



FOREST NEWS

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Seville Heritage Park, St. Ann



Over 600 Trekkers joined us in celebrating International Day of Forests at Forest Trek 2024...



Jamaica’s Mangroves Being Strengthened under Four-Year Project

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Message from the Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation

Jamaica's approval for the Tree Relocator procurement reflects a commitment to environmental protection by relocating trees...

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Jamaica's Mangroves Being Strengthened under Four-Year Project



(Photo by Adrian Walker) Chief Executive Officer of the Forestry Department & Conservator of Forests, addresses Friday's (January 19) launch of the Jamaica Mangroves Plus Project at the AC Hotel in Kingston.

Jamaica's mangrove ecosystem is being strengthened under a project being implemented by the Forestry Department over a four-year period.

The Jamaica Mangroves Plus Project, which began in late 2023 and will run until 2027, is funded by a grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Chief Executive Officer of the Forestry Department and Conservator of Forests, Ainsley Henry, said the initiative is a "groundbreaking activity," that is aimed at promoting biodiversity and positive approaches to the sustainable management of Jamaica's wetland forest habitats.

"Today, for the first time in the history of our country, we have taken deliberate and concrete steps to codify strategies and actions geared at guiding our efforts to sustainably manage and protect the wetland forests," he noted.

Mr. Henry, who was addressing Friday's (January 19) official launch of the project at the AC Hotel Kingston,

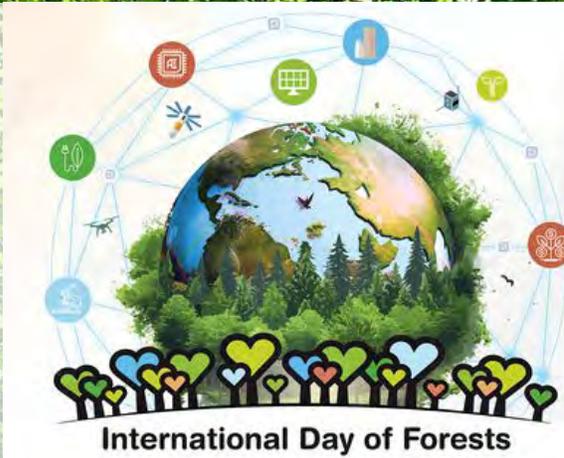
pointed out that mangroves play a pivotal role in preserving the health of the island's coastlines.

The CEO informed that the project is dedicated to restoring, rehabilitating, protecting and conserving the wetland forests as much as possible.

This will be achieved by making the necessary changes to policies; creating a more conducive environment for mangrove sustainability; raising awareness among relevant stakeholders about the significance of mangroves; creating and popularising maps to illustrate wetland forests; proposing zones and areas under consideration for preservation and restoration; developing a dedicated website to provide real time updates on the status and management of wetland forests; designating areas for protection; and rehabilitating and restoring degraded areas.

Source: Jamaica Information Service
Written by: Mickella Anderson-Gordon

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FORESTS AND INNOVATION NEW SOLUTIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD

International Day of Forests



Message from the

Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation

“ Jamaica’s approval for the Tree Relocator procurement reflects a commitment to environmental protection by relocating trees affected by development projects, minimizing environmental impact. Plans to plant replacement trees and expand tree cover demonstrate proactive measures to sustain ecosystems.

The Forestry Department intends to plant replacement trees and increase tree cover to approximately 3,000 across the affected areas using government-owned lands close to the roadworks.

”

Senator the Honourable Matthew Samuda

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Message from the

CEO & Conservator of Forests, Forestry Department

“ With techniques like increasing native planting options, precision planting, social forestry and agroforestry, we are restoring degraded lands and creating resilient forest ecosystems that sequester carbon, mitigate climate change, increase resilience and provide habitat for biodiversity.

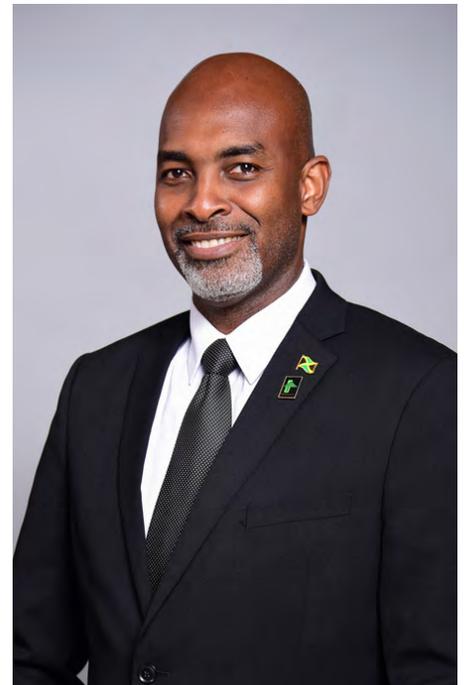
Beyond scientific and technological solutions, innovation in forestry encompasses innovative policies, financial mechanisms, and partnerships that promote sustainable forest management and empower local communities.

