

INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE JAMAICA TRIPARTITE COMMITTEE

The inaugural Tripartite Committee meeting was held on Tuesday July 31, 2012 at the headquarters of the Meteorological Service.

Present were:

Adrian Trotman- Project Manager

Jacqueline Spence - Meteorological Service

Glenroy Brown - Meteorological Service

Phillip Chung - RADA

Michelle Sherwood - R&D, MoAF

Jervis Rowe – JGGA

Eistein McLean - RADA

Leslie Simpson - CARDI

Apologies for absence

- **Mr. Alvin Murray**- Christiana Potato Growers' Cooperative Association

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting got underway at approximately 9:30 am with a welcome from Jacqueline Spence.

CAMI Overview

Mr. Trotman then gave a brief overview of CAMI's objectives as well as some of the accomplishments to date. Ms. Spence then spoke briefly about the training received under the project and the plans for a bulletin for farmers which will be of a more predictive nature. Mr. Trotman then highlighted the importance for representatives from the farmers group to be on the Committee. This was because these persons were farmers as well and would have firsthand knowledge of the various experiences of a farmer on a daily basis. We were later joined by Mr. Jervis Rowe who represented the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association and he confirmed that very point to the persons in attendance.

Weather and Climate Products

Some of the products currently being produced at the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) were presented. This included the Precipitation Outlook as well as the Drought monitoring indices. One point which came out here however is the lack of confidence of farmers and farmers groups in forecasted weather and climate information. This would hopefully change with time but there was definite need for training and dialogue between meteorologists and agricultural persons. This point highlighted the mandate of the Tripartite Committee which is mainly to continue the collaboration between Meteorology, Agriculture and Farmers Groups to ensure that farmers' needs are being met in terms of suitable products to enhance and sustain farming practices as well understanding climate and the expected impacts of climate change on Agriculture. The drought event of 2009/2010 was shown as an example of the value of the predictive tools which was showing the drought signal from 2009 across the islands of the Caribbean. Though the impacts varied by country impacts could be significantly reduced if decision makers are reliably informed and can therefore do strategic planning. One of the concerns was the mode of communicating weather and climate information to the farmers. Systems were already in place in the Ministry of Agriculture to address these issues and therefore these would be utilized as much as possible since the collaboration would seek to enhance and not reinvent the wheel. The predictions currently produced by **Smart Met** for towns across Jamaica were shown by Mr. Brown. This tool allows the user to input the name of a town and a five day forecast would be given for that particular location. RADA is very interested in this tool and would like to be able to utilize it fully with time.

Sustainability

Mr. Trotman enquired of the potential for sustainability of the Tripartite Committee after the project ends and was informed about an agro-meteorological programme which will require collaboration with Met Office and interaction with farmers which is being spearheaded by RADA. The efforts therefore coincide and need to be properly streamlined. RADA and the Met Office have also been discussing a MOU which has been drafted for review by the latter. The Tripartite Committee is also directly relevant to the Ministry of Agriculture's established priority National Agricultural Disaster Risk Management (ADRM) Programme and could fit well within the programme. Climate Change is being incorporated in

the ADRM and the Ministry of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change programmes. Relevance and potential resources are therefore substantial.

TOR for Tripartite Committee

Terms of reference were developed from the Tripartite meeting held in St. Lucia and it was found to be a suitable template for Jamaica which could be enhanced accordingly. It was decided that these terms of reference would be circulated among the group for further discussion and to hopefully be finalized by the next meeting of the Committee.

Pest and Disease Modeling

The Project Manager spoke briefly about the models that have been developed for Black Sigatoka and Citrus greening. There is now the need for determining the accuracy of the models which will come through input of data for future outbreak of these plant diseases. The question was asked about other pathogens which have occurred in Jamaica. The participants were however informed that new models would have to be developed for new pathogens and additional funding for this work secured because CAMI was meant to be illustrative with regards to Pest and Diseases and therefore the models developed were meant to form a foundation on which each country could build on.

Caribbean Rainfall Impact Reporter

The impact of drought emerged as a burning issue and prompted the introduction of the Caribbean Rainfall Impact Reporter which was launched at the Drought Monitoring workshop held in Jamaica in May of this year. This tool would prove useful to identifying the impacts of drought or flood events and provide useful documentation for severity and extent for these events which would play a significant role in the decision making process for coordinating response and also provide historical perspective to these events. It was also highlighted that the Caribbean was the second region to have an Impact Reporter with the US being the only other region to have such a tool.

Follow-Up Action

Looking ahead, some steps which emerged as possible ways forward include:

- Development and finalizing of the Terms of Reference for the Tripartite Committee.

- Having further discussion regarding the contents of the farmers' bulletin.
- Begin discussion on the Farmers forums to be held under the CAMI project which might require another meeting of Committee members.
- Registration of Committee members for the Impact Reporter thereby becoming prepared for future drought or flood events.

The meeting ended at approximately 1:20 pm however a date for the second meeting was not set.