

SECTORAL DEBATE  
2013-2014

HMS PICTURE

Presented by  
HON. ROBERT PICKERSGILL, MP  
MINISTER OF  
WATER, LAND, ENVIRONMENT AND  
CLIMATE CHANGE

**“PARTNERING IN GOVERNANCE  
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2013  
GORDON HOUSE, KINGSTON

## OPENING REMARKS

MR SPEAKER, I begin by again congratulating the Prime Minister, Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller, in being a visionary in establishing this Ministry of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change. The inter-linkages between the portfolios and indeed, across portfolio Ministries such as Science, Technology, Energy and Mining, Transport, Works and Housing and Agriculture and Fisheries, to name a few, are no doubt inseparable.

Mr Speaker I say this for several reasons. It is beyond question that the impact of climate change on our water resources will be severe if we do not increase our resilience to climate change impacts. If we continue to practice inappropriate land use, we will destroy our watersheds and forests, which will compromise our goal of maintaining a sustainable environment. The proper functioning of ecosystems will experience catastrophic changes if the relationship between economic development and environmental sustainability is not properly managed.

Mr Speaker, the conflict between development and a sustainable environment is undeniable. Consequently it requires a balancing act, steered by a steadfast focus and dedication to the achievement of our Vision 2030 goal of ensuring that 'Jamaica has a healthy natural environment'.

**“Partnering in Governance for Sustainable Development”** has to be our new compass. It will require dialogue and partnerships at all levels.

It will mean conducting our core business more efficiently and effectively, especially in these challenging economic times. It will mean exploring creative ways to pursue our economic development goals, while minimizing the risks to our environment and natural resources and in the process, promoting awareness and involving communities in each step we take along the path towards sustainable development.

As the Ministry's Vision Statement articulates, we aim to make Jamaica "In 2020, among the top three countries in the Caribbean and Latin America in environmental stewardship, access to potable water, equitable broad-based land ownership and climate change resilience".

Mr Speaker, I have a constitutional responsibility to report to the country on my stewardship. I pause, Mr Speaker, to commend the Minister of State who has done a commendable job in his presentation on the Rural Water and drought aspects of the Water Portfolio, as well as the Land Portfolio to this Honourable House on June 18<sup>th</sup>. My presentation will concentrate on Climate Change, the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development and entities under the Water Portfolio, not previously covered by my Minister of State.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE.**

Mr. Speaker, I begin with the extremely critical portfolio area of Climate Change. During last year's Sectoral Debate, when I addressed this house as Minister of the new Climate Change portfolio, little did we know that the scientific evidence for Climate Change and its impacts on our economies and societies would have increased as sharply as they did in just one year. Since that time, there have been several issues and severe impacts caused by climate change throughout the world, the Caribbean and Jamaica.

Mr. Speaker, since the recording of global temperatures began in 1895, global warming has increased incrementally, leading to the warmest 12 months being recorded for the calendar year 2012. The objective, internationally, is to maintain a temperature increase of no more than two degrees Celsius (2°C) up to the end of this century.

However, the present trajectory is that this average temperature will be exceeded, and the world is heading towards what is potentially a catastrophic and cataclysmic 4°celsius rise in global average temperatures. This increase in temperature is evidenced by the recently published World Bank Report "Turn up the Heat" showing that we are on a 4 degree trajectory.

Many of you would have heard me refer to a "tipping point" with respect to the concentration of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere.

In a nutshell the tipping point is the point at which possibly irreversible Climate Change would occur. Scientists have estimated that our tipping point lies between 350 and 450 parts per million (PPM). However, just recently, readings of 400 parts per million were recorded for the first time.

Mr. Speaker, the implications of this are visible. The severe and unusual climate and weather that we have been experiencing in recent times have become increasingly worse. Urgent action is therefore required to:-

- 1) Mitigate greenhouse gas emissions globally, to avoid getting to this tipping point.
- 2) Implement projects to adapt to the new bio-physical conditions imposed by climate change.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to everyone's attention the climate change related impacts, that the world has been experiencing over the past 12 months. Several countries have experienced unprecedented flooding, fires, droughts, heat waves, typhoons, and tornadoes with thousands of persons dying. No longer is the magnitude of climate change impacts restricted to only poor countries, but they are now being felt by developed nations.

Jamaica is no exception. As a small island developing state, we are highly vulnerable and we are experiencing several impacts from Climate Change. These include coastal erosion, sea level rise, drought, and flooding. These do not include the impacts that we do not see, such as acidification of the seas, which I spoke to you about last year, and sea temperature increase.

These Mr. Speaker, are what we refer to as Slow Onset Events...the ones we do not see but have the potential to obliterate our reefs, fishing, tourism, numerous livelihoods and have negative impacts on our economy.

At the recently concluded Association of Marine Labs of the Caribbean (AMLC) conference in Ocho Rios, scientists presented data indicating the trajectory of sea temperature increase in the Caribbean. This presents a clear and present danger to the Blue Economy which is of critical importance to the economy of Jamaica. **Mr. Speaker, let me caution that 90% of our GDP is generated in coastal areas.**

That is why, I am proud to report that based on the instructions of the Most Honourable Prime Minister, Portia Simpson Miller, a Climate Change Advisory Committee was established to guide the process of enabling Jamaica to become climate resilient.

The Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC), which is a multi-sectoral, inter-disciplinary body comprising government representatives, civil society, academia, and NGOs, was launched in April 2012 and under the leadership of its Chairman, Dr. Conrad Douglas, has been extremely active throughout the year.

They have bridged the gap, and played a pivotal role in the absence of a Climate Change Division. The Climate Change Advisory Committee has given strategic direction on relevant matters to the Ministry, and the nation at large.

In implementing its mandate, the CCAC also interacted with several national and international agencies on behalf of the Ministry. The first critical activity was the hosting of a Workshop in July last year entitled: **“National Climate Change Workshop: Towards the development of a Climate Change Policy Framework.”**

This was supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and was attended by over 150 stakeholders from diverse and varying sectors across Jamaica, as well as development partners from the World Bank, IDB, UNDP and UNEP.

