



GOJ/EU/UNEP CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION & DISASTER RISK REDUCTION PROJECT



The Ranford Thomas Effect - Winning Climate Change support from Portland Cottage one Resident at a Time

By - NEPA Public Education and Corporate Communication Branch



Portland Cottage Resident, Ranford Thomas

It is no secret, the success of a project by any organisation - governmental or otherwise - is highly dependent on the support it receives from the community in which it is implemented.

For the National Environment and Planning Agency's component of the EU/UNEP/GOJ Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Project, (CCADRRP), the commitment of one community member is strong reassurance that the work being undertaken by the project can be sustained for years to come.

Ranford Thomas, an active community leader, has been a voice of reason and inspiration to his neighbours, championing the cause of the Climate Change Project.

Portland Cottage, Clarendon is no stranger to the negative impacts of storms and hurricanes, often experiencing severe flooding after these events. With a major part of the community's topography consisting of mangroves, the preservation of this coastal ecosystem is of paramount importance to reduce the impact caused by natural disasters. Mangroves are various types of trees up to medium height and shrubs that grow in saline or estuarine coastal sediment areas. They act as a nursery for fish, crabs, birds and many other animals, protect seagrass and coral reefs from being smothered by too much sand, buffer the coast and protect it from wave action and storms; and are the source of important fisheries



Fishing Village at Portland Cottage Project Site



Restored Mangroves at the Portland Cottage Project Site

With his home located on the property on which more than 5 hectares of mangroves are being restored, Mr. Thomas has been a direct link between NEPA's project officers and developments in the Port-



Fence erected to safeguard Mangrove restoration site

land Cottage community.

His help was evident when he reached out to Project Officers, notifying them that recently replanted mangroves were being eaten by goats in the community. To mitigate this, he aided with the building of a fence to protect the area. Mr. Thomas also helped repair the erected fence and notified the Project when community behaviour negatively impacted the structure.

The community elder says he is happy for the work of the project but admits that not all residents are on

board.

However, he notes that though some residents were not actively in support of the mangrove restoration project, sentiments have begun to change now that they are able to see the benefits it can provide. Mr. Thomas asserts that he is ready and willing to mobilize community support to maintain the area, even after the Project Officers are gone.



Members of the CCADRRP walk the site with male EU Representative.

The CCADRRP is a €4.13 million programme which started in 2010 and is scheduled to come to an end in October 2013.

It is funded by the European Union, and implemented by the Government of Jamaica, through the United Nations Environment Programme. It is coordinated through the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ). Other implementing agencies are the Environment Management Division of the Ministry of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change, the Forestry Department, and the Meteorological Service.

NEPA's component of the project aims at increasing resilience of coastal ecosystems. The project focuses on improving the adaptive capacity of coastal ecosystems i.e. mangroves, seagrass, and coral reefs to climate change. The project also aims at helping Jamaicans, particularly vulnerable community groups, to be better prepared to cope with the potential impacts of climate change. This is being done through the establishment of an alternative livelihood grant fund that is intended to promote sustainable livelihoods that reduce anthropogenic pressure on coastal resources.



Project Site Sign for the CCADRRP