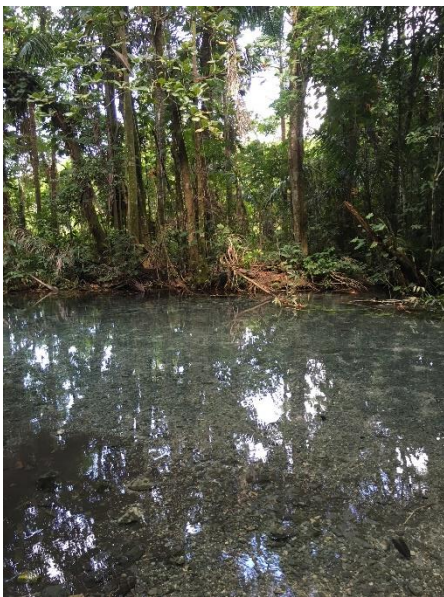




STRATEGIC FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN (SFMP) 2021-2026



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Strategic Forest Management Plan (SFMP) 2021-2026.

This document was prepared by Jan J. Voordouw, independent consultant, in close collaboration with the staff of the Forestry Department (FD). It does not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Jamaica or FD.

Cover photos (both by Jan Voordouw):

Left: Bogue 2 Forest Reserve, St. Ann. Right: Negril Great Morass, Hanover/Westmoreland.

Table of Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations	iv
1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	5
2 GUIDING & MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES.....	7
2.1 Guiding and management principles for SFMP implementation	7
2.2 SFMP's principles focused on organisational management of FD	8
3 OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2022 – 2026.....	11
3.1 Strategic Objective 1: Reverse forest degradation, deforestation and the loss of forest biodiversity, through conservation and sustainable forest management, as well as strengthening the legislative, policy and institutional framework of the sector	11
3.2 Strategic Objective 2: Enhance economic, social and environmental benefits of forests through the sustainable utilisation of forest resources.	15
3.3 Strategic Objective 3: Build the capacity within the Forestry Department, its partners and forest communities to manage, protect and conserve the forest resources.	16
3.4 Strategic Objective 4: Increase public education and awareness to protect, conserve, restore and manage Jamaica's forests	18
4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SFMP	19
4.1 Planning and Management of the Outputs	19
4.2 Stakeholder Engagement.....	19
4.3 Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	20

TABLES

Table 1: Core Values of the Forestry Department	9
Table 2: Key Expected Results of Vision 2030 Jamaica & SDGs and the Outcomes of NFMCP	10

BOXES

Box 1: NFMCP Thematic Areas and their Expected Outcomes.....	12
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBO	Community-based Organisation		enhancement of forest carbon stocks
CSM	Carbon Stock Monitoring		
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
DRM	Disaster Risk Management		
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	TAC	NFMCP Technical Advisory Committee
FD	Forestry Department	TEF	Tourism Enhancement Fund
FMA	Forest Management Area	UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
FMP	Forest Management Plan		
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
GOJ	Government of Jamaica		
Ha	Hectare	UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change		
KPI	Key Performance Indicator		
LFMC	Local Forest Management Committee		
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies		
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries		
MOFPS	Ministry of Finance and Public Service		
MRV	Measuring, Reporting and Verifying		
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan		
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution		
NFI	National Forests Inventory		
NFMCP	National Forest Management and Conservation Plan		
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation		
PASMP	Protected Areas System Master Plan		
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services		
PLO	Private Land Owners		
PMER	Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting		
RADA	Rural Agricultural Development Authority		
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation		
REDD+	REDD and increasing the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and		

1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Strategic Forest Management Plan (SFMP) 2021 – 2026 is the over-arching tool for guiding the institutional and programmatic development of the Forestry Department (FD)¹. It covers the institutional FD Corporate/Strategic Business Plan 2021-2026 (which includes guidance for minimum standards and for corporate strategies) with its mission to “*Manage our forests in an effective and responsible manner for the benefit of current and future generations.*” The SFMP further incorporates the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP)² revised for 2021-2026, a programme involving the entire forest sector towards its goal “*Sustainably manage and utilise Jamaica’s forest resources to enhance social and economic development and contribute to building the country’s climate resilience.*”

The SFMP provides the strategic framework for indicators and targets by which FD’s performance in relation to its institutional and programmatic management is measured. The SFMP seeks to ensure the effective and efficient contribution by FD and the forest sector to achieving Vision 2030 Jamaica. Further, SFMP allows for measuring high-level objectives, such as the following:

- Building the Forestry Department as an efficient and effective service delivery organisation;
- Increasing participation of the private sector, community-based organisations, and non-government organisations in the sustainable management and conservation of Jamaica’s forests;
- Increasing the level of public awareness regarding all issues related to sustainable forestry;
- Developing and implementing forest management plans; and
- Maintaining and restoring forest cover.

FD is mandated by the Forest Act 1996³ to ensure the protection and conservation of forests on Crown lands (which cover just over a quarter of Jamaica’s forest lands). Approximately 100,000 ha of these are designated as Forest Reserves and over 17,000 ha of other forested crown lands are not yet declared under the Forest Act. Nearly three-quarter of forest lands (over 320,000 ha) are privately owned, with no comprehensive legislative framework to govern their protection.

