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## Latest: News

# Jamaica's Dry Tropical Forest Under Threat - Tavares-Finson

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**Opposition Senator Tom Tavares-Finson has expressed grave concern about what he describes as the rapid destruction of the dry tropical forest reserve in the Hellshire hills of St Catherine by persons harvesting the trees for charcoal and other purposes.**

In a release to the press this morning, the senator said the number of persons abusing the woodlands had "descended in unprecedented numbers."

He says the protected forest measuring about 114 square kilometres is one of the few remaining dry tropical forests in the world and is home to several endangered flora and fauna, including the Jamaican iguana, which was believed to be extinct up to a few years ago.

Senator Tavares-Finson says the forests have been rapidly destroyed because they are easier to access than rainforests.

He says researchers from the University of the West Indies working in the forest have expressed fear for their personal safety and the safety of students and have been scaling down activities in the reserve.

The senator's comments formed part of his contribution to the State of the Nation debate in the Senate on Friday.

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