



The Fifth (5th) Annual High Level Ministerial Forum 2009

One of Global Water Partnership-Caribbean's (GWP-C's) most influential activities has been its annual High Level Session (HLS) of Ministers with responsibilities for water management in the Caribbean. The HLS, a joint initiative of the GWP-C and its partner, the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA), began in 2005 as a parallel session of the CWWA Annual Conference and Exhibition.

From inception, the HLS has undoubtedly been a key tool in providing an opportunity to formulate and implement a regional approach to water sector management. Discussions throughout the past four High Level Sessions (2005-2008) have examined issues such as: challenges and opportunities for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the Caribbean and globally; funding of water and facilities programmes and projects in the Caribbean; policy implications for climate change and water utilities; adapting IWRM principles; water financing and several other key technical issues.

The fifth (5th) HLS, which takes place in St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands (USVI) on October 4th - 5th, 2009 aims to build on the efforts of the previous sessions with the goal of developing and adopting strategies and plans that will ensure that the Caribbean is a water secured region. The theme of this year's HLS is 'Building a Water Secured Region: A Caribbean Response.'



Photography by: Floyd Homer

GWP-C's role and involvement in this annual high level Ministerial forum, is intimately woven into its mission to support Caribbean countries in the sustainable management of their water resources. Formally launched in Tobago in June 2004, GWP-C is a working partnership among all stakeholders in water management within the Caribbean

region. As the Caribbean affiliate of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) Regional Water Partnerships, GWP-C shares the vision of a 'Water Secure World'. With fifty (50) partners in twenty (20) Caribbean territories which encompasses the English, Spanish, French and Dutch Caribbean, the organisation continually strives to improve water governance in the region. GWP-C works to achieve this, through the promotion, enhancement and effective implementation of legislation, policy, programmes and institutional regulatory and administrative frameworks.

All partners within the GWP network are fully committed to promoting and applying the concept of an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach, at the community, national and regional level all in an effort to realise the shared vision.

For the 2009 5th Annual HLS in St. Thomas, USVI, GWP-C is honoured to have the participation of the GWP Chair, Dr. Letitia A. Obeng who will give the keynote address on "Building a Water Secured Region."



Dr. Letitia A. Obeng

Chair of Global Water Partnership (GWP)

Dr. Obeng holds a PhD in public health and water resources engineering from the University of London and has extensive experience in water and sanitation strategy development and service delivery. After a 25-year career at the World Bank, Dr. Obeng became the Chair of the Global Water Partnership in January 2008.

The 5th HLS will take place under the auspices of the Governor of the USVI and the Minister of Water who will take over the role of Chair for the session from the Honourable Dr. Horace Chang, Minister of Water and Housing of Jamaica, who hosted the 2008 HLS held in Montego Bay. This year's session, which based on the theme 'Building a Water Secured Region: A Caribbean Response', will feature keynote presentations from the Honourable

Irfaan Ali, Minister of Housing and Water of Guyana and Dr. Edward Greene, Assistant Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Other participants include representatives from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI) and the University of the West Indies (UWI). GWP-C's Chair, Professor Jacob Opadeyi and CWWA's President, Mr. Cyprian Gibson will also be in attendance.

The expected outcomes of this 5th HLS is that it builds upon past achievements to foster a high-level of awareness of and political support for water issues in the region. Furthermore, that strategies for developing IWRM plans and policies in each Caribbean State are discussed and resources needed for developing IWRM plans and policies are identified.



Professor Jacob Opadeyi

Chair of Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C)