This workshop allowed for critical information to be fed into the Climate Change Policy and Action Plan, which was developed under the “Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Project” funded by the European Union.

Mr. Speaker, the draft **Climate Change Policy Framework and Action Plan** has been prepared and will be forwarded shortly to Cabinet as a green paper.

Another outcome of this workshop was the development of two (2) critical Programmes for Jamaica. Firstly Mr. Speaker, is the **Enhancing Capacity for Low Emission Development Strategies (EC-LEDS)** Programme.

My Ministry, along with the Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining (MSTEM), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on June 20, 2013 to accelerate the implementation of the EC-LEDS project.

This initiative supports developing countries' efforts to pursue long-term, transformative development and accelerate sustainable, climate-resilient economic growth, while at the same time slowing the growth of greenhouse gas emissions. This is an excellent example of the joined-up Government approach that climate change demands and that this administration advocates.

One major component under the EC LEDS programme is the **Analysis and Investment for Low-Emission Growth (AILEG)**. Under this Project, my Ministry is being assisted in the development of a Climate Finance Strategy. This will help us in identifying options for the financing of vital mitigation and adaptation projects. We will also be assisted in reviewing the use of economic modelling to take better account of the impacts of climate change in our planning.

Another initiative includes working with two pilot communities to prepare strategic plans for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. The communities of Princess Field and Content in St. Catherine were selected for this intervention through a competitive bidding process. Activities under AILEG will conclude with a National Symposium to be held in Kingston over the period July 9-10, 2013.

We must express our deepest gratitude to the international development partners such as the European Union, the United States Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank for their unwavering support.

Mr. Speaker, as I promised last year, we will be setting up a Climate Change Division. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has provided substantive assistance in developing a plan for establishing this Division. All approvals have been obtained and the recruitment of staff is underway.

Through the Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC), we have taken the initiative to assist the vulnerable City of Portmore to partner with the City of Hagen in Germany, to formulate and implement climate change projects at the Local Government level.

A Situational Analysis in the City of Portmore was conducted and from this, several projects have been identified for implementation. These include Funding to commence implementation of a complete solar energy system for the Heart Academy of Portmore.

Funding is already approved, and inspection of the building is to start for the placement of the solar panels. To complement this, training of engineers in solar energy technology will commence in the 3rd quarter of this year. A climate change park in Portmore is being planned.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there are plans to stage an international reggae climate change festival in the first quarter of 2014.

It is my desire as Minister, that knowledge developed from this project will be replicated in other cities and towns throughout Jamaica.

Through the Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC) we have given support to the Scientific Research Council (SRC) and the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI) in Trinidad, to win an international tender and commence the establishment of a **Caribbean Climate Change Innovation Centre**. The Caribbean Climate Change Innovation Centre will operate from the SRC and CARIRI in Trinidad.

**Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that the Climate Change Innovation Centre will be one of only six centres of excellence of its kind being established by the World Bank in different regions of the world.**

In an effort to infuse climate change risk assessments into our planning cycle, Jamaica was selected as one of the pilot countries to develop a **Climate Change Risk Assessment Tool**. Once completed, any Ministry Agency, or Parish Council will be able to use this tool to assess the risk of community and national projects against specific climate change scenarios. We are grateful to the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (5C's) and the UK based group called Acclimatize, for working with us on this.

**Mr. Speaker, I want to advise every person here today, that before the end of the year, we will be commencing with the training of all Ministers and Heads of Agencies in using this Climate Change Risk Management tool.**

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to state that Jamaica has its own report on the State of the Jamaican Climate 2012, with a Summary for Policy Makers and I am happy to table this Summary in the House today.

This publication was recently handed over to me by the Planning Institute of Jamaica. The report sets out the climate projections and the implications for Jamaica to the end of the century. It includes the latest information, with data sets which may be used for all agencies for incorporation in their planning.

Mr. Speaker, my Ministry continues with its major public education and awareness programme, which is being implemented at every level of our society using various media. Under the Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Project, one initiative was to carry the message of Climate Change on JUTC buses with the slogan : **“With Climate Change, We Must Change”**.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform this Honourable House that the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) have completed their initial scoping Mission and there are plans to host **The Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) Partnership Forum** here in Jamaica during the middle of 2014.

It gives me great pleasure to announce our engagement with the German funded Munich Climate Insurance Initiative (MCII) to conduct a pilot of a micro insurance facility aimed at small farmers in Portland and St. Thomas. This is our way of seeking new ways to help our vulnerable farmers build resilience, specifically against rain and wind impacts.

I am pleased to announce that this pilot has been successful and will be rolled out to a rural farming community in July. The official launch of this project will take place in the 4th quarter of this year. Again Mr. Speaker this is only possible though working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries as well the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management.

I am pleased to inform this honourable house that Jamaica has made an impact internationally in Climate Change Negotiations, in the area of loss and damage incurred from Climate Change Impacts -- for which we are not wholly responsible and seek some form of relief.

Last year, Jamaica earned its place and held its own against the developed countries of the world during the annual United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations in Doha, Qatar.

Through the use of sound scientific data and astute negotiating, we were determined for a meaningful outcome and successfully contributed to the decision being made for the establishment of a Loss and Damage Mechanism – Under the Convention.

This, Mr. Speaker, is of significant importance to us as a Small Island State, and puts us in a position to be able to – in the future- access funds in cases where we are constrained or unable to adapt to climate change impacts.

Jamaica with the support of the Government of Norway, hosted further talks on how to establish this Loss and Damage mechanism, in Montego Bay, in March this year. This was extremely successful in paving the way for negotiations which will take place in Warsaw, Poland at the end of this year. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that this dialogue is now referred to, internationally as the “Jamaica Dialogue”.

Mr. Speaker, I have repeatedly mentioned our slogan, which is “**with climate we must change**”. I am pleased to now be able to say that with climate change we have begun to change.