Forests cover more than 40% of the Jamaican landmass. They are classified in 8 types:

- *Closed Broadleaf* - Closed primary forest with broadleaf trees at least 5 metres tall and crowns interlocking, with minimal human disturbance;
- *Disturbed Broadleaf* - Forest with broadleaf trees at least 5 metres tall and including species which indicate disturbance;
- *Tall Open Dry* - Open natural woodland or forest with trees at least 5 metres tall and crowns not in contact;
- *Short Open Dry* - Open scrub, shrub, or brushland with trees or shrubs 1 - 5 metres tall and crowns not in contact;

¹ In 2010 the Forestry Department became an Executive Agency under the Executive Agencies Act 2002.

² The NFMCP is required to be prepared, following the Forest Act 1996.

³ The Forest Act 1996 specifies mandatory requirements for: Declaration and purpose of forest reserves and forest management areas; National and local forest management planning; Inventory and classification of forest lands; Appointment and function of forest management committees; Determination of allowable cut; Establishment of nurseries and provision of seedlings; and Enforcement of forest protection measures.

- *Swamp* - Single storey forest with waterlogged soil, including species indicators such as *Symphonia globulifera* (hog gum) and *Roystonea princeps* (royal palm);
- *Mangrove* – Forest in areas with brackish water, composed of trees with stilt roots or pneumatophores, including species-indicators such as *Rhizophora mangle* (red mangrove);
- *Secondary forest* – Forest distinguished from disturbed broadleaf as it has larger percentages of disturbance, namely 15-25% compared to <15% for the latter forest type. Indicator species include Trumpet Tree (*Cecropia peltata*), Guango (*Samanea saman*) and Woman’s tongue (*Albizia lebeck*);
- *Forest plantations* – Woodland inclusive of pine and hardwood.

In addition to the FD Corporate Plan and the NFMCP, the SFMP also provides a strategic framework for the implementation of the Forest Policy⁴. This policy lists several policy and regulatory deficiencies which have contributed to the continued loss of quality forest cover over time:

- Lack of clearly discernible demarcation of Forest Estate boundaries;
- Encroachment and squatting on Forest Estates, especially for agriculture and housing purposes;
- Open access use of forests and illegal cutting of trees on Crown Lands;
- Selective removal of valuable biodiversity including endemic tree species;
- Insufficient take up by private landowners of opportunities to declare their forested land under the Forest Act and obtain property tax incentives;
- Lack of a central repository of data on the market price, supply, and demand for local timber;
- Lack of clear rules to manage traditional uses of forests and forest products and lack of the regulation of access by communities to local forests;
- Insufficient tertiary level programmes in silviculture and forest ecology;
- Limited awareness of the value of forests and trees as part of Jamaica’s cultural and ecological heritage;
- Insufficient monitoring of mangrove forests across the island to prevent or reduce conversion;
- Inadequate infrastructure to develop forest appreciation, recreation, and ecotourism activities;
- Paucity of financing for forest restoration outside of regular budgetary allocations; and
- Limited capacity of many local communities to undertake co-management of Forest Estates.

The NFMCP 2021-2026 proposes detailed activities to address these and other issues. Further action to address these deficiencies are discussed in **Chapter 3**.

⁴ Forestry Department, 2017. *Forest Policy for Jamaica*.

2 GUIDING & MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Given the complex and cross-cutting nature of sustainably managing Jamaica's forests with many stakeholders and interested parties, the Forestry Department has articulated several guiding and management principles by which the SFMP will be implemented.

2.1 Guiding and management principles for SFMP implementation⁵

(1) Combating Climate Change – The recognition of growing and emerging impacts of climate change on forests and sustainable forest management and the contribution of forests to climate change adaptation and mitigation will be central tenets in the implementation of SFMP. Physical risks to Jamaica's forests, land, infrastructure, water resources, deterioration of air quality, change in wellbeing of communities, decline in economic security, aspects of change in socio-economic resilience are to be documented, considered for undertaking appropriate action and possibilities for adaptation and co-benefits pursued.

(2) Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) - Supporting Jamaica's ambitious commitment to strengthen its NDC through: (a) maintaining the goal of no-net-loss of forest cover; and (b) increasing carbon retention through tree planting and reforestation.

(3) The Precautionary Approach - This approach is to be utilized in relation to decisions taken that directly or indirectly impact forests in Jamaica. Where there is potential of serious or irreversible damage, precautionary measures are to be taken to prevent such damage and environmental degradation, even if full scientific certainty has not been achieved.

(4) Sustainable Development and Inter-Generational Equity – Management will always contribute to the conservation and sustainable development of forests for present and future generations. Appropriate measures are to be developed to provide legal rights to local communities and their citizens to sustainably use the forest and forest resources in their communities. Additionally, measures are to support the social, cultural, spiritual, economic, and environmental needs of all people of Jamaica.

(5) Localised Management Approaches – Localised management approaches and techniques are to be used for the different types of forests (see Chapter 1) and for maintaining the integrity of their resources. This shall include but not be limited to co-management arrangements for forested Crown Land.

