

REPORT ON THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES (KAP) SURVEY

GEF/CREW AND GWP—CENTRAL AMERICA REGIONAL MEDIA WORKSHOP



Report on the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey

GEF/CREW and GWP–
Central America
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Background and Introduction

Over the period July 21 – 22, 2014 the GEF CReW Project and GWP-Central America hosted a regional media sensitization workshop on wastewater in Panama. This workshop was very similar to the media sensitization workshop held in Guyana in November 2013.

The objectives of the workshop as in the case of the workshop held in Guyana previously were to:

1. Deepen the knowledge and expertise of environmental journalists on wastewater issues and management in the Wider Caribbean Region
2. Increase media coverage about the challenges of wastewater management, impacts on human and environmental health, and solutions, use of appropriate technologies, low-cost alternatives and use of treated water
3. Raise awareness on the GEF CReW Project, GWP-Central America and issues of sustainable financing for wastewater management
4. Build a regional community of journalists, writing regularly about water and wastewater issues
5. Gain a better understanding of how to provide information resources to journalists to enable better coverage.

Fourteen journalists and media practitioners from six Central American countries attended the workshop. These included all four CReW Spanish-speaking countries – Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama – and two countries sponsored by the GWP-Central America – El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Purpose of KAPS Report

The purpose of this report is to document and analyse the information received through the KAP questionnaire that was distributed and completed by participants before the actual start of the workshop. Undertaking the KAPS prior to the start of the workshop was a good strategy as the information contained in the questionnaire was not influenced by the “new” knowledge they received during the workshop.

The questionnaire included 30 questions which were designed in the form of a KAP (knowledge, attitudes and practices) questionnaire towards documenting information on knowledge, attitudes and practices of the media in Central America with respect to wastewater management and environmental issues in general.

This report analyzes each question and, based on the analysis, presents conclusions related to the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the regional media with respect to wastewater and environmental issues in general.

Objectives of KAP Study on Wastewater Management in the Wider Caribbean Region

KAP studies can be approached using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Although quantitative methods are often used in KAP studies because of their generalizability, qualitative approaches are also very common. Qualitative research is explorative in nature, and although not generalizable, gains in-depth knowledge of the perceptions, stories, opinions and beliefs of the participants in the study. This KAPS employs both a quantitative and qualitative approach and was achieved through the use of a questionnaire that contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions.

This KAP study explored the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the media in Central America to wastewater management. This was undertaken to try to better understand how the media in this region values, perceives, and behaves in relation to wastewater and the natural environment in general.

This KAP study was designed to address the following key objectives:

1. To understand knowledge and attitudes of media in Central America with respect to wastewater management
2. To document actions and/or approaches taken by the media(including organizations) to inform the general public on environmental issues in general and more specifically wastewater issues
3. To investigate potential behaviour change mechanisms and/or communication strategies that could be employed to reduce negative impacts on the environment.

General Profile of Participants in the KAPS

Fourteen persons participated in the KAPS. Eleven (79.5%) of participants work with a media organization; 1 works as a freelancer, 2 are in communications. Of the participants who work with a media organization, 21% of them work in print only – this represents the majority of the persons who work with media organizations. 14% (2 persons) work in both print and electronics, whilst another 14% work in electronic media only and yet another 14% work in broadcast media only. One participant works in both electronic and broadcast media whilst another works in both print and broadcast media. The one participant of the freelancers, work in electronic and broadcast media. For the persons who work in communications, one works in print and electronic media whilst the other works in electronic media only. Most of the participants, or 43%, are feature writers, one participant is an editor and feature writer and another is a feature writer and news reporter. 3 participants are editors only and 2 others are news reporters. One person did not respond to this question.

Overall Level of Knowledge of Wastewater Management among Central American Media **(Knowledge)**

Question 1:

What do you think about when you hear the term wastewater? Give one word.