I must again express my deepest gratitude to our international development partners such as the European Union, and its member states; the United States Agency for International Development; the World Bank; the Inter-American Development Bank; the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID); the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme for their unwavering support for our efforts to build our resilience to climate change.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr Speaker, in respect to the sustainable management of the Environment, the Ministry and its Agencies continue to be proactive and vigilant in advocating and enforcing the laws that govern and protect our environment. While we have made progress on some fronts, Mr Speaker, we acknowledge that there is still much to be done. We are grateful to the many stakeholders who have formed partnerships with us in our stewardship of the natural resources of this blessed island Jamaica, for it is essential that “**Partnering in Governance for Sustainable Development**” is at the heart of our thrust for sustainable development.

### Watershed Management

Mr Speaker, the contribution of watershed management to a sustainable environment is of paramount importance.

This financial year, the National Environment and Planning Agency will continue the implementation of the Watershed Area Management Model in five additional Watershed Management Units.

This is a continuation of activities pursued in the last financial year, wherein a Watershed Area Management Mechanism was implemented as part of the Global Environment Facility *Integrated Watershed and Coastal Area Management Project*, in 9 of the 26 Watershed Management Units.

In fact Mr Speaker, this year, the Ministry will spend J\$8 million towards activities to encourage proper farming practices, reforestation of 400 hectares of degraded land, sustainable land management and water security within the Yallahs River and Hope River Watershed Management Units. These Watershed Management Units provide potable water to approximately one (1) million citizens in Kingston and St. Andrew and have been seriously degraded overtime. We will also be working towards the finalization of the Watersheds Policy of Jamaica.

### **Prohibition of Charcoal Export**

Mr Speaker, it is with the foregoing initiatives in mind that my Ministry had to respond decisively to the growing phenomenon of the export of charcoal from Jamaica. Charcoal production is a source of growing concern particularly because of its impact on our forests and watersheds.

So in keeping with the mandate of my Ministry, Mr Speaker, we took the necessary steps to keep Jamaica climate resilient.

Through the National Environment and Planning Agency and the Forestry Department, “joining up” with the Jamaica Customs Department, the decision was taken in February of this year, to prohibit the export of charcoal from Jamaica. Mr Speaker, information is that one country was demanding 40 containers of charcoal per month. This would have certainly served to devastate our watersheds and create a negative impact on our environment.

The National Environment and Planning Agency, has also commenced a demand assessment with particular focus on Jerk Centres.

To date, the assessment has shown that most establishments use between 5 and 35 (25kilogram bags) of coal per week.

During this financial year, the Agency will finalize this assessment towards instituting a regulatory regime to manage the production of charcoal. Mr Speaker, my Ministry does not, at this time, support the export of charcoal.

### **The Cockpit Country**

Mr Speaker, our commitment to protecting our natural resources is the same on the issue of the Cockpit Country. The cockpit country is a national treasure rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage. Consultations have been recently completed and we await the report and recommendations from a team at the University of the West Indies. I intend to take a submission to cabinet for a decision on the boundary for the Cockpit country.

In the meantime Mr Speaker, I stand by what I said in my last Sectoral presentation on this matter. It is my intention to show a documentary on the Cockpit Country to my colleagues in this house.

### **The Forest Management Plan and Forest Policy for Jamaica**

Mr Speaker, the management of our forest reserves is crucial to sustainable environmental management. It was a distinguished scientist Richard Blackwelder who said “... **as a nation we have not yet come to have a proper respect for the forest and to regard it as an indispensable part of our resources—one which is easily destroyed but difficult to replace.**”

Having a proper respect for our forests, Mr Speaker, I recently signed off on the Draft Forest Policy for Jamaica. The Draft Policy has been considered by the cabinet and referred to its Economic and Infrastructure Development Committee. This policy will have far reaching implications for forest management locally. I will remind you Mr Speaker, that a forest is irreplaceable and that the best time to plant a forest was twenty years ago. The second best time is now.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, the Forestry Department has completed the Forest Management Plan for the Cockpit Country Forest Reserve. The plan outlines how the Forestry Department will work with all the various stakeholders within the boundaries of the Cockpit Country Forest Reserve, to preserve one of Jamaica's largest remaining closed broadleaf forests.

I am heartened Mr. Speaker, by the fact that more Jamaicans are actively involved in tree-planting activities.

During the last Forestry Department National Tree Planting Day observed on the first Friday of October annually, a record 31,000 seedlings were distributed for planting islandwide. This financial year, we aim to more than double that record with 75,000 seedlings earmarked for distribution in keeping with the Forestry Department's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Indeed it is our 75<sup>th</sup> as well Mr. Speaker. Once more I call upon Jamaicans to desist from the destructive practice of cutting down trees near riverbanks and the wanton clearing of land for agricultural and other purposes.

## **Air Quality Management Programme**

Mr Speaker, on the matter of major Air Quality Management, we responded to air pollution incidents some of which are etched indelibly in the nation's mind such as those which occurred at the Riverton City Disposal Site, Portmore Causeway, Petrojam Refinery and the Central Sorting Office (CSO) in Kingston. These incidents made it even more critical for my Ministry to work aggressively to ensure that a robust air quality management programme is developed, implemented and monitored not only to comply with the Natural Resources Conservation Authority Regulations but also to protect human health and the environment.

Mr Speaker, over the last financial year the National Environment and Planning Agency developed a national air quality monitoring network; strengthened the air quality management programme to improve air quality monitoring and measurement; developed standards for particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in addition to the existing standards for particulate matter less than 10 microns, and enhanced the country's capacity to respond to air quality pollution incidents.

As part of the initiative, two new air quality monitoring sites have been established in the Kingston Metropolitan Area, Washington Gardens and Waterford, in Portmore. This brings the total number of air quality monitoring stations in the Kingston Metropolitan Area from three to five.

Mr Speaker, last financial year the National Environment and Planning Agency had an approved budget of \$6.3 million.

In this financial year, the Agency received an approved budget of \$9.5 million from the Ministry of Finance and Planning to assist in the strengthening of the National Air Quality Programme.

