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ABSTRACT

Based on newspaper accounts, official documents, and reports by international donors, this article sets out the growing awareness about the environmental impact of resort tourism in Jamaica and action proposed and undertaken to put tourism on a more sustainable path, from the 1970s till the adoption of a Masterplan for Sustainable Tourism Development in 2002. Through a case study of the resort town of Negril, it will argue that the Master Plan was the culmination of action and lobbying by industry stakeholders and environmental groups, a global and regional shift towards sustainable tourism and pressure from international donors. It will also make the case that throughout the period, the Jamaican government struggled to balance the economic and environmental sustainability of tourism because of the centrality of tourism to the national economy and its limited fiscal space.

KEY WORDS: tourism, Caribbean, sustainable development, environmental impact assessment, infrastructure, coastal environment.

MAKING TOURISM SUSTAINBLE?: ENVIRONMENT AND RESORT TOURISM IN NEGRIL, JAMAICA, 1970s-2002.

In 2002, the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) launched the Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development that drew upon the 1999 World Tourism Organisation (WTO)’s definition of sustainable tourism as ‘tourism that takes full account of its current and future *economic*, *social* and *environmental* impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.’[[1]](#footnote-1) The ten-year plan aimed for a 5% increase in stop-over visitors, a 10% increase in cruise passengers, and a 4% increase in room stock per annum to secure the economic sustainability of tourism.[[2]](#footnote-2) To minimise the social impact of this expansion, it proposed more opportunities for locals to benefit from tourism, such as community-based tourism. And based on the understanding that the ‘continued degradation’ of the environment threatened the ‘future of the industry’, the plan included actions to adopt more environmentally-friendly practices in the sector.[[3]](#footnote-3)

This article explores how the GoJ arrived at the Master Plan. It does this through a case study of Negril, which was planned by the GoJ as a resort town in the 1960s and 1970s, rapidly expanded in the 1980s and 1990s and had a strong environmental lobby. The article is divided into two sections. The first will show that in the 1970s and 1980s, different local stakeholders started to demand action to address the negative environmental impact of an increase in hotels, including beach erosion, reef destruction and loss of mangroves. But they faced a government that was reluctant to carefully plan tourism development. Firstly, because it heavily relied on tourism as a driver of economic growth – it contributed US$407 million in foreign exchange receipts in 1985, making it the major foreign exchange earner.[[4]](#footnote-4) And secondly, because it had to navigate high levels of debt – in 1981–1982 the debt service ratio (per cent of Gross National Income) was 29.2% rising to 47.5% in 1987–1988.[[5]](#footnote-5) The second section will demonstrate that from 1990 onwards, local stakeholders increased their lobbying of government and undertook a range of actions to mitigate tourism’s negative impact on the coastal environment. It will be argued that their actions along with a global shift towards sustainable tourism and pressure from international donors, encouraged the GoJ to draft the Master Plan.

Based on newspaper accounts, official documents, and reports by international donors, the following will set out the growing awareness about the environmental impact of tourism in Negril and action proposed and undertaken to put resort tourism on a more sustainable path. In doing so, it will make an important contribution to environmental history. Reflecting on the field’s long-standing concern with conservation, [[6]](#footnote-6) nature-based tourism – tourism based on an area’s natural attractions that often takes place in protected areas – has received more scholarly attention than mass tourism – travel of a large number of tourists to popular destinations, characterised by the use of standardised package products and mass consumption.[[7]](#footnote-7) For example, this journal has published eleven articles that mention tourism or tourist(s) in the title or abstract. Of these, four discuss tourism in some detail but only in relation to national parks.[[8]](#footnote-8) To date, few historians have examined ecotourism – a type of nature‐based tourism that is ecologically sustainable and environmentally sensitive.[[9]](#footnote-9) Elsewhere I have explored the development of ecotourism in Jamaica’s Cockpit Country, focussing particularly on the conflict between different stakeholders.[[10]](#footnote-10) During the period under consideration, there was little ecotourism in Negril. In the late 1990s, a protected area was set up, encompassing a marine park and the Royal Palm Reserve, owned by the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica. A local environmental organisation acquired a lease for the Royal Palm Reserve in 1999 but it closed in 2010 because of financial difficulties.

The few historical studies that have looked at the environmental impact of mass tourism have focussed on the Mediterranean[[11]](#footnote-11) and except for Mansel Blackford’s study of tourism in Maui,[[12]](#footnote-12) ignored the tropical islands that became major tourism destinations after World War Two. It is, however, not easy to draw a clear line between nature-based tourism and mass tourism. Many tourists to tropical islands, for instance, stay at large all-inclusive resorts attracted by the area’s natural beauty and opportunity to snorkel or dive in protected areas.

And this study also adds to environmental history through its focus on the Caribbean. The region is still largely underrepresented in the field. Existing environmental histories of the region have focussed on the impact of sugar production on the landscape and on natural disasters during the plantation era,[[13]](#footnote-13) but with a few exceptions have ignored environmental concerns associated with tourism and other post-war developments.[[14]](#footnote-14) It also needs to be stressed that except for Polly Pattullo’s *Last Resorts*: *The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean* (1996), scholarship on the development of mass tourism in the post-war Caribbean has largely ignored its environmental impact.[[15]](#footnote-15)

*Unsustainable Tourism*

In the decades after World War Two, the Jamaican tourist industry rapidly expanded. In 1950, 74,892 tourists visited the island, rising to 1,248,397 in 1999.[[16]](#footnote-16) Negril was developed relatively late as a resort town. In 1963, a committee was set up to explore ways to develop Negril.[[17]](#footnote-17) When developers failed to come forward, the Urban Development Corporation (UDC), a statutory body undertaking major infrastructure development projects to stimulate growth, was granted 6,500 acres of government land to develop the area.[[18]](#footnote-18) In 1969, it launched a programme to develop several miles of beach front and adjacent land. The first phase was carried out in the 1970s when townhouses, apartments, condominiums, a shopping centre, and various hotels were built, including the 250-room Negril Beach Village hotel. The UDC also added important infrastructures to support mass tourism, including an air strip and a sewage treatment plant.[[19]](#footnote-19)

The second phase of the UDC programme was undertaken in the 1980s when many large hotels were constructed north of the town centre (**see figure 1**).[[20]](#footnote-20) Most of these hotels were all-inclusives, such as the 186-room Sandals Negril.[[21]](#footnote-21) Jamaica was in fact a pioneer of the all-inclusive sector in the Caribbean. By the late 1980s, already 65 per cent of all Jamaican hotels with over 125 rooms operated as an all-inclusive. This gave the country an edge in an increasingly competitive tourism market but came with environmental costs: beach erosion, habitat destruction, increased water and energy consumption and waste and sewage generation.