Wastewater can be defined as:

A combination of one or more of: domestic effluent consisting of blackwater (excreta, urine and faecal sludge) and grey water (kitchen and bathing wastewater); water from commercial establishments and institutions, including hospitals; industrial effluent, storm water and other urban run-off; agricultural, horticultural and aquaculture effluent. It is any water that has been adversely affected in quality by human activities and can contain dissolved and/or suspended pollutants. It may contain pollutants such as nutrients, pathogens and viruses.

Table 1: Words used to describe wastewater by the participants are presented in the table below:

Media Organizations	Freelancers	Communications
Contaminated Contamination x 4 Wastewater sewers rivers contaminated water rubbish x2	Wastewater	Public health Contamination

Of the 14 participants, over 90% of them used a word contained in the definition above for wastewater and therefore this can indicate that these participants have some level of knowledge of what wastewater is.

Question 2:

When you hear the word sanitation, what do you think? Use one word to describe.

A range of words were used by participants in terms of how to describe what comes to mind when they hear the word sanitation. The most popular word used was 'health' (by 28.5% of respondents). Other words used included 'potability', 'recycle', 'clean', 'reclaim' and 'treatment'.

Question 3:

Describe what integrated wastewater management means?

In terms of participants' knowledge of sewage, more than half of the respondents accurately defined the term. Most respondents focused indicating that sewage was about a multi-sectoral approach to planning as well as putting in place systems for water reuse.

Question 4:

Which of the following defines 'sewage' best?

Sewage can be defined as:

Liquid and solid waste carried off in sewers or drains

In terms of participants' knowledge of sewage, 64% of the respondents accurately defined the term sewage.

Question 5:

What would you say best describes your knowledge of general environmental issues?

Participants' were asked to describe their perception of their knowledge of environmental issues. 64% of participants indicated that they had fair knowledge of environmental issues. This is interesting since also 64% accurately defined the term sewage. Only 1 participant indicated that they had good knowledge of environmental issues. 4 participants (28.5%) indicated their knowledge of environmental issues was low.

Question 6:

What would you say best describes your knowledge of wastewater issues in your country?

Participants were asked to indicate their knowledge of wastewater issues in their country. Half of the participants or 50% of them indicated that their knowledge of wastewater management issues affecting their country was low. 4 participants or 28.5% indicated that their knowledge of

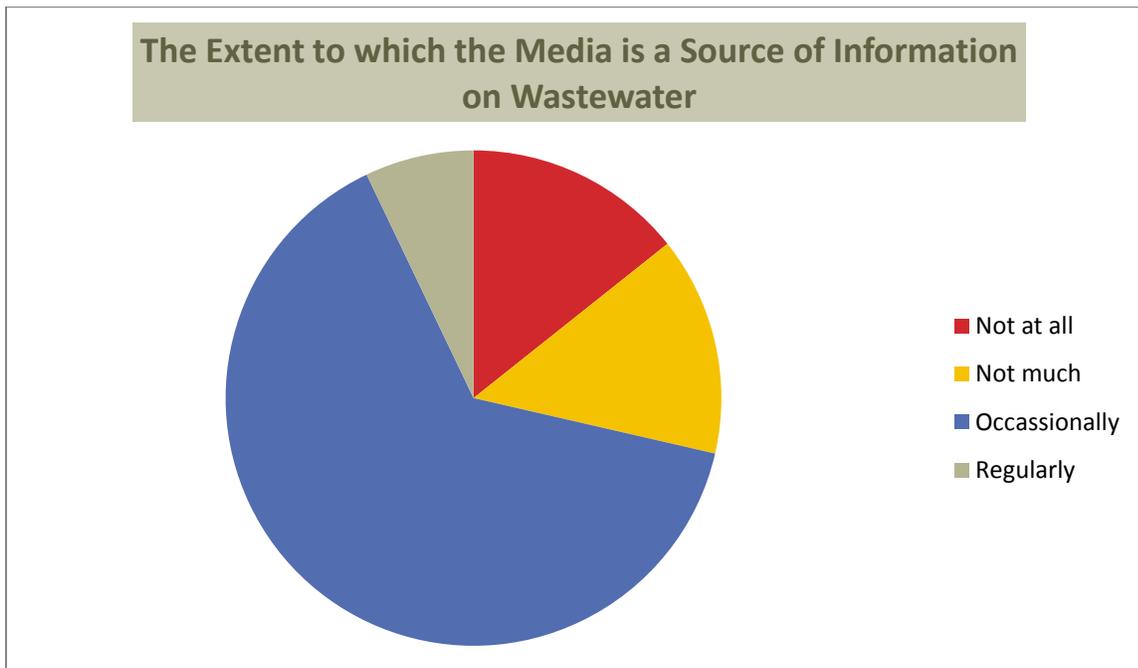
wastewater management issues in their country was fair whilst 3 participants indicated that their knowledge was good.