These funds will support the purchase of new air quality monitoring equipment and so increase the country's capacity in Air Quality monitoring. The funds will also allow the National Environment and Planning Agency to expand the programme into Montego Bay, Spanish Town, May Pen and Mandeville.

### **The Negril Area**

Mr Speaker, the Negril area is ecologically sensitive. The Opposition Spokesman on the Environment in his contribution raised a number of issues relevant to Negril.

The fact is that in the Negril area, the different components of the ecosystem exist in a dynamic ecological balance in which the reduction or loss of one element could lead to further degradation and eventual loss of the ecosystem.

The continued degradation of Negril has significant socio-economic and environmental implications including loss of livelihoods and a threat to the country's economic base. This is likely to be exacerbated, if measures are not put in place to arrest the high rate of coastal erosion that has been taking place and which is likely to increase in the context of climate change and the continued degradation of coastal ecosystems.

Mr Speaker, the Negril Beach (Long Bay) has been experiencing erosion for a number of years. The residents of Negril have been requesting assistance from the Government to find solutions to address the disappearing beach. In response, Negril was chosen as a target area by the Government to benefit from project support through the *European Union/United Nations Environment Programme Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Project*. As a component of this project, a product known as Shorelock is being applied to a small section of approximately 250 meters, of the community beach as a pilot project.

Mr Speaker I am aware of the concerns of some stakeholders in Negril about the possible impact of the product. That is why under the general guidance of NEPA, the Centre for Marine Sciences UWI is already conducting independent monitoring and assessments of the micro-organisms which live in the sand, sand analysis, grain size, porosity, beach profile, water quality and impact on plants and animals that live on the floor of the sea.

In addition, Mr Speaker, to preserve the over 7.2 kilometres of white sand beach around which Negril is marketed as a tourism product, preliminary works will commence this financial year on the construction of two breakwater structures within the coral reef system of Negril, aimed at enhancing the resilience of the coastline.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, guidelines and technical standards for Beach Restoration and Shoreline Protection, as well as Adaptation Plans for the most vulnerable areas along the Negril coastline are being developed.

Moreover, the finalization of the Beach Access and Management Policy by the Natural Resources Conservation Authority is currently underway and will be the subject of public consultation.

Mr Speaker, the National Environment and Planning Agency, in collaboration with the Negril Green Island Area Local Planning Authority, has also begun an exercise to address the illegal encroachment within the Great Morass. Enforcement Notices have been served on individuals and companies in breach of the planning requirements.

Over the past four months, the National Environment and Planning Agency has also conducted a Planning and Environment Study within the Negril area, specifically on the landward side of the Norman Manley Boulevard and the Sheffield Main Road, to determine the extent of reclamation and clearing and the level of intrusion of development in the Great Morass. The results of the study will be available in this financial year.

In order to effectively continue with addressing the environmental issues within the Great Morass, the National Environment and Planning Agency has sought funding from the Tourism Enhancement Fund to increase its enforcement capacity with the Negril Marine Park and to respond to the wider planning and environmental issues impacting the area.

Mr Speaker I have specifically addressed the concerns of the opposition spokesman on the environment, as well as those of the stakeholders from Negril with whom I have held several meetings.

## **Waste Water and Sludge Regulations**

During the last financial year, the Ministry finalized the Wastewater and Sludge Regulations. The development of the Regulations is part of Jamaica's compliance to the Cartagena Convention concerning 'Pollution from Land Based Sources'. The regulations will serve to provide the framework for the operation of treatment facilities, their monitoring and the reporting mechanisms that will be required, as well as issues related to compliance and a discharge fee system. The development included several consultative processes with key stakeholders in the industry.

The Regulations will apply to all wastewater treatment facilities that collect and treat wastewater using natural or imposed means to generate an effluent with a quality that satisfies one of three specific limits for Effluent Standards.

## **Small Island Developing States**

Mr Speaker, in 2014, the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States will be held in Samoa. In preparation for that Conference, next week Jamaica will host the regional consultations for the Caribbean Small Island Developing States with funding support from the United Nations Development Programme.

Mr Speaker, the achievement of sustainable development for Jamaica, the Caribbean Region and the Small Island Developing States the world over, is critical, especially as World Leaders grapple with the need to find ways to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

The Ministry is well placed to address several of the critical priority areas of the Small Island Developing States Programme of Action.

In addition, Mr Speaker, Jamaica will have the opportunity to implement strategies to advance the well-being of our people, through participation in a Regional Pilot Project entitled “*Advancing Caribbean States’ Sustainable Development Agenda through Green Economy Policies*”. Haiti and St. Lucia will also participate in this project.

Mr Speaker, I recently led a team to the British Virgin Islands to the Summit of Political and Business Leaders under the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, where participating countries made a commitment to conserve 20% of their marine and coastal environments as protected areas by the year 2020.

However, I am pleased to announce that to date, 18% of our marine and coastal environments are under protection and we have given the commitment to achieve 25% protection of these areas by the year 2020.

## **PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Mr Speaker, the Minister of State has already spoken in detail about the Land Portfolio, and so I now turn to the issues of Town and Country Planning and Spatial Planning, which are crucial features of our efforts towards achieving sustainable development, as we face the challenges of rapid urbanization coupled with the impacts of climate change.

## **Town and Country Planning**

Mr Speaker the Most Hon Prime Minister referred to commitments by the government to take certain actions this financial year with respect to spatial planning, the promulgation of development orders and a system to enhance decision making in the process of applications for development and sub-divisions. She indicated that I would elaborate on these matters.

My Ministry and, the National Environment and Planning Agency, Mr Speaker, along with the Parish Councils, the Local Planning Authorities and other stakeholders, have been proceeding with alacrity to prepare new Development Orders.

Currently, sixty-six (66) percent of the island is covered by the Town and Country planning Act where Development Orders have already been gazetted. We are now seeking to bring the entire island under the Town and Country Planning Act.

I am pleased to announce that the Government of Jamaica is in the process of promulgating four (4) Development Orders for the Negril /Green Island Area and the parishes of Portland, Trelawny and Manchester.

