

3 **METHODOLOGY**

Field trips were undertaken to several areas throughout Trinidad which have different climatic and soil conditions. Careful observations were made and field notes prepared on the following:

Plants

name of the species, height, spread, rooting depth, root distribution, root strength, abundance, and health and luxuriance of growth in the dry season or after an environmental event like fire. Root characteristics were determined on plant samples (except trees) excavated from the soil. The root strength was assessed by the force required to uproot the plant and to rupture roots during the uprooting. Additional information on plant characteristics e.g. maximum plant height and canopy spread was obtained where possible from the literature.

Soil

soil type, elevation, slope, stoniness, and fertility status.

Climate

rainfall, sunlight (shade and full sunlight), humidity, and temperature.

Other environmental factors

plant response to fire, grazing, salinity, and flooding.

Retired technician Mr. M. Borai Kalloo who worked for several decades with the National Herbarium of The University of the West Indies and have had years of field experience collecting plants throughout Trinidad accompanied the field team on many of the field visits. His knowledge of the behaviour and responses of plant species to different environmental conditions informed the species selection and recommendations in this report.