Question 7 :

To what extent do you think the media is currently a source of information about wastewater issues?

64.3% of respondents indicated that the media is occasionally a source of information about wastewater. This is in sharp contrast to the KAPS done for the Caribbean which showed that 57.1% of participants indicated that the media is not really a source of information about wastewater issues, having chosen answer “b”, “not much” as their main response.

For Central America, 28.6 % of participants indicated that the media was either not a source of information or not much a source of information about wastewater issues. Only 1 respondent indicated that the media was a regular source of information on wastewater issues.



Question 8:

What percentage of wastewater do you think receives any level of treatment in your country?

57.1% of participants indicated that they believed that only 5% of wastewater received treatment in their country. This is similar to the KAP done for the Caribbean, in which the 40% of the participants suggested that they believed that only 5% of wastewater received treatment in their country. For Central America, another 28.5% of participants suggested that only 30% of wastewater was being treated. One participant suggested that 75% was being treated.

Question 9:

Do you know what organization is responsible for wastewater management in your country? If yes, please name it.

All participants indicated the name of an organization in their country which was responsible for the management of wastewater.

Question 10:

Which of the following are under threat from untreated wastewater?

Participants were asked to list the threats from untreated wastewater based on a set of responses presented to them. Releasing untreated wastewater into the environment can have negative impacts on the natural environment and our health such as contamination of drinking water, harm to fish and wildlife populations, restrictions on fish and shellfish harvesting, beach closures and other restrictions on recreational water use. Based on the foregoing, all the answers listed in the question would be threatened by untreated wastewater.



Figure 1: Responses to question: "Which of the following are under threat from untreated wastewater?"

Most respondents listed more than one threat from untreated wastewater. Some respondents listed all six responses as being under threat. It is interesting to note that fisheries emerged as the main threat from untreated wastewater. The least threatened was listed as agriculture. Public health and coral reefs and marine life also seem to be identified as being under significant threat by untreated wastewater (and this analysis was based on the number of votes per issue).

Question 11:

What do you think are the 3 biggest issues relating to wastewater?

Participants were asked to rank the three biggest issues related to wastewater. To determine the ranking, the choices were summed up across issues. The ranking of the issues (1 to 5, with 1 being the highest ranked issue) related to wastewater by respondents are:

Table 2: Ranking of Issues Related to Wastewater by Participants

Ranking	Issue	Number of Votes for Issue	Percentage of Participants ranking this particular issue
1	Public health	14	100
2	Pollution of the Rivers	12	85.7
3	Diseases and Epidemics	8	57.1
4	Pollution of the Seas	4	28.5
5	Agriculture	2	14.3
6	Tourism	1	7.1

All participants indicated that public health was an issue relating to wastewater and this was ranked as the highest issue. This was the same for the Caribbean participants in the previously conducted KAPS. In other respects, this ranking appears to be in sharp contrast to the Caribbean KAPS (except for the issue of public health). For ease of reference the ranking of the Caribbean KAPS is presented below in terms of importance:

1. Public Health
2. Tourism
3. Pollution of the Seas
4. Diseases and Epidemics
5. Pollution of Rivers

Whilst tourism was ranked as the #2 issue in the Caribbean, in Central America it was ranked as last. Interestingly as well, pollution of the seas was higher ranked in the Caribbean than in Central America while in Central America, pollution of rivers was higher ranked. From this, one can glean that the importance of wastewater as an issue is very much dependent on local and regional socio-economic circumstances.