Work is advanced on the preparation of a new Kingston and St. Andrew Development Order. It is intended that this will be promulgated and gazetted during this financial year. Draft Parish Development Orders have been prepared for St. Catherine (excluding Portmore), St. James, St. Thomas and Clarendon.

Mr Speaker, during this financial year, a draft Parish Development Order will be prepared for St. Elizabeth to guide investment and development in that parish. Upon the completion and promulgation of these orders, Jamaica, for the first time, will be completely covered by the Town and Country Planning Act. We intend to update the Development Orders and Development Plans every five (5) years, to ensure that they remain current and relevant.

This financial year the Ministry will also be moving to finalize the Draft Town and Country Planning Bill and the completion of drafting instructions for the new Town and Country Planning Act. Mr Speaker, this new Town and Country Planning Bill will allow for:

- The creation of a framework of Development Plans and Development Orders which will enable government to formulate up-to-date policies and plans with respect to land use, physical and spatial planning and development control.
- The reviewing and rationalizing of the role and function of all agencies involved in land use, physical and spatial planning, and development control.

New features of the Town and Country Planning Bill will include the extension of the Act to our territorial waters to include the continental shelf, the exclusive economic zone and all natural or artificial accretions.

Mr Speaker, the National Environment and Planning Agency, in partnership with the Town and Country Planning Authority, will this financial year, be completing several planning studies with respect to Negril, the Blue Lagoon, and Port Henderson, the net residential density and floor space index throughout the Island, as well as, setback from natural and artificial features including water bodies.

It is my intention to use the recommendations from these and other studies to issue Planning Policy Guidelines that will be used along with other instruments, to guide and control development within the island.

These planning policy guidelines will facilitate a more consistent, transparent and accountable decision making process.

### **Gated Communities, Town House Legislation and “Super Studios”**

Mr Speaker, work continues on the preparation of new legislation to govern the maintenance and management of gated communities, town house complexes, and commercial developments.

This legislation will be similar to the recently enacted amendments to the Strata Titles Act which governs the management of Strata properties.

It has been observed Mr Speaker, that a number of applications are being made by owners and developers for planning permission to develop and construct “super studios”. Empirical evidence is that these are later converted into additional bedrooms, larger apartments or other uses.

This practice, has impacted on the social and physical infrastructure by the increase of residential density for which planning permission was not given.

Mr Speaker, my Ministry is currently working on a policy to address the maximum size of studios. On completion of the process towards a policy, I will issue planning policy guidelines, in keeping with the statutory powers vested in me.

### **Development Application Decision Process**

Mr Speaker, the member for Western Portland highlighted the challenges facing the development decision process. We are all agreed that there is need to act decisively to revamp the system to make it more efficient and customer friendly.

Jamaica's ranking over the last three years in respect of obtaining construction permits improved from a low of 52 to a high of 49 in The World Bank's '*Ease of Doing Business*' Report. Although commendable, like other countries we must continue to improve.

This means that Jamaica will have to implement measures, not only to keep up with other countries competing for investments, but also, to remain an investor friendly destination as far as planning and development contribute to economic development and job creation.

Mr. Speaker as the Ministry with responsibility for Climate Change, it is essential that “**Partnering in Governance for Sustainable Development**” is at the heart of our thrust for development. As such, I will be engaging my colleague Minister of Local Government and Community Development, the National Environment and Planning Agency, the Local Planning Authorities and Parish Councils, the Developers, the Master Builders and the other professionals, to propose measures to improve the development application decision process and where practical, reduce the turnaround time for the development control process.

Mr Speaker, any thrust to speed-up the development application decision process must recognize the need to be thorough and should be underpinned by the adaptation and mitigation challenges posed by climate change. Already we have identified a number of measures that can immediately strengthen the system and make it more efficient.

Measures such as the two-tiered system of application processing; linking the national and parish development application decision processes through the Applications Management and Data Automation System known as AMANDA, (as distinct from ANANDA) which allows for the tracking of development applications; the finalization of the development orders; the completion of the National Spatial Plan and the simplification of the application process, as well as, the completion and implementation of the National Fees Policy guidelines.

Mr Speaker, I have spoken specifically on these matters in compliance with the Most Honourable Prime Minister's announcements in her budget presentation, while taking account of the expressions of the member from West Portland, so that the public can be aware that work is being done assiduously to address planning and development matters.

Any thrust to improve the development decision making process, must recognize the need to be thorough and should be underpinned by the adaptation and mitigation challenges posed by environmental sustainability.

### **National Spatial Planning**

Mr Speaker, I now turn to the National Spatial Plan about which the Most Honourable Prime Minister spoke.

We have received budgetary support in the amount of \$30 million to revise the National Physical Plan 1998 Jamaica, which will hereafter be referred to as the National Spatial Plan. The National Spatial Plan is geared towards ensuring the optimal use and management of the nation's land resources.

It will replace the multiplicity of plans in existence, and will become the principal vehicle linking our national, sectoral, local authority and other policies with public and private investment decisions. It will bring the whole picture together with the respective responsibilities of the different Ministries, agencies and bodies, clearly assigned.

Work on components of the National Spatial Plan, including the review and updating of a National Settlement Strategy, are ongoing. To date the National Environment and Planning Agency has completed this exercise for 133 Centres island wide, and in this financial year additional surveys of urban centres and Desk Audits will be conducted in twenty (20) emerging Centres island wide. A National Settlement Strategy was drafted in the last financial year and a final Report will be prepared during this financial year.

Geo-Spatial data collection has been completed, as part of the preparation process and it is expected that the plan will be completed within the next financial year.

Mr. Speaker, the National Spatial Plan will provide for comprehensive and integrated development for the prudent use of our natural resources. Demand needs of key sectors will be able to be spatially mapped, so that social, economic and human resources requirements will be available for immediate consideration in physical planning.

## **WATER**

### **Water Resources Authority**

The National Spatial Plan will contribute to the enhancement of the water resources management process.

