

Activities of the Public Education and Outreach Subcommittee of the National Climate Change Committee 2010-present

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The National Climate Change Committee

- National committee with representatives of various government ministries and departments such as BEC, Water and Sewage, Department of Statistics, COB
- Sits under the auspices of the BEST Commission and co-ordinates national actions on climate change;
- Bahamas acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992 (ratified in 1994);
- 2001 First National Communication under UNFCCC completed;
- 2005 National Policy for the Adaptation to Climate Change = assessment of vulnerability and capacity to adapt;
- 2013 Second National Communication completed – currently being submitted to cabinet for approval;
- Contains a national GHG inventory.

The PEO Subcommittee Members

Subcommittee of the National Climate Change Committee

Formed in July 2010 as a joint subcommittee between COB and the Bahamas National Trust.

Members:

Dr. Adelle Thomas (Chair, Assistant Professor, Geography)

Lisa Benjamin (Assistant Professor UWI/COB LL.B. Programme and SIS Programme)

Michael Stevenson (Council Secretary, Associate Professor UWI/COB LL.B. Programme SIS Programme)

Portia Sweeting (Director of Education, The Bahamas National Trust)

Casuarina McKinney (Director, BREEF)

Rhianna Neely (PhD in Climate Change Awareness in The Bahamas)

With assistance from:

Stacey Moultrie (Project Co-ordinator for the Second National Communication on Climate Change)

PEO Strategy (three year strategy)

Key Objectives:

- Build awareness of what climate change is and what its expected impacts may be (including economic and social impacts)
- Encourage action-based responses from all sectors of society

Outcomes:

- Develop clear, consistent messages about potential effects of climate change
- Develop educational materials to support educators
- Provide public education workshops to various sectors
- Enhance engagement by public with 'pragmatic optimism' (Ereaut Gill and Segnit, Nat. 'Warm words: How are we telling the climate story and can we tell it better?' Institute for Public Policy Research, 2006)
- Collaborate with local and regional partners
- Generate more political will to implement further policy responses

Target Sectors

1.) Youth, educators and educational institutions

- Inform and support capacity building and promote youth activities
- Climate change is part of ongoing environmental conservation efforts

2.) Media

- Inform and proactively support media coverage
- Provide tailored workshops for media

3.) Private Sector

- Focus on GHG emitting industries and those vulnerable to climate change and provide risk management information
- Addressing climate change makes good business sense

4.) Communities

- Inform and support existing community activities

5.) Politicians/policy makers

- Tailored workshops for various departments

PEO Activities 2010-2011

Contribution of a section on PEO activities for the Second National Communication of The Bahamas to the UNFCCC

Target Sector for Year 1 – Youth and Educators:

- Reviewed national curriculum for climate change content;
- Met with the Acting Assistant Director of Education, Science and Technology and the Senior Education Officer: educational materials and workshops needed;
- December 2010 engaged graphic artist Stevie Burrows to produce comic book on climate change for students Grades 7-9 ;
- Two workshops in early 2011 with subject officers and writing unit of Ministry of Education on drafts of comic book;
- Consultations with various NGOs for comments (BREEF, reEarth, The Nature Conservancy), The National Coastal Awareness Committee and the National Climate Change Committee;
- July 2011 workshop with BREEF and BNT to test student activities on climate change for teachers.