To give some indication of the rapid growth of hotels in Negril during the second phase, between 1974 and 1985 some 431 hotels rooms were added but between 1987 and 1990 alone 680 rooms were completed.[[22]](#footnote-22) This was part of the GoJ’s attempt to make tourism an engine of economic growth at a time when the country’s debt level rapidly increased. More tourists would increase foreign exchange, bringing much needed government revenue and allowing for the importation of capital goods.[[23]](#footnote-23) And more tourists meant more employment and increased household income, which would lower the debt ratio and via increased taxes, ease the burden on public finances. Alongside a more general programme of trade liberalisation, the GoJ tried to attract investment in tourist accommodation through specific schemes, including the divestment of seventeen government-owned hotels sold under the auspices of the UDC.[[24]](#footnote-24) The ownership of much of the new investment in tourism accommodation was Jamaican.[[25]](#footnote-25) The larger hotels built in the 1980s were typically owned by white Jamaicans, such as Sandals resorts founded by the white Jamaican Butch Stewart. Large hotels in Negril coexisted with small hotels and guesthouses that were mostly owned or managed by African Jamaicans.[[26]](#footnote-26)

On paper, environmental concerns were not absent in the development of Negril. In the 1960s and 1970s, the GoJ repeatedly stressed that development should ‘not destroy the natural beauty of the area’ and that ‘much of the present open character’ should be retained.[[27]](#footnote-27) The UDC therefore agreed that buildings on its land could have no more than three floors, had to be set back from the high water mark at a distance ranging from 75 to 250 feet, and that existing trees should ‘as much as possible’ be left standing.[[28]](#footnote-28) It was not until the 1981 Town and Country Planning Provisional Development Order for Negril that preservation of the physical environment – deemed an ‘outstanding attraction’ –, became a formal objective in the development of the whole Negril area and not just UDC land. The order stipulated the number of rooms per acre, limited the number of floors to two and demanded that sea-front hotels be built at least 150 feet away from the high-water mark. The order also required developers to include in their planning application, the infrastructure they would put in place, such as a sewage treatment plant, and the trees they would keep or remove.[[29]](#footnote-29) The order, then, addressed some environmental impacts of tourism’s growth but was more concerned about retaining the physical beauty of Negril to attract tourists through low-rise buildings that allowed for unspoilt views of the beach.

The order became law in 1984 and was overseen by the Negril and Green Island Area Local Planning Authority (NGIALPA). It was not very effective as much building took place without proper approvals.[[30]](#footnote-30) It seems that it was largely small hotel developers that did so. In fact, Lee Issa, the owner of the all-inclusive Swept Away, urged the UDC and NGIALPA to work together to ensure compliance with planning guidelines.[[31]](#footnote-31) At the same time, Negril witnessed an increase in squatter settlements by rural migrants, who had moved to the area in search for work in tourism. This and the stress that the rapid increase in rooms and tourists placed on the environment undermined the aim to preserve the physical environment while developing Negril as a resort town. In fact, by the mid-1980s, Negril’s beaches were already extensively developed and the impact of this on the environment was visible for all, ranging from the destruction of mangroves and beach erosion to sea water pollution and build-up of seaweed along the beaches.[[32]](#footnote-32)

Already in the 1970s, scientists raised concerns about the impact of the rapid development of tourism on the coastal environment, focussing on the disposal of sewage from hotels.[[33]](#footnote-33) Realising that existing methods of sewage disposal by hotels, such as septic tanks, detrimentally impacted on beach water quality, the Beach Control Authority, the Ministry of Health and the National Water Authority from the early 1970s onwards encouraged hotels to move to package treatment plants – small-scale prefabricated wastewater treatment systems designed to treat sewage in places where centralised sewage treatment infrastructure is impractical or impossible – and later issued standards for sewage treatment.[[34]](#footnote-34) Various hotels abandoned septic systems, such as the Sundowner in Negril. Package treatment plants varied, with most offering a primary and secondary treatment – removal of solids and bacterial decomposition – and some also a tertiary treatment – extra filtration – before discharging the effluent in the sea. In 1973, Elspeth Barnes studied sewage pollution along the coastline between Montego Bay and Ocho Rios and concluded that package treatment plants did not have the expected effect as they were complex and few hotels employed qualified engineers to manage them, leading to high bacterial counts in the discharged effluent.[[35]](#footnote-35)

In the 1980s, only a few hotels were connected to the UDC sewage plant.[[36]](#footnote-36) As mentioned by local scientists, the reliance of hotels on package sewage plants and septic tanks posed health risks for tourists and residents and harmed the marine environment because much effluent was deposited on the beach and led to the built-up of seaweed.[[37]](#footnote-37) By the late 1980s, the local community called for action to improve sewage treatment from hotels, led by the Negril Chamber of Commerce (NCC). The organisation had started as the Nature Conservation Society in 1983 to prevent peat mining in a wetland area in Negril, and was formalised in 1989.[[38]](#footnote-38) Its executive committee was largely made up of small hoteliers and operators of tourist enterprises, and most were African Jamaicans, such as Daniel Grizzle of the Charela Inn, Ray Arthurs of the Golden Sunset hotel, and Cliff Reynolds of Cliff’s 3Cs patty shop.[[39]](#footnote-39) In various fora, the NCC demanded a central sewage plant and set up a water quality monitoring system and reef survey to gather evidence to lobby government and international donors.[[40]](#footnote-40) This paid off as sewage lines were extended, the UDC sewage plant’s capacity was increased with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the European Economic Community agreed to fund a central sewage plant.[[41]](#footnote-41)

The GoJ realised in the late 1980s that making tourism an engine of economic growth required an increase in accommodation and adequate infrastructure. But its debt level made this challenging. Most of the debt consisted of Structural Adjustment loans, which came with conditions including reducing government spending. As such, there was less money to extend water and sewages lines and maintain existing infrastructure in resort towns, leading to frequent water lock-offs and sewage plant breakdowns.[[42]](#footnote-42) At the same time, utility rates for households and businesses increased, which explains why many hoteliers, through the NCC, demanded better sewage disposal.[[43]](#footnote-43) At a time of fiscal retrenchment, the only way the GoJ could do this was by relying on international donors. Donors were willing to support sewage and other infrastructural projects in resort towns because they saw them as essential for economic growth but often had specific demands.[[44]](#footnote-44)

