



Management of Marine Resources as a Binding Force in the Eastern Caribbean*

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ABSTRACT

The history of the Commonwealth Caribbean is replete with failed attempts at various degrees of economic and political integration. The Caribbean Sea itself is rather poor in both living and non-living resources, and the entire region—land and water—is suffering from varying degrees of environmental degradation. This article suggests that regional co-operation in the management of marine resources, particularly in the Anglophone islands of the Eastern Caribbean, could serve as an ‘engine of integration’—something previous attempts lacked. There is no assurance that such an effort would be successful, however, despite good intentions, co-operation in many areas at present and some real cultural affinities. The centrifugal forces at work here are still very powerful, including parochialism and the scarcity of resources other than sun, sand and sea.

INTRODUCTION

It is true that centrifugal tendencies seem always to be just below the surface, and even openly erupt from time to time. But it can be said that the history of regionalism in the English-speaking Caribbean demonstrates that tendencies to pull apart at times are but mere strains within Caribbean familyhood, and are firmly contained within the stronger overarching imperative towards unity.¹

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This romantic view of unity and disunity in the Commonwealth Caribbean, by Roderick G. Rainford, Secretary-General of CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, is typical of attitudes expressed for decades past by writers in the region and beyond. Yet most of Rainford's article is, in fact, devoted to a discussion of CARICOM's problems, obstacles and failures, its hopes and plans, with little said about whatever accomplishments it may claim, beyond mere survival.

The literature on the subject is abundant, and only a few references to it are necessary here. Our purpose is not to analyze in detail the problems facing Caribbean unity, but rather to suggest that it may evolve, slowly to be sure, in a very prosaic fashion, as a result of attempts to deal pragmatically with the marine environment. We shall therefore survey briefly the marine resources and the environmental problems of the Caribbean, then consider how resource development can be married to environmental protection on a regional basis within the context of the new Law of the Sea. We then summarize the familiar obstacles to regional co-operation and the more hopeful work in the region of a variety of institutions, and conclude with an assessment of the likely fate of regional resource management during the next decade.

MARINE RESOURCES OF THE CARIBBEAN

The Wider Caribbean Region has been defined by UNEP (the United Nations Environment Programme) as the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and all of their littoral States and areas south of 30°N, including such outliers as El Salvador, the Bahamas and the Guianas. Our concern is with the Caribbean, and especially the Eastern Caribbean, but the larger region is important for a number of reasons.

The Caribbean Sea itself has a very complex geologic structure, consisting of several basins separated by ridges. It has little shallow water: half of it is over 4000 m deep and four-fifths is over 2000 m deep. The continental shelf around it averages 10–15 nautical miles in breadth and, except for a few places in the west and south, its maximum breadth is less than 30 nautical miles. The continental slope is generally very steep, but the continental rise is extensive. The water temperature is high, the overall annual average being 27°C. The zone of maximum concentrations of phosphates and nitrates, major nutrients, is between 600 and 1000 m below the surface. Typically, a layer of warm water overlays the cold bottom water all year long and there is little upwelling of cold water from below.

Some nutrients are brought in from the mouths of the Amazon,

Orinoco and other rivers by surface currents, but in general the Caribbean does not support much marine life. The Eastern Caribbean is an area of only moderate phytoplankton production (150–250 mg of carbon per cubic meter per day), and low to moderate zooplankton production (less than 50 mg/m³) in the upper 100 m of water around the Leeward Islands and 51–200 mg/m³ around the Windward Islands.²

The three principal ecosystems of the Caribbean are coral reefs, mangrove swamps and seagrass beds. These are all interrelated and fragile in varying degrees, and they harbor most of the marine life of the region. Although there are no extensive continental shelves in the Eastern Caribbean, there are some small banks near Antigua, Barbuda and Anguilla which generate some nutrients by water mixing. There has never been a detailed inventory of the biota of the Caribbean, not even of the commercially valuable species. Estimates of total populations, distribution and potential harvests vary widely and are constantly changing. All agree, however, that the natural conditions described above preclude large commercial fisheries on the order of those in more temperate waters such as the northwest Atlantic, the North Sea and the southeast Pacific.

Marine life here is typical of that of the tropics, both on land and in the sea; many species, few individuals of each species. There are some exceptions, notably the large populations of shrimp in the area from Trinidad to the mouth of the Amazon. This area is also seen to have the greatest potential for finfish as well, but even here the potential is relatively small. Some non-traditional species, such as squid, are grossly underexploited, but 'major commercial fisheries . . . cannot be sustained, with the exception of the existing trawl fisheries off the Guianas.'³ Since this evaluation was written, commercial fishing has increased, particularly from Cuba and Venezuela, but part of this increase has come at the expense of artisanal fishermen and most of it is simply increasing the pressure on stocks that may already be overfished. The most important species in this category are the spiny lobster (especially popular in the French islands), various turtles and conch.

Present hopes for Eastern Caribbean fisheries development center on pelagic fishes (tuna, dolphinfish, kingfish, billfish and flying fish). Although exploitation of these stocks by Eastern Caribbean fishermen has been limited by small fishing boats and inadequate cold storage, development assistance programs to remove these constraints are underway in Grenada, St Vincent, St Lucia, Dominica and Antigua.