Question 12:

Circle whichever issues you think are impacting wastewater management

Participants were asked to indicate the issues that they felt were impacting wastewater management. They were presented with 8 issues as indicated in Column 2 in the table below. Respondents indicated that the following issues were impacting wastewater management. The issues are ranked based on the number of persons who selected the issue. Most participants selected more than one issue in almost all cases. These issues are ranked in the table below according to the number of times they were selected by participants.

Low priority of government was voted as the top issue impacting wastewater. This was followed by lack of funding and public ignorance. In contrast, public ignorance of wastewater was voted as the top issue impacting wastewater in the Caribbean, followed equally by lack of funding for wastewater management and the low priority of this issue by governments. Both regions selected the same top three issues.

The issues that participants felt least impacted wastewater management were lack of technical skills and extreme weather events.

Table 3: Ranking of Issues Impacted by Wastewater Management as indicated by Participants

Ranking	Issues	Number of Votes for Issue	Ranking of Issues in the Caribbean region
1	Low priority of government	13	Public ignorance
2	Lack of funding	12	Lack of funding
3	Public ignorance	12	Low priority for government
4	Poor utility management	8	Lack of regulation
5	Lack of regulation	5	Unregulated housing
6	Unregulated housing	5	Lack of technical skills
7	Lack of technical skills	2	Poor utility management
8	Extreme weather events	1	Extreme weather events

Conclusion – Knowledge

Of the 14 participants under consideration, more than 50% of them can be classified as having some level of knowledge on issues related to wastewater and the environment in general. Whilst there is some knowledge of environmental issues, this knowledge also is limited. This is based on:

- Participants’ own perception of their knowledge of environmental issues – as much as 64% of respondents indicated that they had fair knowledge of environmental issues and 64% of them was also able to accurately define the term sewage.
- 50% of participants indicated that their knowledge of wastewater issues affecting their country was low.
- 64% of participants indicated that the media is occasionally a source of knowledge about wastewater issues in their country
- The fact that only about 30% of respondents could identify all the threats to untreated wastewater presented to them in question 10.

Approach to Environmental and Wastewater Issues and Coverage (Attitudes)

Question 1:

Do you think your activities have an impact on wastewater?

Participants were asked to indicate whether they felt that their own activities had an impact on wastewater. Choices were: not at all; occasionally; and, often. Almost all participants indicated that their activities often had an impact on wastewater – 71.4%. This is in contrast to the Caribbean KAP which showed that only 39.3% of participants indicated that their activities often had an impact on wastewater. Another 3 participants indicated that their activities occasionally impacted on wastewater. Non-response was one participant.

Question 2:

Which do you consider that untreated wastewater released into the environment (ground/drains/waterways/rivers/coastal waters) is:

Participants were asked to rate the threat that untreated wastewater posed to the natural environment. Responses ranged from no threat to high threat. All participants who responded to this question (13/14 or 93% of the sample or 100% of persons responding to this question) indicated that untreated wastewater presents a high threat. In contrast, only 71% of respondents of the Caribbean KAPS rated the threat of untreated wastewater to the environment as high.

Question 3:

Have you ever written about environmental issues, water and/or wastewater issues in the past?

Participants were asked to indicate the extent which they have written about environmental issues in the past. Responses ranged from occasionally to frequently. 57% of respondents indicated that they occasionally write about environmental/wastewater management issues – this was exactly the same for the Caribbean KAPS. Another 36% from Central America indicated that they frequently write about environmental and wastewater management issues.

