

POVERTY AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN : IDENTIFYING A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

- Poverty and the environment have a dual relationship whereby the environment provides several functions such as provisioning, regulating and supporting services for life on earth but can also be easily degraded through human interactions which in turn can affect the quality of life for society.

Poverty Definitions

- The United Nations Development Programme (1997) has defined poverty as:

“deprivation in the most essential capabilities of life, including leading a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable, having adequate economic provisioning and participating fully in the life of the community.”

Sustainable Livelihoods

- A “sustainable livelihood is a way of thinking about the objectives, scope and priorities for development in order to enhance progress in poverty elimination.
- *SL approaches rest on core principles that stress people centred, responsive and multi-level approaches to development.”*

Ashley and Carney (1999)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCEPTS

- the environment can be described as a natural resource base that provides:
 - **sources** (material, energy, etc.); and
 - perform **sink** functions (such as absorbing pollution)

The Nexus between Poverty and the Environment

- The Brundtland Report (1987) refers to the relationship between poverty and the environment as a dual relationship. It states that:

“Poverty is a major cause and effect of global environmental problems. It is therefore futile to attempt to deal with environmental problems without a broader perspective that encompasses the factors underlying world poverty and international inequality.”

The Nexus between Poverty and the Environment

- THEORIES:
- Population Growth and Technological Growth
- The Downward Spiral (Orthodox Approach)
- Environmental Kuznets Curve
- Beckerman Hypothesis
- Porter Hypothesis
- Economic Marginalization and “breakdown of harmony”
- Environmental Entitlements

Poverty Levels in the Caribbean

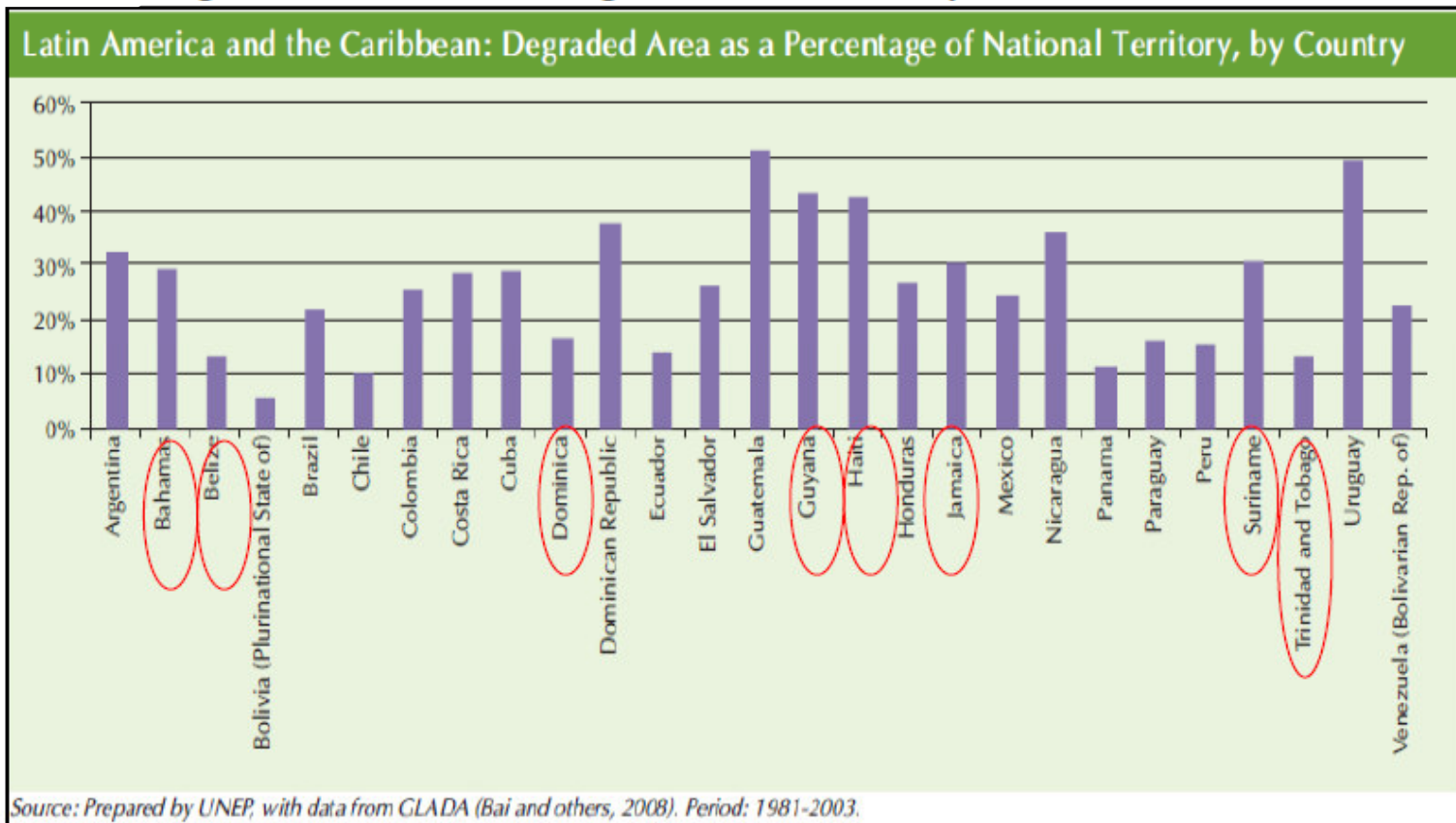
Table 1: Poverty Levels in the Caribbean