Still, there is a certain nervous restraint about these preparations: the actual potential for expansion is unknown for most species. While the present harvest by Eastern Caribbean fleets is relatively small, the same

stocks are targeted by numerous other nations; commercial fishing vessels from Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Scandinavia, the French West Indies and the United States operate within the Exclusive Economic Zone of the EC countries. In the past 3 years, for example, the area has seen a sharp increase in fishing activity by United States vessels in pursuit of swordfish. In some cases, permission has been sought, but more often than not, the vessels operate without the knowledge or consent of Caribbean governments.⁴

There have been many proposals for mariculture projects and a few have actually been started, but so far they have not been very successful. 'Some projects are wildly impractical, while others held promise—but none have demonstrated long-term economic benefits for local economies.'⁴

As with biota, so it is with minerals. There has to date been no systematic, detailed minerals survey of the Caribbean. What we do know about Caribbean geology, however, is not very promising. Of greatest interest in a fuel-poor area, of course, is petroleum. Its greatest potential, because of land-derived sediments, is off the coasts of North and South America; that is, in precisely those areas where production has been great for a long time. 'The broad belt between these places is unfavorable for large accumulations because of the low content of organic matter in the calcareous sediment of the platforms . . . and on the ridges and the floors of the basins . . .'⁵ There are favorable strata for oil and gas, but mainly in deep water. Small oil pools lie under shallow water to the south of Grenada, off the northern coast of Barbados and on Saba Bank between St Kitts-Nevis, Saba and the United States Virgin Islands, and perhaps also in the Grenadines and on land in Montserrat.⁶ It seems unlikely, though, that existing production in Barbados and Trinidad will be augmented very soon or very significantly by offshore wells anywhere in the Eastern Caribbean. Any small amounts for local consumption, however, will be most welcome—if the price is right.

In respect of hard and other minerals, on present indications there appear to exist in the Caribbean undetermined quantities of manganese nodules and manganese dioxide concretions . . . iron ore, titanium, and anhydrite . . . sand, gravel and lime shells; and berite modular concretions. Titanium deposits are found . . . offshore south of Jamaica and Haiti. Surface deposits of manganese nodules have been discovered 200 miles west of Grenada, St. Lucia, and Martinique. . .⁷

It is possible that commercially developable deposits of these or other minerals will be found in the future, but meanwhile mineral production cannot rank very high in development planning in the Eastern Caribbean.

The sea itself can provide resources for the peoples of the Caribbean, and already does so in some ways. Minerals, of course, can be extracted from the sea water itself, but there is no evidence yet that it can yield commercial quantities at reasonable prices here. No hot brines, for example, have been discovered here, as they have been in the Red Sea. The sea can generate energy, however. Of all the forms of marine energy developed so far, the one that is most promising in the Caribbean is OTEC, ocean thermal energy conversion. This system of pumping cold bottom water in pipes through warm surface water uses the temperature gradient to generate electricity. The technology has been developed in experimental projects under similar conditions off Hawaii. Oil prices on the order of those in the late 1970s will undoubtedly stimulate more development and application of OTEC, but until then, most of the islands of the Eastern Caribbean must continue to import petroleum for energy.

The sea is also valuable for transportation. It is, in fact, one of the most heavily trafficked portions of the global sea, criss-crossed with many sea lanes. Large numbers of ships traverse it daily, chiefly oil tankers carrying both crude and refined products northward from Trinidad and Venezuela, and Alaskan oil from Panama to US Gulf ports and to the US Virgin Islands for refining. This is one of the factors that has given this semi-enclosed sea such strategic importance and why the United States insists on controlling it. This also presents opportunities to the island countries, but so far they have been unable to develop their own shipping services more sophisticated or profitable than small-scale and generally inadequate inter-island and cabotage services.

At present—and for the foreseeable future—it would appear that the Caribbean's greatest 'natural resource' is the Caribbean: sea, sun and sand. Tourism has become, in the eyes of many in the region, the great hope for economic salvation. Already it is the chief revenue-producer for a number of the islands, and most of the rest are eagerly seeking investment in tourism facilities and tourists to utilize them. This means more sport fishing, more water skiing, more scuba diving, more people using more beaches. Can the marine environment sustain the ever-increasing pressure of this kind of development? Or any kind of development?

ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Ecology is the interrelations between individual species and their physical environment, which, of course, includes other species. No species of plant or animal can flourish in an environment devoid of the requisites of life and health, and this includes human beings, whose technological marvels can never substitute for a healthy physical environment. Man has lived in the Caribbean for so long and is increasing in numbers and wealth so rapidly that the physical environment is endangered in most places and perhaps irreparably destroyed in others. As the resource base is eroded, the carrying capacity of an ecosystem is reduced, resulting in increased difficulties for its living species, leading to greater distress, diminished numbers and perhaps extinction. This natural law is immutable, and *homo sapiens* is not immune from it—for all its technology. The Caribbean cannot yet be described as Paradise Lost. It is certainly not devastated and probably was never a paradise, but it is in danger.

We already know a great deal about the physical environment of the Caribbean but, as indicated above, not nearly enough. The dearth of detailed and accurate data on the various elements of the environment, especially the marine environment, is clearly a handicap to rational planning for economic development. Nevertheless, we know enough already to understand the major threats to the environment and their causes. They can rather arbitrarily be classified as land-based and sea-based threats and natural hazards. We can summarize them briefly here.

The land-based threats to the marine environment emanate from virtually every human activity on land, especially those connected with contemporary and projected economic development: forest clearing for wood products and agricultural land, road building, oil refineries, urbanization, rudimentary industrialization, construction of tourism facilities, use of agricultural chemicals, all these and more contribute toxins, silt, sewage and solid wastes to the sea, causing measurable damage to its fragile ecosystems. The sea-based threats result from overfishing of some species and wasteful, inefficient harvesting of others. Accidental oil spills and deliberate discharge of oil from tankers, disposal of wastes by ships and so on, all contribute to the deterioration of the marine environment.

