

CLAWRENET

1st ANNUAL MEETING

BARBADOS

2 - 4 OCTOBER 2000-10-04

HAITI COUNTRY REPORT

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Haiti is located in the high latitude tropics, between 18-23 degrees north. Its position and mountainous terrain (with peaks up to 2,684 meters and few arable plains) have created extremes of weather and temperature regimes which vary greatly with altitude (Erlich et al, 1985). Haiti's land area of 27,700 km² is primarily mountainous: 63% of the land has slopes greater than 20%, over 40% of all lands are above 400 meters in elevation, and only 29% has slopes less than 10%. Rainfall ranges from 300 mm in the northwest peninsula to 3,000 mm in the mountains of the southwest. Extreme events, hurricanes, droughts and floods are quite frequent.

Due to its mountainous nature and its high population of almost eight million persons on that relatively small surface area, Haiti relies upon a disproportionate amount of steep hillside to meet much of its agricultural production. Erosion is thus the most serious problem affecting the agricultural sector, with an annual loss of about 36,000,000 tons, which is more than 10 tons/ha/year. The overwhelming environmental problem of the country is thus soil erosion that has lead to declining agricultural yields, damage of downstream lands, the devaluation of water development projects and the destruction of coastal marine resources. Most hillsides are highly eroded and most widely practiced cropping systems encourage continued erosion.

With limited economic growth and resources, and severe infrastructure problems, Haiti remains vulnerable to environmental degradation. Two or more crops a year are grown in most areas as a result of bimodal rainfall distribution and the possibilities of multicropping.

Institutions responsible for the management of the environment in Haiti

INSTITUTIONS	DIRECTIONS, SERVICES & SATELLITE ORGANISM	TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS
MDE	Minister's Staff Direction General Technical Direction OSAMH	Policies & Strategies for Environment Management ATTPF: Forest management and conservation, natural parks, buffer zones, legal and institutional aspects Water policies: management of used waters
MARNDR	Direction Natural Resources SNRE, SPNS, SDRT, SRF, SIGR	Management of: lands, forest, surface and groundwater, watershed, marine, meteorology
MPCE	DAPTE (Direction of the Territory Management and Environment Protection)	Global and functional zoning of the national territory; Definitions of management strategies for the territory
MTPTC	BME EDH Direction of Urbanism Direction of "Cleaning/ Assainissement) SNEP	Mineral and energy resources exploration and exploitation ; Hydroelectricity Runoff, industrial and used waters; Drinking water distribution

Note: Since the major part of the territory, including the mountains, is used for agriculture, the MARNDR has always been considered as the most responsible for the renewable natural resources management. This may be understood through its name.

However, the newly-created Ministry of the Environment (1994) should be able to play a major role in that matter; but its organic law has not been approved yet by the Parliament; so that its mission is not very clear.

Moreover, there is a National Commission for the Environment” (CNE) consisting of the Prime Minister and the Ministers of the MDE, the MARNDR and the MTPTC. A National Environmental Action Plan (PAE) has been elaborated, whose implementation requires structures and funds not really guaranteed so far.

HOT SPOTS

- Dispersion of the responsibilities regarding the natural resources management;
- Lack of coordinating authority;
- Lack of financial resources;
- Poor land tenure;
- Lack of spatial and temporal continuity regarding natural resources management.

BRIGHT SPOTS

- **ELABORATION OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT POLICY (MARNDR / NATIONAL)**
 - Responsibilization of the local collectivities
 - Better involvement of the concerned institutions
 - Better comprehension of the natural resource management issues.
 - Possibility for collecting some relevant data from ONG and other institutions.
- **ISSUES ON DATA AVAILABILITY**
 - Since 1986, there have been serious political and administrative problems resulting in the depletion of data collecting systems. These days, efforts are being made in that matter:
 - Data on agricultural production (at least 10 years)
 - Pluviometry (about 60 years for some stations)
 - Economy
- **INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTS**
 - IHS
 - Programming and Survey Unit / MARNDR