Question 4:

Do you cover environmental issues with the aim of ...:

Participants were asked to indicate their aim in covering environmental issues. Possible responses that participants could have chosen are listed in the box to the right. Participants in some cases did indicate more than one answer which was recorded. The aim of covering environmental issues are ranked below (1 to 5, with 1 being the most popular response of participants) based on popularity of response:

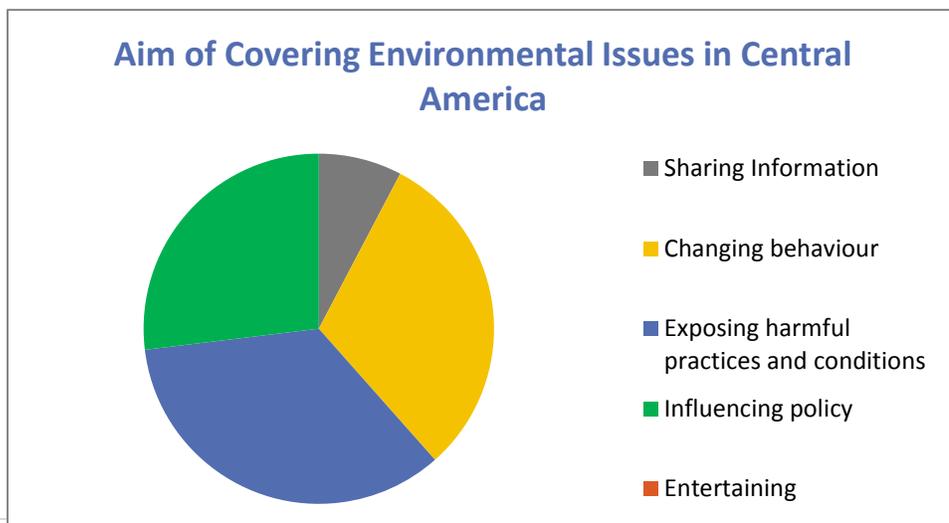
1. Exposing harmful environmental practices and conditions
2. Changing behaviour
3. Influencing policy
4. Sharing information
5. Entertaining

Aim of Covering Environmental Issues – Possible Responses

- Sharing Information
- Changing Behaviour
- Exposing Harmful Practices and Conditions
- Influencing Policy
- Entertaining

The responses for Central America media were different from the Caribbean Media. The most popular response for the Caribbean was sharing information and this issue was ranked 4th in the Central America group. The responses for the Caribbean media are presented below:

1. Sharing information
2. Exposing harmful practices and conditions
3. Changing behaviour
4. Influencing policy
5. Entertaining



Question 5:

How did your editor react to your participation in this workshop?

Participants were asked to state how their editor reacted to participation in the workshop. 13 of the participants or 93% reported that their editor was very interested and supportive of this workshop. Only 1 person reported that their editor was indifferent. For the Caribbean KAPS, 61% of participants who responded indicated that their editor was very interested and supportive of their attendance in the workshop while 39% indicated that their editors were indifferent.

Question 6:

Do you have any particular interest regarding wastewater or other environmental stories? If so state:

Participants were asked to state any areas of interest they had regarding environmental or wastewater stories. All participants expressed interest regarding wastewater or other environmental issues. Many participants indicated more than one area of interest.

Areas of interest regarding wastewater as indicated by participants are presented below:

- Public health
- Biodiversity and species survival
- Social responsibility
- Changing attitudes of persons towards the environment
- Reforestation
- Sustainability of potable water
- Integrated water resources management
- Sanitation and drinking water
- Impact of mining on potable water

Question 7:

Do you think you have an important role to play in shaping and/or changing people's perceptions of wastewater?

Participants were asked to express how they felt about their role in shaping and/or changing peoples' perception of wastewater. All participants agreed that they have a role to play in shaping and/or changing persons' perception of wastewater.

Question 8:

What are your expectations of this workshop? State.