Natural hazards are threats only in human eyes; they are simply normal environmental processes that are continually altering the environment irrespective of man's activities or even existence. Nevertheless, they must be taken into account when considering any

kind of resource development. In this region, the most dramatic and frequent natural disasters result from hurricanes and earthquakes. Others include volcanic eruptions, floods, droughts and massive fish kills.

Recently, A. Meriwether Lewis⁸ summarized the environmental problems of the Caribbean island by island. Here is his list for the islands of the Eastern Caribbean:

- *Antigua and Barbuda*: excessive sand removal destroying reefs, overexploitation of lobsters, resort building on beaches.
- *Barbados*: nearshore fisheries overexploited; coastal erosion from dredging and construction stressing reefs; changing water circulation patterns and quality; pollution from sewage, wastes and fertilizer.
- *British Virgin Islands*: mangroves cleared for tourism development causing loss of habitats and increasing sedimentation in seagrass and reef areas; boat anchors damaging reefs; domestic sewage problems.
- *Dominica*: hurricane devastation to reefs; maintenance of primary coastal road encouraging shoreline erosion; oil and ship wastes pollution.
- *Grenada*: overexploitation of all fisheries; beach erosion near tourism centers and airport; coastal tree removal and sand mining increasing erosion; seaborne and solid waste pollution.
- *Montserrat*: overexploitation of fisheries.
- *St Kitts and Nevis*: nearshore fisheries overexploited; coastal erosion from sand removal; sewage pollution from tourism activities; inadequate port facilities.
- *St Lucia*: erosion from forest clearing and sandmining affecting reef and seagrass habitats; tourism construction stressing habitats.
- *St Vincent and the Grenadines*: seaborne tar pollution on beaches; excessive sand mining for construction; waste from yachts.
- *Trinidad and Tobago*: pollution pressure and recreation misuse of Caroni swamp; coastal zone resource use conflicts; overcollecting of turtles and shells.

This list of problems could undoubtedly be augmented by more detailed surveys, but these alone should convince even the most hardened skeptic that uncontrolled economic development brings serious environmental consequences.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW LAW OF THE SEA

Ideology has no place in consideration of this issue. Neither pure *laissez-faire* capitalism nor 'Don't touch a thing!' environmentalism can be helpful in this complex, crowded, strategic and aspiring region. Instead, the true formula for achieving greatest benefit at least cost is: resource development plus environmental protection equals resource management. This formula should be applied at every level: individual, community, country, subregion, region and world. We shall concentrate here on the Caribbean region and more particularly the Eastern Caribbean subregion.

There is no need to recount the history of attempts to unite the islands of the Caribbean, especially the Anglophone islands, both politically and economically, dating back at least to 1671. Even in the past half-century we have seen the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, the Caribbean Commission, the Caribbean Organization, the Federation of the West Indies, the West Indies Associated States and the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) arrive, pause briefly in the spotlight, then vanish, leaving only a vague memory behind. They all accomplished useful things in functional areas—agriculture, health, economics, education, housing, industrial development, weather services and so on—and CARIFTA was especially successful in stimulating intra-regional trade, but none has yet led to economic or political integration. Today we have CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, and its associate OECS, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, each with its common market aspirations, but neither yet being delegated any measure of sovereignty by its members. Each is discussed in some detail below.

Looking at integration efforts around the world over the past half-century, one is struck by a number of clear patterns. The dominant one, of course, is almost universal failure. Why have most of them failed despite the well-known and perfectly valid arguments in their favor? This is not the place for an analysis of this kind, but a couple of observations seem appropriate. Nearly always, the academics and the technocrats strongly support integration, while the politicians are at best lukewarm and the people uninformed and vaguely hostile. This is certainly true in the Caribbean, where even the leadership of Norman Manley, Grantley Adams, Errol Barrow and Eric Williams (prime ministers and political giants in Jamaica, Barbados, Barbados and Trinidad respectively) was insufficient to persuade lesser politicians and the ordinary people to go along with federation. Now we are facing a different situation, especially in the Eastern Caribbean.

Now we have independent, sovereign States with populations no larger than those of large towns or modest-sized cities in larger countries, subsisting on a meager resource base and utterly dependent upon a steady flow of cash from outside in the form of investments, tourism, remittances from their nationals abroad, and loans and grants, facing concentrated problems of economic development hampered by environmental degradation.

The logic of regional co-operation in the management of these problems is inescapable, and has been advanced by many experts. A few samples will suffice to illustrate the point:

What seems to be desirable for the Caribbean is a system whereby the living resources would be subjected to a regional regime for both conservation and utilization and bilateral arrangements for the reciprocal grant of fishing rights would be worked out among the states bordering the Caribbean Sea. (Ref. 7, p. 75.)

... the obligations of conservation and management, monitoring, surveillance and enforcement are generally recognized as being beyond the capabilities of the individual island states ... The apparent alternative is for the islands to harmonize their marine policies and aim for a sustained management of their resources and to develop their respective potentials in exploiting that resource.⁹

The main implication of this analysis is that the islands should concentrate their efforts on acquiring an effective management regime for their exclusive economic zone. However, this regime should be accomplished at minimum cost. To do so, the islands will have to rely on co-operation and the establishment of a regional organization for EEZ management. (Ref. 6, p. 79–80.)

