

# Ecosystem-based Development for Andros Island Stakeholder Consultations Report 2016



Prepared by SEV Consulting Group

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#### 1.0 Introduction

SEV Consulting Group has been engaged by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to complete a consultancy for outreach and capacity building activities under the project *Ecosystem-based Development for Andros Island, Bahamas*. The Consultations Report details the second round of stakeholder consultations held on the island of Andros in the districts of North Andros, Central Andros, Mangrove Cay and South Andros during the months of January and February 2016. The consultations consisted of larger public stakeholder meetings as well as small group and individual interactions with stakeholders. The consultations were conducted by SEV team members – Stacey Moultrie, Rochelle Newbold and Charlene Carey – in conjunction with Adelle Thomas, Technical Advisor to Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). The Natural Capital Project (NatCap) and Office of the Prime Minister participated in the consultations held in North and Central Andros. The maps used during the consultations were developed by NatCap. The team was assisted in successful completing the consultations by the Island Administrators and their offices in each district as follows:

- Mr. Ivan Ferguson, North Andros
- Mrs. Cleola Pinder, Central Andros
- Mr. Glenn Lightbourn, Mangrove Cay
- Mr. Gregory Knowles, South Andros

The goals of the stakeholder consultations were to:

- 1. Discuss the various development scenarios with stakeholders;
- Verify that the scenarios captured what currently exists on Andros (Current Scenario)
  and recommendations stakeholders had made for the future (Conservation,
  Sustainable Prosperity and Intensive Development Scenarios);
- 3. Document any revisions to the various scenarios that the stakeholders recommended; and
- 4. Share results of the consultations with the project team.

The basic methodology for the consultations is outlined below:

- For small group and individual interactions, the posters of the various scenarios were posted at the Local Administrator's office in each district for 2 3 days in advance of SEV team's arrival. On the final day of posters being available, SEV team members were available to discuss the scenarios with stakeholders and answer any questions they may have. OPM and NatCap participated in these interactions in North and Central Andros:
- For larger public meetings, PowerPoint presentations were given by SEV team members about first round of consultations, overview of scenarios and types of activities included in each of them, how the scenarios were developed, how this

- project ties in with the National Development Plan and the next steps, namely the master planning process;
- In North and Central Andros larger public meetings, presentations were also given by representatives from Office of the Prime Minister and NatCap;
- There was an opportunity for questions during each of the session types;
- For the larger public meetings, there was division of participants into smaller working groups to enable more in-depth discussion with support from project team members in case there was a need for clarification.

## 2.0 North Andros

Stakeholder consultations were held 25 – 28 January 2016 in North Andros.

# 2.1 Stakeholder Meetings

A stakeholder meeting was held on Thursday, January 28 at the North Andros High School. The following notes reflect the discussion about the scenarios.

## **General comments during plenary**

Concern was expressed about the size of the Joulter Cays Park and its boundaries as it affects development decisions in the area. Some participants expressed that they were unaware that it has been established as a park. There have been requests for sand mining in this area. There is a need for scientific evidence to determine what would happen if permission is given to persons to mine sand in the Joulters. Currently, Local Government does not approve these requests based on their personal feelings, but they would like it to be scientifically-based.

Participants felt that sand mining would fit under the intensive development scenario. Scenario chosen should allow development and also take into account the natural resources of the country that brings a lot to the island. The Joulters are important to people from Lowe Sound – it's their economic base. It was added that it is important for all of North Andros.

Concern was expressed about lack of representation of Androsians on the project team. Participants were assured that the team is sharing input and ideas of Androsians on what they would like to see for development. Additionally, it was noted that Rochelle is an Androsian, living in New Providence.

#### **Breakout group 1**

Mining should be from areas about to be developed rather than from additional areas. There is a major concern over aragonite mining in the Joulter Cays, since it's a crucial area for

fishing. A desire was expressed by Local Government representatives to have science support the decision-making process on this issue.

Using the term 'commercial harvesting' rather than 'forestry' made more sense to some stakeholders.

Big hotels in North Andros would be too much development.

Mr. Rolle and Mr. Mason (birders in North Andros) would like areas set aside as bird reserves or protected areas north of Red Bays, north of San Andros road, around Breezy Hills and around Charlie's Blue Hole.

#### **Breakout group 2**

Sustainable prosperity was expressed as the preference of this group, but they also noted that it does not go into sufficient detail on the map. They wanted to know if we were going to be able to expand educational facilities as well as include sufficient parks and other amenities as it relates to education. New schools were not indicated on the map.

Another question was "If population increases in 30-40 years, will land be available for expansion?"

When thinking of development, there should be something in place, legislated perhaps, that says that these are the things we want and these are the things that only Bahamians can take advantage of, and additionally, some industries/activities reserved for Androsians.

Stacey noted that the process to date has taken stakeholders' feedback generally and settlements were expanded to accommodate everything. Master Plan will be more detailed and outline costs, location, timeline, and other parameters.

The stakeholders would like to see some things zoned for Bahamians and ownership of certain industries exclusively for Bahamians.

One person noted that Andros is 15 minutes from Nassau, but on weekends, holidays, etc., you see no visitors. He asked how much of investment/tourism dollars trickle down to Androsians. Andros needs more domestic tourism. There has been lots of talk, but he is not seeing it. St Lucia has had rapid growth in 10 years since he has visited it. Why is this not happening in Andros?

Stacey asked the group what they saw as the barriers to growth in Andros. They noted insufficient activities, nightlife, and cultural activities. Andros needs to offer a consistent

product to generate positive word of mouth. Androsians are not putting themselves out there for others to see.

