

How to take action to STOP marine pollution?

MAKE A COMMITMENT AND IMPLEMENT THE LBS PROTOCOL!

STUDY - All countries that signed the Cartagena Convention are now urged to ratify or accede to the LBS Protocol. To do so, a government's Ministry of Foreign or External Affairs must first obtain a certified copy of the LBS Protocol from the Government of Columbia, which is the Depository for the LBS Protocol, and study it carefully.

DECIDE - Each country must then decide whether, in a case where it has already signed, it is ready to ratify, or in a case where it has not signed, it is ready to accede to the LBS Protocol.

RATIFY OR ACCEDE - Having decided, the country should then deposit the instrument of accession with the Government of Columbia as Depository. This is important since ratification or accession by at least nine countries of the WCR is required before the Protocol can enter into force and become a legally binding instrument.

THE NEXT STEP - Countries are expected to begin or continue specific mitigative actions within specified time periods after the LBS Protocol comes into force. Grace periods are allowed in particularly needful situations.

Despite the fact that some countries have not yet acceded to or ratified the protocol, many have already begun to take positive actions to control and reduce pollution from land-based sources and activities. The LBS Protocol can further help countries to realize existing and future objectives.

BENEFIT - Through accession to the Protocol, Governments can receive expert guidance on ways to control and reduce pollution impacts. The Secretariat to the Cartagena Convention and its protocols can help provide countries with guidance and scientific/technical information and expertise on reducing priority pollutants. ■



Fitting into the Bigger Picture

The first global concern for the state of the marine environment was officially embodied in the many volumes of the United Nations Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) compiled over two decades ago. Ten years after UNCLOS the historic Rio Conference on Environment and Development was convened in 1992 in Brazil. An action plan emerged of global environmental concerns embodied in Agenda 21 and a funding facility known as the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) was established.

We cannot forget the small countries in these large global fora. A Programme of Action for the Small Island Developing States (SIDS/POA) was devised in 1994 in Barbados. This Programme of Action was reaffirmed in 2005 in the Mauritius Declaration with one of the objectives being the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. The Global Programme of Action (GPA) was crafted in Washington DC in 1995 and was the forerunner to the LBS Protocol under the 1983 Cartagena Convention. The LBS Protocol falls within the framework of the Assessment and Management of Environmental Pollution (AMEP) Sub-Programme of the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP). The UNEP Secretariat for the LBS Protocol has been located in Kingston since 1986 and is hosted by the Government of Jamaica.

FUTURE HOPE

Signing and meeting the obligations of the LBS Protocol will help to reduce priority pollutants in the Wider Caribbean Region. It will also promote co-operation in monitoring, research and exchange of scientific and technical information on land-based pollution in countries of the Wider Caribbean. Caribbean people can hope to get financial and technical help in eliminating present pollutants, preventing future pollution problems, and promoting sustainable agriculture, industry, tourism and fisheries.

Governments of the Wider Caribbean Region must take responsibility for protecting and sustaining the quality of the coastal and marine environment of the Caribbean for current and future generations. We cannot afford to wait any longer. Our future development and livelihoods are threatened. We must take action now.



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For the status of the LBS protocol you can visit:
<http://www.cep.unep.org>

Photos: IMA staff and Joy Rudder



GETTING TO THE SOURCE...

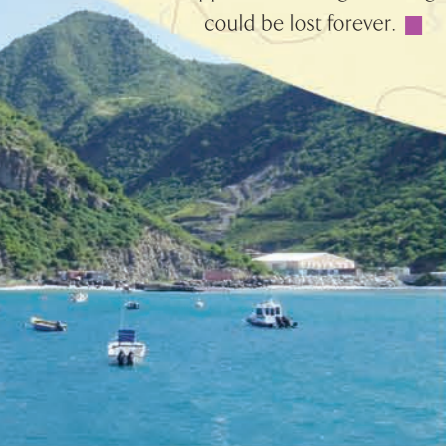


THE LAND-BASED
SOURCES OF
MARINE POLLUTION
(LBS) PROTOCOL

... and
improving
OUR
future

Our THREATENED Caribbean

The Wider Caribbean Region stretches from the Bahamas in the North to Trinidad and Tobago in the South, Barbados to the East and all the islands in between; also the Caribbean coasts and watersheds of South and Central America. The Caribbean Sea that links us all is threatened by pollution that originates on land. This pollution threatens the livelihood of millions: from village-based fisherfolk to multi-national hotel chain owners. Creatures which inhabit streams, rivers, estuaries, mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs, and open ocean areas are in danger. This pollution erodes the basis for the survival of entire human communities: fisheries, tourist attractions and valuable food supplies. Income generating opportunities could be lost forever. ■



Here's HELP!

The Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention) of 1983 outlines the threats to the continued development of the Caribbean Sea and what we can do to help protect it. Its first protocol deals with Oil Spills; its second protocol is designed to conserve Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) and most recently, the LBS Protocol addresses the problem of Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution.

This Protocol identifies the major sources of land-based pollution and offers ways for decreasing their negative impacts on the coastal and marine environment. If all countries of the Wider Caribbean Region formally ratify/accede and meet the obligations of the LBS protocol, the fate of our Caribbean Sea—and our lives, can be changed from a dismal future to hope for sustainable development of the peoples of the Wider Caribbean and protection of the Caribbean Sea. ■

WHAT'S THERE TO CARE FOR?

The Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea may seem infinite when we stand on the seashore and look towards the horizon. Blue sea seems then, to go on forever. Much of the waste that enters the sea is unintentional, or we send it there because we think the sea will swallow it up indefinitely. Today, the effects of pollution from land are impacting human health as can be seen in diseased fish and other creatures, in negative effects to nearshore reefs, mangroves, seafood and water quality.

Mangroves are often seen as wastelands where mosquitoes breed. Most are cleared and drained to build coastal resorts, roads or air strips or are used as garbage dumps. Natural healthy mangroves buffer

young creatures. The health of this offshore nursery determines the productivity of fish and other marine stocks later on. They are also the feeding grass for turtles. When pollution from land reaches seagrass beds, creatures may sicken and often die or pass the poisons they ingest on to other creatures which eat them. This includes food consumed by humans.

Coral reefs are the calling cards of many Caribbean nations. From amateur snorkellers to professional divers, from glass-bottom boat operators and tour guides to sport fishermen and sun-tanning sea bathers, they all depend on the health and pristine nature of coral reefs. Reefs protect the land from storm surges and provide livelihoods to tourism operators, local fishermen and indigenous coastal communities.

the land from storm surges that could destroy coastal communities; they slow the flow of flooded rivers preventing damage to coral reefs. In the quiet mangroves juvenile fish and crustaceans find a safe place to thrive; other reptiles, mammals and fish make mangroves their permanent homes.

Seagrass beds are sometimes cleared by hotel owners eager to offer tourists white sand beaches. But these important habitats provide a home for tiny fish and other



They may take thousands of years to grow but can be quickly wiped out by heavy loads of silt, other forms of pollution run-off that reach them via the land, and improper coastal development. ■

How does the LBS PROTOCOL help us?

- It alerts us to the problem of pollution from the land.
- It identifies the main pollutants affecting the Caribbean Sea. These are **domestic sewage**, including toilet waste (black water); discharges from showers, wash basins, kitchens and laundries (grey water); and wastes from small industries; and, **agricultural non-point sources of pollution** meaning polluted runoff and contaminated sediment generated from land clearing, cultivation of crops and rearing of animals that finds its way to the streams, rivers, estuaries and the sea via rainfall, atmospheric deposition, drainage and seepage.
- It identifies other land-based pollutants of concern that originate from chemical
- It provides scientific standards for safe effluent discharges into the marine environment.
- It encourages the sharing of information and expertise between all countries of the Wider Caribbean Region and links them to international sources of scientific and technical expertise.
- It provides information on funding sources and mechanisms for the implementing of programmes and projects to reduce marine pollution.

industries, extractive and mining industries, pulp and paper industries, manufacturing industries, sugar refining and distilleries, food processing and intensive farming.

- It describes the effects of land based sources of marine pollution on human health and habitat health.
- It gives technical guidelines for determining levels of marine pollution.

- It provides a means for productive new diplomatic dialogue on environmental issues between signatories and supporters of the protocol. ■