This obvious and long-standing requirement for regional co-operation in the management of marine resources (if not regional management by a regional or subregional government) is now being emphasized by the new Law of the Sea. The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III, 1973–1982) produced the massive, comprehensive United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOS Convention), opened for signature at Montego Bay, Jamaica on 10 December 1982. Most of the major topics covered by this treaty directly affect the Caribbean islands in some degree. They include the various maritime zones: internal waters, territorial sea, continental shelf, exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and archipelagic waters; straits used for international navigation, semi-enclosed seas, protection and preservation of the marine environment, fisheries, marine scientific research and

transfer of marine technology. Of these, the most important for our present topic is the exclusive economic zone.¹⁰

According to Branford Taitt, at the Sixth Caribbean Heads of State Conference at Kingston, Jamaica in 1970, Barbados suggested that the States represented there should be aware of and participate in the new developments in the Law of the Sea 'and if possible to formulate a joint approach to the several issues.'¹¹ The conference approved this motion and established a Working Party on the subject. The Working Party met at St Vincent in July 1970 and recommended, *inter alia*, 'that the Commonwealth Caribbean countries should extend the present limits of their territorial waters; such extension should be oriented towards securing for the Region as a whole optimum benefits from the exploitation of the resources of the sea...' (Ref. 11, p. 30). In November 1971, Barbados hosted a special Ministerial Meeting of the Commonwealth Caribbean Countries on the Law of the Sea and related matters. This meeting ratified the Working Party's recommendations, but went even further: 'It proposed a new subject for Caribbean consideration—the concept of the *Mare Clausum* and the Zone of Economic Jurisdiction.'¹¹

It was Jamaica that proposed this 'matrimonial sea' and it repeated the proposal 7 months later at the Specialized Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Caribbean Countries on the Problems of the Sea, held at Santo Domingo. This was offered as an alternative to the 'patrimonial sea' proposed by Venezuela and incorporated into the Declaration of Santo Domingo of 3 June 1972. Only Trinidad and Tobago of the Commonwealth States represented signed the declaration; Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica abstained because they stood to lose if this notion of each coastal State having a right to claim its own exclusive resource zone were adopted. Guyana objected to the idea of unlimited access to the high seas of the Caribbean, and Barbados took no position at all on the issue. Since then, each of them has gone its own way.

It was not long before Trinidad and Tobago turned against the patrimonial sea/exclusive economic zone concept. According to Lennox Ballah, prominent Trinidadian diplomat,

The late prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Eric Williams, convinced of the overwhelming disaster facing the majority of Caribbean States in respect of the pending new international agreements on the Law of the Sea, called on these States to seek common approaches to protect themselves against what he perceived as an 'impending catastrophe.' He proposed on 15 June 1975 that the Caribbean Committee (CDCC) of the [UN] Economic Commission

for Latin America (ECLA) be convened and that its agenda give the highest priority to the question of a common Caribbean position on the law of the sea aimed specifically at securing international recognition for a special regime for the Caribbean multigovernmental archipelago. (Ref. 7, p. 62).

This proposal received little support, but Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and the Bahamas were especially active at UNCLOS III, concentrating on issues revolving around the territorial sea, EEZ, international seabed regime and marine pollution. Interestingly enough, the new EEZ provision means that effectively there is no area of high seas or international seabed area within the Caribbean Sea, and no Eastern Caribbean State is able to take full advantage of either the continental shelf or EEZ provisions.¹² Nevertheless, each of them has agreed to assume the obligations spelled out in the Convention as well as to accept its benefits.

Part V of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea permits a coastal State to declare an exclusive economic zone, defined as 'an area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea, subject to the specific legal régime established in this Part . . .' (Art. 55) which 'shall not extend beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured.' (Art. 57) Within this zone, 'the coastal State has:

- (a) sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources, whether living or non-living, of the waters superjacent to the sea-bed and of the sea-bed and its subsoil, and with regard to other activities for the economic exploitation and exploration of the zone, such as the production of energy from the water, currents and winds;
- (b) jurisdiction as provided for in the relevant provisions of this Convention with regard to:
 - (i) the establishment and use of artificial islands, installations and structures;
 - (ii) marine scientific research;
 - (iii) the protection and preservation of the marine environment;
- (c) other rights and duties provided for in this Convention.' (Art. 56)

The Convention goes on to enumerate in 18 more articles, some of

them very long and complex, provisions pertaining to, *inter alia*:

- rights and duties of other States in the exclusive economic zone; artificial islands, installations and structures
- conservation of the living resources
- utilization of the living resources
- stocks of marine species that straddle the EEZs of two or more coastal States or an EEZ and the high seas
- highly migratory species
- marine mammals
- right of geographically disadvantaged States
- restrictions on transfer of rights
- enforcement of laws and regulations of the coastal State
- delimitation of the exclusive economic zone between States with opposite or adjacent coasts.

Overall, these provisions confer far more rights on coastal States than they impose obligations. The countries of the Eastern Caribbean, however, considering their proximity to one another and to island and mainland territories of other States and the relatively modest resource endowment of the sea even within 200 nautical miles of their coasts, stand to gain relatively little by exercising these rights while paying heavy costs to fulfill the obligations. A very few samples will serve to illustrate the point:

Article 61:

1. 'The coastal State shall determine the allowable catch of the living resources in its exclusive economic zone.'
2. 'The coastal State, taking into account the best scientific evidence available to it, shall ensure through proper conservation and management measures that the maintenance of the living resources in the exclusive economic zone is not endangered by over-exploitation.'

Article 62:

1. 'The coastal State shall promote the objective of optimum utilization of the living resources in the exclusive economic zone without prejudice to Article 61.'
2. 'The coastal State shall determine its capacity to harvest the living resources of the exclusive economic zone. Where the coastal State does not have the capacity to harvest the entire allowable catch, it shall . . . give other States access to the surplus of the allowable catch . . .'

Article 74:

1. 'The delimitation of the exclusive economic zone between States with opposite or adjacent coasts shall be effected by agreement on the basis of international law . . . in order to achieve an equitable solution.'