(6) Enhancing Coordination and Harmonisation, Partnerships and Authentic Dialogue and Participation among all Stakeholders - Collaborative approaches to administration and policy-making in the forest sector are to engage interested parties, including women, local forest communities, private land owners, industries, labour representatives and NGOs, in the development, implementation, and monitoring of local or national sustainable forest strategies, plans and policies. Opportunities are to be provided for the full inclusion of all groups in society, including marginalised communities, vulnerable people, youth, and people with disabilities. Timely and accurate information is to be provided on forests, forest ecosystems, and activities that impact forests, to support public understanding and informed decision-making.

⁵ *The management principles and guiding principles listed are based on statements in the Forest Policy 2017, the NFMCP 2016-2026, other forest policies and instruments (such as the UN Forest Instrument, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007) and general organizational management theory.*

(7) Protection and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity - Jamaica's biodiversity shall be conserved and protected and access to biological resources found in forests shall be regulated appropriately to ensure sustainable use. Local knowledge regarding the conservation and sustainable use of these forest resources will be recognised and documented/recorded.

(8) Best Science regarding Sustainable Forest Management - Sound technical and scientific principles in forest planning and management shall be applied and, where relevant, traditional knowledge incorporated. Due consideration is to be given to emerging thinking on landscape restoration, social forestry, management of mangrove and swamp forests, payment for ecosystem services, and development of principles and guidance for urban forestry.

(9) Recognising the Value of Forest Lands, Goods and Services - The value of ecosystem services and forest products and services are to be integrated into budgeting and costing processes. Decision-making at the individual, corporate and governmental level is to be based on the true value and costs to users and beneficiaries of forests, its management or conservation. Accounting is to include the costs of environmental degradation, caused by unsustainable activities. Mechanisms are to be researched, introduced and incentivised for innovating forest finance, such as disaster risk financing and other new and alternative financing mechanisms for the management and conservation of the forest sector.

(10) Comprehensive Gender Equality Mainstreaming - Partnerships are to be built with stakeholders to tackle specific areas where one gender is unrepresented or disadvantaged. Women and men, are to be treated fairly in activities and services, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities.

(11) Jamaica's Charter of Rights (adopted in 2011 under a Constitutional Amendment) - A substantive right to a healthy environment for all Jamaican citizens is to be actioned. It provides that all citizens have *"The right to enjoy a healthy and productive environment free from the threat of injury or damage from environmental abuse and degradation of the ecological heritage."* Jamaica's forests are part of its ecological heritage and the SFMP is to provide a framework that will prevent degradation of the island's remaining forests.

2.2 SFMP's principles focused on organisational management of FD

(12) Enhancing the management, decision-making and service capabilities of FD – Investments are to be made in developing successful management in FD: **(a) Planning:** Choosing appropriate goals and actions to pursue, strategies to use, priority actions to take, and determining resource needs; **(b) Organizing:** Establishing team relationships for staff to achieve their organisational goals together; **(c) Leading:** Articulating a vision, energising employees, inspiring and motivating people using vision, influence, persuasion, and effective communication skills; **(d) Staffing:** Recruiting and selecting employees for positions within teams and departments; **(e) Monitoring:** Evaluating progress towards goals, performance, taking actions, adapting and setting standards.⁶ The core values of FD are presented in [Table 1](#).

⁶ Additionally, FD is to maximise the benefits of financial, human, equipment and other resources mobilised under NFMCP. Under the Public Sector Modernisation Programme (2010-2020), FD grew as an Executive Agency, strengthening its link between planning, budgeting and performance management, through the introduction of a framework for integrated results-based management. It also improved efficiency and effectiveness of human

Table 1: Core Values of the Forestry Department

Core Values	Value Statements
INTEGRITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Honourably fulfil all obligations and commitments to stakeholders ▪ Act with honesty without compromising the truth
TEAMWORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help others when necessary ▪ Work harmoniously with others ▪ Share information and resources with team members ▪ Work out conflicts with the person involved ▪ Treat one another with respect ▪ Encourage the best ideas to surface from anywhere in the Agency
COMMITMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedicated to a cause or activity ▪ Consistency, honesty and accuracy are key in keeping promises to customers-internal or external
CONFIDENTIALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committed to safeguarding information obtained on the job which, if becoming public, might endanger the Agency or cause damage to any employee or customer.
PROFESSIONALISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain confidentiality ▪ Limit personal business on the job ▪ Stay focused on work rather than getting distracted by gossip ▪ Find solutions to problems rather than complaining ▪ Speak constructively of co-workers, the job and the Agency ▪ Do not be subjective ▪ Keep promises

(13) Transparency and Accountability - A commitment to the principles of transparent, responsive, and accountable governance, measuring the performance of SFMP implementation against intended results.

(14) Relevant National and Sectoral Policies – Pertinent policies and guidelines are to be embraced, such as the Protected Areas System Master Plan (PASMP), the National Biological Diversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP) and others.

(15) Alignment to Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan. FD is to ensure that the implementation of the SFMP is fully aligned to Jamaica’s national development planning efforts. The Strategic Framework for Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) of NFMCP includes a Theory of Change that assumes the feeding of the results of NFMCP into National Outcomes 13, 14 and 15 of Vision 2030 Jamaica and that FD staff uses this to track pertinent progress. An overview table is presented here for ease of reference, see [Table 2](#).

