

Message from the Chairman



While the status of the Environmental Commission as a specialist superior court of record places it within a small fraternity of judicial institutions in the Caribbean region, its unique position in terms of the administration of environmental justice puts it into a category of its own. This is simply because unlike most other superior courts of record in Trinidad and Tobago and the region, the Commission has an unequivocal mandate to take into account the needs of not only present generations but also future generations in the exercise of its jurisdiction. This reality, together with the range of matters falling within the Commission's jurisdiction, the complexity of these matters and the fact that in many instances it is likely that litigants will represent themselves, has reinforced the need for the Commission to take a strategic approach to the delivery of its services.

This term "delivery of services" is used deliberately as the Members and staff of the Commission fully embrace the concept that the Commission was created to serve the public. This has been and continues to be our focus and has guided the development of the Commission's Strategic Plan 2007 - 2010, which was prepared through a process of consultation with the court's stakeholders. The active participation of all involved resulted in clearly articulated vision, mission and core values. The strategic issues identified through this process have been prioritized with goals and strategies for addressing same being set out in the Strategic Plan. At the very top of the list of goals is to improve access to justice in the Environmental Commission. All other goals and strategies ultimately build towards achieving this goal.

The year 2007 saw the Commission taking several meaningful steps in implementing the strategies set out in the Plan. This includes preparation of revised Rules of Practice and Procedure to clarify the procedures for accessing the services of the Commission; catering to the special needs of differently abled visitors to the Commission; public education and information on accessing the Commission; and implementation of information technology solutions to improve the efficiency of the Commission in serving the public.

I am grateful to our many stakeholders who have worked together with us to improve the delivery of the services the Commission provides. We at the Commission look forward to continuing this partnership into the future. We remain confident that, guided by our strategic plan, the Commission will ultimately fulfill its mission and provide "environmental justice for all".

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Paul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sandra Paul
Chairman