Participants' expectations of the workshop were fairly consistent. Most participants expressed an interest in learning more about wastewater and wastewater management as well as the impacts of wastewater on various sectors. Many were interested in learning from the experiences of other countries.

Question 9:

In your country do you think that the issue of wastewater is seen as ...:

Participants were asked to express how they think the issue of wastewater is seen in their country. Responses ranged from immediate to not immediate. 64% of respondents indicated that the issue of wastewater was somewhat immediate, while 28% indicated that it was not seen as urgent at all. Compared to the Caribbean media KAP, 53.6% of respondents indicated that the issue of wastewater is seen in their country as not immediate, while another 39.3% of participants indicated that the issue of wastewater in their country is seen as somewhat immediate. Only 7% of participants in both Central America and the Caribbean KAPs indicated that wastewater issues were seen as immediate in their country.

Question 10:

Do you think that providing more information on wastewater issues to the public will result in ...:

Participants were asked to assess what the result of providing wastewater issues to the public would be. Responses that participants could select were:

- A better understanding of the issues

- A feeling of greater helplessness regarding wastewater management
- Greater proactivity regarding wastewater issues

Some participants selected more than one response. The most popular response was greater proactivity regarding wastewater management issues. In the Caribbean KAP however, a better understanding of the issues was elected by almost all the participants as to how the public would respond to more information on wastewater issues. For the Central American KAPS the second most important issue was a better understanding of the issues.

Question 11:

Rank the following linkages according to which you think need to be most urgently explained to the public (1 being the highest)

Participants were asked to rank the following linkages (in text box to the right) in order of priority in terms of the issues that they think most urgently need to be explained to the public. Participants' rankings were varied. Each participant's responses were ranked individually. These individual ranks were then tabulated to come up with an overall ranking of each linkage and this ranking was based on how participants ranked each linkage and the number of participants ranking each linkage. This is presented below with 1 being the highest rank that respondents felt the public needs to urgently understand.

The top priorities are:

1. **Wastewater and health**
2. **Wastewater and the environment**
3. **Wastewater and livelihoods**
4. **Wastewater as a resource**
5. **Wastewater and climate change**
6. **Wastewater and tourism**

Key Linkages with Wastewater that Participants were asked to rank:

- a) Wastewater and health
- b) Wastewater and tourism
- c) Wastewater and climate change
- d) Wastewater as a resource
- e) Wastewater and livelihoods
- f) Wastewater and the environment

It should be noted that the top priorities for both Central America and Caribbean KAP are the same. The same can be noted for the last two priorities.

Question 12:

What do you think are the greatest barriers to effective media coverage on environmental issues (rank in order of importance, 1 being the highest)

Participants were asked to rank, in order of importance, the barriers to effective media coverage on environmental issues. Six barriers were presented as follows:

- Lack of information
- Lack of interest and support by media houses and editors
- Lack of clear messages
- Lack of understanding of the journalist's role
- General indifference to environmental issues
- Lack of information that is easily understood by the public

Participants were ranked individually for each of the barriers and then these were tabulated to arrive at an overall ranking of the barriers. The barriers are presented below as ranked by the respondents: (1 being the greatest barrier):

1. Lack of interest and support by media houses and editors
2. Lack of information
3. Lack of clear messages
4. Lack of understanding of the journalist's role
5. Lack of information that is easily understood by the public
6. General indifference to environmental issues

The ranking of barriers from the Caribbean KAP was slightly different from that of Central America and these responses are presented below:

1. Lack of information that is easily understood by the public
2. Lack of information
3. Lack of interest and support by media houses and editors
4. General indifference to environmental issues
5. Lack of clear messages
6. Lack of understanding of the journalist's role

Question 13:

Would you have any issues being identified as a 'wastewater journalist'?