Stacey asked whether they could go after low-hanging fruit. Signage, posters, and websites are very cheap and can get people talking and aware of businesses and activities. Stakeholders noted that a major barrier in Andros is education and sensitization to the opportunities that exist. Some are just not seeing the opportunities. Education is the barrier – Androsians expecting people to just come to us, not doing enough to go out and attract them. Someone who is educated and has specialization in knowing the local wildlife will get further. North Andros needs a vibrant domestic ecotourism product. People need to have the skill sets to own and make projects happen.

"If we don't know where we are going, we'll end up wherever we are headed" was a direct quote from one of the participants. "Why is Andros, with its proximity to capital, abundance of land and water seemingly shunned?" was a question raised. One person noted that the look forward to continuing the conversation and involving Androsians to the fullest. They recommended that the TAC should include a local Androsian seen as a community leader. Administrators can move away from the island and thus, there is no continuity. District superintendent may be a good representative. In planning, we need to make sure that all of Andros is properly zoned. Schools in proper areas, businesses, etc. Andros needs town planning to develop a planned city similar to Freeport. There are lots of young Androsians who are unemployed. Any future plan must provide for young people. Planners must find a way for young people to be employed. Employment must include opportunities for growth.

All the settlements in Andros are on the coast. Persons would like to see low-cost housing in Andros and about 5 acres inland that people can farm on. Something like 50 houses in a community with land available for farming. It is very hard for people to get access to land.

Because of zoning of land in North Andros, there is too much focus on agriculture and limited possibility for other activities.

The best farmland in Andros is already taken by BAMSI. Is it worth it for anyone else in Andros to farm? Farming is not very profitable. Government should reduce fuel surcharge for fuel and subsidize fuel for limited period. Androsians could take that savings to invest in development.

It was noted that the Morgan's Bluff dock obstructed by sunken boat.

South Andros residents refuse major development because it would threaten crab habitat.

They want to see small businesses and small hotels - no big hotels and developments. We need to educate the younger generation and teach children that work equals success. We need to maintain the culture and traditions of catching crab, fishing, enjoying nature, etc.

It was asked if there could be a combination of sustainable prosperity and intensive development. Stacey indicated that combining scenarios was a possibility.

Cost of doing business is a major barrier. For example, the cost of visiting west side Andros is out of reach for most Bahamians.

There is a need to look at marketing Andros so people know what's available. There needs to be education of children so they can take the message home to parents. Some adults are not going to ever come to town meetings and the like. There is a need to figure out an approach to reach everyone. We should consider using cartoons, books, etc to reach children, educate them on their island and The Bahamas so they can share the message.

We need to create more activities for visitors.

# **Breakout group 3**

Joulter cays are very important because they are the economic engine for people in the region and people like to visit them. Now they have been designated as a national park.

There is some concern that the plan represents a policy from a given government administration and it will change with a change in the administration.

"How long is the plan going to run for?" was a question asked. The team clarified that it ran through 2040.

This group gave feedback specific to each scenarios as follows: *Conservation scenario* 

- What level of conservation is proposed for the reef? Is it take or no-take? Most of the parks in Andros have no consideration for people who use parks. Many fishermen are poorly educated and are poor. Fishermen (or just the general population) that have more resources are those whose voices are represented in this conservation plan. We need to think more broadly about their needs.
- Most sportfishing for bonefish takes place in the Joulter Cays, but it is catch and release. There is nuance in the policy that allows some uses, but not other uses.
- There is concern about the ability of fishermen to pursue lobster in the Joulter Cays, and closed areas in general for fishing. The broader group was generally less

- empathetic with this position, but it also appears that there are no other fishermen in the group
- Definitely some support for conservation of Joulter Cays; bird habitat was mentioned
- Joulter Cays is a key breeding ground for conch
- The 38 years of life for one citizen has been enough to demonstrate a drastic change in finding conch and other sea life near their home

#### Sustainable Prosperity scenario

- There was definitely lots of support for this scenario, especially related to economic prosperity (aquaculture, farms, birding tourism, bonefish catch and release).
- There is a sense of urgency in the group that conservation activities need to happen soon as resources are disappearing.
- There is a belief that many natural resources can be cultivated (silvertop, conch, sponge), which may partly allow for more wild harvest by taking pressure off of these stocks
- Bonefish fishermen have heard from clients that they choose other locations because their boats cannot dock at Andros. Even one single marina would make a large difference. This should be at Morgan's Bluff (large agreement among group) or Pleasant Harbor area. Pleasant Harbor would only require a few hundred feet of dredging. However, there is some concern that auxiliary infrastructure for this marina is not adequate, particularly roads.
- Morgan's Bluff is a key area for a container port because you do not have to dredge (some support for this)
- Cruise ships used to come to Morgan's Bluff. There is a strong aversion to cruise ships in Andros as they do not provide much economic development, but end up taking up a lot of resources (trash and water)
- Proper zoning is critical (lots of support for this)
  - o Residential value being eroded by eyesores and haphazard zoning
  - There needs to be some level of enforcement for zoning, as people don't abide by the existing rules
- The development of roads is being done in a haphazard way (not including telecommunication, water lines, etc.) when roads are built the first time.
- There needs to be economic opportunities.
- It would be nice if many bureaucratic tasks could be undertaken in Andros versus going to Nassau, such as passports, dealing with property transactions, etc.

## Intensive Development Scenario

- There is no support for the Intensive Development scenario.
- There is support for an international airport in Andros.

- People want their existing infrastructure to work better (roads, a marina, an international airport) and supporting and attractive infrastructure for ports of entry.
   Protection of this infrastructure from coastal storms is really important there was some expressed interest for sea walls.
- Recreational opportunities in Conch Sound are needed.
- Some concern that these scenarios are just scratching the surface and that there needs to be significantly more detail in them.

# 2.2 Small group and individual interactions

These interactions occurred in the foyer at the Administrator's Office in Nicholls Town, North Andros on Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. The scenarios maps and information about them had been posted for public viewing since Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>.

