



**STATEMENT FROM THE JAMAICA ENVIRONMENT TRUST (JET)  
ON THE ISSUE OF BUILDING A PORT FACILITY AND/OR LOGISTICS HUB  
IN THE PORTLAND BIGHT PROTECTED AREA INCLUDING THE GOAT ISLANDS**

In view of the many allegations being made on the above issue, JET would again like to state the organization's position on this matter:

- 1) JET is not opposed to the building of a port facility or logistics hub, or indeed any type of commercial or industrial development, anywhere in Jamaica. **We are not opposed to development; but we are for sustainable development.** This is also official government policy as outlined in Vision 2030 and numerous other policy documents. Indeed, in her budget speech on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the Prime Minister said: "Mr Speaker, I now turn my attention to what is perhaps the most pressing and critical task before us, that is, the challenge of achieving meaningful economic growth and sustainable development."
- 2) What JET is opposed to is the construction of any large industrial or commercial facility in Jamaica's most protected area of land and sea without the required due diligence and public consultation.
- 3) Nor are we "reflexively opposed" to the current proposal. The issues we are raising are follows:
  - There is **insufficient information** in the public domain. We have called for the GOJ to (a) release the criteria for site selection, which specific sites were considered and rejected and (b) full details of the scope of the project, so that alternatives can be considered.
  - There has been **insufficient public consultation**. Not even the NGO that has been managing the protected area since 1998 had any official notification that this was being considered.
  - **Critical government agencies are being sidelined** – NEPA has no information before it, at the time of writing.
  - The Portland Bight Protected Area and the Galleon Harbour and Three Bays fish sanctuaries were **declared by the Government of Jamaica** after due consideration, consultation and study. They are **held in trust as protected areas for the people of Jamaica**. Any development in such areas must be approached with the utmost care, caution and transparency.
  - The nature of the coastal resources of the Portland Bight Protected Area are such that they are very likely to be **severely impacted** by large scale port development – but full details are needed. These impacts are likely to include **increased vulnerability to storm surge**.
  - The Portland Bight Protected Area fisheries and associated occupations **currently provide livelihoods** for a reported 4,000 families in the area. This figure has been questioned, but we want to make sure that we do not lose sight

of the fact that there are existing livelihoods dependent on the integrity of the protected area.

JET is profoundly disappointed at the tone and quality of the discourse emanating from Government sources on this matter. The environmental sector is a signatory to the Partnership for Jamaica, JET's CEO, Diana McCaulay, is the environmental representative for that important committee, and we do not believe that some of the rhetoric we have seen in the media is consistent with the ideals expressed in that document, nor do we feel the PFJ's commitment to openness and transparency have been met.

JET calls again for the GOJ to release details of exactly what is being contemplated for this facility, so that a complete assessment of the environmental, social and economic impacts can be done.

***Jamaica Environment Trust  
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