Global Change and Caribbean Vulnerability: Environment, Economy and Society at risk?

*International Seminar to be held at The University of the West Indies, Mona campus, Jamaica, 24th to 28th July 2006*

The Department of Geography & Geology, University of the West Indies, Mona campus, in conjunction with the Climate Change Research Group and the Developing Areas Research Group of the Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographers are holding a joint Regional Meeting on ‘Global Change and Caribbean Vulnerability: Environment, Economy and Society at Risk?’ at The University of the West Indies, Mona campus Kingston, Jamaica. The meeting will take place on 24-28 July 2006.

The Caribbean region is confronted by global change on many fronts. Global warming and climate change comprise the environmental engine while globalization and population growth are the fuel that drives changes in economy, society and landscapes. Caribbean nations (small island developing states - SIDS) are vulnerable to these global changes in complex and interconnected ways. The aim of this meeting is to present a multi-disciplinary perspective on global change in the Caribbean region by highlighting its impacts on environmental, economic and social systems. The intention is to bring together researchers from geography and related disciplines in the natural and social sciences to share their views on the interrelated impacts of global change on Caribbean people, societies and landscapes.

Offers of Papers are invited on one of the following themes:

1. Environmental change in the Caribbean Basin: current trends and future predictions
2. Vulnerable Caribbean natural systems: the impacts of environmental change and population pressure.
3. Vulnerable Caribbean economies and societies: the impacts of globalization and environmental change

Offers of papers, with an abstract of not more than 250 words, should be sent to the organisers by 31 January 2006:

- Dr Duncan McGregor ([d.mgregor@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:d.mgregor@rhul.ac.uk)) (Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, UK)
- Professor David Barker ([david.barker@uwimona.edu.jm](mailto:david.barker@uwimona.edu.jm)) (Department of Geography and Geology, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica)
- Dr David Dodman ([david.dodman@uwimona.edu.jm](mailto:david.dodman@uwimona.edu.jm)) (Department of Geography and Geology, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica)

Papers which fall outside these themes but are linked to the main theme will also be considered.
1. **Environmental change in the Caribbean Basin: current trends and future predictions**

The 1990s predictions of the effects of global warming in the Caribbean Basin included a scenario of progressive dessication of the Basin together with potentially more stormy conditions. No clear pattern of sea level change was evident due to differential tectonic effects across the Basin. More sophisticated models are now available, and it is intended that the meeting take a closer look at the emerging predictions for the next decades. These can be set against currently-observed trends of climate and sea level across the Basin.

2. **Vulnerable Caribbean natural systems: the impacts of environmental change and population pressure**

Terrestrial and marine ecosystems in the Caribbean region are highly vulnerable both to environmental change (global warming, sea-level rise, natural hazards) and economic pressures brought about by population growth, urbanisation, tourism and other manifestations of globalisation. We invite topics under this theme on issues such as conservation, biodiversity, national parks and protected areas, and island biogeography, water resources and land degradation. A key issue here is the nature of food security under environmental change.

3. **Vulnerable Caribbean economies and societies: the impacts of globalization and environmental change**

The historical and contemporary dependencies between the region and the metropolitan economy ensure that the balance between economic vulnerability and economic opportunity, precipitated by globalisation, is heavily skewed against Caribbean SIDS. We invite papers that highlight the vulnerability of Caribbean economies and societies in the face of both economic and cultural globalization and of global warming and its various environmental consequences. Papers in the fields of tourism, trade, agriculture and food security, urban and regional planning and industrial policy are particularly appropriate.

The meeting will comprise three days of selected papers, interleaved with two field days illustrating aspects of Jamaica’s vulnerability to environmental change and globalisation.

Following the pattern of four previously-successful Meetings held as the *RGS-IBG British-Caribbean Seminar Series*, under the DARG umbrella, publication in the form of an edited book and Journal Special Issues will be sought. The common theme of these Meetings is the search for development strategies that focus on the social and economic needs of people without further deterioration of the region’s fragile environmental resource base. This will be carried forward into this fifth Meeting, with a more overt focus on the nature of climatic change in the Caribbean Basin, and the consequences of observed trends for human activity. In common with the previous Meetings, contributions will be actively sought from non-geographers, and papers will be encouraged from young geographers either in the final stages of postgraduate research or in their early post-thesis career.

*Presenters who wish their papers to be considered for publication should bring three copies of the complete paper (including any figures and tables) to the meeting. All submissions will be refereed.*
**Provisional Costings**

All costs are provisional at this stage. More detailed information will be available from the organisers in early 2006. Costs are given in US dollars as most costs in Jamaica are pegged to the US dollar.

**David Dodman** will be acting as Local Secretary for the Meeting, and any questions regarding costs, registration and accommodation bookings should be done through david.dodman@uwimona.edu.jm

**Accommodation**

The University of the West Indies, Mona, is a campus university located on the outskirts of Kingston. Kingston has many hotels of a variety of standards and prices. However, none are located close to the University campus, public transportation can be difficult, and private taxis can be expensive. It is therefore strongly recommended that conference attendees stay at one of the following options available on campus.

**AZ Preston Hall, University of the West Indies**
- Self-catering apartments in UWI Hall of Residence
- Non-Caribbean residents: US$28 (single) / US$40 (double) per room per night
- Caribbean residents: US$25 (single) / US$40 (double) per room per night

**Mona Visitors’ Lodge and Conference Centre**
- Hotel-standard accommodation on campus at the University of the West Indies
- US$80 (standard double) / US$90 (suite) per night (including continental breakfast) when booked through conference organisers

**Meal costs**

- **Breakfast** can be self-catered or purchased on campus for a cost of approx. US$5 per day.
- **Lunch and Snacks** are available for purchase on campus during the day.
- **Evening meals** will be arranged at a variety of local restaurants, at costs of approx. US$10-US$20 per meal.

**Field trips**

Field trips (including field guide) will cost approx. US$40 per person.

**Conference Registration Fees**

These fees will include a volume of abstracts, refreshments during paper sessions, and transportation to organized evening meals.

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