To protect the environment, scientists and local stakeholders also demanded better planning processes. Already in 1974, Brian Hudson, a foreign-born architect and planner who had been involved in the early discussions around the development of Negril, wrote three newspaper articles in which he stressed that the ‘uncontrolled, haphazard and unsympathetic development’ was ‘ruining’ the coastline.[[45]](#footnote-45) In 1978, he and other members of the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) submitted a report to the Town and Country Planning Authority, recommending a comprehensive plan for the development of Negril based on wide local consultation. Because they feared that the zoning of the fifteen-mile-stretch from Green Island to Negril Light House as ‘hotel resort’ or ‘resort/residential’ would ‘destroy the natural beauty of Negril’, they proposed the formation of a Negril Conservation and Development Company with representatives from the UDC and other stakeholders. According to Hudson, the reports was dismissed as unrealistic.[[46]](#footnote-46) Hudson, by then an academic, continued to express in various fora that ‘insufficient attention is given to proper physical planning and environmental conservation.’[[47]](#footnote-47) He was supported by other scientists, including the African Jamaican Ben Henry. In one of the first scholarly articles on the environmental impact of tourism in Jamaica, Henry proposed density rules for resort areas – limits on the number of tourists – commensurate with the environment, to reconcile tourism development and conservation.[[48]](#footnote-48) Although he did not use the term ‘sustainable’, Henry believed that hotel developers should protect the marine environment so that it could continue to attract tourists. A similar proposal was put forward by the Caribbean Tourism Research and Development Centre, which also proposed the use of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for major tourism developments.[[49]](#footnote-49) EIAs were first used in the US in the late 1960s and became common across the globe in the 1980s. Initially they just evaluated the anticipated environmental effects of a proposed development but over time also assessed social effects and the means proposed to mitigate negative impacts.[[50]](#footnote-50)

The local community held the UDC, private developers and Ministry of Tourism responsible for the rapid tourism development – 23 per cent of 5,671 hotel rooms constructed in Jamaica between 1987 and 1990 were located in Negril –[[51]](#footnote-51) with its concomitant negative effect on the environment.[[52]](#footnote-52) Councillor Frank Manborde, for instance, complained that some developers abused the development order by building a hotel with the maximum number of rooms but then applied for permission to add another floor. He asked the government to find ways to protect Negril’s natural beauty while also generating economic growth.[[53]](#footnote-53) Many hoteliers also supported a comprehensive development plan for Negril because the rapid increase in tourist accommodation put a strain on existing infrastructure, which affected their businesses and harmed the very thing that attracted tourists.[[54]](#footnote-54)

The World Bank was also concerned about the lack of planning. Referring to all major resort towns and particularly sewage disposal, it concluded in 1989 that there were ‘serious deficiencies’ in both infrastructural support for tourism and environmental protection. It noted that attempts had been made to address some of the deficiencies, but these were ineffective as responsibility was spread between different organisations. It encouraged the GoJ to devise a ‘strategic master plan for the future development’ of tourism and rigorously apply ‘local land use planning’ to ‘avoid the proliferation of small, unplanned additions to room capacity (as has occurred in Negril)’.[[55]](#footnote-55)

The GoJ was not oblivious to the environmental impact of the rapid expansion of tourism and realised that action was needed if tourism was to remain a key driver of economic growth. It has already been mentioned that the GoJ secured funding from USAID to improve sewage disposal. USAID also contributed to a sea grass restoration project in eighteen coastal sites undertaken by the Natural Resources Conservation Department (NRCD) in 1982–1983. A survey undertaken as part of this project concluded that beach erosion was rife because of ‘inadequate physical planning’ that allowed for development right up to the high-water mark, the illegal removal of sand for construction and the removal of sea grass by hotels to improve beach areas.[[56]](#footnote-56) And in 1986, Prime Minister Edward Seaga set up a steering committee to devise a development plan for Negril that would align economic and environmental needs.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Although the concept ‘sustainable tourism’ did not emerge until the 1990s, this section has shown that by the late 1980s, different stakeholders and the GoJ were concerned about the environmental impact of tourism and realised the need for careful planning to put the industry on a more sustainable path. The discussion about mass tourism in Jamaica in the 1980s lagged behind that of Global North countries, who focussed less on density-rules and more on sustainable practices.[[58]](#footnote-58) The next section will explore the adoption of such practices in Negril, the embrace of the concept ‘sustainable tourism’ across the region and other factors that contributed to the Master Plan.

*Towards Sustainable Tourism*

In the 1990s, the GoJ’s economic growth strategy remained focussed on tourism. The 1996 National Industrial Policy, for instance, aimed to attract more investment in tourism and increase the sector’s competitiveness so it could continue to contribute much foreign exchange – already 45 per cent in 1992.[[59]](#footnote-59) Investment in tourist accommodation in this decade was mostly local. Following financial liberalisation in the early 1990s, large financial conglomerates emerged that moved into tourism ventures.[[60]](#footnote-60) Some international chains also invested in tourist accommodation in the 1990s, including the Spanish RIU. Senior posts in international chain hotels were largely held by white expats in contrast to those at locally-owned chains as these made considerable efforts to hire and train local staff for management positions.[[61]](#footnote-61)

By 2000, there were already 54 hotels in Negril with a total of 3,145 rooms.[[62]](#footnote-62) Many of these were large hotels, facilitated by changes in the number of rooms allowed per acre on UDC land.[[63]](#footnote-63) Large properties, such as the 396-rooms RIU Bloody Bay hotel, made Negril according to the NCC, “a concrete jungle”.[[64]](#footnote-64) The increase in large hotels and concomitant increase in rural migrants put a huge strain on the environment. A study undertaken in 1992 on behalf of the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS) found massive coral overgrowth and estimated that in some areas more than half of the coral had died.[[65]](#footnote-65) Six years later, another survey undertaken by the NCPRS that was widely commented upon, estimated that depending on the area 2% to 15% of coral was still alive.[[66]](#footnote-66) The main reason for the decline of reefs was an increase in nutrients in the water resulting from improper sewage disposal.[[67]](#footnote-67) Also like other resort towns, Negril lost much beach in the 1990s, with some areas losing as much as 40 feet of beach between 1995 and 1999.[[68]](#footnote-68) This was largely because developers put properties close to the water edge and tried to increase the expanse of open beach by removing trees and vegetation.[[69]](#footnote-69)

