

Beaches to be cleaned on September 15

Garbage and other debris will be removed from several beaches across the island on September 15, as Jamaica joins the rest of the world in observing International Coastal Cleanup Day.

Programme Director at the Jamaica Environment Trust (JET), which is organising the day's activity, Suzanne Stanley, told JIS News that a number of sites have been confirmed for cleaning. These are: Fort Rocky Beach, Kingston; Welcome Beach and Old Harbour Bay, Clarendon; Museum Beach, Hanover; Alligator Pond Beach, Manchester; Prospect Beach, Portland; Flavours Beach, St. Ann; Hellshire Beach, St. Catherine; Black River Beach, St. Elizabeth; and Howard Cooke Boulevard Coastline, St. James. She said that a list of sites will be posted on the JET website at www.jamentrust.org, where persons can register as volunteers. "There will be contact information for each of the coordinators across the island, so persons can get in contact with them beforehand just to see if they need to register prior to the day or if they can just show up," Miss Stanley stated. She informed that already, several schools, youth and community groups, non-government organisations and service clubs, have indicated that they will participate, and "we have support from several corporate entities that will send teams and will also assist us with refreshments for the volunteers." She is imploring Jamaicans to come out on the day and support the coastal cleanup effort. "It's the largest volunteer event in the world so come out and support the event, become familiar with the solid waste management issues that are (affecting the beaches) and play your part and try to contribute to reducing the amount of waste that we have on our beaches," she urged. JET has organised beach cleanups in Jamaica since 1994. On International Coastal Cleanup Day 2011, observed on September 17, JET, with the support of the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) and the business community, mobilised more than 4,000 volunteers for the cleaning of 55 beaches. The national summary report, compiled by JET, found that the combined effort of the volunteers resulted in the collection of 3,105 bags of debris of various compositions, weighing over 35,209 pounds. This contributed to the global total of 9.1 million pounds of marine debris picked up by 598,076 volunteers in 114 countries and locations around the world, as reported by the Ocean Conservancy in its 2012 report.