(16) International obligations and commitments – The Forest Sector is to support the country’s commitments to various multilateral agreements.⁷

resource management (employee performance management and appraisal), as well as nurtured continuous improvement in the quality-of-service delivery.

⁷ A listing is provided in Section 2.6 of the PMER Strategic Framework 2021-2026.

Table 2: Key Expected Results of Vision 2030 Jamaica & SDGs and the Outcomes of NFMCP

Expected major results of Vision 2030 Jamaica & SDGs		Expected Outcomes of NFMCP
NO13	Integrated Management	<i>All Outcomes culminate into Sustainable Forest Management.</i>
	Biodiversity Conservation	Outcome 1.2: Forest biodiversity protected.
	Governance Structures for strong Environmental Management	Outcome 1.1: Strengthened governance, policy and legislative framework to ensure sustainable development of the forest sector.
NO14	Hazard Damage Reduced	Outcome 5.2: Strengthened capacity for impact and vulnerability assessments and for management of research and knowledge systems.
	Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate-related Hazards and Natural Disasters Strengthened.	<p>Outcome 3.1: Improved participatory planning to manage, protect and conserve Jamaica's forests.</p> <p>Outcome 3.2: Strengthened institutional capacity for REDD+ readiness.</p> <p>Outcome 3.3: Strengthened capacity of Local Forest Management Committees and other community groups.</p> <p>Outcome 4.1: Forest communities, the general public as well as targeted groups have increased capacity regarding sustainable forest practices.</p> <p>Outcome 4.2: Strengthened capacity for natural resource valuations, carbon stock monitoring and silviculture.</p>
NO15	A Comprehensive and Efficient (Spatial) Planning System	<p>Outcome 5.1: Improved availability of spatial data for sustainable forest management practices, promoting investment, and assessing vulnerabilities and risks in the forest sector.</p> <p>Outcome 5.3: Improved collaborative monitoring of forest resources.</p>
	Economic Growth and Diversification Achieved in Rural Jamaica.	<p>Outcome 2.1: Innovative mechanisms established for financing sustainable forest management and obtaining benefits from forest use.</p> <p>Outcome 2.2: Sustainable harvesting and use of timber products from forests.</p> <p>Outcome 2.3: Sustainable use of non-timber products and services of forests.</p>

3 OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2022 – 2026

The long-term vision of the Forestry Department, its plans and programmes is: *“By 2062, Jamaica’s forests and its biodiversity are sufficiently restored and sustainably managed, so once again the island can adequately be described as ‘the land of wood and water’, capable of meeting the social, economic and ecological needs of current and future generations.”* A consequence of this vision is that sustainable forest management and climate resilience are woven throughout the institutions and daily habits of Jamaicans. The goal of FD can therefore be expressed as *“Sustainably manage and utilise Jamaica’s forest resources to enhance social and economic development and contribute to building the country’s climate resilience.”*

The SFMP recognizes the following strategic objectives, also expressed in the NFMCP and the FD Corporate Plan 2021 - 2026:

- Strategic Objective 1: Reverse forest degradation, deforestation and the loss of forest biodiversity, through conservation and sustainable forest management, as well as strengthening the legislative, policy and institutional framework of the sector.
- Strategic Objective 2: Enhance economic, social and environmental benefits of forests through the sustainable utilisation of forest resources.
- Strategic Objective 3: Build the capacity within the Forestry Department, its partners and forest communities to manage, protect and conserve the forest resources.
- Strategic Objective 4: Increase public education and awareness to protect, conserve, restore and manage Jamaica's forests.

The five Thematic Areas of NFMCP, which respond to these strategic objectives, as well as its 13 outcomes, are listed in **Box 1**.

3.1 Strategic Objective 1: Reverse forest degradation, deforestation and the loss of forest biodiversity, through conservation and sustainable forest management, as well as strengthening the legislative, policy and institutional framework of the sector.

Under this strategic objective, the following specific objectives are proposed:

- 1.1 Continuously strengthen the legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks for development, management, and conservation of all forests in Jamaica and enhance capabilities to ensure appropriate enforcement of Jamaica’s forests laws in order to achieve no net loss of forest cover.
- 1.2 Improve transparent and accountable decision-making as it relates to forests within the context of other sectors as well as address cross-cutting issues, overlapping mandates, and conflicting policies and practices.
- 1.3 Protect Jamaica’s biodiversity, particularly flora and fauna of ecological, cultural and historical value.
- 1.4 Facilitate and encourage the protection and conservation of forests, particularly native and endemic tree species, found on private lands in urban and rural areas.
- 1.5 Mobilise the forest sector to realise achieving the NDC, and strengthen this commitment over time.

Box 1: NFMCP Thematic Areas and their Expected Outcomes.

Under Thematic Area 1, Forest Governance and Conservation, ten outputs are being implemented during 2021-2026. Its expected outcomes are:

- Outcome 1.1: Strengthened governance, policy and legislative framework to ensure sustainable development of the forest sector.
- Outcome 1.2: Forest biodiversity protected.