These requirements, added to all of the other burdens imposed by independence, can be a significant burden for a larger country with a more generous endowment, but for a small island with very limited human and financial resources, they can be onerous. The options for such a country are limited: import the necessary financial and human resources (which would probably result in an even greater net burden), renege on some important international obligations, or combine efforts with other countries for regional co-operation. This is precisely the conclusion reached by the observers cited above, and, in varying degrees, the political leadership of the Eastern Caribbean.

Before going on to the question of regionalism, it might be well to say something more about maritime boundaries in the Eastern Caribbean.

In addition to the major problem of Aves Island,¹² there are numerous smaller problems in delimiting the boundaries between the various maritime zones of the Eastern Caribbean islands (indeed, of all Caribbean islands). Some result from the many small islands, islets, cays and sandbanks; some from the new concept of the archipelagic State, detailed in Part IV of the LOS Convention. These provisions, like those of the EEZ, are complex and need not be spelled out here. Basically, they create a new type of maritime zone: archipelagic waters.

A State 'constituted wholly by one or more archipelagos' (Art. 46) is considered an archipelagic State and 'may draw straight archipelagic baselines joining the outermost points of the outermost islands and drying reefs . . .' (Art. 47). From these baselines are measured the territorial sea, contiguous zone, EEZ and continental shelf. Within the baselines, the archipelagic waters are the sovereign territory of the State, but within them the State may designate sea lanes for the passage of foreign vessels. There is much more, but suffice it to say that most qualifying States stand to gain maritime territory beyond what they would gain if baselines were drawn around each individual island of the archipelago.

In an excellent article, Carl Dundas¹³ has explained the effects of these provisions on the Caribbean islands. Apparently, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago would qualify as archipelagic States. If they choose to do so,

their new baselines in most cases could enclose waters currently under the jurisdiction of neighboring islands. Antigua and Barbuda, for example, would be able to take waters from St Kitts and Nevis, Montserrat, Guadeloupe and St. Barthélemy.¹³ Naturally, this would necessitate numerous and difficult negotiations among the island States of the Caribbean.

Because of the manifold problems of delimiting boundaries among the OECS countries, they have agreed to postpone the whole matter, probably hoping to work out some kind of subregional system in future. Meanwhile, they have negotiated boundaries only with France: St Lucia on 4 March 1981 for its boundary with Martinique, and Dominica on 5 May 1987 for its boundaries with Martinique and Guadeloupe. In all three cases, there is a single boundary between the islands delimiting all relevant maritime zones. This practice is becoming common around the world and will probably be followed in most or all of the Caribbean.

These are among the local problems found worldwide that impelled the delegates to UNCLOS III to encourage regional approaches to maritime affairs. In the 1982 LOS Convention, the words 'region', 'subregion', 'regional' or 'subregional' or some combination of them appear in no fewer than 21 articles. These words are nowhere defined, however, and so interpretation of the relevant provisions is left to the parties to the Convention, and all references to co-operation on a regional or subregional basis are permissive or hortatory in nature rather than mandatory.²¹ Nevertheless, this is one of the strongest endorsements of regional co-operation to be found anywhere in international law. How effective it can be remains to be seen.

PROBLEMS OF REGIONAL MARINE CO-OPERATION IN THE CARIBBEAN

Although co-operation in marine affairs seems logical, even essential, for the Caribbean region, and especially for the Eastern Caribbean subregion, the history of attempts at regional integration or even co-operation here is hardly inspiring or even encouraging. The obstacles are familiar and well documented in the literature. They need only be summarized in this paper.

First among them is the renowned (or notorious) insularity of the Caribbean peoples. Despite decades of experience with regional and subregional institutions and activities, despite more inter-island migra-

tion than ever before, despite the rapid spread of popular culture from one end of the Caribbean to the other, no real sense of Caribbean identity has yet developed. Even Commonwealth West Indians do not think of themselves as such until they have migrated out of the region. This insularity, it seems, developed into nationalism which led to independence of most island territories and fragmentation of others, which thereupon reinforced the pre-existing insularity.

Other obstacles to Caribbean marine regionalism include the traditional orientation of each individual island toward the colonial rulers outside the region rather than toward nearby islands, a tradition somewhat weakened now but still evident. The question of the proper role of the still-dependent territories (Turks and Caicos Islands, Cayman Islands, British Virgin Islands [BVI], Montserrat) has been tackled but still not subdued. More difficult is the question of participation by non-Commonwealth territories, those of the United States, France and the Netherlands, and by Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Independence has also forced the ex-colonies to turn inward more, to concentrate on domestic political, social and economic matters.

There are other centrifugal forces at work in the region . . . many of the territories belong to or are associated with multinational trade preferences. Then there is the vertical integration of several industries by multinational corporations, examples being bananas, sugar, bauxite and petroleum. Finally, there are the footloose enclave industries planted by large foreign corporations to take advantage of local raw materials, cheap labor and financial incentives to produce goods solely for export.