Community groups drove action to mitigate the environmental impact of tourism in the 1990s. The most prominent were the NCC, the NCRPS and the Negril Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT). The NCRPS, set up in 1990 by divers and dive operators, was dominated by Europeans and North Americans. For instance, its American founder Katy Thacker had come to Negril in the 1980s and worked in a dive shop.[[70]](#footnote-70) The NEPT was a consortium of sixteen community groups and organizations, including the NCC and the NCPRS, set up in 1994. Conservation was a key tool used by the groups. In 1997, the Negril Environmental Protection Area (EPA) and the Negril Marine Park, which fell within the EPA, were formally declared (see **figure 2**). NEPT was the driving force behind the EPA, using USAID-funding to bring residents together to draft a management plan for the area. And the NCRPS started in 1991 to conserve the area that became the Negril Marine Park by raising awareness about reef damage, monitoring reefs and lobbing government.[[71]](#footnote-71) The EU agreed to fund it because it would contribute towards the GoJ’s aim to “stabilize its economy by maintaining and increasing its foreign exchange earnings through tourism”.[[72]](#footnote-72) In fact, in the 1990s international donors saw ecotourism as a means to reduce rural poverty. USAID, for example, piloted two national parks – the Blue and Jim Crow Mountains National Park and the Montego Bay Marine Park – and tried to set up a national parks system based on the assumption that this would generate foreign exchange and local employment by attracting tourists.[[73]](#footnote-73)

With little government funding available, conservation groups had to appeal to international donors to protect an area. This not only meant that they had to present themselves as rational and bureaucratic organisations, drafting lengthy management plans, but also charge people to enter a park so that their programmes would become self- sustaining. And they were often forced to prioritise the tourists’ needs over those of other users. For example, hotel operators pressured the NEPT, which managed the Marine Park, to ban fishing because guests complained about the presence of small fishing boats.[[74]](#footnote-74) And because NEPT was an NGO, it lacked authority to enforce the regulations of the EPA and Marine Park on tourist enterprises and the UDC.[[75]](#footnote-75)

Community groups actively used the EIA to limit tourism’s impact on the environment. The 1991 National Resources Conservation Authority Act granted the NRCA, a quasi-autonomous organisation,[[76]](#footnote-76) the right to request an EIA for developments in a ‘prescribed area’ – an area defined by the Minister overseeing the Act as deserving special attention for planning purposes. Developers had to comply with an EIA request and the public could submit feedback. In 1992, the NRCA requested an EIA for the 240-room Sandals Beaches Negril Hotel but only after indirect pressure. Firstly, by the Minister of Tourism, who made a public comment that developments of this scale should require an EIA. And secondly, by the NCC, the National Environmental Societies Trust (NEST) – an umbrella organisation for environmental NGOs – and the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDT), who protested that the hotel was being built on the last piece of woodland in Negril and that the UDC had not taken environmental issues into account when selling the land.[[77]](#footnote-77)

A public discussion of the EIA for the Sandals Beaches Negril Hotel was held in January 1993, the first in Jamaica.[[78]](#footnote-78) The NCC criticised the EIA for failing to quantify the impact of the loss of vegetation and trees and not considering the ecological, social and visual value of the woods, and argued that existing infrastructure could not cope with this development. Although the developers tried to alleviate some of these concerns, e.g. they would use a tertiary package sewage treatment plant until the main sewage plant was upgraded,[[79]](#footnote-79) the NRCA refused the application because of “the recreational and green-space value of the lands involved”.[[80]](#footnote-80) The developers contested the outcome in the Supreme Court, which ruled in their favour because the UDC had listed the disputed development site as a ‘designated site’, which meant it was not ‘a prescribed area’ under the NRCA act.[[81]](#footnote-81) During the building, the developers addressed various issues raised during the public discussion. For example, they made efforts to save trees.[[82]](#footnote-82) It is difficult to know whether the developers would have considered them had it not been for the EIA.

The adoption of a new Permit and License System in 1997, which required an EIA for any hotel with 12 or more rooms, ensured that hotel developers paid more attention to the environment.[[83]](#footnote-83) But the EIA was not a perfect tool. A review of EIAs for six hotels in Negril between 1992 and 2001 concluded that these were ‘just satisfactory’.[[84]](#footnote-84) The EIA guidelines provided for public participation via a public consultation during the EIA study and a public hearing after submission of the draft EIA.[[85]](#footnote-85) Local environmental groups made active use of these opportunities as illustrated by the EIA for the RIU Bloody Bay hotel, which fell within the Negril EPA. During the public consultation in 2001, NEPT, NGIALPA and the NCRPS expressed concern about the removal of sea grass to create a beach area, the possible destruction of red mangroves and the impact on a planned fish sanctuary that had to “maintain fishing as a viable commercial activity and continued source of local employment”.[[86]](#footnote-86) These organisations and the NCC also participated in the public hearing because the draft EIA recommended the clearance of woodlands and a change in the boundaries of the planned fish sanctuary.[[87]](#footnote-87) It is unclear if the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), which had succeeded the NRCA in 2001, instructed RIU to address these issues when it approved the EIA in June 2002.

Community groups raised also more directly concerns about sewage infrastructure. For instance, in 1992, the NCC undertook a coastal water quality programme to monitor the impact of the UDC sewage plant and took out a legal injunction against the UDC to prevent it from opening a new hotel complex unless it undertook extensive improvements to its sewage plant, while the NCRPS lobbied government for a moratorium on new construction in Negril until the central sewage plant was completed.[[88]](#footnote-88) Following the injunction, the UDC agreed to upgrade its plant.[[89]](#footnote-89) Work on the central plant did not start until 1994 and was only completed in 1998. It consisted of ponds built in peat land in the Negril wetlands, with effluent treated before being discharged in the South Negril River, which flowed downstream to coral reefs in the West End and beaches in Long Bay.[[90]](#footnote-90)

The central plant failed to live up to the expectations of community groups.[[91]](#footnote-91) Firstly, it did not offer tertiary treatment and collected only sewage from large tourist resorts, leaving out the local communities that used pit latrines which contributed to high levels of nutrients entering the sea. And secondly, it had an emergency overflow pipe, which ran from one of the pumping stations to the sea, posing a risk for the marine environment. Community groups appreciated that local stakeholders had a role in the management of the plant through an advisory monitoring committee,[[92]](#footnote-92) but were disappointed that government had failed to make the connection of households and businesses mandatory.[[93]](#footnote-93) Studies undertaken of the impact of the plant confirm it left much to be desired. A USAID-funded assessment from 2001 found that the plant failed to always meet NRCA effluent standards.[[94]](#footnote-94) And another study, partly undertaken by the NCRPS, noted a ‘significant δ15N enrichment of macroalgae on shallow and deep reefs at South Negril and Ironshore’ between 1998 and 2002, which strongly suggested that the new plant had increased sewage pollution at the West End of Negril.[[95]](#footnote-95)

