



MEDIA RELEASE

The Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association
22nd Annual Conference and Exhibition
October 6 – 11, 2013

Caribbean Water Ministers Meet to Address Wastewater Policy and Financial Challenges

Bridgetown, Barbados, September 18, 2013: Ministers with responsibility for Water in several Caribbean countries will gather at the 9th High Level Session (HLS 9) Ministerial Forum which takes place on 10 - 11 October 2013 at the Hilton Barbados Resort. This Ministerial Forum is part of the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association's (CWWA's) 22nd Annual Conference and Exhibition, which is being hosted by the Barbados Water Authority (BWA).

HLS 9 will be held under the auspices of Dr. The Honourable David Estwick, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Water Resource Management. The theme is *"Water and Sanitation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Addressing Wastewater Policy and Financial Challenges in the Caribbean."*

It is a fact that 85% of wastewater entering the Caribbean Sea remains untreated, negatively impacting on the near shore marine environment, human health, tourism and livelihoods. Yet even as we produce more and more wastewater, and social, environmental and economic costs increase, investment in wastewater management receives little attention and throughout the region wastewater treatment continues to be neglected.

It is against this background that Ministers and senior officials involved in water resources management will through dialogue, seek to achieve greater harmonisation of water governance within the region thereby leading to the development and implementation of regional approaches/policies for water sector management in the Caribbean. They will also discuss available opportunities for training, financing new infrastructure and south-south cooperation as well as endorse specific approaches and activities.

The HLS which is a joint initiative of the CWWA and the Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C) will this year see a collaboration with the Global Environment Facility's Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (GEF CReW), a four year project which began in 2011 and which aims to provide sustainable financing for the wastewater sector, to support policy and legislative reforms and to foster regional dialogue and knowledge exchange. Other regional partners including CARICOM, CARPHA, CAWASA, UWI and UNEP, involved in water and wastewater management are expected to provide technical support and guidance for the discussions.

The media is invited to the Official Opening Ceremony of HLS 9 at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday 10th October 2013. For more information on the HLS please contact:

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