We spoke with 2 student groups from North Andros High School:

- **12**<sup>th</sup> **graders** One student expressed concern about so much development covering up natural areas in the Intensive Development scenario.
- **10**<sup>th</sup> **graders** The students liked that Andros was quiet and the beautiful nature. They liked to play basketball, fishing, walking the beach with their free time.

We gave them an overview of the project, how the maps were developed, how the project linked with their geography class and the availability of tools like GIS that could be used for planning. We linked decision-making to games like Minecraft. The students lit up when this game was mentioned. One student liked the Sustainable Prosperity scenario because it was a mix of conservation and development. One student liked the Current scenario; he wants it to stay the way it is. Their teacher asked about development of the forest in a sustainable way that could also make money. Katherine spoke about commercial harvesting as an old and new idea for Andros. The Intensive Development scenario contains some proposals for clear cutting of the entire forest in Andros. The project team is still exploring how sustainable harvesting could occur and what would be the economic benefits. Students commented on the Morgan's Bluff development map (also in the foyer) – that they liked the hotel and that you could sail into the harbor.

## Mr. Campbell, MOW

He stated that he was definitely not interested in the Intensive Development scenario. He does not want to see another 'Nassau'. He was interested in Sustainable Prosperity scenario, but potentially with some bridge connections between districts in Andros. NatCap mentioned that the span between Behring Point (Central) and Mangrove Cay would be difficult as it would represent 8 – 9 miles of bridge construction in addition to some persons requesting they be drawbridges, so that boats can pass. Maintenance would be a concern.

#### Bahamas Electricity Corporation (BEC) - 2 representatives

One of the representatives asked about the mining area in North Andros for quarry. He noted that if you mine here, you will leave a hole in the ground and attract mosquitoes to the trapped water. He suggested an alternative site as the proposed marina basin in Morgan's Bluff, so the basin can be constructed and you have the quarry you need. It would save money for everyone. He noticed that a large area is designated for national parks. Katherine clarified that the striped areas are for ecotourism because these are areas where they heard bonefishermen frequented. The parks are outlined – West Side and Joulter Cays. In the Conservation Scenario, the entire barrier reef is added as a park.

One question was "would bonefishing be allowed in the West Side park?" The team responded that the park does not restrict this activity. He was also concerned about other persons who fish and sponge being able to access the park. Charlene noted that management plans are being developed through stakeholder consultations, so there can be discussion about how communities can benefit from these areas and may want to utilize them. He noted that sponging is mainly in the shallow areas. Katie indicated that sponging is allowed, but the park managers would probably promote sustainable harvesting.

## Michelle Bowleg, District Superintendent of Education

Ms. Bowleg asked if we captured the new schools from the Education District, namely in Lowe Sound and Fresh Creek. At the time of the interaction, we could not confirm this, but Katherine later clarified that NatCap had expanded the town centers so that they would encompass new schools, clinic, police station, etc. They did not specifically site any of these requested infrastructure.

#### 3.0 Central Andros

Stakeholder consultations were held 25 – 29 January 2016 in Central Andros.

## 3.1 Stakeholder Meeting

The stakeholder meeting was held on Friday, January  $29^{th}$  at the Clarence Bain Town Hall in Fresh Creek. The following notes reflect the discussion about the scenarios.

# **General comments during plenary**

An individual felt that the Intensive Development was not appropriate for Andros.

Concern was expressed that a change in government administration would affect the implementation of the project. It was noted that some of the activities can be implemented by Androsians with funding from outside of the government, if this were to occur.

One participant, Mr. Thompson was concerned that less than 3 % of the population of Andros gave input into the development of the scenarios. He wanted to know how we can get more input from a larger percentage of the population. Stacey asked participants to encourage persons to attend the future meetings and to comment on the Facebook page. Another participant would like to see more flyers to promote meetings and perhaps colourful eyecatching flyers. These could be sent to schools, communities and churches. [As a point of clarification, flyers were circulated in the communities and churches by the Island Administrators. Meetings were announced on national radio and emails were sent out to persons who had attended the first round requesting that they encourage others to attend. Getting persons to come to non-political meetings is challenging in The Bahamas. Additionally, the numbers consulted in the first round were statistically representative of the island's population.]

There was concern that crab was not shown as an important value for Andros. Katie said that they are still working on the crab scenario. She noted that the challenge with crab is that there are few statistics on crab harvest. They were encouraged to have citizen or community science data collection. It was noted that the mail boat may have data about the quantity of crab that they ship.

Concern was expressed about intensive development on the Western Coast (Wide Opening) under the Intensive Development Scenario which can impact natural resources and activities on the Westside, e.g. bone fishing and flamingo.

Corruption is affecting Andros, especially in the way in which tourism operates; locals do not have much of a voice.

It was asked whether the recommendations will be backed by legislation and whether the local community can vote to select the final choices for the master plan. Androsians want to be empowered for decision-making even if it means giving more power to Local Government.

Mr. Prescott Smith noted that the system of interconnected blue holes with subterranean veins and caves will impact where development can occur. Sub-structure may not be appropriate for intensive development in all cases. This can be dealt with through proper planning and zoning.

Concerns were raised about the current education system. There are no physical education, science or music teachers at the school currently.

Fresh Creek Harbour needs to be dredged to facilitate transport of goods.

Roads need to be repaired and maintained to facilitate commerce

#### **Breakout group 1**

Preferred scenario expressed by the group was Sustainable Prosperity.

With respect to health and safety, more healthcare and fire safety facilities and adequate supplies for health care facilities are needed. There is no fire engine in North Andros. Investment should be focused on providing these services as a priority over hotels. There also needs to be training for locals to provide skills, such as fire wardens.

