



ST. LUCIA NATIONAL TRUST

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PRESS RELEASE

Saint Lucia National Trust initiates dialogue on Beach protection

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The Saint Lucia National Trust met with partner agencies on Wednesday, September 3rd, to discuss issues pertinent to beach management and protection. Amongst the many issues tabled for discussion was sand-mining, recreation on beaches, safety on beaches, poaching of turtles, access to beaches and sale or leasing of the Queens Chain. The objectives of this discussion were to:

- a) develop a clear understanding of the many challenges being experienced with regards to the protection of the island's beaches;
- b) identify the existing and emerging policy and legal framework for beach protection; and
- c) develop specific interventions to address the problems to be identified.

At the meeting, various departmental representatives made short presentations on the issues facing them as regards beach protection and management. These presentations were made by groups such as the Sustainable Development and Environment Section which presented a draft report on sand-mining in Saint Lucia, the Department of Fisheries which presented on poaching, the Crown Lands department which presented on beach access and the Saint Lucia Life Saving Association which presented on beach safety.

A major finding of this meeting was that there is a need for greater enforcement and monitoring capacity among agencies and that there is a need for a greater push towards educating the general public. All the participants of the meeting agreed however, that there is a lack of funding and adequate resources to properly undertake the duties of enforcement and education. Department representatives also provided their views on the particular interventions to be implemented to help address the problem. As a case in point the Saint Lucia Life Savings Association re-established a relationship with the National Conservation Authority and the Crown Lands Department to address safety on the island's beaches.

This meeting is considered to be the commencement of a conversation with referral agencies on beach protection and will continue as long as there are clear opportunities for addressing the problems. As a follow up to this first meeting the trust will be meeting with a group of lawyers who have volunteered to assist with exploring legal issues related to beach protection.

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