But it was not only community groups that pressured the GoJ to address the environmental impact of resort tourism. Already in 1993, the government was told by the World Bank, one of its main lenders, that environmental destruction by tourism threatened the country’s growth policy: ‘Without continued investment in sewage treatment and water supply infrastructure and maintenance, one cannot exaggerate the threat to an economic growth strategy based on tourism.’[[96]](#footnote-96) The GoJ realised that it needed to balance environment and economic growth. The 1995 National Environmental Action Plan, for instance, stressed that beaches, cays, and coral reefs contribute ‘significantly to the economic well-being of the country through tourism’ and that these ‘natural assets’ required protection through amongst others improved standards for effluent discharge.[[97]](#footnote-97) And the 1996 National Industrial Policy stated that making tourism more competitive required addressing the environmental challenges facing the sector, including polluted coastal waters and lack of proper solid waste management.[[98]](#footnote-98)

The GoJ tried to balance economic growth and the environment through changing planning processes for tourism, including the requirement of EIAs, and by upgrading and extending crucial infrastructure in resort areas. For instance, it co-funded the North Coast Development Project, which started in 1991 with US and Japanese support and aimed to provide adequate infrastructure in key tourist areas, including an upgrade of Negril’s water supply system.[[99]](#footnote-99) Furthermore, in 1993 the Minister of Tourism issued, as requested by the NCRPS, a moratorium on new hotel developments until both the upgrade of the water supply and the central sewage plant were completed.[[100]](#footnote-100) But the moratorium was not effectively implemented and was partially lifted in 1995, when developments that would not put additional pressure on water and sewage infrastructure were allowed to proceed, paving the way for, amongst others, the 225-room Breezes hotel.[[101]](#footnote-101)

And starting in 1996, a Sustaining the Environment and Tourism programme was set up by the Tourism Product Development Company,[[102]](#footnote-102) which aimed to enhance resort areas by improving infrastructure and the physical environment. In Negril, for instance, public toilets were upgraded, sidewalks were added, and verges and beaches were cleaned.[[103]](#footnote-103) Community groups contributed to this effort. Starting in 2001, the NCC led the Greening Negril project, which focussed on raising awareness about recycling and proper solid waste disposal – there was a lot of fly tipping and burning of waste after one dump site was closed because it leached nutrients in the sea, and another was moved 30 kilometres away –,[[104]](#footnote-104) and it also lobbied government for improved solid waste infrastructure.[[105]](#footnote-105)

In line with a growth policy that largely dictated by the international lender and emphasised privatisation and deregulation, the GoJ was reluctant to impose sustainable practices on the tourism sector.[[106]](#footnote-106) The sector was increasingly attracting major international investment and government feared that setting regulations on how hotels had to be run could put off potential international investors. Other Caribbean states equally embraced a non-interventionist role vis-à-vis the tourist industry, which was generally difficult to regulate because it was private-sector driven.[[107]](#footnote-107) Yet the sector realised that their practices were polluting the quality of the coastal environment and that they needed to undertake action to retain a competitive edge in the regional and global market.[[108]](#footnote-108) Already in the early 1990s, various hotels in Negril undertook such actions as switching to energy-saving light bulbs, installing low-flow shower heads and offering staff training in environmental issues. Much of this was due to awareness raising campaigns undertaken by community groups.[[109]](#footnote-109) For instance, the engineer of Hedonism II gave a demonstration to the NCRPS of the various energy-saving measures that the hotel had adopted and following this, the organisation approached other hotels to do the same, while the NEPT drafted an ‘environmental code of conduct’ for Negril hotels.[[110]](#footnote-110) Such local actions fed into national initiatives. By the late 1990s, for example, the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) supplied all hotels with an environmental handbook and used environmental criteria in its hotel licensing process.[[111]](#footnote-111)

Realising that overseas tourists valued and even came to expect environmental practices, some hotels started to pursue a sustainable tourism certification. The most common was the Green Globe, set up in 1994 by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The process of getting a sustainable tourism certification was expensive so that only large hotels pursued it. Between 1997 and 2002, the USAID funded-project Environmental Audits for Sustainable Tourism (EAST) worked with small and medium hotels to obtain Green Globe certification. After an audit was made of existing practices, recommendations were made that had low implementation costs, a rapid payback period and were easy to implement. EAST also provided the participating hotels with financial support to implement the recommendations.[[112]](#footnote-112) The project started in Negril because hoteliers here already had some degree of environmental awareness. For instance, in 1992 the NCRPS had carried out an environmental survey of 128 hotels, villas, cottages, guesthouses and restaurants, and gave them tips to become more environmentally friendly.[[113]](#footnote-113) The fifteen Negril hotels that took part in EAST significantly cut their energy and water use and three eventually achieved Green Globe certification. The success of these hotels and support from the JHTA for implementing environmental Management systems quickly led other hotels, including major chains like Sandals, to embark on audits and adopt water and energy-saving measures.[[114]](#footnote-114)

The increasing awareness of hoteliers about the impact of their businesses on the environment and their adoption of more sustainable practices reflects the embrace of the concept ‘sustainable tourism’ in the global tourism industry in the 1990s. As Saarinen and others have argued,[[115]](#footnote-115) the idea of sustainability was transferred to tourism from the ideology of sustainable development after the publication of the 1987 Brundtland Commission’s report *Our Common Future*, which defined sustainable development as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’[[116]](#footnote-116) The 1992 United Nations’ Earth Summit (also known as the Rio Conference) highlighted the need to adopt the principles of sustainable development in a wide range of economic and social processes, including tourism. Building on this, in 1996 the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) and the Earth Council published *Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry:* *Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development,* which outlined steps that governments and tourism operators could undertake to make tourism more sustainable.[[117]](#footnote-117)

Shortly before the WTO and Earth Council’s report was published, representatives from 23 Caribbean and Central American states adopted a declaration that urged local governments to adopt environmental policies.[[118]](#footnote-118) And in 1997, CARICOM and the UN took *Agenda 21* forward by developing an action plan in collaboration with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO), while the Caribbean Hoteliers Association with support from the WTTC and CTO set up the Caribbean Action for Sustainable Tourism (CAST) that provided workshops, training courses and guidance material for its members on a range of environmental issues, including how to set up an environmental management system.[[119]](#footnote-119)

The global and regional shift towards sustainable tourism along with the actions adopted by Jamaican hoteliers to make the industry more sustainable do much to explain why the GoJ developed the Master Plan. Another factor was the international donors’ embrace of sustainable tourism to alleviate poverty. For example, USAID not only sponsored the EAST programme but also explored the development of ecotourism in Jamaica. In 1998, as part of a larger project that aimed to promote ‘environmentally and socially sound long-term economic growth’, the organisation in collaboration with the GoJ undertook a study of eight sites to see if tourism could offer ‘sustainable economic benefits to local communities’ and contribute to ‘natural resource conservation’.[[120]](#footnote-120)

