



To: All News Editors

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NWC LAUNCHES ESSAY AND PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITIONS

The National Water Commission (NWC) launched its inaugural photo and essay competitions on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 under the theme: “Nature for Water – Protecting and Preserving Jamaica’s fresh water resources. Both competitions are set to culminate on World Water Day – March 22, 2018. The competition’s theme is aimed at exploring nature-based solutions to water challenges we face in the 21st century, especially since occurrences such as global warming and climate change, are negatively affecting the sustainability of our water resources.

The need to engage the critical publics with arresting messages about the essential value of water, the challenges and costs of service, the finiteness of our water resources, the fragility of our environment and the urgent need for cooperative interventions is even greater now than ever before. According to keynote speaker, Mr. Clifford Mahlung, as he brought the matter into focus, the advent of climate change has exasperated many of the water concerns and has dictated that while we seek to increase access to potable water generally, we have to ensure that we consider the effects of climate change as well and identify ways to harvest and protect our natural resources to ensure sustainable water management to improve quality of life.

He explained that Climate Change will affect our water resources through the following:

- Increase in the length of dry seasons which leads to less annual rainfall by the end of the century.
- Increase in the frequency of very intense rains in the short to medium term - very heavy rains will increase the amount of dirt and debris in the water flowing in watershed areas.
- Increased dirt and debris will mean additional work and costs to treat water for our daily use.
- Decrease in rainfall and increase in temperatures.

- Increase in the intensity of hurricanes - stronger hurricanes pose an increased threat to infrastructure such as pumps and wells and also to revenue after the event and during the recovery period.
- Increase in the sea levels within the Caribbean in general and around the coasts of Jamaica.

Miss Teisha-Ann Pinnock, Community Relations Manager (W) of the NWC and who provided details on the competitions told the audience that possible solutions to the issue of Climate Change can be obtained through collaboration with all stakeholders to include future generations which is also the target groups for the essay competition - (i) 9-12 and (ii) 13-16. The photo competition, however, has no age limit therefore adults can prepare to participate in this aspect. Competitors are encouraged to capture images which are artistically arresting, aesthetically pleasing and geared towards heightening the awareness of protecting and preserving our water resources through beauty and art.

Mr. Mahlung commended the efforts of the National Water Commission to stage these competitions and charged the participants to think critically about the theme and how they can find practical ways to act on what it means to them. "You will be utilizing your skills for essay writing and photography to promote positive climate actions that will sensitize more persons on this important topic of climate change," he emphasized to the students in the audience.

As crusaders of climate change, Mr. Mahlung implored all to make the consideration of water and nature a critical part of their daily lives, not only as part of events on World Water Day when the theme brings it to light but throughout their operations and through working with other partners.

Miss Pinnock reminded the audience about strict rules that are in place as well as the need to avoid plagiarism. "The NWC will award many exciting prizes to winners as well as the opportunity for successful entries to be displayed at the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA) conference to be held in Montego Bay throughout the week of October 8-12, 2018 and that is a big deal," she continued.

Entry forms and competition details are available from the NWC's website at <https://ww.nwcjamaica.com> commercial offices islandwide as well as Ministry of Education regional offices.

The launch was hosted on the site of the Hope Filter Plant in St. Andrew and was attended by students, representatives from the Ministry of Growth and Economic and Job Creation, the Climate Change Division as well as NWC officials.