Under Thematic Area 2, Forest Utilisation, ten outputs are being implemented during 2021-2026. Its expected outcomes are:

- Outcome 2.1: Innovative mechanisms established for financing sustainable forest management and obtaining benefits from forest use.
- Outcome 2.2: Sustainable harvesting and use of timber products from forests.
- Outcome 2.3: Sustainable use of non-timber products and services of forests.

Under Thematic Area 3, Capacity for Sustainable Forest Management, twelve outputs are being implemented during 2021-2026. Its expected outcomes are:

- Outcome 3.1: Improved participatory planning to manage, protect and conserve Jamaica's forests.
- Outcome 3.2: Strengthened institutional capacity for REDD+ readiness.
- Outcome 3.3: Strengthened capacity of Local Forest Management Committees and other community groups.

Under Thematic Area 4, Education, Training and Awareness, four outputs are being implemented during 2021-2026. Its expected outcomes are:

- Outcome 4.1: Forest communities, the general public as well as targeted groups have increased capacity regarding sustainable forest practices.
- Outcome 4.2: Strengthened capacity for natural resource valuations, carbon stock monitoring and silviculture.

Under Thematic Area 5, Monitoring and Information Management, five outputs are being implemented during 2021-2026. Its expected outcomes are:

- Outcome 5.1: Improved availability of spatial data for sustainable forest management practices, promoting investment, and for assessing vulnerabilities and risks in the forest sector.
- Outcome 5.2: Strengthened capacity for impact and vulnerability assessments and for management of research and knowledge systems.
- Outcome 5.3: Improved collaborative monitoring of forest resources.

For each Thematic Area, the outputs 2021-2026, outcome and output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Sources of Verification/Data are listed in the PMER Strategic Framework, revised for 2021-2026. The PMER Plan 2021-2026 provides this information as well and additionally, for each output, lists baseline information (usually for 2020-2021), targets for each Financial Year, estimated Risk Level, M&E methodologies, the frequency of data collection, cost of the intervention, and the stakeholders engaged in implementation (lead and supporting partners).

The Forest Policy 2017 lists several deficiencies relating to the enforcement of forest laws:⁸

⁸ Policy and regulatory deficiency identified as a priority by the Forest Policy 2017.

- Encroachment and squatting on Forest Estates, especially for agriculture and housing purposes;
- Open access use of forests and illegal cutting of trees on Crown Lands;
- Selective removal of valuable biodiversity including endemic tree species;
- Lack of clearly discernible demarcation of Forest Estate boundaries.

In order to provide the legal basis to address these deficiencies, as a priority during the period, inter-agency collaborative work will continue regarding the amendment of the Forest Act 1996 and its promulgation. In tandem, updated Forest Regulations to those introduced in 2001 are being prepared, covering new permit and license programmes. Pertinent public awareness campaigns are planned after these documents are finalised.

Several government agencies in Jamaica have a central role in the development and land use planning on Crown Lands. Agencies responsible for mining, agriculture, energy, and housing all are given jurisdiction to make plans for the use of Crown Lands under their mandate. Improvements are needed in land use coordination and the sharing of current land use plans, leases, and permit information. Conflicts in land use should be identified and assessed along with the legitimate interests of different stakeholders. Abiding to the Forest Management Plans governing the various forest reserves and forest management areas will be key. The NFMCP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is to be strengthened for its role in the governance of the forest sector and in promotion of the mainstreaming of Sustainable Forest Management into relevant national decision-making processes in other pertinent sectors and in development orders. The TAC is the prime mechanism to address cross-cutting programmatic issues, overlapping mandates, and conflicting policies and practices. FD also aims to become part of consultations on environmental impact assessments on forest lands.

Planning and implementing the management of mangrove forests is a priority for the period 2021-2026. For many years, there was insufficient monitoring of mangrove forests across the island to prevent or reduce conversion.⁹ In recent years, FD has surveyed the island's remaining mangrove forests. The transfer of mangrove lands to be managed by FD is being prepared. In tandem a mangrove management plan is being finalised for immediate implementation during the period. This includes the restoration of mangrove forests through removal of garbage and replanting (a seedling nursery has been established). Some terrestrial lands are also being transferred to the management of FD, in the scope of supporting the implementation of REDD+.

FD will continue its boundary verification programme during the period. The demarcation of boundaries of Forest Reserves and Forest Management Areas is essential for the verification of forest inventories, to prevent encroachment, for monitoring and enforcement purposes, and the implementation of public awareness initiatives. Most of Jamaica's Forest Reserves have been prescribed using legal descriptions and monuments, not surveyed boundaries and readily identifiable markers. In this regard, priority will be given to the delineation of boundaries for Forest Reserves and Forest Management Areas which are identified as being continually under threat of encroachment.

