





# REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION IN THE COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN

***March 20-21, 2013  
The Knutsford Court Hotel  
Kingston, Jamaica***



*improving management for the  
environment*



*Photo Credit: Flickr/Theron Trowbridge*

# WELCOME

DAY ONE // WEDNESDAY, MAR. 20

On behalf of the Jamaica Environment Trust, the World Resources Institute, the Access Initiative, Jamaicans for Justice, The Mona School of Business and the Access to Information Unit of the Government of Jamaica and many collaborating partners, welcome to this **Regional Conference on Freedom of Information Laws (FOI) in the Caribbean – Improving Management for the Environment**.

This Regional Conference has been organized to provide an opportunity for dialogue and sharing of experiences on the adoption and implementation of FOI laws in the Caribbean as well as outlining regional possibilities for advancement and collaboration.

We have designed the agenda to allow us to look at successes and challenges the region faces as well as encourage Government and civil society representatives to make new commitments to promote greater transparency and citizen engagement in government decision making.

## Objectives:

- **Identify challenges and promote the more effective implementation of FOI laws in participating Commonwealth Caribbean countries**  
Explore the state of FOI in the Caribbean, identify challenges to implementation and opportunities to promote FOI in participating countries.
- **Provide a platform for dialogue, future planning and sharing of experiences in the Caribbean**  
Facilitate dialogue between civil society and government institutions to develop actionable plans necessary to promote, entrench and sustain improvement in the implementation of the rights of access to information, and public participation in the participating Caribbean countries.
- **Identify the institutional linkages between FOI and Open Government data initiatives and develop strategies for convergence**  
Increase the awareness of the Open Government Data movement and the role of key actors, including civil society FOI practitioners, government institutions, the media, technology intermediaries and citizens in crafting the emergence of an Open Data Ecosystem that builds on, and is in harmony with the existing FOI institutional framework.

This is an important time in the history of the Caribbean and there is a new opportunity to adopt powerful and effective legal, institutional and practice reforms to advance progress in governance. It is our hope that all the partners and participants in this event will forge strong alliances and make commitments to join regional processes.

## 9:00 AM // REGISTRATION

## 9:30 AM // WELCOME AND OPENING

MS DIANA MCCAULAY, Chief Executive Officer, Jamaica Environment Trust  
MRS CHARMAINE GOMES, Sustainable Development Officer, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean  
THE HONOURABLE SANDRA FALCONER, Office of the Prime Minister, Jamaica

## 10:00 AM // SESSION ONE

### **Regional Instrument for Latin America and the Caribbean: Principle 10 - Rio Declaration (Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice)**

*Chairperson:*

- MRS CHARMAINE GOMES, Sustainable Development Officer, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

*Discussants:*

- MS CONSTANCE NALEGACH-ROMERO, International Negotiator, Ministry of Environment, Chile
- MS LEONIE BARNABY, Ministry of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change, Jamaica
- MRS TIRSIS QUEZADA, Director of Planning and Environment, Ministry of Environment, Dominican Republic

## 11:15 AM // COFFEE BREAK

## 11:30 AM // SESSION TWO

### **Freedom of Information in the Caribbean: Progress and Challenges**

Panel Discussion: The introduction, development and state of FOI legislation in the Caribbean

*Chairperson:*

MS LAURA NEUMAN, Associate Director, The Carter Center





Photo Credit: Adrian Creary

## DAY TWO // THURSDAY, MAR. 21

9:00 AM // REGISTRATION

9:30 AM // SESSION FIVE

**PANEL: Enforcement Models and Mechanisms**

*Chairperson:*

MR DAMIAN COX, Director of Access to Information Unit, Jamaica

*Discussants:*

MS LAURA NEUMAN, Associate Director, The Carter Center

MRS JENNIFER P. DILBERT, Information Commissioner for the Cayman Islands

MRS DOROTHY PINE-MCLARTY, Chairperson of the Access to Information Tribunal of Jamaica

Q&A

10:15 AM // COFFEE BREAK

10:30 AM // SESSION SIX

**Working Groups: Regional Partnerships and Action Planning**

A. Regional Instrument on Principle 10 and The Caribbean

B. Open Government Partnership

12:00 PM // LUNCH

1:00 PM // SESSION SIX (CON'T)