They do not want to see Andros turn into a major city. There is no interest in large scale hotels. They were not pleased to see planned development for Wide Mouth Creek on West Side in the Intensive Development scenario.

Interest was expressed in exploring whether aragonite mining is appropriate for Andros There is interest in protecting the long-term natural value of the Joulter Cays over short-term economic gain from activities such as mining.

One woman mentioned that the conservation scenario is like a utopia - the place she grew up in instead of a viable future where people have economic opportunities. Technology and the introduction of a capitalistic market structure has introduced some troubles. This was echoed in the breakout group.

A questions asked was whether Casuarinas could be removed in a manner that would not cause further environmental and infrastructural damage. It was noted that we need to be careful in the approach to removal. The potential exists to capitalize on the presence of Casuarinas to produce charcoal, furniture etc.

There is concern that fishers have to go further afield to harvest.

There is a need to identify and protect additional natural areas for tourists to visit.

Small businesses should be promoted, e.g. hardware stores to provide access to building supplies.

Land should be made accessible to locals for ownership. Timely access to deeds is needed so that landowners can access funding/loans for development. Stakeholders expressed concern that decisions regarding allocation of land is determined in Nassau and Androsians are not given ready access or priority.

Funding for Tourism Board in Andros is very small (\$15,000). It was stated that one resort has been controlling tourism in Andros for 50 years with undue influence with local officials which restricts opportunities for most Androsians.

Protected areas to support birding and diverse ecotourism activities are needed in North Other needs expressed included:

- Zoning
- Solar technology
- Forestry activity not in favour of clear-cutting the forest. Interest expressed in selective cutting and other less destructive practices
- Entertainment opportunities, including community-based activities
- Community-based organizations to support coming together as a community to implement ideas to benefit Androsians
- Agriculture food security is essential
- Education and training in keeping with the development plans for Andros
- Cooperatives people to work collectively and trust each other
- Having a direct link to other islands for distribution of goods, services and products
- Signage to facilitate location of remote locations e.g. Red Bays
- Better infrastructure, but development should maintain the culture and feel of the
  community and allow the youth to stay and find work in Andros e.g. BAMSI and other
  tertiary institutions that result in temporary, periodic influx of persons in a controlled
  manner. No interest in activities that would bring large scale influx of persons and
  result in crime and other social problems.

#### **Breakout group 2**

Cargill Creek needs to be dredged to increase flow to 100% (now reduced by 15%). Fresh Creek bridge needs to be two-lane and higher.

Some felt that many of the problems in Andros are associated with policies and practices that are colonial and are imprisoning the people so they cannot succeed. They cannot care about the environment if they are concerned about survival. Master Plan needs to look not just at physical changes, but changes that are needed for systems and policies, including how decisions are made. People need to be empowered.

Promotion Boards are not functioning well and are funneling tourism into their businesses and are hurting the locally-owned businesses.

We need to train and empower local people so they can earn a decent living from the environment.

The primary school in Fresh Creek has been demolished. Students are hosted in an old building that is not suitable – they were initially supposed to be there for 2 years and have been there for 12 years. A running track for the children is also designed; there have been plans for one since 1993 but nothing has been done. Stakeholders want to see separation of junior high students from senior high students so older students cannot prey on younger ones.

Too many persons are leaving the island looking for work.

Androsians need deeds and ownership of the land. People have been living on land for 20 years and do not have a deed.

Decisions are generally made narrowly. Factors like those below need to be considered:

- There is 30 inches of rain annually in southern Andros, and 60 inches of rain in northern. Most is between Fresh Creek and Stafford Creek. This is influenced by pine forests on Andros and other islands. Impacts freshwater availability, nursery system for fish and lobster.
- Bridges across creeks block movement of water and species from nursery areas to open ocean

It was noted that there is not one marina on Andros owned by a local.

Dredging will help movement of water in Fresh Creek and Cargill Creek; increased movement will rejuvenate habitats in the creeks and enhance fishing opportunities.

One gentleman felt that Andros barrier reef was a factory for employment.

The airport runway needs to be fixed, lengthened and perhaps another runway added. They can only take small charters and there is no Bahamasair service. Charters need to be strictly regulated so they are safe. Some persons felt the island suffers because Bahamasair does not offer regular service so they can plan when they can leave on trips. However, airports should not be placed where the most fertile lands are as has happened in North Andros.

Local Government does not have all the expertise it might need, but if they have a plan with zoning, they could use it as a guide in decision-making.

Reverend Hamilton noted that Intensive Development scenario would not be good for Andros now. The island can cope better with sustainable development and they do need conservation. Intensive Development would destroy everything they have fought for over the last 30 years in conservation. They want to improve the way they are living. Along with improvement in activities, there would be better education and improvement in policies.

It was noted that marine transportation in the Intensive Development scenario was over the top and not needed. There was uncertainty whether the proposed routes from Central to Mangrove and South would be able to get enough business to be reliable.

The group noted the vital importance of transparency and accountability in this whole thing so that the plan can actually work and there is not a small group profiting and everyone else is suffering. There are issues with infighting for limited opportunities.

There are real problems in our communities. Poverty is real. In Red Bays primary, there are 34 children and 34 on welfare. In some schools, it is half; some schools it is not as high. The kids are embarrassed to come and collect their welfare food.

Opportunities must be created for persons to be able to earn a living sustainably.

One gentleman does not want to see large development investor coming in. Ecology of Andros is too important. He would also oppose vehemently an offshore oil drilling.

They understood the importance of money being made by locals and staying in the economy versus that being made by foreign developers which has little to no impact.

There does not need to be a bonefish season because bonefish and tarpon are available all year. The Tourism Board has been using an old tourism model where the island only gets bonefishers from the north when it's winter and they disappear once the snow melts. Fishing, kayaking, snorkeling, etc, are all possible in the summer and need to be marketed as such.

