

RIO MINHO WATERSHEDS

Presenter

Jamaican Network of Rural Women Producers

Description

The main cause of climate change is the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, coming mainly from fossil fuels, carbon dioxide, nitrogen and other gases. Jamaica's contribution to global emissions is very little compared to other countries, due to less industrialisation and presence of infrastructures. However, Jamaica's commitment to mitigate emissions is high: in Jamaican national policy, the country has set targets for the reduction of the dependence on fossil fuels and set targets for reforestation. Targets has been set as well in relation to reduction of emissions from vehicles by cutting down the importation of older vehicles which are less fuel efficient. Jamaica is also turning to more renewable sources of energy. The Country signed the Paris Agreement and have set a 30% target to reduce emissions by 2030. It is part of the group 'Seventy-Seven', maintaining a significant voice in international forums bringing the voice of farmers. Jamaica has in place a national policy framework on climate change. This policy outlines the strategies that Jamaica will employ in order to effectively respond to the impact and challenges of climate change. The Country led the way in terms of political action, as the first one to create a Ministry with responsibility of climate change.

Practices are being implemented to manage watersheds that are being degraded throughout the Country. One important example can be identified in the project on Rio Minho watershed, where dams have been built in order to manage the run of the water coming from the hillside, channelled for irrigation purposes.

Moreover, farmers are looking for sustainable water harvesting techniques (reservoir ponds), instead of unsustainable catchment systems.





Results

Even though Jamaica is a small country - and not only Jamaica but other Caribbean islands - risks are large. In other bigger nations, if sea levels rise 2 feet they can retreat to a mountain, if in the Caribbean Sea levels rise above 2 feet, people may become climate refugees. In the Caribbean it is important to share best practices, to learn from each other and to make the necessary representation on behalf of rural farmers. There is a need for farmers to aggregate and be part of the discussions at International level through their representations.

Results of best practices implemented in the country are:

- Better water management;
- Resilience to droughts.

Climate smartness

It is worth highlighting that the project focused on the implementation of collective benefit practices and practices of an individual nature, which allow climate risk management at different scales, this contributing more effectively to the success of the project.

The project is mainly focused on helping producers to adapt to climate change and variability with regards to water resource management. The practices implemented allow farmers to have water available during both the rainy and dry seasons. In the same way, by promoting practices that allow crops to develop in dry seasons, the income is increased through enabling farmers to sell their products throughout the year. Therefore, this project is climate-smart since it is framed within two of the fundamental pillars of this approach, which are adaptation and productivity.

To be more comprehensive, the project could include practices focused on the conservation of the basin and the implementation of forest systems that help improving the hydrological cycle, which may be beneficial for the objectives of this initiative.

Additionally, this type of practice, which includes the use or conservation of tree species, enables adding the mitigation component to the initiative, since carbon sequestration in tree biomass could also be considered.