



BEST Review of 2022

January 2023

BEST continues to bring synergy to environmental activism and advocacy by facilitating collaborative efforts with peer organizations around significant environmental issues, to ensure more efficient use of resources and to deliver greater, overall impact.

The need to strengthen the connections between people and the natural world and to inspire greater awareness of the impact of human activity on our environment is crucial. Without this critical sense of connection, we lose sight of our shared responsibility for the health of the environment and our quality of life. Until we, as a community, evolve to accept that shared responsibility, BEST will persevere in its efforts to bring attention to it.

BEST continues to focus on deepening our reach within our community and in developing collaborative relationships. The more we work together, listen to one another and seek ways to co-create responses to local environmental issues, the more trust will be built, resulting in more unified processes and outcomes.

Highlights from BEST's ongoing projects in 2022 include:

BEYOND PLASTIC BERMUDA (BPB) – the Beyond Plastic Bermuda campaign originated in 2021 through a collaboration with Keep Bermuda Beautiful (KBB) and half-a-dozen other environmental advocates in Bermuda. It has continued to expand under the direction of a core team and with the support of Beyond Plastic Champions. BPB's mandate is to: increase community awareness and commitment to reducing Bermuda's use of single-use plastics (SUPs); support Government's ban on SUPs and meet with stakeholders to assist the transition to more sustainable practices and products throughout the island. The BPB website is: <https://beyondplastic.bm/>

ABANDONED BOAT PROJECT – BEST works in collaboration with KBB and the Bermuda Government to research and make recommendations to address the problems created by sunken or abandoned boats in Bermuda. Phase 1 is well-underway with more than 100 boats identified and removed. It is imperative that recommendations for systemic change be considered and enacted to prevent future problems.

LUNCH & LEARN - Since 2018, BEST and the Bermuda College have hosted six Eco Lunch & Learn presentations each year to raise awareness and generate discussion around environmental issues.

MARINE CONSERVATION TEAM – The team concentrates on the balance between innovative initiatives and the impact on Bermuda’s marine environment and fisheries.

Actions included:

- Participating on the Abandoned Boat Project.
- Holding discussions with the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) who are developing a Fisheries Development Centre to promote the export of fish from Bermuda.
- Reviewing and responding to plans being proposed by the Bermuda Ocean Prosperity Programme (BOPP) which includes a Draft Blue Prosperity Plan and a Draft Marine Spatial Plan.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS REVIEW TEAM (PART) – The team was established in 2019 and reviews the increasing slate of applications for development in Bermuda.

Of particular concern are the following:

- Increased applications for development, including for a variety of new hotel/tourism ventures while two large hotels remain closed and empty.
- Proposed development for Southlands Park. Our concern is less about what is going to be proposed for the northern portion of the site but about what is going to be proposed for the southern portion (on the coast).
- The lack of progress with the renovation and reopening of the Gencom/Fairmont Southampton hotel.
- PART recently launched a Public Poll to gauge the community’s awareness, interest, and concern about protected zonings in Bermuda.

Other 2022 projects included:

- Efforts to establish connections with organizations in the Caribbean.
- Efforts to encourage the Government to explore the possible benefits of an industrial-scale anaerobic digestion system for producing methane as a cleaner fuel source for Belco’s North Power Station.
- Encouraging the formal organizing and strengthening of the Farmers’ and the Bermuda Fishermen’s Associations so they are better able to lobby for their respective, critically-important industries.
- Providing encouragement and ideas to a member of The Garden Club to promote their desire for the greater availability of non-peat compost products in Bermuda.