All of these offer alternative methods of reaching some of the goals announced for CARICOM.¹⁴

Vaughan Lewis, Director General of the Secretariat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, has identified other symptoms of a weak *raison d'être* for regionalism. Falling commodity prices during the 1980s, for example, reduced island incomes which led to a sharp drop in intra-regional trade. Inefficiency and mismanagement aroused scepticism and lack of support for integration, especially in the three largest territories. Jamaica and Guyana became active in the Non-Aligned Movement and the movement for a new international economic order, and strengthened their relations with the larger Latin American countries, thus diverting attention from regional affairs. There are other symptoms in his doleful list, but these are the most important.¹⁵

INSTITUTIONS FOSTERING CARIBBEAN MARINE CO-OPERATION

Notwithstanding the obstacles and problems, the distractions, suspicions and other centrifugal forces so prominent in the Caribbean, there really is a great deal of functional co-operation being practiced daily, and interest in such co-operation seems to be growing. Much of it is unofficial, informal, little publicized and little known. Cumulatively, however, it helps to create a climate in which more formal, larger-scale co-operation becomes acceptable, even desirable. We must limit ourselves here to a review of the most important public and private institutions involved in and potentially helpful in regional co-operation in marine affairs. Some of the smaller institutions are listed below; brief descriptions of the larger ones follow. In considering them all, however, we must not forget the important role played by individuals in this gradual process of forging links among the scattered, disparate territories of the Caribbean.

Selected Caribbean institutions concerned with resource development and environmental protection:

- Caribbean Environmental Health Institute, St Lucia, Fisheries Information Service for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico City
 - Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project, Antigua
 - Caribbean Energy Information System, Jamaica
 - Island Resources Foundation, US Virgin Islands
 - Caribbean Information System of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Trinidad
 - Consortium of Caribbean Universities for Resource Management
 - Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Recovery Team (WIDECAST), Georgia, USA
 - Caribbean Coral Reef Ecosystems, Smithsonian Institution, Belize
 - Association of Island Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean
 - Various programs of the Inter-American Development Bank, Organization of American States (OAS), United Nations Development Programme, International Maritime Organization, World Meteorological Organization, etc.
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Two United Nations organs operate important programs in the Caribbean. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), an agency of UNESCO, established a regional program in 1967 called Cooperative Investigations in the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (CICAR). It held conferences annually from 1968 through 1975 and finished its work with a symposium in Caracas in 1976. It was succeeded by IOCARIBE, the IOC Association (now Sub-Commission) for the

Caribbean and Adjacent Regions. It was founded in Port of Spain in 1975 and its headquarters was transferred to San José, Costa Rica in 1979. It is dedicated to marine sciences in general and in particular to preservation of the marine environment, and it collaborates actively with FAO and UNEP. Members include the Bahamas, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. In 1979 it launched CARIPOL, a program for marine pollution research and monitoring.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), through its Fisheries Division, operates the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC). Founded in 1973, it counts among its 30 members Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts-Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago. Its main functions are 'to facilitate the co-ordination of research; to encourage education and training; to assist Member Governments in establishing rational policies; to promote the rational management of resources that are of interest for two or more countries.'¹⁶

A non-governmental organization that has been extremely active in promoting the protection of both the marine and the terrestrial environments is the Caribbean Conservation Association. It was founded in May 1967 by delegates from Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, St Kitts, St Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) and Venezuela as a forum for discussions of conservation issues, co-ordinator of outside technical and financial assistance, and lobbying group. It has since undertaken other responsibilities, primarily in the field of conservation education. In addition, in co-operation with CANARI (discussed below), it coordinates the Caribbean Park and Protected Areas Network. In 1988, there were 20 such areas and 82 proposed areas in the Eastern Caribbean, as follows: Antigua and Barbuda (3), Barbados (1), BVI (4), Dominica (1), Montserrat (1), St Lucia (2), Trinidad and Tobago (8).

CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, was founded in 1973 as the successor to CARIFTA, the Caribbean Free Trade Association, to build on CARIFTA's success in promoting economic integration in the Commonwealth Caribbean, including the Bahamas, Belize and Guyana. It has had its ups and downs and seems to be in an upswing at the moment, but it is still very far from achieving its ultimate goal of a complete common market among its members and perhaps even closer economic and political association. Its orientation has been largely economic, although it has also been concerned with security issues and cultural matters. It has only recently become active in resource and environmental issues.

The first CARICOM Ministerial Conference on the Environment was held 31 May–2 June 1989, in Port of Spain. It adopted the Port of Spain Accord on the Management and Conservation of the Caribbean Environment, a rather impressive document which, if fully implemented, could bring about a reversal of the environmental decline currently being experienced in the region and permit the more effective use of its resources. The Accord has four parts. The first is a lengthy preamble, with background material. Then there is a list of 14 ‘priority issues and problems,’ including degradation of the coastal and marine environment and prevention and mitigation of the effects of oil spills, as well as a number of others that directly affect the marine environment. This list is followed by ‘Strategic Approaches to the Solution of the Problem.’

The final section is perhaps the most important. Titled ‘Institutional Arrangements for Consultation and Coordination,’ it lays out a series of actions to be taken by CARICOM, and others recommended to member governments. They include the establishment of a Standing Committee of Ministers Responsible for the Environment, ‘the establishment of a consultative forum of agencies whose activities in the region are relevant to the development of Caribbean environmental programs and projects,’ the designation by each member government of a ‘focal point which would relate in a coherent manner to the regional and international levels’, and several other actions. It ends with a ringing declaration, reiterating ‘our firm and unswerving commitment to the rational use and conservation of our environmental resources. . .’

The first concrete result of this new commitment was a conference on the public policy implications of sustainable development in the Caribbean region, 28–30 May 1990, in Kingston, Jamaica. It was sponsored jointly by CARICOM, the Government of Jamaica and the Canadian Institute for Research on Public Policy.

The Second CARICOM Ministerial Conference on the Environment was held in Kingston, 10–11 September 1991. The delegates seemed to demonstrate a seriousness of purpose as they discussed a wide range of issues and made a number of significant recommendations. Among the developments most important to our topic were the following:

1. It reviewed the work of the Consultative Forum on the Environment recommended by the first conference in 1989.
2. The Conference agreed that provisions be made to strengthen the technical capacity of the CARICOM Secretariat through the development of close working ties with, *inter alia*, the Institute for Marine Affairs.