Country	Year (latest)	% below the poverty line
Anguilla	2002	23
Antigua & Barbuda	2006	18.4
Bahamas	2001	9.3
Barbados	1997	13.9
Belize	2002	33.5
British Virgin Islands	2002	22
Dominica	2002	39
Grenada	1999	32.1
Guyana	1999	35
Haiti	1997	65
Jamaica	2005	12.7
St. Kitts	2000	30.5
Nevis	2000	32
St. Lucia	2006	28.8
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	1996	37.5
Trinidad and Tobago	2005	16.7
Turks and Caicos Islands	1999	25.9

Source: Bourne, C. (2008)

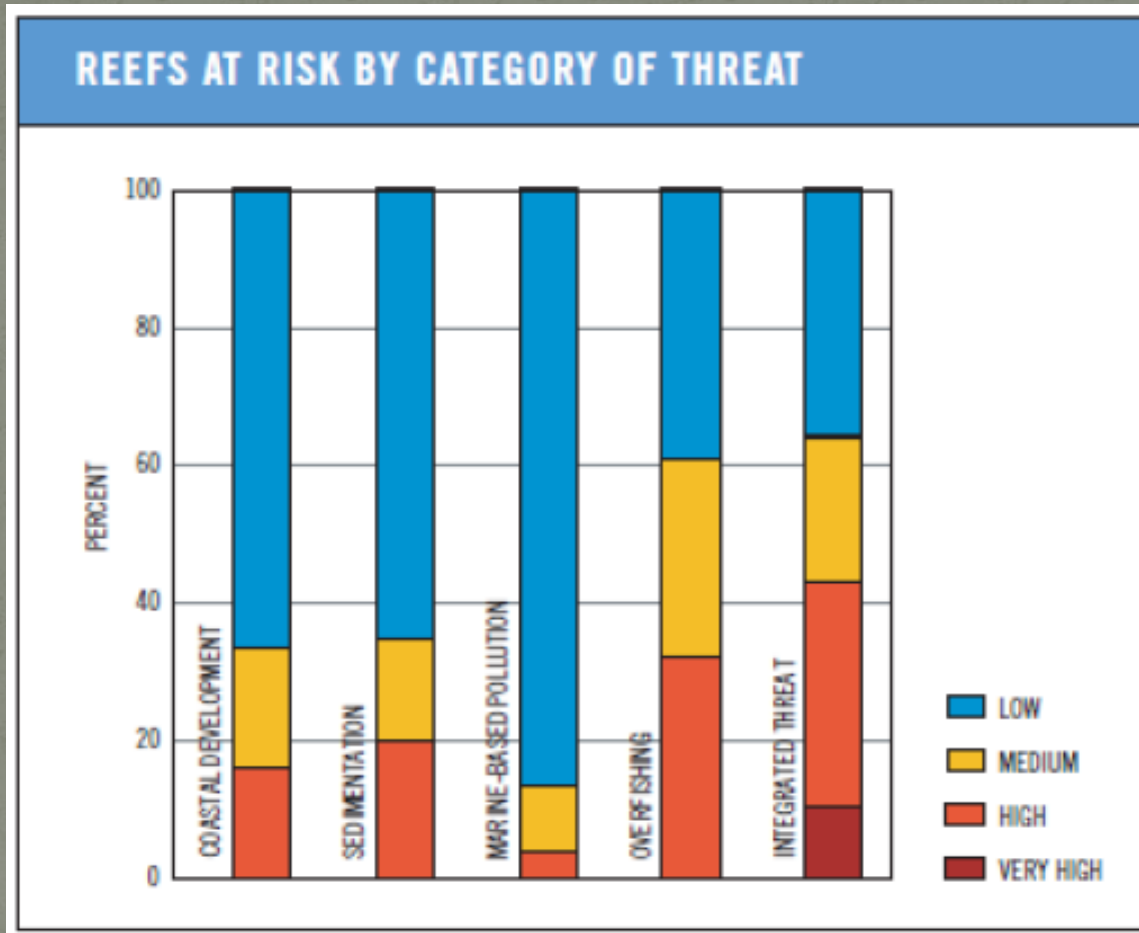
ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Degraded Area as a Percentage of National Territory