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”

Ainsley A. Henry, JP

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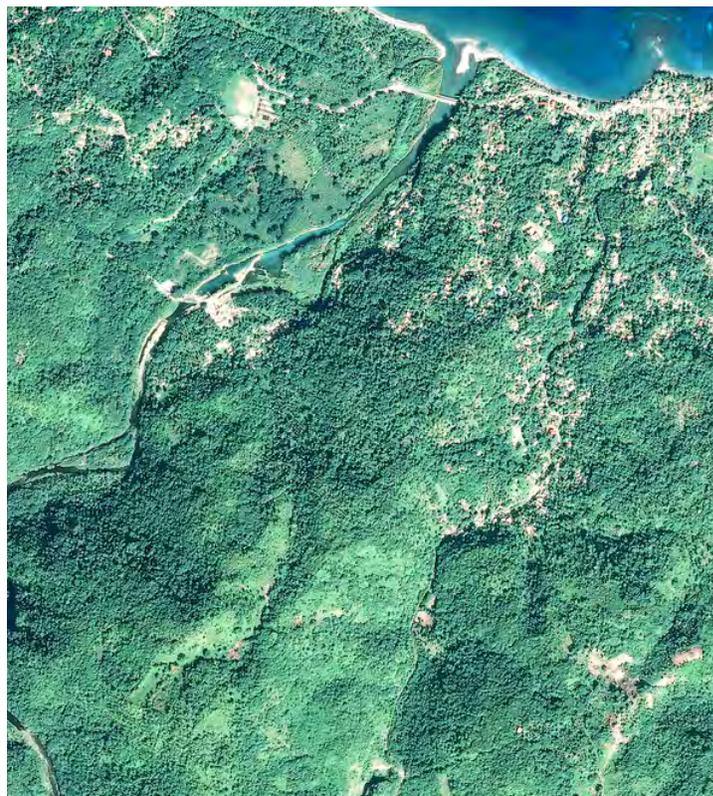
Harnessing Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Forest Management in Jamaica

Jamaica, with its diverse forest types, biodiverse ecosystems, and vibrant flora and fauna, is a treasure trove of natural beauty. However, like many nations, our small island faces the dual challenge of preserving its forests while meeting the socio-economic needs of its people. Technology and innovation have emerged as powerful allies for the Forestry Department (the Agency) in this endeavour, offering transformative solutions for sustainable forest management.

One of the most significant advancements in recent years has been using remote sensing technologies such as satellite imaging and drones. These tools provide invaluable insights into forest cover, land use changes, and ecosystem health reflected in the Land Use/Land Cover Change Assessment (LULCA) we are conducting. Using high-resolution satellite imagery, the Forestry Department can accurately identify deforestation and forest degradation as well identify regeneration and restoration of forests. This data informs decision-making on the practices to be used to ensure the sustainable management of the island's forests.

In addition to technological advancements, innovative forestry practices are crucial in promoting sustainable land management in Jamaica. CEO and Conservator of Forests, Ainsley A. Henry, says, "With techniques like increasing native planting options, precision planting, social-forestry and agroforestry, we are restoring degraded lands and creating resilient forest ecosystems that sequester carbon, mitigate climate change, increase resilience and provide habitat for biodiversity."

Agroforestry, for instance, integrates trees into agricultural landscapes, providing multiple benefits such as soil conservation, carbon sequestration, food security and diversification of income sources for local communities. Similarly, reforestation initiatives aim to restore degraded ecosystems, enhance biodiversity, and mitigate the impacts of climate change. By embracing these nature-based solutions, Jamaica can create resilient landscapes that support both ecological integrity and human well-being.



Satellite imagery showing Caenwood Forest Reserve in Portland, surrounding communities (Caenwood, Cooling Spring, Union and Hope Bay) and the lower course of Swift River where it meets the sea.

While technology and innovation offer immense potential for sustainable forest management in Jamaica, challenges remain. Limited access to technology, inadequate infrastructure, and capacity constraints hinder widespread adoption and implementation. Moreover, ensuring the inclusivity and collaboration of local communities, policymakers, and private sector groups is essential for the success of forest conservation efforts.

Technology and innovation are indispensable tools in Jamaica's quest for sustainable forest management. By leveraging these tools and other innovative strategies, we can enhance our ability to monitor, conserve, and restore our precious forests.