Limestone in Andros is the purest in the world. Mr. Smith indicated spot on the west side of Andros (off of North Andros) as well as 3 spots around the Joulters Cays where mining is planned. The company is one out of Grand Bahama (possibly South Bahama Rock; it is Lockheed and Martin in partnership with a local company). They also want to make a huge facility in Mayaguana. They destroyed freshwater lenses (he estimates about 3 Billion

gallons). Katie needs Brett to get information about the company and their proposals and current activities.

Reverend Hamilton talked about meeting fatigue with persons having gone to meetings for years and years with nothing coming to fruition. He felt this quality of meeting was necessary and thinks we are on the right path with the drafting of the plan.

If they could have appropriate infrastructure (roads, runway, port that works and telecommunications), they can take care of themselves.

Mr. White was not sure what role AUTEC has in stopping development in certain areas. People have been working there for years and they have been treated like slaves for the past 60 years. Union exists but it is impaired by the Government that says one thing and then does something else. The impacts of AUTEC should be included in the scenarios. Mr. Smith added that AUTEC is making billions of dollars and the Government is making a couple million per year. They should be paying the GOB that amount per week for the access to our oceans. They have done a lot of damage to ecosystems as well. The US Army Corps of Engineers could rebuild bridges at Fresh Creek and Cargill Creek as a mere compensation for the advantages they have gained.

One participant indicated the need to examine the system of Local Government as it is not working effectively.

Sustainable Prosperity seemed to be the general consensus for the group.

## Breakout group 3

One participant noted that the maps are deceptive – some of the land is wetland that cannot be developed yet shows development. "Development" should refer to concrete, roads, and hard infrastructure. Development in Andros should not follow pattern of giving away huge tracts of land to foreigners. Sustainable development makes much more sense.

Androsians need to be given land in order for development to happen. Proper subdivisions are also needed to allow people to access land. Housing developments and infrastructure need to be properly developed and regulated.

Questions were asked about inter-island transport system: would it be government run or a public-private partnership? How would weather affect transport? Ferry system is already in place from South Andros to Mangrove Cay. It needs to be expanded from Mangrove Cay to Central and North. Intra-Andros ferries are not needed between settlements in North and Central Andros

Fast ferry or day trips would be a good idea, especially when Baha Mar opens. Ferries should go to North and Central to take advantage of different excursions on Andros.

It was noted that Fresh Creek Harbour needs to be dredged.

Sandy Creek is a location that can be dredged to obtain construction material

Bridges in Central Andros should be two-lane instead of one. Relocate fresh creek bridge and put a marina in fresh creek. 2 lane draw bridge. Bridge in Staniard creek is collapsing and not stable. Stafford creek bridge also needs to be fixed.

Solar energy should be incorporated into any of the future plans.

One big airport should be built to serve North and Central Andros rather than 2 airports in North and Central.

The road needs to be finished. Larger roads would have an even more detrimental effect on crab populations so no major highways should be built.

Proper zoning is needed for future expansion.

New primary school is needed for Central Andros (Fresh Creek).

Healthcare infrastructure needs to be significantly improved.

Wilderness areas should be protected and a quota established of how much residential and commercial development.

Bridge repair is needed at Staniard Creek; there are coastal flooding and erosion concerns.

Zoning is needed in Bowen Sound and improvement of clinic. Medical services are needed in Central, for example HIV/AIDS programme, mental health, and elderly person services,

Recreational parks are needed for the communities.

Priorities of attendees for inclusion in the development scenarios:

- Medical services and facilities e.g. one hospital with emergency facilities
- Roads improved and maintained
- Sporting facilities

- Zoning subdivisions and property ownership/deeds, city limits to prevent urban sprawl
- Transportation system one airport
- Dredging harbour and bridge
- Maintain and manage protected areas
- New/Rebuild Primary School for Fresh Creek

## 3.2 Small group and individual interactions

These interactions occurred in the Courtroom next to the Administrator's Office in Central Andros on Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>. The scenarios maps and information about them had been posted for public viewing since Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>.

# Peter Douglas, Ministry of Tourism and ANCAT

Mr. Douglas went through the various maps and scenarios with NatCap and discussed accuracies and any needed revisions.

#### **James Thompson**

Mr. Thompson raised the idea about looking at The Bahamas as a whole and not islands in isolation. There needs to be someone looking at how the country works together as a whole and how connectivity between islands can happen or improve, both from a physical perspective and an economic perspective. He mentioned that the mailboat system operated by the UBP in the 1960s worked well in connecting the islands; he suggested maybe talking to some of the old captains and some of the companies that have been in existence since that time as there may not be physical records of what happened.

He talked about how we need to focus on domestic tourism, getting Bahamians to visit different islands and making that feasible and affordable.

#### **Andy Smith**

He and his brother, Benry mentioned they want to set up a foundation for scholarships for Andros students; funding would be from their guests.

He talked about the vital importance of access to the land for creating wealth – not just leases, but ownership (the deeds). The Government needs to facilitate access to the land as well as access to capital – for example, through low-interest loans. Commercial banks are killing Bahamians and the Bahamas Development Bank is too politicized.

He suggested government giving land to private developers and letting them develop low-cost subdivisions.

#### 4.0 South Andros

Stakeholder consultations were held on 2 February 2016 in South Andros.

# 4.1 Stakeholder Meetings

The stakeholder meeting was held on Tuesday, February  $2^{nd}$  at the Marion Forbes Centre in Kemp's Bay, South Andros. The following notes reflect the discussion about the scenarios.

## **General comments during plenary**

Development of community policies to ensure that local businesses can benefit from economic activities, for example to encourage bonefishers to patronize local restaurants and stores.

One attendee indicated a lack of interest in the Intensive Development Scenario – interest is sustainable development/Green Society.