Participants were asked if they had any issues with being identified as a wastewater journalist. Responses were either yes or no. 57% of participants indicated that they would have no issue with being referred to as a wastewater journalist, while 43% indicated that they would have an

issues being identified as a wastewater journalist. For the Caribbean media KAP, 68% of participants indicated that they would have no issue with being identified as a wastewater journalist. 18% of participants did not respond to the question whilst 14% of participants indicated that they would have an issue with being identified as a wastewater journalist.

Conclusion – Attitudes of Central America Media

Generally, participants expressed a good and positive attitude towards wanting to learn more and understand better environmental and wastewater issues. This positive attitude is emphasized by:

- 71% of participants indicated that their activities often had an impact on wastewater— recognition of how one impacts an environmental issue is a good start to changing practices - and indicated a range of interesting topics that they had in mind.
- 100% of participants felt that they had a role in shaping and/or changing people’s perception of wastewater.
- 57% of participants indicated that they occasionally write about environmental and wastewater management issues.
- Participants’ expectation of the workshop was another indicator of their attitude towards the topic in questions – almost all participants indicated interest in obtaining more information on wastewater to be able to write articles and stories.
- 93% of editors showed interest and support for this workshop.
- 93% of participants indicating that wastewater is a high threat to the environment.
- Just under 60% of participants indicated that they would not have a problem being identified as a wastewater journalist.

Approach to Work/Coverage (Practices)

Question 1:

Ranking the Key Attributes of News Stories

Participants were asked to rank what they look for most in a news story. The following choices were presented to participants:

- a) Human interest
- b) Public good
- c) Educational value
- d) Sensationalism
- e) Revelation

Participants' responses were ranked individually and then these were summed to derive the overall rankings. Based on this assessment, the following has emerged as a result of participants own ranking of what they look for in a news story (ranked in order of importance, with 1 being the highest). The ranking is as follows: (1 being the highest):

- 1. Human interest
- 2. Educational value
- 3. Public good
- 4. Revelation
- 5. Sensationalism

It is interesting to note that participants in both KAPs (Central America and Caribbean) voted human interest as 1st (most important) and sensationalism as 5th (or the least importance) of all the attributes they look for most when writing a news story.

Question 2:

Percentage of Time Participants Choose their Subject of Coverage

Participants were asked to indicate what percentage of time they were able to choose their subject of coverage. Responses ranged from 20% to always. Like the Caribbean media KAPS, 36% of participants indicated that they are able to choose their subject of coverage 75% of the time. Another 36% for Central America indicated that they were able to choose the subject of their coverage all the time. This contrasts with the Caribbean KAP where journalists were only

able to always select their topic of coverage only 29% of the time. 28.5% of the respondents for the Central America KAP are able to select the topic of coverage 20 – 50% of the time.

Question 3:

What percentage of your coverage is dedicated to environmental issues?

Participants were asked to indicate the percentage of their coverage dedicated to environmental issues.

Responses ranged from “less than 20%” to “100%”. 36% of respondents indicated that they covered environmental issues between “less than 20%” to “20%” of their overall coverage. Another 36% indicated that their overall coverage of environmental issues was between “75%” to 100%”.

For the Caribbean media KAPS, more than half of the respondents (58% of them) covered environmental issues between “less than 20%” and “up to 20%” of their overall coverage. 11% of participants indicated that they dedicated “75%” of their stories to environmental issues whilst another 11% indicated that for them environmental issues made up 100% of their overall coverage.

Question 4:

Where do you source most of your information?

Participants were asked to indicate where they source information for their stories. Responses to choose from were:

- Interviews
- Scientific reports
- Institutional and project reports
- Newsletter and other specially produced information materials
- The internet/other media coverage

Most participants indicated more than one response to the question. The ranking of where participants obtained information for their stories are presented in the Table below. Most participants indicated that interviews were the main source of information in their coverage and this was followed by institutional or project reports. The least popular source of information was newsletters and other specifically produced information materials. For the Caribbean Media KAP, interviews and the internet were ranked 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 4: Ranking of where Participants Obtain Information for their Stories

Ranking	Source of Information	Number of Votes for Issue
1	Interviews	11
2	Institutional and project reports	5
3	Scientific reports	4
4	The internet/other media coverage	2
5	Newsletters and other specifically produced information materials	1

Question 5:

How often do you follow-up or return to cover an issue after your initial coverage?