Forestry Department to supply trees via e-commerce platform

By June 2024, customers will have expanded options to purchase a wider variety of products and services from the Forestry Department's (the Agency) e-commerce platform. Among the products to be introduced are seedlings and potted plants, which will be paired with the convenience of shipping services. Launched in January, this e-commerce facility aims to widen access to the Agency's offerings for customers across the island who are unable to visit its centralised nurseries in Constant Spring, St. Andrew; Moneague, St. Ann; and Williamsfield, Manchester.

During the Agency's Plant Sale on March 21 in Montego Bay, St. James, Kadeon Crighton Mullings, the Director of Marketing and Sales at the Forestry Department, announced the forthcoming benefits of the e-commerce platform. Mrs. Crighton Mullings emphasised that "This digital platform will enable citizens from various regions, including St. James and St. Mary, to actively contribute to tree cover by enhancing their accessibility to seedlings and plants".

Beyond seedling and plant acquisitions, the e-commerce platform and shipping services will also facilitate local and international transactions for other products, including canvas prints of Jamaica's forests and the Manual of Dendrology.



A snapshot of the Forestry Department's e-commerce platform, accessible through its website, www.forestry.gov.jm

Mrs. Crighton Mullings explained that the decision to host the sale at the Agency's Catherine Hall office was strategic and sought to address persistent demand for increased access to seedlings and potted plants in the western region. To facilitate seamless transactions, customers were offered the option to pre-order seedlings and potted plants online, allowing them to secure their purchases for collection at the Plant Sale.

The Plant Sale was one of the activities done by the Agency to celebrate the International Day of Forests.



Customers line up to purchase or collect pre-ordered seedlings and potted plants at the Forestry Department's Plant Sale on International Day of Forests, March 21 held at the Catherine Hall regional office in Montego Bay, St. James.

Billboards illuminate Mangroves on International Day of Forests



Ainsley A. Henry, CEO of the Forestry Department and Conservator of Forests (centre), takes a photo with Dainalyn Swaby (left) from the Food and Agriculture Organization and Italee Patterson from the Protected Areas Branch at the National Environment and Planning Agency at the unveiling of the recently installed Jamaica Mangroves Project billboard on March 21, International Day of Forests.

On International Day of Forests, March 21, the Forestry Department, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), unveiled one of two billboards installed for the Jamaica Mangroves Plus Project to raise awareness about mangroves.

Passers-by can view the billboards on Windward Road, Kingston, just below the intersection with Manley Boulevard, and at the stoplight in Falmouth, Trelawny.

The Jamaica Mangroves Plus Project is the first step in the implementation of the ten-year National Mangrove and Swamp Forest Management Plan (NMSFMP) (2023-2033). The project is being funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented through the FAO.



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Forest Trek 2024

Sponsored by:



Over 600 Trekkers joined us in celebrating International Day of Forests at Forest Trek 2024 in the forests of Seville, St. Ann on Saturday, March 16. Hikers at different fitness levels took to the 9km trail and our newly introduced 1km Forest Funland Trail for children under 11 years old. Rated at level 6, the hikers on the 9km trail had to be reasonably fit to climb the ascending hills, which gave them panoramic views of the coast. As they hiked beneath the forest canopy, they learned about the flora, fauna and innovative solutions implemented in the forest. Despite the challenging trail, they persevered and even stopped to plant native trees on the trail. We look forward to an even more rejuvenating and positively challenging experience at the next Forest Trek.



Photo Highlights



Innovative Techniques for Preventing Forest Fires



There are innovative techniques you can use to prevent forest fires caused by burning waste and clearing land by fire for agriculture (slash-and-burn).

Try these:

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

Utilize municipal garbage disposal services.



Lessen the need to burn domestic waste.



Innovation is a smaller price to pay than millions of dollars lost in crops and property damaged by forest fires.

Investing in innovative waste disposal and agriculture techniques preserves forests for the benefit of small forest dependent communities and the entire country for current and future generations.

Mulching and Composting

Mulching involves covering the land with organic materials like wood shavings which helps suppress weed growth and retain moisture in the soil.



Composting organic waste and using the compost as a soil amendment can also improve soil fertility and structure without the need for burning.



Agroforestry

Agroforestry combines agriculture and forestry practices by integrating trees and crops on the same piece of land.



This approach can help maintain soil fertility, prevent erosion, and provide additional income streams for farmers while reducing the need for land clearance.



Grazing Animals

Introducing grazing animals such as goats or sheep to the land can help control vegetation growth naturally.



However, this method requires careful management to prevent overgrazing and degradation of the land.



Mechanical Clearing

Instead of relying on manual labor to clear land through slash-and-burn techniques, machinery such as bulldozers, excavators, or tractors can be used to clear vegetation.



This method is more efficient and allows for selective clearing while minimizing soil disturbance.



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