

# 3. VISION, MISSION AND PERFORMANCE

As part of its strategic planning process the Environmental Commission has reviewed and revised, *inter alia*, its Vision and Mission Statements.

## **3.1 Vision Statement**

The Environmental Commission, a superior court of record, will be known to all as a court characterised by excellence, which strives to attain justice for all through the rule of law. The court will be easily accessible, using effective case management methodology, and information technology. The court will be recognised as a leader in achieving sustainable development through its decisions.

### **3.1.1 Guiding Principles**

The Vision Statement of the Environmental Commission is premised on the following principles:

- Provide equal access to a fair and effective system of justice to all Members of society;
- Offer alternative dispute resolution processes while preserving the right of parties to a hearing before the Commission;
- Provide quality service that continuously improves, that meets and exceeds public expectations, and ensures that all persons appearing before the Commission are treated with courtesy, respect and dignity;
- Maintain the independence of the Commission while strengthening relations with the public, bar, the Legislature and the Executive;
- Enhance the potential of every person at the Commission to contribute to the administration of justice through participation, training and technology; and
- Earn the respect and confidence of an informed public.

## **3.2 Mission Statement**

The Environmental Commission shall, in a fair, accessible, effective, and efficient manner, resolve disputes arising within its jurisdiction, impartially and consistently to protect the rights of citizens while being cognizant of the need for the balancing of economic growth with environmentally sound practices.

### **3.2.1 Guiding Principles**

Consistent with its Mission Statement, the Environmental Commission shall be guided by the following principles:

- Make decisions in the best interest of the public.
- Conduct the Commission's business based on an underlying commitment to equal and timely justice while providing public access to an independent forum for the resolution of disputes.
- Participate in dialogue that will result in policies and resources necessary for the Commission to fulfill its Mission.
- Ensure the continued development of an accessible Commission through planning, research, and evaluation programmes, and through the use of modern management approaches and technological developments.
- Provide leadership in the administration of justice at the Commission by establishing broad and consistent policies for the operation of the Commission and appropriate rules and forms.
- Promote a competent responsive and ethical Commission and staff through a comprehensive programme of judicial education and training of Commission employees.

- Contribute to the public's understanding of the judicial process at the Commission through a continuing programme of public education.

### **3.3 Core Values of The Environmental Commission**

As part of its strategic planning process the Commission has further refined and articulated the core values required to accomplish its Mission:

- **Independence**  
As a superior court of record charged with a constitutional and statutory duty to adjudicate over applications (with respect to specific matters related to the regimes created by the various pieces of subsidiary legislation under the Environmental Management Act) and appeals (against certain decisions of the Environmental Management Authority) the court discharges its judicial mandate in accordance with the law and the doctrine of separation of powers.
- **Fairness**  
The court maintains a fair and reliable judicial process, and procedures which adhere to all relevant laws, rules of procedure and established policies.
- **Integrity**  
The court, in but its judicial and administrative capacities, is guided by principles of integrity. The court decides each case on its own merits and only upon legally relevant considerations including technical and scientific factors.

The administration of the court is conducted in accordance with the highest standards of accountability and transparency. In this regard the court is administered in a manner that seeks to utilise responsibly and to account for the public funds for the operations of the court. To this end the court continues to be guided by the financial, regulations, instructions and other directives issued by government.

The Chairman, Members and officers of the court, in all aspects of their duties, conduct themselves ethically and in a manner that is above reproach in accordance with the highest standards of Judicial Office, Court Administration and the Public Service.

- **Accountability**  
While observing the principle of comity in its relations with the Executive and Legislature, the court will clarify, promote and institutionalise effective working relationships with the other arms of State. The court will responsibly seek, utilise and account for the public funds and other public resources with which it is entrusted.
- **Quality Service**  
The court is client focused and delivers an effective, prompt, impartial and efficient system of resolving matters falling within its jurisdiction through litigation or alternative dispute resolution.

### 3.4 Strategies



*Dr. Daniel Straub, Straub and Associates moderating discussions at the Commission's Stakeholder Consultation held at Crowne Plaza, Port of Spain on September 14, 2006*

In its Annual Report 2004 the Environmental Commission identified strategies to achieve its objectives. As part of its strategic planning process during the period under review these strategies were reviewed resulting in the Strategic Plan of the Environmental Commission of Trinidad and Tobago 2007 - 2010. The Strategic Plan was developed by the Commission with the assistance of a consultant and through an interactive consultation process involving the active participation of over one hundred stakeholders. It sets out a plan for strategic management of the organization providing verifiable goals and objectives and giving each officer of the Commission a clear line of sight from their work to the purpose of the organization.

The plan outlines key strategic issues identified through stakeholder consultation, goals to be pursued by the Commission over the next three years and the strategies for achieving same. In 2006 the relevant functional working groups within the Environmental Commission commenced the process of developing the Management Action Plans to implement the different strategies identified in the Strategic Plan. These should be completed early in 2007.

While many of the strategies identified in the plan are new, many build on the strategies previously articulated in the Commission's Annual Report 2004 which the Commission continued to pursue in 2006 pending the finalization of the Strategic Plan 2007 - 2010. The Commission's efforts to implement these strategies have been outlined in later sections of this Annual Report.

### 3.5 Standards of Performance

The Commission has adopted standards of performance and measures of appraising its own performance which are consistent with international norms in court administration. These standards were articulated the Commission's Annual Report 2004. In developing the Strategic Plan 2007 - 2010 these standards and performance measures were reviewed with the assistance of the project consultant and found to be still relevant to the objectives of the court. The standards provided a solid foundation for the development of the Strategic Plan and are being directly integrated into the Management Action Plans for each respective functional working group within the Commission. The interactive stakeholder consultation has reinforced the importance of pursuing such standards as a pre-requisite to fulfilling the expectations of the public which the court serves.