3. It agreed to designate the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO) as the regional Action Group on Global Warming and Sea Level Rise.

We can hope that these conferences will lead to further commitments to rational resource management in the region.

The most important institution functioning in the field of resource management in this region to date is UNEP, the United Nations Environment Programme. It was founded in 1972 upon the recommendation of the United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm. Its headquarters is in Nairobi and it has regional offices around the world. One of its most important projects, the Regional Seas Programme (now called the Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme), was initiated almost immediately, in 1974. It launched the Mediterranean Action Plan, a co-operative activity of all of the Mediterranean littoral States except Albania, which finally joined in 1991. The Blue Plan, as it is called, has guided the clean-up of one of the world's most polluted semi-enclosed seas. Preparations for a Caribbean Action Plan began in 1977 with a joint UNEP/CEPAL project in Port of Spain. The staff consisted of three men, from Guyana, Jamaica and Puerto Rico. It took 4 years of very hard work before the Action Plan was finally adopted by representatives from 22 States and territories of the Wider Caribbean at Montego Bay, Jamaica in April 1981.

The activities encompassed by the Caribbean Action Plan (CAP) are:

1. Assistance to all countries of the region, recognizing the special situation of the smaller island countries.
2. Co-ordination of international assistance activities.
3. Strengthening of existing national and regional institutions.
4. Technical co-operation in the use of the region's natural financial and human resources.
5. Promotion of regional self-reliance through the sharing of experience on common problems.
6. Increasing public interest in environmental and development issues.

The subjects covered by the plan include pollution control, coastal areas, fisheries, watersheds, natural disasters, energy, human settlements, tourism and environmental health. The five regionally co-ordinated comprehensive programs that make up the Action Plan are:

- (1) Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution (CEPPOL)
- (2) Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW)

- (3) Integrated Planning and Institutional Development for the Management of Marine and Coastal Resources
- (4) Information Systems for the Management of Marine and Coastal Resources (CEPNET)
- (5) Education, Training and Public Awareness for the Appropriate Management of Marine and Coastal Resources.

The CAP is the project component of the Caribbean Environment Program (CEP) of UNEP. 'CEP's long-term goal is to achieve sustainable development of marine and coastal resources in the Wider Caribbean Region through effective integrated management that allows for increased economic growth'¹⁷ Other components include:

- (i) The Cartagena Convention and its protocols
- (ii) The Caribbean Trust Fund
- (iii) Intergovernmental and Contracting Parties meetings
- (iv) The Monitoring Committee
- (v) The Regional Coordinating Unit, established in Kingston in September 1986 to serve as UNEP's regional office and the CEP secretariat.
- (vi) Focal points within the government of each participating country.

Also incorporated into CEP is the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), founded in 1977 as the Eastern Caribbean Natural Area Management Programme (ECNAMP) to strengthen the local capacity to manage the living natural resources critical to development. In 1988 alone it was operating 16 field projects in nine countries of the subregion, held seven major workshops and courses, performed numerous short-term consultancies, and produced many publications and special reports. It was operated by the Caribbean Conservation Association until 1986, but is now independent. Since its reorganization and name change in 1990, it has been active in the Wider Caribbean Region. Its headquarters are in St Croix, USVI and in Vieux Fort, St Lucia.

The Cartagena Convention is more formally known as the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, adopted on 24 March 1983 by representatives of 14 countries of the region. Currently, 18 States have ratified or acceded to the Convention, including Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and Dominica. It describes, in rather general terms, the obligations of the Contracting Parties to 'prevent, reduce and

control pollution of the Convention area,' and to 'protect and preserve rare or fragile ecosystems, as well as the habitat of depleted, threatened or endangered species, in the Convention area.' More detailed obligations were to be spelled out in specialized protocols to the Convention.

The first such protocol was the Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region, adopted along with the Cartagena Convention itself. The second is the Protocol on Marine Pollution from Land-based Sources, which entered into force in October 1986. The most recent is the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW), adopted in Kingston on 18 January 1990 by 14 Contracting Parties, including Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica and St Lucia. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago signed the Final Act of the conference, but not the protocol. It will not enter into force, however, until the three quite detailed annexes that were adopted by consensus on 11 June 1991 and the rest of the protocol have been ratified by nine Contracting Parties. Clearly, progress has been made, but there is much work yet to be done to reach the objectives of UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme.

Finally, we consider the work of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States in fostering co-operation in resource management in the subregion. The OECS grew out of the West Indies Associated States (WISA) and was organized in 1981 within the framework of CARICOM. It inherited the East Caribbean Common Market from CARIFTA and this has become the Economic Affairs Secretariat of the OECS, located in St John's, Antigua. The members of the OECS are Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the St Vincent Grenadines. Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands are associated with the OECS in somewhat different ways; Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Suriname have observer status in some of its organs; and the United States Virgin Islands and the French territories have expressed interest in co-operating with the group. Its headquarters is in St Lucia and a Fisheries Unit is located in St Vincent.

The OECS was born near the end of UNCLOS III and was fully cognizant of the implications for the region of the impending Law of the Sea Convention. Accordingly, from the beginning it placed a high priority on marine affairs as an area within which member States were expected to co-ordinate and pursue joint policies. As Vaughan Lewis expressed it at the 1987 OECS Workshop on Maritime Delimitation Negotiations, 'This is hardly surprising since as small developing island States the countries of the OECS are intimately dependent on the Sea and its resources for their economic well-being in such areas as trade, fisheries and tourism.'