Over the past year, the Water Resources Authority has concentrated on upgrading and expanding the National Hydrologic Monitoring Network, through the installation of additional and more accurate monitoring equipment.

The data from this network will guide the management of water resources, the allocation of water to drive national development and the assessment of climate change impacts on water resources and relevant strategies, that must be implemented to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

The Water Resources Authority also continues to offer technical assistance to public and private sector agencies and companies in ensuring that investments and the process of national development are not stymied by a lack of water.

In the true spirit of our policy of “joined up government”, the Water Resources Authority has provided technical assistance to Agencies such as the National Water Commission and the National Irrigation Commission, to guide the development of major public water supply systems.

These include the Kingston Metropolitan Area Water Supply System, Irrigation systems along the south coast including Yallahs, New Forest-Duff House, Hounslow and Pedro Plains.

The Water Resources Authority also guides the development of the water supply to increase clean energy which is so crucial for increased economic activity in our country.

Mr Speaker, the Water Resources Authority has continued its close collaboration with the Jamaica Bauxite Institute and the National Environment and Planning Agency, to achieve success in reducing the impact of the bauxite alumina operations, on water resources across the island.

Success stories include a groundwater model of the Essex Valley Limestone aquifer which was completed in association with Alpart. This model will guide water resources management and the reduction of contamination once the Alpart Plant is restarted. Another achievement is the implementation of a more efficient effluent management system at the Ewarton Plant, which is reducing spills into the Rio Cobre. This was achieved in partnership with UC Rusal.

Also, of note is the drainage of the Mount Rosser Red Mud Lake, which has reduced the contamination of the water resources at the Rio Hoe-White Rivers to the north and to the Linstead-Bog Walk aquifer to the south.

This Mr Speaker was achieved with funding and technical support from Alcan/Rio Tinto and in the next few years the former Red Mud Lake will become a vegetated reclaimed land area.

## **National Water Commission**

Mr. Speaker, development, and more so sustainable development, is enhanced by the provision of potable water and sewerage services.

For this reason, my Ministry through the National Water Commission intends to provide access to a reliable supply of potable water and central sewerage systems at affordable rates, in keeping with our National Settlement Strategy.

Mr Speaker, I have repeated on many occasions, that we are targeting 85% of the population to have access to potable water by way of in-house and communal taps by 2020.

For the remaining 15% of the population, we will look at other modalities based on the best localized solutions, including rainfall harvesting. For this purpose, we have secured a grant from the Inter-American Development Bank to prepare the plans that are required for this segment. Consultants have already been retained to do the work with the National Water Commission and the Rural Water Supply Limited. Mr Speaker, we continue the thrust of **“Partnering in Governance for Sustainable Development”**.

## **Operational Challenges and Proactive Response**

Mr Speaker, the National Water Commission, like any other business, is not without challenges. There is no quick fix to the challenges faced by the Commission due to, among other things, the **high cost of energy consumption**.

The National Water Commission is one of the largest consumers of energy in this country and in fact, uses approximately five (5) percent of the total energy consumed in the country. We are aiming for a reduction in energy consumption costs by thirty (30) percent over the next five years.

Among the strategic initiatives to be pursued by the Commission to reduce energy usage, are resorting to the alternative production of energy, the replacement of 320 old inefficient pumps, rehabilitation of 288 tanks with the necessary controls to prevent overflows and most importantly taking advantage of using the recently approved power wheeling policy.

Mr. Speaker, despite an increase in the JPSCO's energy costs of 9% from 2011 to 2013, the NWC's energy expense only increased by 4% year over year. This suggests that the NWC has actually become more energy efficient in 2012/2013.

Mr Speaker, the matter of Non Revenue Water (losses) is another well-known challenge faced by the National Water Commission. It is estimated that no revenue is received by the Commission for a substantial amount of the water that it produces and distributes.

Non revenue water or losses consist of leaks, overflowing tanks, meter under-registration and water theft. The National Water Commission is presently pursuing several initiatives which are designed to stop this haemorrhaging. These include mains replacement, network management, water supply management and mass replacement of old defective revenue meters.

In fact the NWC will be replacing 100,000 domestic meters and 3,000 large commercial/industrial customer meters and this will commence in September 2013.

To give some more insight on these initiatives Mr Speaker, through financing received from the Inter-American Development Bank, the National Water Commission intends to implement a *Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Integrated Water Management System (SCADA)*.

This system will aid in the operation and maintenance of the Commission's systems and will result in the reduction of the Non-Revenue Water component of the Commission's operations, as well as the high energy costs, while improving service to its customers.

Mr Speaker, let us acknowledge that there is no more important commodity than water. That is why we all agree that water is life. Water is critical for the maintenance of environmental and human health and is essential for the support of the human ecology. Yet, of all the utility rates faced by households, **water is the least expensive by far.**

The fact is, it will require significant capital investments to mobilize the water projects necessary to significantly impact the economic development of our country. Strengthening of the revenue base is therefore an imperative.

I am happy to report, that the National Water Commission has completed its public consultations in conjunction with the Office of Utilities Regulations. Those consultations have revealed that the primary concern of consumers, is access to potable water, rather than the cost, especially in the rural areas.

The tariff submission is based mainly on the Commission's efforts to expand and improve potable water and sewerage services to the Jamaican people.

I defiantly disagree with the sentiments expressed by the Opposition Spokesman and his leader. I would have thought that the protocol surrounding a live application before the OUR, would have prevented comments aimed at politicising the review process. Mr Speaker, it is curious that in 2008, under their stewardship, they sought an increase of 44%. They received 23%, with a scheduled review five years later. Mr Speaker, the NWC is now seeking an increase of 12% on the base rate along with adjustments to the X Factor.

Mr Speaker, expansion and improvement need to be supported by a rate regime which will enable the Commission to attract financing for its programmes and projects. We await the determination of the OUR.

