GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

Tel: (284)468-2730
Official Government Website:
https://gov.vg

Dr. Cassander Titley-O'Neal Appointed Commissioner to the Sargasso Sea Commission

Release Date: 7 January, 2026

Virgin Islander and Director of the National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands (NPTVI), Dr. Cassander Titley-O'Neal, has been recently appointed by the Government of Bermuda as a Commissioner to the Sargasso Sea Commission.

The appointment is authorised under the Hamilton Declaration, established through two years of negotiations among governments with interests in the Sargasso Sea region or high seas conservation. The Hamilton Declaration was initially signed by the governments of the Azores, Bermuda, Monaco, United Kingdom and the United States, and were later joined by the Virgin Islands, the Bahamas, Canada, the Cayman Islands, and most recently the Dominican Republic.

Dr. O'Neal expressed, "I am very pleased to have been appointed to this Commission. I look forward to beginning work, sharing my expertise and learning from my colleagues to achieve the Commission's goals".

Entering her first three-year term, Dr. Cassander Titley-O'Neal oversees NPTVI operations across 21 national parks. Her responsibilities include balancing conservation, protection and sustainable management of these valuable natural resources, in the Virgin Islands, with the economic demands of tourism.

Dr. Titley O’Neal has over 16 years as an environmental consultant, and specialises in ecotoxicology where she investigates the nature, effects, and interactions of substances that are harmful to the environment and the organisms living in it, specifically endocrine disruption in female marine gastropods (snails). Her research appears in various peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Environmental Monitoring*, *Science of the Total Environment*, *Bulletin of Marine Science and Water Quality Research Journal of Canada*.

In 2019, Dr. Titley-O’Neal contributed to the National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) for the Virgin Islands (Envision 2040), now ratified by The Planning Authority. Regionally, as the K2 - Marine Specialist for the Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project (CROP), she led the development of 5 marine spatial plans for St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and the regional framework.

Dr Titley-O'Neal holds a Ph.D. in marine biology from the University of New Brunswick (Canada), a M.Sc. in applied marine science from the University of Plymouth (UK), and a B.Sc. in marine biology with a minor in chemistry from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (USA).

The Sargasso Sea Commission is comprised of independent, international, and local experts that serve three-year terms overseeing the high-seas ecosystem stewardship, conservation, health, productivity, and resilience.

For Additional Information Contact:

Berta Mckelly Adams

Information Officer

Department of Information and Public Relations

Telephone: 468-2730

Email: bmckelly@gov.vg

Additional Documents or Media

- dr_cassander_titley-o’neal_appointed_commissioner_to_the_sargasso_sea_commission_edits.pdf