In 1998, the GoJ adopted a medium-term development plan (1999-2002) that centred on four pillars, including ‘ensuring sustainable development’. As part of the plan, the GoJ committed itself to adopting a sustainable tourism development strategy, which was welcomed by the World Bank.[[121]](#footnote-121) The Master Plan was the outcome of this commitment. In 1998 and 1999, consultations were held with various stakeholders, including local communities, to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the industry and discuss possible future directions of the industry, and another round of consultations was held between 2000 and 2002 to get feedback on a draft master plan.[[122]](#footnote-122)

As outlined in the introduction, the Master Plan aimed to make tourism economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. With regards to the latter and which is the focus of this article, the plan mentioned a new location strategy, environmental mitigation measures and support for the industry. The location strategy concentrated the majority of the 11,360 hotel rooms that would be built in the next ten years in the major resort towns – Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Negril. To allow for bottom-up planning, the resort boards that planned and implemented strategies to make resort towns more attractive were to be widened in membership and scope. The EIA required for all hotels would be a major tool to implement the location strategy, but NEPA regulations needed adjusting for that purpose. To allow resorts to cope with the increase in rooms and visitors, it was recommended to provide US$8 million for capital expenditures to improve environmental management, including waste and sewage collection, and US$0.5 million per year to sustain marine parks. And to help the industry reduce its environmental impact, the plan recommended better availability of information about and financial support to undertake environmental audits.[[123]](#footnote-123)

The Master Plan, then, addressed some of the major concerns raised by environmental groups and industry stakeholders in Negril, including poor sewage infrastructure and lack of inclusive planning. But it was far from radical. It largely built on work already going on in Negril and other resorts, such as environmental audits. And the GoJ remained reluctant to prescribe changes in the industry – the industry was expected to introduce a voluntary programme of monitoring compliance with planning and environmental standards.[[124]](#footnote-124)

*Conclusion*

It was not until the late 1980s that the impact of resort tourism in Negril on the coastal environment became visible, ranging from beach erosion and coral reef destruction to sea water pollution. The foregoing has shown that different local stakeholders for different reasons then started to demand action to mitigate the impact. They focussed especially on sewage disposal from hotels, which posed a health risk for residents and tourists, killed fish and led to algae blooms that smothered reefs. When more and larger hotels were built in the 1990s, local stakeholders – often working together – not only pressured government to improve sewage and other infrastructure but also undertook action to mitigate some of the negative impacts of tourism development. Hoteliers, for instance, adopted energy-saving practices and environmental groups monitored reefs and lobbied international donors to fund sewage projects.

By the late 1980s, the government realised that its economic growth strategy based on tourism required the protection of the marine environment and then started to take action to do so, partly driven by pressure from international donors. For instance, it declared the EPA and the Negril Marine Park, secured bilateral donor funding to upgrade infrastructure, made EIAs a common requirement for tourism developments, and eventually adopted a sustainable tourism strategy. For most local stakeholders, however, the government did too little too late. The government was certainly constrained in its ability to mitigate tourism’s negative environmental impact in the 1980s and 1990s, considering its limited fiscal space and conditionalities imposed by international lenders. But what also hindered government action was an economic growth strategy centred on tourism. This largely explains why the government turned a blind eye to violations of the Negril Development Order; why so many EIAs for hotel developments were approved despite major objections; and why it did not want to mandate changes in the industry, not even in the Master Plan.

In the wake of the covid pandemic, which caused a 10 per cent decline in real GDP, [[125]](#footnote-125) various new tourism developments have been negotiated with government support that in the next few years will add 10,000 hotel rooms.[[126]](#footnote-126) EIAs for these developments, including the 2,000-room Princess hotel in Negril, have been quickly approved despite objections by residents and environmental groups that local infrastructure cannot accommodate these large-scale developments and that they will destroy flora and fauna.[[127]](#footnote-127) This illustrates that the GoJ is still more concerned with the economic than the environmental and social sustainability of tourism. But there are hopeful signs that it is trying to achieve a better balance between the three, most notably its decision to finally replace the Master Plan. With support from the Interamerican Development Bank and input from industry stakeholders and civil society organisations, the GoJ embarked in 2023 on the development of a new tourism strategy that will put sustainability – economic, social and environmental – at its centre.[[128]](#footnote-128)

**Figure 1:** Map of Negril (2023)

A picture containing map, text, atlas, diagram

Description automatically generated

*Source:* Google Maps

**Figure 2:** The Negril Environmental Protection Area and the Negril Marine Park

A map with red lines

Description automatically generated with low confidence

*Source*: NEPA, ‘Protected Areas’, <https://www.nepa.gov.jm/protected-areas-2> (accessed 17 Oct. 2023).