Mr Speaker, over the next four years, steps have to be taken to facilitate investors with respect to an easier environment to do business. One of the means to do this is a review of the procurement process. In the same way that we are facilitating the decision making in the development application process, we have to also facilitate other investors in the process of production and productivity. Therefore, this is why the protocol of procurement is being reviewed, in order to improve growth and production, without any threat, as some may think, to indulge in corruption.

In this regard, we wish to be able to at least maintain or improve on the nearly J\$9 Billion invested in new projects, which included J\$7 Billion from the K-Factor funds, in the last financial year, in our contribution to growth and development. This level of capital expenditure is unprecedented and is indeed a record for the Commission and is nearly twice what is normally invested in an average year.

It should be noted that it is reported in the Jamaica Public Bodies report, that the National Water Commission was the second largest investor among government entities, second only to the National Housing Trust. Mr Speaker, we continue **“Partnering in Governance for Sustainable Development”**.

Mr Speaker, I should also advise this Honourable House that during the past year, the College Green, Ravinia, Standpipe Lane, Cedar Valley and Barbican Road Sewer construction projects which were initiated by the previous administration, were completed. These projects were carried out at a cost of J\$50 Million and benefitted 3,000 citizens.

I also wish to report that work on the Clarks Town Water Supply Project in the constituency of Northern Trelawny was also successfully completed at a cost of J\$45 Million and is benefitting approximately 10,000 citizens.

Mr Speaker, I am again reminded of First Corinthians chapter 3 verse 6 which says..."**I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase**". In this case the projects were initiated under the Opposition Spokesman on Water, but the increase has come to me as they have been completed under my watch.

### **PROMISES KEPT**

Mr Speaker, I will now demonstrate the record breaking performance of the NWC over the last financial year, and in the process I will show how the J\$9 Billion was spent.

Mr Speaker, the National Water Commission remains resolute about delivering on its mandate of supporting national development through the provision of potable water and sewerage services to the people of Jamaica.

At the beginning of the last financial year, I made some promises regarding the Capital Projects. I now report on my stewardship in relation to those promises.

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said we would complete the rehabilitation of the **Mona and the Hope water treatment plants** to improve reliability of water supply in the Corporate Area at a cost of \$1.6 billion.

Mr Speaker I now confirm that:

- The facilities have been rehabilitated, with the works completed within budget and on time.
- The Mona Treatment plant can now deliver 16 to 18 million gallons per day. This is a 50% improvement in the output from this very important facility.
- The Hope Water Treatment Plant can now deliver over 6 million gallons per day, up from about 4 million gallons per day. Again, a 50% improvement in output capacity.
- During Hurricane Sandy and the drought that followed, the water supply continued and the water quality was maintained, with minimal disruptions. This has improved the water supply for approximately 400,000 residents in the corporate area.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said we would commence construction of a new **pipeline to Portmore** to improve water supply to that community.

Mr Speaker I am now confirming that:

- I broke ground for the construction of this new transmission pipeline in November and work is now 80% complete.
- The project will significantly improve water supply to southeast St. Catherine including Bernard Lodge, Portmore and Hellshire.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said we would commence work on the **Port Antonio Water Sewerage and Drainage Project in eastern Portland.**

Mr Speaker :

- I signed the agreement for the construction works on August 17, 2012 and broke ground for the project on May 2, 2013. Work is now well underway.
- At a capital cost of \$1.6 Billion and with 75,000 beneficiaries, this project represents a major investment in the water, sewerage and drainage infrastructure for the town of Port Antonio and its environs.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said we would commence work to replace the second part of the **Rio Cobre Pipeline from Content to Ferry.**

Mr Speaker

- Work has commenced and this project is progressing steadily.
- This pipeline will replace the old asbestos cement transmission line now in place and will result in reductions in losses and improved supply to the KSA and Portmore areas.
- **This project has expanded** to include replacement of the section of pipeline between Ferry and Six miles. This new line will link directly into lines running along the Washington Boulevard and Spanish Town Road. All the constituencies in these areas will benefit, and they know who they are.
- **PROMISE KEPT AND EXCEEDED!**

Last year, I said we would rehabilitate the **Bogue Water Treatment Plant in St. Ann** in order to improve the water supply in St. Ann and St. Mary.

Mr Speaker:

- Work has commenced on this project and will include a complete rehabilitation of the facilities to improve treatment capacity, plant reliability and useful life.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year I said that we would rehabilitate the **Martha Brae Water Treatment Plant** in order to improve water supply in Trelawny and St. James.

- The rehabilitation work has commenced and is progressing.
- In addition we have also commenced the construction of an additional 5 million gallons per day facility, to expand the treatment capacity at the Martha Brae Water Treatment Plant to 11 million gallons per day.
- This project will significantly improve the supply in Trelawny and St. James, as well as indirectly benefit water supply to Lucea and Negril in Hanover.
- **PROMISE KEPT AND EXCEEDED!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said that we would rehabilitate the Great River Water Treatment Plant in order to improve water supply to St. James and Hanover.

Mr Speaker:

- Work has commenced and we have already seen benefits with the plant capacity improving from 10 million gallons per day to 14 million gallons per day, a 40% improvement.
- As a result of work done so far and other system improvements, supply to Hanover, including the Lucea and Negril areas, has improved substantially in recent weeks.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Mr Speaker, the Bogue, Martha Brae and Great River projects cost a combined total of J\$650-million and will benefit 250,000 residents in these areas. Again I say Mr. Speaker...**PROMISE KEPT!!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said we would rehabilitate **26 major water supply facilities in the KSA** and St. Catherine to improve reliability of supply in these parishes.

Mr Speaker:

- Work has commenced and is progressing on schedule.
- Work will include rehabilitation of a number of wells, pumping stations and storage tanks.
- Total cost will be just under J\$2 Billion and over 750,000 persons will benefit.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said that we would be embarking on a major **Non-Revenue Water Reduction Program for the KSA** in order to reduce losses to 25%.

Mr Speaker I now confirm that:

- The project experienced some delays but bids have now been received and evaluated and the requisite approvals are being sought.
- The project will involve expenditure of US\$50 Million over a five year period to reduce losses in the KSA from 50% to 25%.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, I said that we would be embarking on a major water supply project to completely upgrade the water supply systems in **Old Harbour, May Pen, Mandeville and surrounding areas** in order to meet the current and future demands for these rapidly developing areas.