Participants were asked to indicate how often they follow-up on or return to cover an issue after their initial coverage. Responses ranged from 20% to all the time. 50% of respondents indicated that they return to cover an issue after initial coverage about 50% of the time, while 35% of respondents indicate that they return 20% of the time. Only 14% of respondents indicated that they return 100% of the time.

With respect to the Caribbean KAP, 54% of respondents indicated that they follow-up on an initial story 50% of the time while another 29% indicated that they follow-up on a story 20% of the time. Only 8% of participants indicated that they never follow-up on a story after the initial coverage.

Question 6:

What kinds of information do you think would help you support or write better about wastewater issues? (Rank with 1 being the highest).

Participants were asked to rank the kinds of information (presented below) they would like to help them write better about wastewater issues from the following list.

- a) Statistics
- b) Case studies

- c) Project updates
- d) Interviews
- e) Site visits

Participant ranking of the information (1 being the highest rank) that they think would help them write better about wastewater issues are:

1. Site visits
2. Interviews
3. Case Studies
4. Project updates
5. Statistics

For the Caribbean KAP, site visits and interviews were also ranked 1 and 2 and statistics was also ranked at 5.

Conclusion – Practices of Central American Media

Whilst participants displayed a strong interest in environmental and wastewater management issues, their practices in covering these stories were limited in many instances by their lack of understanding of environmental and wastewater issues as well as a lack of information. Most participants agreed that site visits and interviews would help them to write more about wastewater issues.

Towards the Development of a Public Awareness Strategy for the Media...

Recommendations Emerging from the KAPS

The KAP study provided valuable information on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of regional media with respect to wastewater and environmental issues. By knowing the level of knowledge, attitudes and practices of participants, carefully designed public awareness, training and capacity building programmes can be designed towards achieving better outcomes in how information on wastewater and environmental issues are disseminated to the general public and also how they affect demand for environmental knowledge and information.

To bring about social and behavioural change with respect to wastewater management, communications and public awareness interventions need to be evidence-based. Evidence-based programming underlines the importance of collecting baseline and follow-up data to design and evaluate activities and programmes aimed at populations or specific subgroups. The Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) study geared to media in Central America explored their knowledge, attitudes and practices with respect to wastewater and environmental issues.

The KAP study produced data that were informative, insightful and broadly useful. This data will inform the communications and information dissemination approach to be used for media. The KAP study helped to define the practices and attitudes that need to be changed or adopted. The results of the KAP study will play a critical role in identifying the communication needs of the media in the region and provide the basis for the formulation and implementation of a better media strategy.

The KAP study will enable the development and elaboration of specific tools and messages for regional media as well as the development of information for the timely and expeditious delivery of communication materials and the establishment of strategic partnerships.

A preliminary list of key mechanisms that could be employed and elaborated on to enhance the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the media include:

- Hosting additional media sensitization workshops
- Undertaking media briefings on a regular basis possibly through the use of online frameworks (e.g. Go-to-Meeting)
- Organizing field trips to allow first-hand looks, give first-hand information on the importance of conservation, wastewater management as well as best practices etc.
- Development of press kits to include a portfolio of fact sheets as well as general information on wastewater management and case studies. Press kits also should include information related to the activities being undertaken under the Project as well as other wastewater/environmental activities
- Creating an annual awards competition that recognizes journalistic efforts for the best reports, features and photographs related to wastewater management and environmental conservation. Consideration will be given to expanding existing environmental journalism awards to focus on wastewater management.
- Development of radio discussions, and radio spots conveying specific conservation messages to be used on popular radio talk shows
- Production of a special documentary film for screening on television, in schools, community centres, expos and other public gatherings, in offices etc.