

The Negril Marine Park Zoning Plan

1. The Houses of Parliament are being asked to note the Negril Marine Park Zoning Plan which is attached at Appendix I of this Ministry Paper.

2. Background

2.1 The Negril Marine Park (NMP) was legally established under the Negril Marine Park Order in 1998. It was officially opened on 5 March, 1998 and covers an area of approximately 160 km². The coastal boundary is approximately 33km and extends from Davis Cove, Hanover in the north to St. John's Point, Westmoreland in the south.

2.2 With the financial support of the European Union, a zoning plan for the NMP was developed in 1998 by the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS) through a series of consultations with governmental and non-governmental entities, users, and members of the community. In 2008, the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) decided to revise the Plan which would thereafter be gazetted. The revision exercise resulted in the development of a five year (2013-2018) zoning plan which seeks to realize three (3) main objectives within the Marine Park:

1. Ensuring the sustainable use of the natural resources;
2. Promoting the safety of users; and
3. Encouraging compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

2.3 After a comprehensive consultative process, which included several rounds of consultations with relevant stakeholders, the NMP Zoning Plan was prepared. This Plan was approved by Cabinet in April 2015.

3. The Purpose of Zoning the Negril Marine Park

3.1 Over the last 20 years, various impacts from land-based development and natural phenomena such as storm surges and hurricanes have resulted in the decline of the health of the coral reef and the surrounding marine environment.

3.2 Zoning in marine parks is a management tool that has been commonly used in many jurisdictions to protect sensitive marine resources from overuse and to separate conflicting human activities within these areas. It is a system by which specific geographic areas within a protected area are classified based on preservation requirements, as well as the site's ability to accommodate various types of activities. A zoning plan defines the "limits of acceptable use" and the types of developments and activities that can and/or cannot occur in each zone. It rationalizes and regulates the use of the protected area and its resources, defining where activities can be undertaken and how to achieve the area's management objectives.

4. *Zones of the Negril Marine Park*

4.1 The Negril Marine Park consists of three major zones. These are:

1. Conservation Zone,
2. Non-motorized Recreation Zone, and
3. Multiple-use Zone

There are also four Sub-zones and two Special Purpose Zones (making a total of seven different zoning distinctions (see Appendix 1I).

5. *Legislative Basis for Zoning the Negril Marine Park*

5.1 Section 22 of the Natural Resources Conservation (Marine Parks) Regulations, 1992 provides the basis for the zoning of the NMP. It makes reference to the purposes for which zones may be established, the demarcation of zones, the process involved in the formulation of a zoning plan with specific reference to input from stakeholders through consultation and the method of disseminating the Plan.

6. *Implementation*

6.1 The Negril Marine Park Zoning Plan will be implemented by the National Environment and Planning Agency. It is expected that support will be provided, particularly with respect to enforcement and monitoring activities, by local interest groups including the Negril Environment Protection Trust (NEPT), the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (Negril Chapter) and Water Sports operators.

7. *Consultations*

7.1 Stakeholder consultations on the Negril Marine Park Zoning Plan were hosted by the NCRPS in 1996 to 1997 and focused mostly on local stakeholders (fishermen and water sports operators). Based on the concern that the information in the Plan from that period would have been outdated, a new round of stakeholder consultations commenced in January 2008 with the aim to review the existing proposed zones in the context of the changes which have occurred in the environment since the publication of the initial draft zoning document in 1999, and to formulate recommendations for its amendment.

7.2 A series of stakeholder meetings were also convened in Negril throughout the months of January and March 2009. The primary objectives of these meetings were to:

- Re-introduce to initial stakeholders the Negril Marine Park Zoning Plan as produced in 2003 and present the same to the new group of stakeholders; and
- Discuss and amend the proposals for zoning the marine protected area presented in the plan produced in 2003 based on legislative considerations as well as physical, environmental and social changes occurring in the community since the period of initial discussions in 1999.

7.3 An initial meeting with the wider group of stakeholders was held on 29 January 2009 which was followed by focus group meetings on 19 March 2009 with hotel interests and water sports operators, as well as with fishermen. During and subsequent to this period,

water sports operators, as well as with fishermen. During and subsequent to this period, informal consultations were also held with various stakeholder groups. The final round of stakeholder consultations towards the completion of the Plan took place between December 2011 and January 2013.



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2p June 2015

Appendix II. Map showing the Zones of the Negril Marine Park (2013-2018)



