

Caribbean states warned to consider the effects of sea pollution on tourism

FINLAND'S Ambassador to CARICOM and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is challenging those attending the consultation on the Caribbean Sea Commission, to look at such issues as the impact of tourism development on the environment and the implementation of a harbour fee, to help deal with pollution in the Caribbean Sea if it were to occur.

Ambassador Mikko Pyhälä's comments came as he addressed those gathered in the Shell Suite of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus yesterday morning for an expert consultation on the Operationalisation of the Caribbean Sea Commission (CSC). The three-day workshop is being sponsored by the Association of Caribbean States (ASC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, CER-MES and the University of the West Indies.

"For this particular meeting here I think it is important to raise the



Some of those attending the consultation on the Caribbean Sea Commission on Wednesday morning.

question, is there need for additional legal instruments now that we have the technical facilities for prevention of pol-

lution, do we need some kind of harbour fee that everyone would pay and then they could not escape the payment and

the paid compensations would be channelled to the places where the waste is actually downloaded," he said.

Referring to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, he noted that there is also the need to raise awareness within

the region and put plans in place in the event something like that were to happen in the Caribbean.

Moreover, he said that it is also important that the delegates address the issue of extensive tourism development and determine whether or not it is destroying our unique biological resources. Additionally, he questioned whether Caribbean countries at the individual national levels were preparing for the rise in sea level which is almost certain.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Pyhälä said that Finland has already made plans for a Caribbean wide initiative on disaster prevention and response that is expected to soon get off the ground and are also considering organising a seminar on best practices in education for the CARICOM countries. He said that Finnish students are the best students in terms of reading, mathematics and science and they want to share that expertise with the region. (JRT)

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