Among the early joint positions arrived at by the OECS members are the following concerning maritime boundary delimitation:

1. All maritime boundaries in the subregion should be negotiated according to the principle of equidistance.
2. The OECS will negotiate as a unit in determining maritime boundaries with other CARICOM States.
3. They will work out a joint position vis-a-vis Venezuela.
4. They will all adopt 12-mile territorial seas and 200-mile EEZs (with the exception of Montserrat which would seek adoption for it of a 200-mile fishery zone by the United Kingdom). (1 nautical mile = 1.61 km.)

Fisheries was also an early priority. The OECS convinced FAO to co-sponsor three fishery workshops in 1983 and 1984 that led eventually to harmonized legislation for fishery development and management. (Anguilla, Barbados and BVI are also adjusting their fisheries laws and regulations to be in harmony with those of the OECS.) OECS and FAO also operate a training program for fisheries law and administration.

With the assistance of the Canadian International Center for Ocean Development, OECS is also assisting members to develop and manage fisheries. The Dalhousie Ocean Studies Programme at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia also provided valuable studies and recommendations during the WISA period and the early years of the OECS. The OECS countries have also begun co-operating in other marine affairs, including exchanging information on suspected illegal foreign fishing, establishing a registry for all foreign vessels, formulating guidelines for fisheries joint ventures and fighting narcotrafficking.¹⁸

In the broader field of conservation, the Natural Resources Management Unit was established by the OECS in 1986 as a co-operative venture with the OAS and GTZ, the German technical assistance agency. Its objective is to improve the technical capability of the member countries and the OECS itself to plan the use of their land and other natural resources and generally to manage the environment. This is done through various mechanisms, including consultancy services, training, public education, limited provision of essential equipment, developing and harmonizing environmental laws and regulations, and representing the interests of OECS members within various inter-governmental bodies such as CARICOM and UNEP. Examples of marine-related activities include coastal zone management sub-projects in BVI, St Kitts-Nevis and St Lucia, and workshops on coastal resources held in Tortola in 1986 and Nevis in 1987.

The OECS has recently undertaken a more vigorous approach to marine environmental and resource problems. Indicative of this is the Castries Declaration, adopted by the Authority of the OECS on 24 November 1989. In view of some of the comments of observers cited earlier in this paper, it seems appropriate to quote the three operative paragraphs of this declaration:

'Resolve to seek to establish a regional regime for the regulation and management of the pelagic resources in the Lesser Antilles region that would outlaw the use of drift nets and other disruptive fishing methods by commercial fishing vessels, and call upon other States in the region to co-operate in this regard;

Resolve that all member States of OECS will take all possible measures in the interim to prevent the use of indiscriminate fishing methods in their exclusive economic zones;

Further resolve that member States, acting individually and collectively, will take whatever action possible within relevant regional and international organizations that would contribute towards the global restriction of harmful fishing practices.'

With the experience of joint action in fisheries and delimitation issues as a foundation, we may hope that the OECS will undertake additional marine projects, acting, of course, in co-operation with other intergovernmental, national and non-governmental bodies such as those discussed earlier.

CONCLUSION

We have reviewed here some of the marine resources of the Caribbean, some of its environmental problems, and some progress and problems in co-operation among the territories of the Caribbean, especially the Eastern Caribbean, in marine affairs. We come now to the difficult question: Where is all this taking us as we rush headlong into the twenty-first century?

Specialists in economic development have long been attempting to identify one sector or another of a poor country's economy as 'the engine of development'. It may very well be that within the next decade, marine activities, especially fishing, transportation and tourism, will become the 'engine of development' for the Eastern Caribbean. We may even put forward the still more daring notion that co-operation in the management of the marine resources of the subregion may

become the 'engine of integration' that has hitherto been so sadly lacking.

It would appear that the OECS has the potential to drive these engines. Already there is considerable co-operation among its members, 'more than appears on the surface,' according to one of its technocrats.¹⁹ However, according to Vaughan Lewis, CARICOM is 'more technocratically independent in the sense of initiatives and coordination' than the OECS, and 'the more developed countries of the Eastern Caribbean need at this time to act as support flanks for the OECS States in their effort of political coordination for economic advancement.' This, he believes, is the 'inextricable link between the OECS and the CARICOM systems . . .' (Ref. 15, pp. 96–97.)

There is nothing automatic about this process, however. Progress in co-operative management of marine resources, as in other fields in this part of the world, has been painfully slow. It is much more difficult here than in similar regions elsewhere, the South Pacific, for example. There are many reasons for this. Perhaps the most basic is the fact that 'electorates have not been brought adequately into the process.'¹⁹ This is what sank the West Indies Federation, and unless the problem is rectified, it could leave both CARICOM and OECS adrift in the open Caribbean, far from port.

One is tempted to end an article of this sort on an optimistic note, to assure the reader that its title is truly justified as a promise. But it is not a promise, nor even a prediction, only a suggestion. It seems so logical, even imperative, that the management of marine resources should be a binding force in the Eastern Caribbean—but the author saw first-hand the struggles and collapse of the West Indies Federation, as American Vice Consul in Kingston, Jamaica in 1960–1962, and has followed subsequent attempts at integration. It is difficult to be optimistic about the future, even for such a wise and experienced local observer as Patrick Emmanuel. He puts it this way:

[I]t has tended to be assumed that certain similarities in the historical, ethnic and politico-economic backgrounds of these territories are sufficient factors favoring their integration, even political unification. But there really is no logical reason why this need be so. The EC [Eastern Caribbean] Systems are competitive more than they are complementary or mutually sustaining. Subjectively, among various strata of the population, objective similarities do not ground a compelling case for integration. Perhaps for the vast majority of the population, the most highly preferred option is migration to a metropolitan location.²⁰

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