I confirm now that:

- An engineering firm has been identified.
- The project will cost about US\$60 million and will benefit all of the residents in Old Harbour, May Pen, Mandeville and their environs.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said we would be rehabilitating a number of sewage treatment plants under the CReW and K-Factor Programmes.

Mr Speaker:

- A contractor has been selected for the construction of a new sewage treatment plant at Boscobel in western St. Mary which will benefit over 5,000 households.
- A contractor has been selected for the rehabilitation of the plant at Elleston Flats in Kingston and St Andrew.
- Tenders have been invited for rehabilitation and replacement of eleven other sewage treatment systems across the country under the NWC's K-Factor Program.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said that we would be moving to **retire the old, non-functioning sewage treatment plants in Portmore** and re-directing the flows to the new facility at Soapberry.

I now confirm that:

- A contractor has been selected for the works and the necessary approvals are now being sought from the National Contracts Commission.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said that we would continue expansion and **rehabilitation of the sewerage systems in the KSA.**

Mr Speaker I again confirm that:

- Work to rehabilitate, upgrade and expand the sewerage is being implemented at a cost of J\$750 million in the areas of Majesty Gardens, Seaview Gardens, Riverton City, Duhaney Park, Barbican, Mona, areas along Hope Road and Swallowfield
- The programme is to facilitate the connection by residents in the KSA. This will facilitate additional and more intensive developments while protecting the ground water from on-site systems which do not provide the level of treatment required for sustainable development.
- I broke ground for the rebuilding of the Darling Street Sewage Pumping station on February 23, 2012. This project has been completed within budget and on schedule.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

Last year, Mr Speaker, I said that we would continue work on the **Harbour View Sewage Treatment Plant** to better serve the needs of that community.

Let me confirm that:

- Work is continuing on the project which will see Harbour View residents having their wastewater treated to tertiary levels.
- **PROMISE KEPT!**

## **The Work Continues**

Mr Speaker, the work continues. The NWC now has over one hundred (100) Capital Projects at different stages of implementation. Time will not permit me to go into the details, but I have them here for anyone who would wish to peruse the listing. These projects will impact potable water and sewerage services across the entire country.

Work is ongoing on several major projects including the Jamaica Water Supply Improvement Project at a cost of over \$18 Billion; the Inter-American Development Bank funded projects at a cost \$15 Billion; several wastewater projects at over \$2.2 Billion; and other water supply projects which are all expected to benefit residents and businesses across all parishes.

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to say that work continued post the Jamaica Water Supply Improvement Project Category “A” works, in the Stony Hill and surrounding areas. The Non Revenue Water level has continued to decrease to below forty (40) percent for the first time, coming from an initial value of over seventy-five (75) percent. This demonstrates that the model being adopted by National Water Commission can be successfully replicated on a broader scale. Several areas went from no water for decades to water pressure being too high. We have now normalized the situation and residents are enjoying a continuous supply of potable water at normal pressures.

There have also been similar improvements in Manning's Hill, lower Lawrence Tavern, Mount Ogle & Temple Hall.

In fact, Mr Speaker, the Jamaica Water Supply Improvement Project has been so successful, that it has won the 2012 "Project of the Year Award" sponsored by the Jamaica Institution of Engineers.

## **GIVING THANKS**

Before I close Mr. Speaker, and in accordance with the vision of Voltaire who said, "**Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well**", I say thank you to those who have played a significant role in my achieving the level of success I have enjoyed, as both a Member of Parliament and as the Minister of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change.

Mr. Speaker, I give thanks for having the distinction of being the longest serving Chairman of the Peoples National Party. Additionally, I am now serving the Constituency of North West St Catherine for my sixth consecutive term as Member of Parliament. This record is surpassed in this Honourable House on my side, only by my Leader. Mr Speaker.

To the Councillors of North West St. Catherine, present and past, I give thanks for your representational work, and for your service to all the residents. In turn, thank you to each and every one of my constituents whose unwavering support has enabled me to serve my fellow Jamaicans.

Mr Speaker, I also express my profound gratitude to my family - my sister and brothers - who have been my 'pillar of strength'.

Special thanks to the Board Chairmen and Board Members, the Permanent Secretary, Dr Alwin Hayles, the Director General, Mrs Sharon Crooks, the Heads of Agencies, and the staff of the Ministry. A special thanks also to my Executive Assistant and personal support staff, especially Monica for her 29 years of sterling service. I thank you.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

Mr Speaker, as we balance our social and economic development agendas with the preservation of our environment, there are fundamental choices that we need to make about how we live, and our methods of production and consumption. Our challenge is how to achieve equilibrium between economic development and the preservation of our natural resources. The threats to development are real and imminent. Our socio-economic policies and programmes must be realigned to address these challenges, and we must continue to adopt a communal approach to creating partnerships with all our stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, I have often said it, and I repeat, **“When a ship is sinking, half the ship does not sink, but the entire vessel.”** We must therefore engage in **“Partnering in Governance for Sustainable Development”** as the opportunities to enhance our well-being, and preserve our life-support systems for future generations, are phenomenal. Mr Speaker, as I have said before, **“Teamwork Divides the effort, but multiplies the effect”**.

With this acknowledgement we will continue our collaborative efforts through partnerships and the “joined up” approach, to managing all our four portfolio areas of responsibility within, across Ministries and with ALL our stakeholders.

The sustainable management of Jamaica’s environment, by enabling a sustainable healthy natural and built environment, equitable broad-based land ownership, and access to natural resources in a climate change resilient society, is our overarching goal, as we strive to make “**Jamaica the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business.**”

To this we remain committed Mr Speaker, as we take our position to be among the leaders in the Caribbean and Latin America in environmental stewardship, through “**Partnering in Governance for Sustainable Development**”, as we continue to serve JAMAICA, LAND WE LOVE.