Source: UNEP 2010

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION



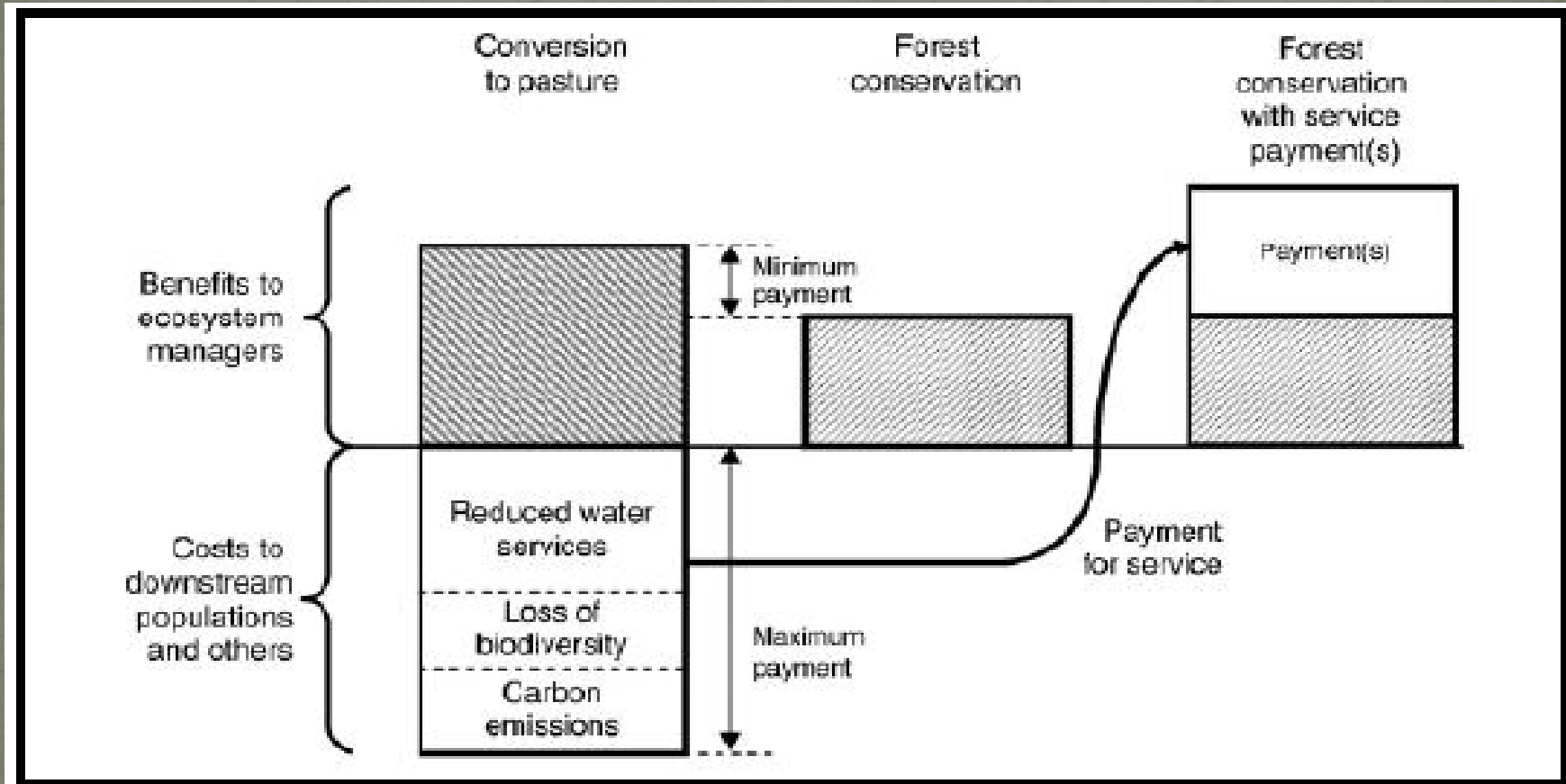
Source: Burke and Maidens (2004)

A Framework for the Poverty-Environment Relationship

- Mayrand and Paquin (2004) defines a PES scheme as an approach that seeks:

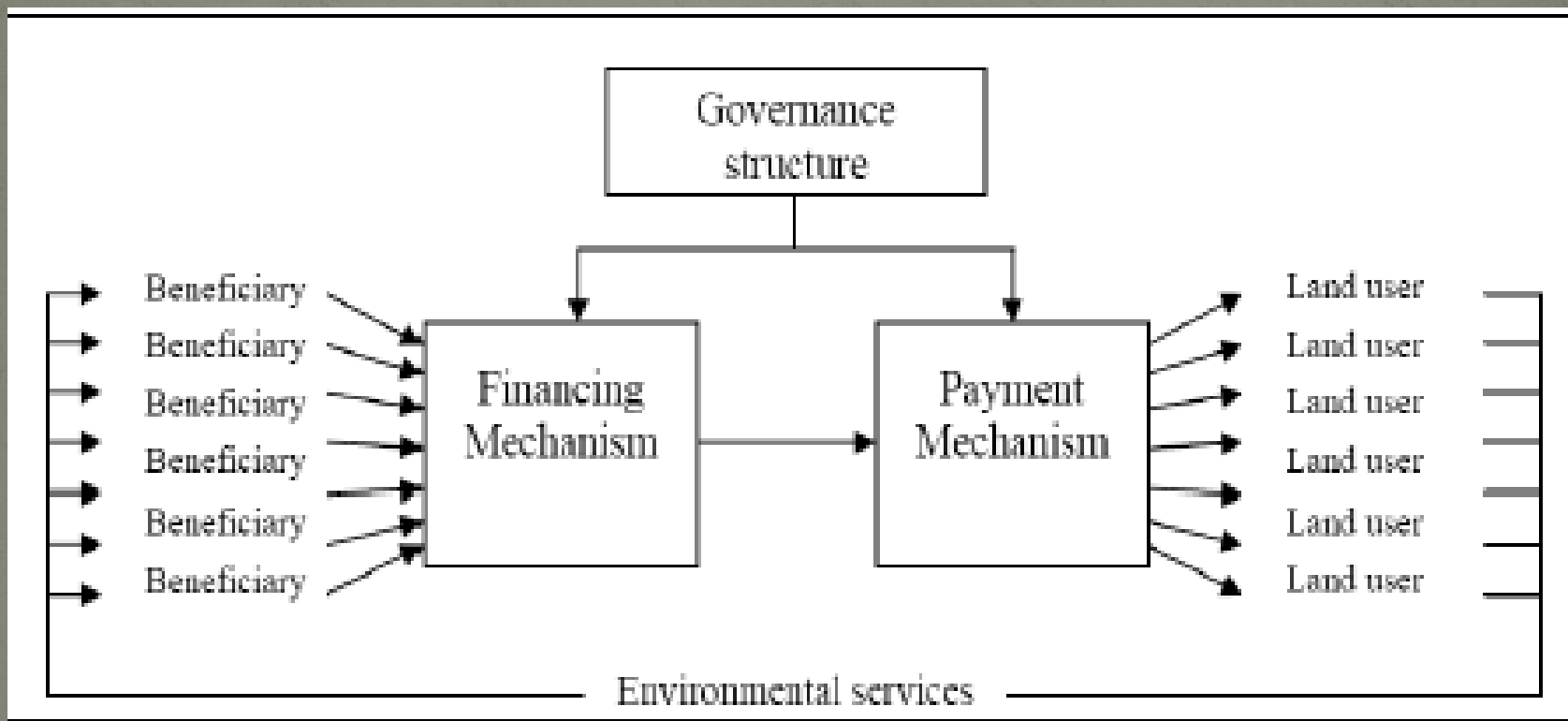
“to support positive environmental externalities through the transfer of financial resources from beneficiaries of certain environmental services to those who provide these services or are fiduciaries of environmental resources.”

THE LOGIC OF A PES SYSTEM



Source: Engel, S., Pagiola, S. and S. Wunder. (2008)

THE STRUCTURE OF A PES SYSTEM



Source: Pagiola, World Bank, 2003 as cited in Mayrand, K. and M Paquin, (2004)

Applicability of the Payment for Environmental Services (PES) Framework to Small Island Developing States: The Caribbean

- Mc Intosh and Leotaud (2007) emphasises some challenges from a regional study on *“Who Pays for Water?”*
 - A fragmented policy and institutional framework
 - Informal land occupancy
 - Scarcity of willing downstream buyers
 - High transaction costs
 - Data gaps and insufficient human capacity

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

- These challenges illustrate the complexity of the Caribbean context in terms of poverty and the environment. Requires:
 - **The Identification of Environmental Services (& Valuation)**
 - See Burke (2008), Thur (2010), Edwards (2009), Hope-Thomas (2001), Khan (2000), Barker and Roberts (2001), Pantin et al (2006), Pantin and Reid (2005), Pantin, Rennie and Ramjattan (2008).

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

- **Governance Structures**
- **Payment Mechanisms**
- **Financing Mechanisms**
- **Beneficiaries**
- **Land Users**
- **Role of CBOs/NGOs**

CONCLUSION

- The PES system can provide an overarching framework for positively affecting livelihoods and the environment however such a system may have to be adjusted to the Caribbean reality.
- By analyzing the challenges for the development of formal schemes for environmental services in the Caribbean as well as current situation for Caribbean countries the framework can be adjusted accordingly.