The SFMP gives priority to the continued protection of the island's unique biodiversity. Jamaica is rated fifth in islands of the World in terms of endemic plants and its forests are important repositories of biological diversity. Jamaica's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2003) indicates that at "least 3,304 species of plants occur in Jamaica" of which 923 (27.9%) are endemic. The Convention on

⁹ *Policy and regulatory deficiency identified as a priority by the Forest Policy 2017.*

Biological Diversity (CBD) also makes reference to ‘Forest Biodiversity’ which it defines as a broad term inclusive of all life forms within forested areas and the ecological roles they perform. The main factors associated with the decline of forest biological diversity are: climate change, conversion of forests, agricultural land use, overgrazing, unmitigated shifting cultivation, unsustainable forest management, introduction of alien invasive species, infrastructure development, mining and oil exploitation, anthropogenic forest fires and pollution. A main focus for the period is research of invasive fauna and flora, specifically for the various forest types and the preparation of targeted management plans. Additionally, FD has identified target species for conservation, and will collaborate in the preparation of management and recovery plans.

The reforestation of degraded landscapes is one of the major objectives of the NFMCP and a key contributor to two of the (current) 16 key commitments of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC): *No net loss of forest cover* and *National Tree Planting Initiative (NTPI)- 3 million trees*. Reforestation actions assist in the mitigation of climate change and adapting to its impacts. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has introduced a mechanism for “reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD+). The REDD+ mechanism seeks to provide incentives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, the conservation, sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of carbon stocks.

In order to ensure ‘no net loss of forest cover’, FD implements reforestation and tree planting programmes for forest estates, urban areas and mangroves. Another priority is the development of guidelines for planting and maintaining trees in urban settings. The NTPI aims to plant 3 million trees by 2022 across Jamaica, with one million saplings distributed to the public and 2 million planted centrally by Government Departments and private organisations.

Jamaica’s updated NDC (2020) aims to reduce emissions by 25-29% relative to a business-as-usual scenario by 2030.¹⁰ The updated NDC submission covers in addition to emission reduction in the energy sector, emissions from forestry and land use change, reflecting the importance of the forestry sector to climate action in Jamaica.¹¹

There are many co-benefits to climate mitigation and adaptation in the forest sector. These include helping to maintain optimal levels of groundwater under increased water stress, reducing salt-water intrusion, reducing soil erosion and hence boosting crop productivity in the face of more challenging climatic conditions, and reducing heat stress to the population. Important adaptation benefits are provided in terms of improving health, the lifespans of infrastructure and resilience to drought conditions. Important synergies between mitigation and adaptation are found in swamp and mangrove forests. In addition, coastal mangroves play an important role in preventing coastal erosion in the face of rising sea levels. As a small island developing state, Jamaica is acutely aware of how the physical risks of climate change threaten its development and the wellbeing and economic security of its citizens. Adaptation therefore represents an important cross-cutting element for all sectors.

¹⁰ *The specific NDC (2020) commitments are: (a) 25.4% reduction relative to business-as-usual emissions in 2030 unconditional; (b) 28.5% reduction relative to business-as-usual emissions in 2030 conditional upon obtaining international support.*

¹¹ *The baseline for assessing emission reduction from land use change and forestry was determined using Jamaica’s 2013 Land Use Change Assessment.*

3.2 Strategic Objective 2: Enhance economic, social and environmental benefits of forests through the sustainable utilisation of forest resources.

Under this strategic objective, the following specific objectives are proposed:

- 2.1 Maintain and restore forest cover by providing appropriate incentives to support the protection of forested lands and the reforestation of denuded lands in order to address mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- 2.2 Incentivize the preservation of standing natural forests to enhance ecosystem services, disaster risk financing, purification of air and water, carbon sequestration, nutrient dispersal, as well as provision of biochemical and industrial products. Increase the participation of the private sector and their role in forestry-as-a-business.
- 2.3 Develop greater appreciation of Jamaica's forests by increasing opportunities for Jamaicans and tourists to access them for recreational and leisure activities as well as for cultural purposes.

Without deliberate action by private owners (who own just under three-quarters of forested lands), the quantity and quality of forest cover on their lands will decline.¹² Appropriate incentives are to be designed for private land owners to retain standing forests, engage in reforestation practices, conduct habitat enhancement activities and prevent soil erosion. Incentives should meet the needs of private land owners who may have divergent interests based on the size of lands owned, the level and quality of forest cover on these parcels, tax structures and individual future potential development of these properties. In recent years under NFMCP, additional incentives were explored which now need to be made available and promoted.

Forest cover is also central within the scope of disaster risk financing, where Jamaica made important strides in recent years. A World Bank / Ministry of Finance and Public Service 2018 study¹³ reported that on average, the GoJ would need to cover losses of approximately J\$16 billion annually, or 0.84 percent of Jamaica's 2015 gross domestic product (GDP) to address its contingent liabilities related to hurricanes and floods, an amount also equivalent to 3.09 percent of total government expenditures in 2016. In addition to long-term impacts on economic and social development in Jamaica, disasters also increase Jamaica's sovereign debt, as more loans are borrowed to finance unplanned post-disaster expenditures. The report made recommendations for the formulation of a country-specific comprehensive disaster risk finance (DRF) strategy, based on the assessment of the legislative, financial management, fiscal, and insurance market environment in Jamaica. This would equip MOFPS with information and instruments to manage contingent liabilities posed by natural disasters. It is important to note that the Forest Policy 2017 lists Financing for forest restoration outside of regular budgetary allocations as a deficiency.