Concern was expressed about the timeline for implementation of the plan. Stacey clarified that once the Master Plan is completed, the IDB has indicated that funding for implementation will be possible. The Government is also supposed to set aside funds (budget allocation) to support the Andros Master Plan, The Chamber of Commerce is also supposed to assist. Some of the projects will be community driven. The Master Plan is supposed to be completed by the end of the year. It was reiterated that the plan is non-partisan so that it will be implemented in an apolitical manner.

Local people often do not participate in projects for the islands and therefore do not benefit financially. The plan is supposed to change that dynamic to provide direct economic benefits to Androsians. This plan will provide a driver for the community to develop skills/technical expertise in the areas needed for plan implementation.

One stakeholder noted that people need to be educated about the potential impacts of climate change. Stacey noted that this project looks at vulnerability to sea-level rise so the plan will make recommendations for appropriate development. The options for coastal protection are being explored, such as seawalls and restoration of natural landscapes.

How do currently proposed projects fit into the development plan, are they on hold until the plan has been completed, for example Solar Verde. Stacey indicated that Solar Verde was included in the Intensive Development Scenario, but she could not speak to the status of this development. She noted that before developments can be implemented, there is usually a process they have to go through which includes review by the National Economic Council

and submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment. She could not say where Solar Verde was in the process.

It was noted that South Androsians need to be empowered with deeds to their land so that they can have access to loans to develop businesses.

Local wardens/enforcement of regulations and protected areas in Andros are needed. The success of the ECLSP is the best example of sustainability that is a direct result of enforced park regulations. Fishery resources are being depleted in Andros.

#### Breakout group 1

There is a need jobs for students leaving high school. About 20 - 35 leave each year – some with diplomas and others with leaving certificates. The latter especially need employment opportunities. They also need job skills training so they could work in establishments, such as bonefishing lodges.

A Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI) campus could be an economic driver for South with students coming in from other parts of Andros.

Present lodges and hotels (foreign-owned particularly) are all-inclusive. They do not encourage their guests to come out into the community to use restaurants, buy crafts, etc. There must be a way to encourage tourists to walk about. Lodges should be asked to assist the economy by encouraging their guests to support local businesses –birdwatching tours, blue hole tours, craft markets. The community needs their tourism. Foreign lodge operators are cashier, bartender and front desk clerk – everything related to management. They could offer these positions to locals. They typically only hire gardeners, cooks, maids and guides. Policies need to change so that foreign-owned lodges contribute to the local community.

Government needs to have some sort of marketing program to get a portion of tourists from Nassau to come to Andros.

A larger hotel with 40 - 50 rooms could be a good economic driver. It would provide opportunities for persons coming out of school to have a job. South Andros needs to be marketed. Persons do not even know that it exists.

If the Government can work on the small things, like running water, deeds to land, dredging the harbour at Mars Bay as a priority, they can move forward with other activities.

The Prime Minister needs to come to South Andros as they have something to say to him. They feel disrespected, that South Andros does not exist. The Government needs to stop using people when election time comes.

Stacey mentioned that the Facebook page would be up soon and they can post comments about their needs and concerns.

Mr. Knowles stated that linking the districts is important. Having the ability for tourists to drive between them would be possible if the islands are linked. If not bridges, then a roll-on, roll-off ferry could connect the districts. The ferry also would have ports where you could wait between ferries, restaurants, restrooms and shelter. Ports would need to be in each district.

A ferry for all of Andros would be good. Students in other parts of Andros could access BAMSI which they cannot do now without living there. They could leave in the morning and return home in the evening. Even if you have a passenger-only ferry initially, that would be good.

South Andros needs a project that can jumpstart the economy to bring more people into the island. All the stores selling the same products.

They need networking for sale of products like crab meat and coconut products. Jocelyn Wallace has 30 pounds of crab meat frozen that she cannot get a sale for because she has no contacts in Nassau. Currently, they throw away all the crab biters because there are too many for them to deal with. They need a processing plant to deal with by-products like biters.

Carolyn Stewart is building Blue Hole Villas near Congo Town airport. She has 4 units built and plans to build 7 in total and be open for business in 2.5 to 3 years.

There is a need for industries which are cottage and allow persons to process their own produce, i.e. coconut dehusking or oil press. There is also need for a mechanism or infrastructure for persons to sell their resources for processing, i.e. crab meat or fish packing house.

Conservation areas can be used to generate economic development opportunities for local persons.

There is a need to decentralize the approval and permitting of development projects from Nassau to a place in Andros

#### Breakout group 2

Support for light industry by locals and tourists is needed.

Community farming should be encouraged as a means of food security.

Community expansion is not a priority. Current settlement sizes are adequate to accommodate returning Androsians.

What role does oil exploration/drilling play in this plan? Has this been considered? We need to reduce cost of electricity and explore alternative energy. Ocean current in Little Creek might be suitable for hydroelectricity [ocean thermal energy conversion may be an option as well].

The main priority is potable water for South Andros.

There is a replica of the Holy Land in Deep Creek. The first phase opened January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016; this development needs to be taken into consideration in the Master Plan.

Employment can be provided through the sale and reopening of Emerald Palms and through agriculture.

Training with short, medium and long-term objectives needs to occur in order to provide skills among locals for plan implementation

Several small marinas are needed to support tourism; recommended sites were Driggs Hill, Kemp's Bay, Grassy Creek, and Mars Bay.

Private and scheduled inter-island ferry service is needed to facilitate movement of goods and people.

Expansion of the powers of local government should occur with proper funding for effective community development.

There should be development of a skills database and the implementation of policies that require developers to utilize local persons as a priority over imported labour.

