

ABSTRACT**An Analysis of Coastal Development Policy
in Trinidad with special reference to Dredging****Darren Hamid**

This report examines the role that dredging has played in the development of the coast in Trinidad over the last 45 years. The significance of this analysis is highlighted by the increasing number of applications for coastal development involving dredging in Trinidad, including port expansion and industrial development and the uncertain impact of these projects upon sensitive coastal environments.

A review of international and Caribbean experiences in dredging was undertaken. Through primary data collection and analysis, the research attempted to quantify the incidence, duration and costs of dredging and dredge related schemes that have taken place in Trinidad over the last 45 years. The institutional environment and the legislative and regulatory framework within which dredging and dredge spoil disposal occur were analyzed.

The international and Caribbean experiences in dredging, as a tool for coastal development, revealed the high potential for negative environmental impacts associated with the activity. It also demonstrated the advantages of utilizing dredge spoil for land reclamation activities.

A significant issue in the Trinidad case study was the absence of a database of dredge and dredge spoil disposal activities which makes scientific analysis of the process difficult. Weaknesses in the regulatory and policy framework governing the process were also identified. There is an increasing awareness among coastal developers of the potential for land reclamation using dredged materials as a solution to create new land for housing, commercial and industrial development.

The findings of the research suggest that the creation of a functioning database of dredge related information would be an important step in the formulation of a national dredging and reclamation policy which would govern and regulate this vital development tool.

Keywords: Darren Hamid, dredging, dredge spoil, land reclamation.