A related theme in climate change adaptation and mitigation is the launch of Payment schemes for Ecosystem Services (PES). In the period 2021-2026, an inter-ministerial working group should be established and pilot projects actively pursued, to outline the options that can be developed.

¹² *The Forest Policy 2017 notes that there is "Insufficient take up by private landowners of opportunities to declare their forested land under the Forest Act and obtain property tax incentives."*

¹³ World Bank Group. 2018. *Advancing Disaster Risk Finance in Jamaica*. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33089> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

Another funding mechanism for forest management and conservation could be the establishment of a Forest Fund (comparable to the Tourism Enhancement Fund), as allowed under the 2001 Forest Regulations. The Regulations provide that the Fund may be used for reforestation; watershed management and sustainable forest management; public recreation and nature conservation; carbon conservation projects; forest adaptation and mitigation measures; and grants to owners and tenants of land for tree planting and forest management. For this, partnerships for a stronger and more relevant forest sector are to be strengthened and operationalised.

FD will promote forestry-as-a-business and support sustainable earnings from timber and non-timber products in several ways. It will address the deficiency “Lack of a central repository of data on the market price, supply, and demand for local timber¹⁴” and for this period focus on three to five wood species relevant to timber harvesting. It will also develop a sustainable harvesting programme for forest stands within Forest Management Areas (FMAs) and develop a research and marketing programme on non-timber resources. Strategic emphasis will be placed on increasing the sustainable production of wood from accessible plantations which are environmentally and economically suitable for harvesting, and encouraging the development of such plantations on suitable private lands. The increased participation of private land owners and investors in partnerships for the development of the forestry sector are therefore essential.

FD will implement various business strategies and plans to expand recreational facilities in forested areas. Inroads will be made to address the deficiency identified in the Forest Policy: “Inadequate infrastructure to develop forest appreciation, recreation, and ecotourism activities.” FD can build on ecotourism pilot projects, recently implemented in forest communities. FD will develop targeted infrastructure and regulate recreation and tourism activities in Crown Lands, considering the carrying capacity for each area.

FD will also coordinate the assessment of risks and vulnerabilities to climate change of forests and forest communities. Relevant research outputs related to sustainable forest management and climate change will be made available.

3.3 Strategic Objective 3: Build the capacity within the Forestry Department, its partners and forest communities to manage, protect and conserve the forest resources.

Under this strategic objective, the following specific objectives are proposed:

- 3.1 Provide a broader framework to support community and public participation in the planning, policy making and management of forests, which may include granting rights of use and management of timber and non-timber forest products. The development and implementation of forest management plans are a part of this framework.
- 3.2 Continue to develop and promote the use of agro-forestry techniques by farmers operating in close proximity to forests, community forestry programmes, as well as alternative sustainable forest-based activities that create employment and income generation, thereby building the knowledge base and interest of farmers and communities.
- 3.3 Develop staff training programmes for professional development and customer services.

¹⁴ Policy and regulatory deficiency identified as a priority by the Forest Policy 2017.

3.4 Build the capacity to handle innovative techniques and new technology for sustainable forest monitoring and management.

The successful management of the island's forests requires that rural and community interest groups are actively involved in the various stages of the planning and implementation processes. In this regard, residents in rural areas, both men and women, should play important roles in the sustainable management of the forest sector. Participatory management approaches will be adopted to facilitate access to and sharing of the benefits that can be derived from forests by rural communities, for example, to reduce rural poverty levels. One such initiative is the opportunity for persons who reside on the fringes of State-owned forests with an interest in the sustainable management of these areas, to become members of a Local Forest Management Committee (LFMC). Special training activities will assist LFMCs and other Community-Based Organisations (CBO) to address the "Limited capacity of many local communities to undertake co-management of Forest Estates," listed as a deficiency in the Forest Policy 2017.

The Forest Act 1996 identifies that Forest Management Plans for declared Forest Reserves and Forest Management Areas should be developed. These Plans are designed to achieve consensus and allow for practical management rules and understandings. Forest Management Plans can actively target and aim to prevent deforestation and land degradation and seek the active involvement of specific stakeholders. They further highlight potential opportunities for the sustainable management of the natural resources found in the relevant reserve or management area. In addition to these forest management plans, another priority for FD is to develop forest restoration activities in watersheds and to prepare riparian forest management.

In recent times, FD has funded a host of projects to generate alternative livelihood in forest communities. Together with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) and the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), FD has promoted agro-forestry systems, which bring together agricultural production techniques with protection of soil and water resources, conservation of biodiversity, and carbon sequestration. Agro-forestry is part of a continuum towards social forestry, which produces timber as well as non-timber products. The promotion of agro-forestry and social forestry will be important areas of focus during the period and appropriate roadmaps will be developed. As such, FD will address the deficiency identified in the Forest Policy 2017: "Lack of clear rules to manage traditional uses of forests and forest products and the regulation of access by communities to local forests."