# 4.2 Small group and individual interactions

These interactions occurred in the foyer of the Administrator's Office in South Andros on Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. The scenarios maps and information about them were posted for public viewing on Tuesday. The posters were sent to South Andros on Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, but the Administrator was off island and the airline never called his office to have someone pick it up. SEV team members picked up the posters when they arrived in South Andros on Tuesday morning.

There were only a few persons who came to see the posters and they only asked questions for clarification. There were no recommendations for edits or other comments. We encouraged them to attend the evening public meeting and some of them did.

# **5.0 Mangrove Cay**

Stakeholder consultations were held 1 – 3 February 2016 in Mangrove Cay.

# 5.1 Stakeholder Meetings

The stakeholder meeting was held on Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Courthouse in Little Harbour, Mangrove Cay. The following notes reflect the discussion about the scenarios.

## **General comments during plenary**

Stakeholders want a representative from Parliament to come and speak with them.

They want to ensure that dredging of the harbor takes place as has been promised.

They want increased employment opportunities. Jobs are a priority and so they want to know what the implications for jobs would be for the chosen scenario.

There were mixed responses to large hotel development; some want to see this and some do not.

#### **Breakout group 1**

Overall, the group chose the sustainable prosperity scenario with the following additions:

- Add seawall protection
- Add coconut processing plant
- Not Lisbon Creek Regatta Site but it is called

They also suggested the following be included in Fishing for sustainable prosperity:

- Agree with enforcement and policing of existing regulations
- Want to ensure that they can still go to West Side National Park and fish and sponge sustainably
- Develop conch farming on the east side

#### Breakout group 2

This group had four main points:

1. Make the master plan a legal document so that politicians are unable to change it due to their changing political will.

- 2. Renovation, dredging and possible expansion of Lisbon Creek to facilitate a port of entry and an international port of entry at the airport.
- 3. Marina in Lisbon Creek (tourism draw).
- 4. Creation of eco jobs so that people benefit from the resources (e.g. wardens, tour guides).

#### **Breakout group 3**

This group preferred the Sustainable Prosperity Scenario. They recommended the following edits:

- 1. A training centre to provide courses in marine biology, outdoor activities and education tourism. There is currently some job preparedness training in the high school, but it needs to be more focused which could happen at this centre.
- 2. Under Fishing, there is a need for better docks and boat ramps at locations such as Lisbon Creek (the same spots that are indicating for dredging in the north and south of Mangrove Cay on the maps).
- 3. Under Agriculture, livestock farming should be encouraged. Farm land needs to be designated with access for residents. They are interested in crops like coconut, banana, papaya, citrus and potatoes. Canning factory for making fruits preserves such as mango.
- 4. Under Dredging and Mining, sand and quarry should be brought in by the Government and sold to locals to prevent ad hoc beach mining.
- 5. Under Tourism, there need to be more hotel rooms spread across small hotels, bed and breakfasts and a single hotel that can accommodate 100 guests. There needs to be a full-time tourism officer in Mangrove Cay. There should also be a small marina similar to Fresh Creek.

# 5.2 Small group and individual interactions

These interactions occurred in the foyer of the Administrator's Office in Little Harbour, Mangrove Cay on Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. The scenarios maps and information about them had been posted for public viewing since Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup>.

There were only a few persons who came to see the posters. They mainly asked questions for clarification, but did give the following comments:

- There should be use of the natural resources for ecotourism like the West Side National Park.
- There needs to be improvement of the fishing and farming industry with respect to processing and export; organic farming was preferred.
- Infrastructural improvement should occur to enable access to land at the back which would allow more persons to go to the coastline.
- Improvement of the harbor, airport and major transportation of tourists and locals.

We encouraged them to attend the evening public meeting and some of them did.

The SEV team was also able to meet with the geography class at the high school which had the following comments on the scenarios:

- Consideration should be given to aquaculture.
- Sustainable option with inclusion of a roll-on/roll-off ferry.
- There needs to be a gym attached to the high school.
- Big Wood Cay is important for crabs.

# **Appendix 1: Stakeholder Presentations**

Copies of the three presentations given during the stakeholder meetings are attached as separate files.

# **Appendix 2: Sign-in Sheets**

North Andros – pages 28 - 31

Central Andros - pages 32 – 35

Mangrove Cay – pages 36 – 29

South Andros – pages 40 - 41

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IDB Andros Stakeholder Meeting – Feb 2016 (Mangrove Cay)

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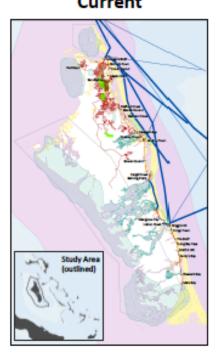
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# **Appendix 3: Scenario Posters**

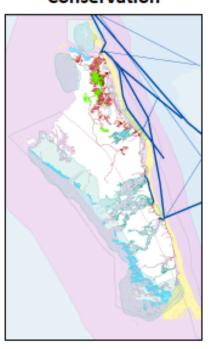
The scenario posters used during the second round of stakeholder consultations are attached.

# Draft Development Scenarios for Andros Island Master Plan

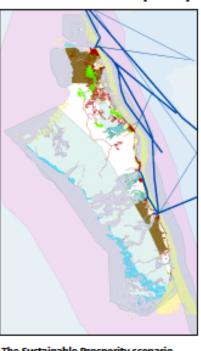
# Current Conservation Sustainable Prosperity Intensive Development



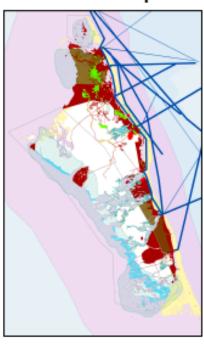
The Current scenario represents the human activities occurring on Andros. These activities were identified by Androsians and other stakeholders in October, 2015.



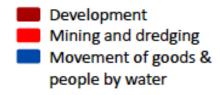
The Conservation scenario gives priority to ecosystem health and protection of habitat and species rather than economic development.



