



## PERRY INSTITUTE FOR MARINE SCIENCE

### 2010 Community Day



The Perry Institute for Marine Science (PIMS) at Lee Stocking Island hosted a productive and engaging Community Day Luncheon on February 12, 2010. Guests included representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Finance, Department of Customs, Department of Labour, Department of Road Traffic, Bahamas Police Force, National Insurance Board, The Bahamas National Trust, The Exuma Garden Club, and The Sandals Resort, as well as local government officials and community members.

Island Manager Eric Lamarre greeted guests with opening remarks and introduction of the staff over morning coffee and muffins. He highlighted the Institute's mission and goals, as well as community outreach activities over the past year. The guests then introduced themselves and their organizations. The session proceeded with Dr. Erich Mueller's presentation entitled "40 Years of Research & Education," which summarized the Perry Institute for Marine Science's accomplishments over the years. Researcher Mark Albins, a PhD candidate at Oregon State University, gave a presentation on the Indo-Pacific Lionfish in The Bahamas. The population data regarding the increasing number of Lionfish overwhelmed the guests and raised some interesting questions and concerns.

Everyone became more acquainted with each other over lunch and praised Sue Gordon's delicious cooking. After lunch, guests toured the facility and then regrouped for the final presentation of the day. Ms. Zaidy Khan, a visiting researcher from the South Pacific, presented her involvement with PIMS and its local partners in current education and outreach activities in Exuma. She addressed the importance of local community engagement in sustainable fisheries harvest and management awareness programs. This led into an open forum of dialogue and discussion on the current fisheries policies and fishing patterns that are responsible for fisheries stock depletion. Guests raised great concerns about the protection of spawning aggregations sites of lane snapper, and also discussed overfishing of conch and lobster. Community officials showed great enthusiasm discussing fisheries policy and sustainable fisheries management. Major concerns were expressed about finding ways to protect overfished and endangered fisheries in Exuma.

The Perry Institute for Marine Science's Community Day Luncheon was a successful event that brought community, government, and business leaders to Lee Stocking Island to meet PIMS staff, engage in healthy discussion, and enjoy the beauty of the Cay.