The development of continuing training programmes on core areas of competence for sustainable forest management is also prioritised for the period 2021-2026. Collaboration with local as well as international training institutions is being instituted. The FD team is already using new technology and new approaches in the implementation of NFMCP. During the period, this should increase, for instance by expanding carbon stock monitoring activities through a national methodology for determining how much carbon is sequestered by local forests. A new methodology for forest assessments and conducting bio-physical inventories is also to be introduced. FD will continue to focus on improving forest management information in the following areas: (a) Analysis of the ecosystem services provided by the Forest Estates including the determination of the economic value provided by these services; (b) Biophysical attributes and species inventory on priority sites; (c) Development of indicators to monitor compliance with the no-net-loss of forest cover policy on Crown Lands; (d) Vulnerability assessments of forested areas detailing the risk of flooding, run-off, soil erosion, and fire.

3.4 Strategic Objective 4: Increase public education and awareness to protect, conserve, restore and manage Jamaica's forests.

Under this strategic objective, the following specific objectives are proposed:

- 4.1 Raise knowledge and awareness among the public at large on forest protection, restoration and management and the contribution of forests to climate resilience.
- 4.2 Raise awareness, in particular within forest communities, on preventing and managing bush fires, including their dangers and costs.

FD is carrying out important steps to make its work more visible. During the period, it will continue its programme of school and community visits for educational activities, as well as a strong social media programme.¹⁵ Tree planting at schools, at companies and with many other groups in society is being expanded.¹⁶ The urban forestry activities will be important vehicles for education and awareness, since it brings the message of value of trees close to home for many citizens. During the period, knowledge and awareness on climate resilience will accompany the messages regarding the values of forests and trees.

FD will also conduct forest-fire awareness and related educational activities, in particular in vulnerable communities.

¹⁵ *The Forest Policy 2017 recognizes "Limited awareness of the value of forests and trees as part of Jamaica's cultural and ecological heritage" as a deficiency.*

¹⁶ *In particular within the scope of the National Tree Planting Initiative (NTPI): Three Million Trees in Three Years (2019 – 2022).*

4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SFMP

4.1 Planning and Management of the Outputs

The NFMCP, recently revised and updated for the period 2021-2026, provides the framework for the implementation of the programmatic side of SFMP. NFMCP thematic areas and outcomes are listed in **Box 1**. Its 47 outputs for the period are described in detail in a companion document, the NFMCP PMER Plan for 2021-2026.¹⁷ Overall costing information is also provided in that document as well as another containing budget notes¹⁸, while detailed budgeting for each output is contained in a Database (provided in Excel, to be uploaded in the FD BMES system).

The NFMCP management structure is described in another document, the Strategic Framework for NFMCP/PMER 2021-2026.¹⁹ Central to management of the plan as well as increasingly important in guiding the forest sector is the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Regarding the SFMP, the TAC manages the programmatic side, while the institutional component is managed by FD's Senior Management Team.

4.2 Stakeholder Engagement

A wide variety of stakeholders participate in planning, implementing and monitoring NFMCP. A specialised document contains a targeted stakeholder engagement plan²⁰ and is available as another companion document to this SFMP. It informs on the two large groups of stakeholders to be engaged at appropriate times in the implementation of targeted areas of NFMCP, as recognized in the NFMCP Theory of Change for 2021-2026²¹:

- a) **Implementation partners** which are directly involved in activities towards achieving the outputs of the NFMCP. These are the Primary Implementing Entities (PIEs) and Secondary Implementing Entities (SIEs). The PIEs together coordinate the implementation of the NFMCP and fulfil tasks related to Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER). The SIEs include several additional Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Private Sector and International Organisations.
- b) **Stakeholders in wider society** which are essential for achieving the higher-level results of NFMCP and providing contributions to the results of Vision 2030 Jamaica and their sustainability. These include many professional associations, schools, churches, additional private sector entities,

¹⁷ September 2022, Forestry Department, Government of Jamaica. *Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) Plan 2021-2026 for the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP)*.

¹⁸ September 2022, Forestry Department, Government of Jamaica. *Notes to the Budget of the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP) 2021 – 2026*.

¹⁹ September 2022, Forestry Department, Government of Jamaica. *Strategic Framework for Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) of the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP) – Update for 2021-2026*.

²⁰ September 2022, Forestry Department, Government of Jamaica. *Stakeholder Engagement Plan 2021-2026 for the Continued Implementation of the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP) and its NFMCP and its Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) system*.

²¹ See the *Strategic Framework for the NFMCP/PMER 2021-2026*.

additional community institutions and groups, entities at parish level, additional MDAs, CSOs, farmers, fisherfolk, other individuals pertinent to sustainable forest management, as well as international organisations.

4.3 Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Throughout this document, reference has been made to the Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) system for NFMCP, and by extension the SFMP. PMER is documented in a series of four documents and a database:

- Strategic Framework for Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) of the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP) – update for 2021-2026;
- Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) plan 2021 – 2026 for the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP);
- Notes to the Budget of the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan (NFMCP) 2021-2026;
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan 2021-2026 for the continued implementation of NFMCP and its PMER system;
- Database for the NFMCP/PMER 2021 - 2026 (Excel, including textual and budget information).

Guidance for the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on NFMCP has been provided in the Strategic Framework. Pertinent information for FD is also provided in its corporate plan 2021-2025.