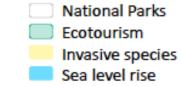
The Sustainable Prosperity scenario gives priority to investments in critical infrastructure and education to achieve a nature-based economy that can be sustained over time.



The Intensive Development scenario gives priority to major economic development rather than ecosystem health and protection of habitat and species.

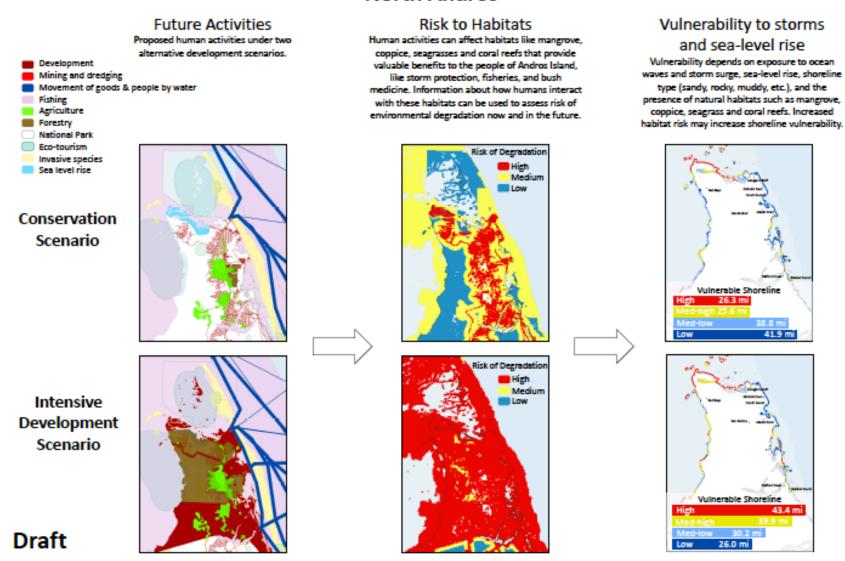




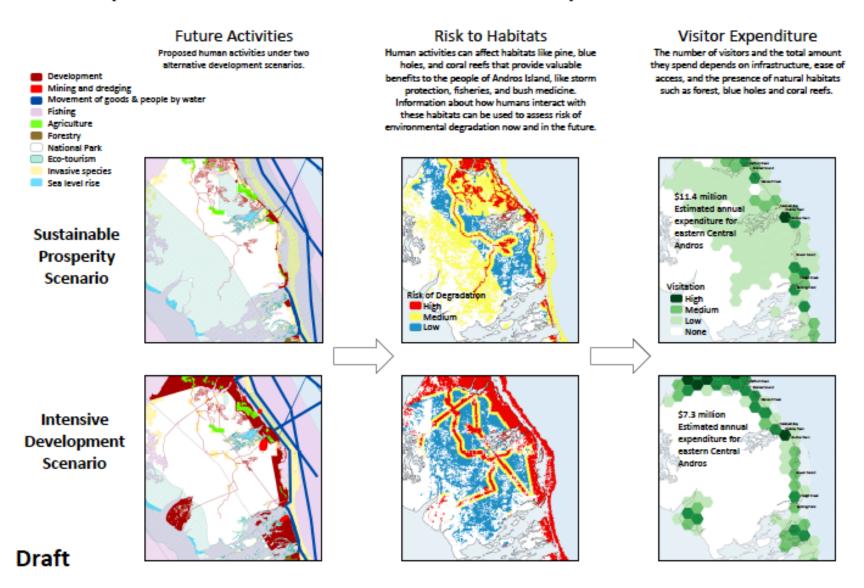


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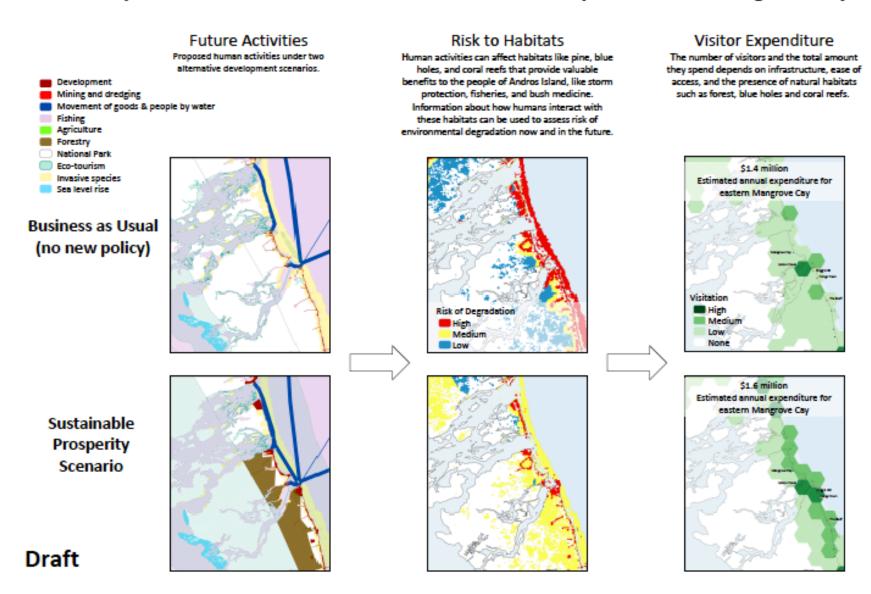
# Development Scenarios Affect Habitats and Vulnerability to Storms and Sea-Level Rise North Andros



# Development Scenarios Affect Habitats and Visitor Expenditure in Central Andros



# Development Scenarios Affect Habitats and Visitor Expenditure in Mangrove Cay



# Development Scenarios Affect Habitats and Vulnerability to Storms and Sea-Level Rise South Andros