**Working Groups: National Implementation of FOI and Open Data**

C. Open Data Opportunities

D. Assessment of priority actions for FOI implementation in participating countries and development of action plans

2:30 PM // PRESENTATION OF ACTION PLANS

3:30 PM // CLOSING

*Discussants:*

PROFESSOR FAY DURRANT, Department of Library and Information Studies, University of the West Indies

MR DAMIAN COX, Director of Access to Information Unit, Jamaica

MR OSCAR WILLIAM-SELGADO, Attorney-at-Law, Office of the Ombudsman, Belize

MR ALISTER THOMAS, Ombudsman, Antigua and Barbuda

Q&A

1:00 PM // LUNCH

2:00 PM // SESSION THREE

**PANEL: Freedom of Information as a Tool for Better Governance**

*Chairperson:*

MS DIANA MCCAULAY, CEO, Jamaica Environment Trust

*Discussants:*

DR CAROLYN GOMES, Chairperson, ATI Advisory Stakeholders Committee, Jamaica

MR BRENT FULLER, Journalist, The Caymanian Compass

MS DANIELLE ANDRADE, Legal Director, Jamaica Environment Trust

MRS AUDREY MATURA-SHEPHERD, Vice President, Oceana, Belize

Q&A

3:15 PM // SESSION FOUR

**PLENARY: Open Government Data, Open Government Partnerships and FOI**

■ DR MAURICE MCNAUGHTON, Mona School of Business & Management, University of West Indies

■ MRS CAROLE EXCELL, Senior Associate, World Resources Institute

Open Government Data and FOI: Philosophical Differences and Institutional Synergy - Crafting a Roadmap towards Convergence

■ MRS SONIA JACKSON, Director General, STATIN, Jamaica

National Statistics and FOI - Implications

■ MS ELISA CALZA, OD4D Project Director, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Open Data for Development: Emerging Impacts and Potential of Open Data for Public Policy in Latin America and the Caribbean

■ MR JAN VOORDOUW, Programme Director, Panos Caribbean

■ MRS PETRE WILLIAMS-RAYNOR, Senior Programme Officer, Panos Caribbean

Media: Data Journalism - A New Paradigm for Investigative Journalism and Story Telling

Q&A

5:00 PM // CLOSING



# ORGANIZERS AND SPONSORS

## **Jamaica Environment Trust**

The Jamaica Environment Trust is a non-profit, non-governmental membership organization operating in the island of Jamaica. We were formed in 1991 and our main focus is environmental education and advocacy. ([www.jamentrust.org](http://www.jamentrust.org))

## **The Access Initiative**

The Access Initiative is the world's largest network of civil society organizations dedicated to ensuring that local communities have the rights and abilities to gain access to information and to participate in decisions that affect their lives and their environment. ([www.accessinitiative.org](http://www.accessinitiative.org))

## **Jamaicans for Justice**

Founded in 1999, Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ) is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-violent citizens' rights action organisation that advocates for good governance and improvements in state accountability and transparency. ([jamaicansforjustice.org](http://jamaicansforjustice.org))

## **Government of Jamaica - Access to Information Unit**

The Access to Information Unit has been established to spearhead and guide the implementation and administration of the Access to Information Act 2002. The Unit falls under the Office of the Prime Minister. ([www.ati.gov.jm](http://www.ati.gov.jm))

## **Mona School of Business, University of the West Indies**

UWI's mission is to unlock West Indian potential for economic and cultural growth by high quality teaching and research aimed at meeting critical regional needs, by providing West Indian society with an active intellectual centre and by linking the West Indian community with distinguished centres of research and teaching in the Caribbean and overseas. ([myspot.mona.uwi.edu/msbm](http://myspot.mona.uwi.edu/msbm))

## **Commonwealth Foundation (Sponsor)**

The Commonwealth Foundation is a development organisation with an international remit and reach, uniquely situated at the interface between government and civil society. ([www.commonwealthfoundation.com](http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com))

## **United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Sponsor)**

ECLAC, which is headquartered in Santiago, Chile, is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations. It was founded with the purpose of contributing to the economic development of Latin America, coordinating actions directed towards this end, and reinforcing economic ties among countries and with other nations of the world. ([www.eclac.cl](http://www.eclac.cl))

## **Office of the Information Commissioner - Cayman Islands (Sponsor)**

The Information Commissioner's Office in the Cayman Islands is an independent entity that promotes access rights to Government records and monitors the compliance of public authorities with the Freedom of Information Law, 2007. ([www.infocomm.ky](http://www.infocomm.ky))