entitlement to protection, licenses and criminal liability in respect of variety denomination. This act seeks to protect property rights with respect to flora, and therefore can be used as a tool to regulate and control biodiversity access.

Cross - sectoral biodiversity coordination

The protection and management of biological resources is shared among various entities. These agencies vary in their mandates and responsibilities and include governmental, non-governmental, academic and other major groups. These bodies vary in their roles depending for example on whether they are technical, policy oriented, administrative, or advisory in nature. The challenge therefore is to ensure adequate coordination across these different bodies. Efforts at ensuring coordination are both formal and informal including the establishment of multi-disciplinary and multi-agency steering committees, formal Memoranda of Understanding and less structured arrangements based on good-will among stakeholders. Examples include the Working Group on Biodiversity which is a technical body that performs an advisory function. There is the National Commission on sustainable Development which was established to oversee the pursuit of sustainable development in the island. In addition to these there are various sectoral and departmental bodies that are more focused on specific issues or concerns affecting biodiversity management

Some progress has been achieved in biodiversity management through these institutional arrangements but there is much room for further improvement with the provision of adequate resources.

Cross - cutting national plans and strategies

14. Tourism Plan

The NBSAP has as its 12th Objective: “To promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in various sectors (agriculture, health, fisheries and tourism). A detailed list of strategies and actions are provided for the tourism sector, some examples of these are:

- Promote only small- scale, fully-trained guided tourism in important biodiversity areas.
- Prevent high impact tourism development in currently undeveloped areas of significant biodiversity importance.

In 2001 the Ministry of Tourism submitted a Green Paper on the “Sustainable Development of Tourism in Barbados-A Policy Framework” which was used to guide the sustainable development of the tourism industry in Barbados in the short to medium term. The Sustainable Development of Tourism in the Barbados Policy Framework has been developed by the Government and addresses the natural environment. The specific objective is to promote sustainable tourism development through the protection, conservation and development of the natural environment within its carrying capacity and through education and awareness of, and respect for, the country’s unique natural heritage.

In 2008, the multi-sectoral Tourism Advisory Council which provides advice to the Minister of Tourism on critical issues impacting the industry-reviewed the Policy Framework in light of the current international climate.

The Government of Barbados has taken the decision to develop a policy framework, plan and strategy, which will guide and provide specific prescriptions for the future growth and development of the tourism industry in Barbados over the ten (10) year period 2012-2021 in the form of a Tourism Master Plan (TMP). The policy and planning framework will ensure that the tourism industry grows in a manner that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and thus able to meet the future needs of Barbadians, visitors, investors and other stakeholders. Currently the Ministry is seeking to develop a Tourism Master Plan 2012 -2016

15. Agricultural Plan

The Fisheries Management Plan 2004-2006 contains within the Fisheries Code of Conduct Code of conduct for responsible fisheries specific articles addressing biodiversity. In particular, Article 6 of the Code sets out general principles which are summarized below and serve as the guiding principles for fisheries management in Barbados.

- Maintain biodiversity and use ecosystem approaches to management;
- Manage fishing capacity and fishing methods to facilitate resource sustainability;
- Use precautionary approaches to sustainable use, management and exploitation;
- Integrate fisheries into coastal area management to ensure that the needs of coastal communities are met without harming fragile coastal ecosystems;
- Protect and rehabilitate critical fisheries habitats and the environment generally;

16. Plant Protection

The mandate of Plant Protection is the phytosanitary security and conservation of Barbados' agricultural plant biodiversity through the identification of plant pests and diseases and provision of environmentally sound control practices.

17. Millennium Development Goals

Barbados has adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). A full review of progress towards meeting these goals will not be presented in this report. However, Target 9 of Goal 7 of the MDGs is relevant to biodiversity as it requires integration of the principles of sustainable development into policies and programmes and reversing the loss of environmental resources. The indicators for environmental sustainability are (i)the proportion of land area covered by forest, (ii) percentage of area protected to maintain biological diversity,(iii) energy used (kg of oil equivalent per \$1 000 of GDP), and (iv)carbon dioxide emissions per capita.

The progress towards meeting this target is difficult to assess, however from a biodiversity perspective. Barbados is moving to establish its Network of Protected Areas through its National Park Plan, which will see an increase in the areas under protection in the marine and terrestrial environment.

Linkages with other un conventions

Climate change

Climate change will have an indirect impact on the islands' biodiversity. Increased sea temperatures will effect coral bleaching and have other deleterious impacts on near shore habitats and marine life. Terrestrial impacts will be felt in the agriculture industry affecting crop production and animal husbandry.

Desertification

Desertification is not only about the spread of deserts, but refers to land degradation in arid, semiarid and sub - humid climates. Land degradation is the persistent decrease in the supply of ecosystem goods and services as a result of changes in soil or vegetation, and includes deforestation and the effects of drought.

Barbados ratified the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 1997. A national action programme to combat land degradation and alleviate rural poverty has been developed. This action plan clearly recognizes and responds to the strong linkages between desertification, biodiversity and climate change, noting that Barbados should coordinate and have a synergistic approach to implementation of the three conventions.

Cross-cutting programmes and projects

18. Fiscal incentives

CBD Article 11 requires each party, as far as possible and appropriate, to adopt economically and socially sound measures that act as an incentive for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources. Some progress has been made by Barbados in this regard with the adoption and promotion of various economic instruments. Examples include the codification within the Coastal Zone Management Act of a regime for assessing damage to coral reefs. The legislation expressly provides the method and basis for calculating penalties for damage or destruction of coral reef. There is also Environmental Levy legislation whereby charges on levied on specified imported goods that may have a deleterious effect on the environment.

19. Ecosystem approach

OVERVIEW

The Government of Barbados adopted and is in the process of implementing the notion of the ecosystem approach that was endorsed at the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 2000. The ecosystem approach as defined by the CBD refers to "a strategy for the integrated

management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. The ecosystem approach is consistent with the three objectives of the Convention: conservation; sustainable use; and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources”.

20. Mainstreaming biodiversity in land - use planning and decision-making

One of the most effective ways of mainstreaming biodiversity is through incorporating biodiversity concerns into planning and decision making at the appropriate levels. The land use and physical planning process provides a very useful platform for integrating principles of biodiversity protection and management. For mainstreaming to be effective, biodiversity needs to be an integral part of the planning and decision - making processes in the various spheres of government. This section briefly assesses the degree to which biodiversity considerations are included in land - use planning and decision - making in Barbados.

Since 1970 land use development in Barbados has been guided by the Physical Development Plan (PDP) which is a requirement of the Town and Country Planning Act, Chapter 240. The implementation of this policy has assisted the orderly development of the island while ensuring the protection and conservation of the environment. One aspect of the PDP relates to the establishment and protection of a National Park through balanced development.

The PDP therefore may be used to minimize the impacts of development on biodiversity (species, ecosystems, habitats. Another important planning tool has been the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which was introduced through the physical development planning process in the 1980s and was formally adopted through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act, Chapter 240 in 1998. Since then there has been a growing number of EIAs that have been prepared for major developments that seek to take environmental impacts into consideration prior to development.