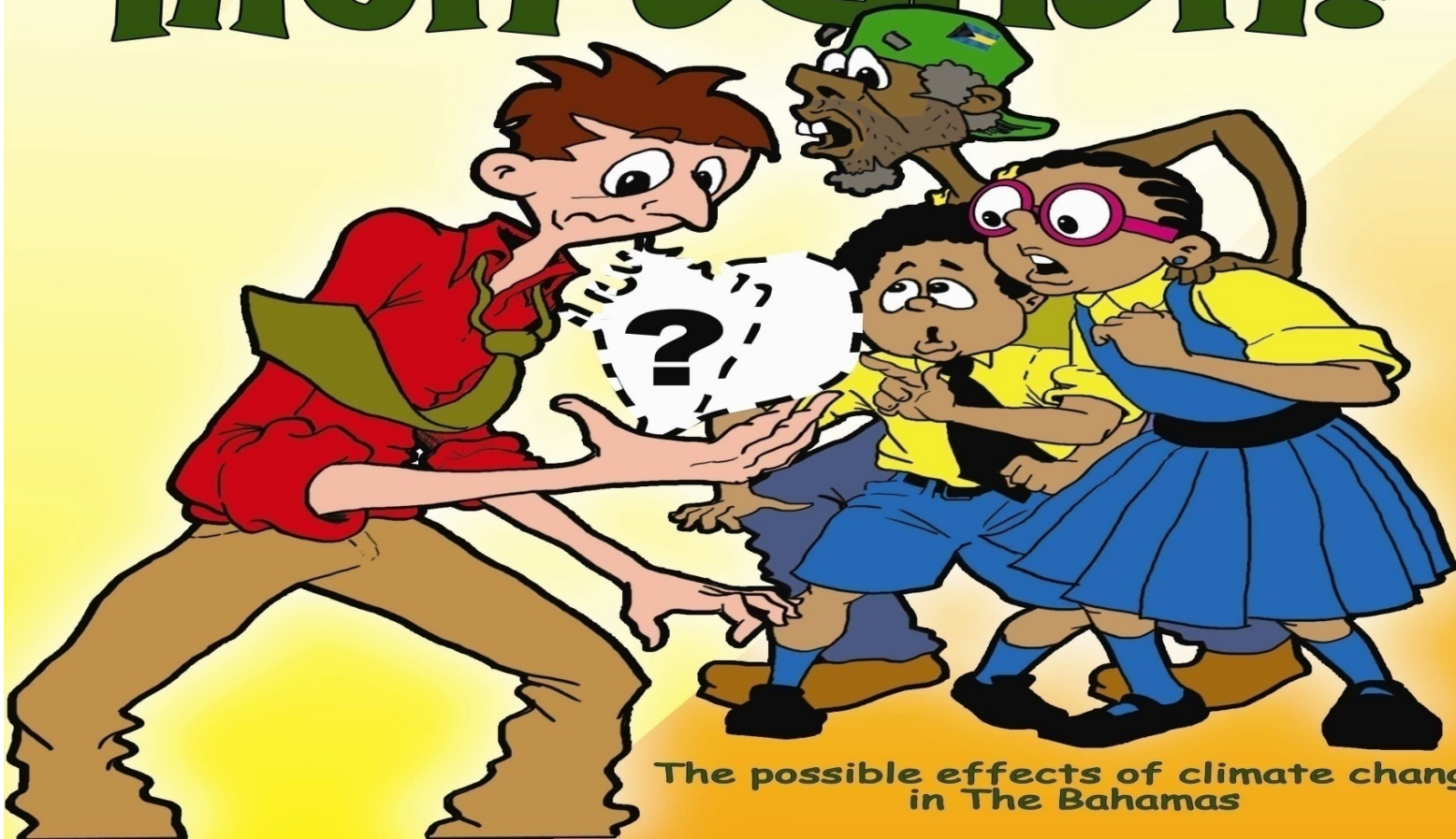
PEO Activities 2011-2013

- Held public forum with the BEST Commission and COB in September 2011 on climate change as part of public education activities which coincided with the UNESCO climate change experts meeting in Nassau
- Finalized comic book on climate change and raised funds to print copies for the Ministry of Education. Handover of the comic book from Ministry of Environment to Ministry of Education held on 17 September 2012.

Targets for Year 2 – Workshops:

- Teachers workshops: 60 social science teachers in February 2012 and workshop with Grand Bahama science teachers in July 2012;
- Planned media and politicians/policy makers workshop in 2014.

Who tief muh conch?



The possible effects of climate change
in The Bahamas

Other PEO Activities

Regional Efforts:

- **Established a relationship with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC);**
- **Involved with a University of Florida project to develop a regional partnership on climate change to identify best practices in climate change education and piloting of innovative climate change education practices;**
- **Met with Organization of American States to discuss involvement in regional project of PEO activities on renewable energy and development of a regional public awareness strategy;**
- **Collaborated with the Canadian Environmental Youth Network's environmental workshops in The Bahamas;**
- **Collaborated with the Climate Change Initiative at The College of The Bahamas**



Media Workshop 2014: Resources

- Website developed: www.climatechangebahamas.org
- Separate section for the media with resources (BREEF resources to be hosted) along with contact details for members of PEO subcommittee
- Academic resources populated with research relevant to The Bahamas and the region on climate change

Media Workshop 2014: Academic Resources

PhD Thesis of Dr. Adelle Thomas 'An integrated view: Multiple stressors and small tourism enterprises in the Bahamas' Rutgers University, 2012

- Thesis focused on how small hoteliers are affected by changing environmental and economic conditions.
- One of the case studies she considered was how climate change will affect these hoteliers.
- She found that the economic and environmental resources that the tourism industry is reliant upon are highly vulnerable to climate change. This has serious impacts on the future profitability of the tourism industry and on the ability of these smaller hotels to remain in business.

Media Workshop 2014: Academic Resources

PhD Thesis of Dr. Rhianna Neeley, 'Bahamians and Climate Change: an analysis of perception of risk and climate change literacy'

The focus of this research was to:

- evaluate the risk perception toward climate change and to assess climate change literacy among Bahamians; and
- to address current policies and make recommendations that may aid in increasing the climate change literacy level among Bahamians while improving adaptation and mitigation strategies
- 499 Bahamians participated in this study;
- 3 areas of climate change literacy (attitude, behavior and knowledge) were analyzed as well as risk perception.
- Conclusion: Bahamians seemed to have an elementary understanding of the underlying causes of climate change, while possessing positive attitudes toward adopting new climate change policies and are already adjusting their behaviors in light of the current predictions.

Media Workshop 2014: Academic Resources

Papers by Lisa Benjamin:

'Climate change and small island developing states: the state of play' Lisa Benjamin, International Journal of Bahamian Studies, 2010

'The role of AOSIS in UNFCCC Negotiations' by Lisa Benjamin, International Environmental Law Making and Diplomacy Review, 2011 at page 117

'Small Island Developing States in International Negotiations on Ocean Governance: UNCLOS, UNFCCC and the Doha Development Round of the WTO' by Lisa Benjamin International Environmental Law Making and Diplomacy Review 2012 at page 17