1. WTO, ‘Sustainable Development’, <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development> (accessed 17 Oct. 2023). Emphasis mine. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Commonwealth Secretariat, *Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development – Jamaica* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2002), p. vii. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Commonwealth Secretariat, *Master Plan*, pp. 201–202. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. D. E. Bloom et al., *Occasional Paper: Globalization, Liberalization, and Sustainable Human Development: Progress and Challenges in Jamaica* (2001), table 4. <https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/poedmm176.en.pdf> (accessed 17 Oct. 2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. P. Anderson and M. Witter, ‘Crisis, adjustment and social change: A case study of Jamaica’, in E. Le Franc (ed.), *Consequences of Structural Adjustment: A Review of the Jamaican Experience* (Kingston: Canoe Press, 1994), p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. A.C. Isenberg, *Oxford Handbook of Environmental History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 1–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. N. Naumov and D. Green, ‘Mass tourism’, in J. Jafar and H. Xiao (eds), *Encyclopedia of Tourism* (Zurich: Springer Reference, 2016), n.p. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Based on a search for touris\* on the Web of Science for articles in *Environment and History* conducted on 17 Oct. 2023. The sub-discipline of the history of tourism has started to pay attention to the environment but it too has largely focussed on nature-based tourism. See S. Moranda, ‘The emergence of an environmental history of tourism’, *Journal of Tourism History* **7** (3) (2015): 268–289. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. ‘Ecotourism’, in C. Park and M. Allaby (eds) *A Dictionary of Environment and Conservation,* 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), n.p. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. H. Altink, ‘Conservation and conflict in Cockpit Country, Jamaica, 1962-2022’, *Historia Ambiental, Latinoamericana y Caribeña* **13** (2) (2023):21-54. For other studies that have examined conflicts around ecotourism, see for instance L. R. Horton, ‘Buying up nature: Economic and social impacts of Costa Rica’s ecotourism boom’, *Latin American Perspectives* **36** (3) (2009): 93-107 and J. M. Beisky, ‘Misrepresenting communities: The politics of community-based rural ecotourism in Gales Point Manatee, Belize’, *Rural Sociology* **65** (4) (1999): 641-666. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See, for instance, R.J. Buswell, *Mallorca and Tourism: History, Economy and Environment* (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Mansel Blackford*, Fragile Paradise: The Impact of Tourism on Maui, 1959-2000* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas: 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See, for instance, S. Johnson, *Climate and Catastrophe in Cuba and the Atlantic World in the Age of Revolution* (Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); K. Johnston, ‘Endangered plantations: Environmental change and slavery in the British Caribbean, 1631-1807’, *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* **18** (3) (2020): 259–286; S.B. Schwartz, *Sea of Storms: A History of Hurricanes in the Greater Caribbean from Columbus to Katrina* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. For instance, D. Bond, D. ‘Oil in the Caribbean: Refineries, mangroves and the negative ecologies of crude oil’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* **59** (3) (2017): 600–628; S. Díaz-Briquets and J. Pérez-López, *Conquering Nature: The Environmental Legacy of Socialism in Cuba* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000); J. Howell, ‘Capital prospects: Jamaica and the environmental history of postwar decolonization’, *Environmental History* **28** (1) (2023):133–159. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See, for example, J. Guilbaut and T . Rommen (eds), *Sounds of Vacation: Political Economies of Caribbean Tourism* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2019); B. C. Scott, *Unpacked: A History of Caribbean Tourism* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2022); M. Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London: Routledge, 2003); F. F. Taylor, *To Hell with Paradise: A History of the Jamaican Tourist Industry* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993); and K. Thompson, *An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism, Photography and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Taylor, *To Hell with Paradise,* p. 160; Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), *Annual Travel Statistics 2000* (Kingston: Jamaica Tourist Board, 2000). <https://www.jtbonline.org/report-and-statistics/annual-travel/> (accessed 17 Oct. 2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. ‘Negril development project’, *Gleaner*, 30 July 1963, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. ‘Negril development’, *Gleaner*, 8 March 1969, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Government of Jamaica (GoJ), Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Foreign Trade, *Urban Development Corporation – Progress Report* (Kingston: Ministry Industry, Tourism and Foreign Trade, 1976), pp. 17–19. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. World Bank, *Jamaica: Adjustment under Changing Economic Conditions* (Washington: World Bank, 1989), p. 101, <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/986881468039008497/pdf/multi0page.pdf> (accessed 17 Oct. 2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. T. Graham, ‘Negril becoming a “True Slice of Paradise”’, *Gleaner*, 13 August 1988, p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. GoJ and R.M. Field Associates, *Jamaica Country Environmental Profile* (Kingston: n.p., 1987), p. 213; World Bank, *Jamaica: Adjustment,* p. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Foreign travel receipts increased by some 29% per annum in the 1980s, compared to 14% in the 1970s. S. Curry, ‘Economic adjustment policies and the hotel sector in Jamaica’, in P. Johnson and B. Thomas (eds), *Perspectives on Tourism Policy* (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd, 1992), p. 198; K.R. Hope, ‘The Caribbean tourism sector: Recent performance and trends’, *International Journal of Tourism Management* **1** (3) (1980 ): 180. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. S. Handa and D. King, ‘Structural adjustment policies, income distribution and poverty: A review of the Jamaican experience,’ *World Development* **26** (6) (1997): 919. When tourist numbers rapidly declined in the 1970s due to the recession and political instability, many hotels built with government-guaranteed loans got into financial problems and government was forced to acquire them. E. H. Stephens and J. D. Stephens, *Democratic Socialism in Jamaica: The Political Movement and Social Transformation in Dependent Capitalism* (London: Macmillan, 1986), p. 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Curry, ‘Economic adjustment policies’, p. 208, table 12.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Three hotels opened in 1987, for instance, were all run by African Jamaicans. ‘New Faces at Negril’, *Gleaner,* 16 March 1987, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. ‘Hotel for Negril’, *Gleaner*, 30 May 1964, p. 2; ‘Negril development plans’, *Gleane*r, 15 January 1970, p. 18; ‘Negril Development starts Soon’, *Gleaner*, 21 October 1972, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. GoJ, *Urban Development Corporation*, p. 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. GoJ, ‘The Town and Country Planning Act’, *The Jamaica Gazette Supplement* **civ** (57) (1981): 363–390. Areas serviced by the UDC’s central sewage plant were allowed to have a higher density. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. I. Spencer, ‘Hoteliers, residents concerned over future of Negril’s Tourism’, *Gleaner*, 8 September 1987, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. ‘Lee Issa urges merger to save Negril’, *Gleaner*, 11 September 1992, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. As mentioned, for instance, in various letters to the *Gleane*r, the island’s biggest newspaper. M.D. Hendry ‘Beach stability in Negril’, *Gleaner,* 2 October 1985, p. 8; S. Hodges, ‘Development or destruction?’, *Gleaner,* 16 April 1988, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Globally, research into the environmental impact of tourism started in the 1960s reflective of a wider concern about the environment in that decade but it really took off in the 1980s when scientists began to measure a range of environmental impacts, from the quality of coastal waters to the loss of vegetation and destruction of wildlife habitat. S Zahedi, ‘Tourism impact on coastal environment’, *WIT Transactions on the Built Environment* **99** (2008): 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. ‘BCA to encourage full treatment for sewerage’, *Gleaner,* 28 April 1970, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. E. Barnes, ‘Sewage pollution from tourist hotels in Jamaica’, *Marine Pollution Bulletin* **4** (7) (1973): 102–105. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. S. Grizzle, ‘Negril problems’, *Gleaner*, 30 April 1987, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See, for instance, Dr Barry Wade in ‘Best beaches threatened: Hoteliers’ help urged’, *Gleaner*, 19 January 1988, p. 20; B. Henry, ‘The environmental impact of tourism in Jamaica’, *The Tourist Review* **43** (2) (1988): 17–18. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. S. Otuokon, *Case Study of the Negril Environment Protection Plan, Jamaica* (Trinidad: CANARI, 2001), p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. ‘Chamber of Commerce elects executive’, *Gleaner*, 15 January 1990, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. See for instance, ‘Negril problems neglected, says Caolsingh’, *Gleaner*, 18 December 1986, p. 17; D. Dorman, ‘Problems facing the Negril tourist industry’, *Gleaner,* 20 April 1987, p. 8; ‘Negril CofC takes action,’ *Gleaner*, 21 April 1990, p. 29; ‘Negril problems’, *Gleaner*, 30 April 1987, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. ‘Negril CofC takes action’; ‘Govt. to hold discussions on sewerage disposal’, *Gleaner,* 25 April 1988, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Dorman, ‘Problems facing’; ‘Negril CofC takes action’. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Curry, ‘Economic adjustment policies’, p. 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. See, for instance, USAID, *Jamaica Shelter and Urban Services Policy Programme* (Washington: USAID, 1988), p. 17; World Bank, *Jamaica: Adjustment,* p. 36. Donors often had specific demands for projects, see for instance T. Klak, ‘Excluding the poor from low income housing programs: The role of state agencies and USAID in Jamaica’, *Antipode* **24** (2) (1992): 87-112. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Unfortunately, the three articles are not included in the *Gleaner*’s online archive. Hudson referred to them in his ‘Our coastline’, *Gleaner,* 27 June 1981, p. 10 and in his ‘Paradise lost: A planner’s view of Jamaican tourist development’, *Caribbean Quarterly*, **42** (4) (1996): 22–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Hudson, ‘Paradise lost’, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. ‘Our coastline’, *Gleaner*, 27 June 1981, p. 10. Hudson also wrote articles in *The Masterbuilders* and the *Caribbean Review*. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Henry, ‘The environmental impact’,16–19. Density rules were commonly proposed at the time to limit the negative impacts of mass tourism. See J. Saarinen, ‘Traditions of sustainability in tourism studies’, *Annals of Tourism Research* **33** (4) (2006): 1122 and 1125. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. J.S. Holder, ‘Pattern and impact of tourism on the environment of the Caribbean’, *Tourism Management* **9** (2) (1988): 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. ‘Environmental Impact Assessment,’ in A. Rogers, N. Castree, and R.B. Kitchin (eds), *A Dictionary of Human Geography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), n.p. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. World Bank, *Jamaica: Adjustment*, p. 106. Data for tourist arrivals in Negril is lacking but the number of stop-over tourist arrivals in Jamaica increased by 6.8% per annum between 1980 and 1989. Curry, ‘Economic adjustment policies’, p. 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. See K. McNeill, ‘The problem of pollution, *Gleaner*, 23 October 1987, p. 9; S. Hodges, ‘Development or destruction?’, *Gleaner,* 16 April 1988, p, 10; ‘Lee Issa urges’. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. F.L.R. Manborde, ‘The gradual destruction of Negril’, *Gleaner*, 8 December 1987, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. ‘Lee Issa urges’; ‘Negril problems neglected’; ‘Hoteliers, residents concerned over future of Negril’s tourism’, *Gleaner*, 8 September 1987, p. 1; ‘Flipside of the tourism boom’, *Gleaner*, 7 January 1988, p. 9; ‘James Lawrence gets Rotary’s Paul Harris fellow’, *Gleaner* 8 July 1988, p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. World Bank, *Jamaica: Adjustment,* pp. 37 and 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. ‘Sea grass’*, Gleaner*, 2 January 1985, p. 8; ‘Programme to control coastal erosion enters second phase’, *Gleaner*, 19 January 1985, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. ‘P.M. urges landscape planners to spare environment’, *Gleaner* 5 September 1986, p. 30. There is no evidence that this committee developed such a plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Saarinen, ‘Traditions of sustainability’, 1122. It was especially mass tourism in the Mediterranean that drove this shift as its negative environmental impact was increasingly quantified by scientists. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. GoJ, *National Industrial Policy: A Strategic Plan for Growth and Development* (Kingston: Government of Jamaica, 1996), p. 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. C. Kirkpatrick and D. Tennant, ‘Responding to financial Crisis: The case of Jamaica’, *World Development* **30** (11) (2002): 1935–1936. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. See my, ‘Out of place: Race and colour in Jamaican hotels, 1962-2020’, *New West Indian Guide* **95** (3-4) (2021): 254-287. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. JTB, *Annual Travel Statistics* 2000, p. 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. D. Ortega, ‘Spanish seek investment in Jamaica’, *Gleaner,* 25 March 2001, p. C3. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. As cited in ‘Ministers in on Negril controversy’, *Gleaner*, 27 January 1992, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. T. J. Goreau, *Coral Reef Protection in Western Jamaica* (Global Coral Reef Alliance, 1992), <https://www.globalcoral.org/_oldgcra/coral_reef_protection_in_western.htm> (accessed 17 Oct. 2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. ‘Slow death under the sea,’ *Gleaner*, 25 Jan. 1998, 10. *Gleane*r columnists and radio commentators referred to the survey. See, for instance, Barry A. Wade, ‘Tourism and North Coast environment,’ *Gleaner*, 9 Sept. 1998, B9; Diana McCaulay, ‘Negril’s coral reefs,’ *Gleaner*, 28 Feb. 1999, A9. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. T. J. Goreau, *Negril: Environmental Threats and Recommended Actions* (Global Coral Reef Alliance, 1992), <https://globalcoral.org/_oldgcra/Negril%20Environmental%20Threats%20and%20Recommended%20Actions.htm> (accessed 17 Oct. 2023). Climate variability and change also contributed to reef loss, including sea level rises, increase in sea water temperature, and extreme weather events. Studies suggest that from the mid-1980s the growing rates of reefs rapidly decreased and mass bleaching and local bleaching became more common. See T. J. Goreau, ‘Bleaching and reef community change in Jamaica, 1951-1991’, *American Zoologist* **31** (6) (1992): 690. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Based on an informal study carried out by the NCRPS, cited in McCaulay, ‘Negril’s coral Reefs’. A recent study has estimated that Negril’s beaches lost between 0.25 and 1 meter a year between 1968 and 2008. See P. Peduzzi et al., ‘Assessment of the role of nearshore marine ecosystems to mitigate beach erosion’, *Environments* **9** (62) (2022): 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. P. Reeson, ’The Negril beach story’, *Gleaner*, 3 April 2002, p. B7. See Peduzzi et al., ‘Assessment of the role’, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. J. G. Carrier, ‘Biography, ecology and political economy: Seascape and conflict in Jamaica’, in P.J. Stewart and A. Strathern (eds), *Landscape, Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 2003), pp. 212-213. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. B. Olsen, ‘Environmentally sustainable development and tourism: Lessons from Negril, Jamaica’, *Human Organization* **56** (3) (1997): 289. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. As cited in, J. G. Carrier, ‘Think locally, act globally: The political economy of ethical consumption’, in P. Luetchford, G. De Neve, J. Pratt, and D.C. Wood (eds), *Hidden Hands in the Market: Ethnographies of Fair Trade, Ethical Consumption and Corporate Social Responsibility* ( Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2012), p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Author’s article. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Carrier, ‘Biography, ecology, political economy’, pp. 219-221; Otuokon, ‘Case Study’, 2. This reflects what Aaron Kamugisha has called the reconfiguration of landscapes to present a vision that tourists may enjoy. See his ‘The coloniality of citizenship in the contemporary Anglophone Caribbean’, *Race & Class* **49** (2) (2007): 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. ‘Unsound enviro development and public dialogue’, *Gleaner*, 2 July 2001, p. A5. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
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