



The jetty in Hillsborough, Carriacou, the main entry point to the island is a hive of activity as water taxis, cargo vessels and ferries come and go.



Water taxi operators from around the Grenadines come together to plan ways to improve their efficiency, safety, customer service and environmental practices.



Martin Barriteau, Project Manager, sustainable Grenadines Project, (second from left) working with community members from Ashton, Union Island, Petite Martinique and Carriacou to seed lines for an experimental seamount plot.

Marine Project Headed for Completion

With the first phase and the bulk of the second phase of the Sustainable Grenadines Project almost completed, the region's most cutting-edge participatory co-management for integrated sustainable development project to support the preservation of marine and terrestrial resources in small island systems to date in the region is poised for successful completion.

Project Serves as Model for Others

The project, which was developed through the efforts of the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) at Cave Hill, under the guidance of its Director, Professor Robin Mahon, has sparked widespread regional and international interest and is being held up as a model that can be adapted and deployed elsewhere.

Genesis of the Marine Project

The project, in simple terms, was conceptualised around the broad goal of building the capacity of civil society to play its role in sustainable development in the Grenadines Islands. The need for this was seen as particularly acute given that small islands are plagued with issues of low human capacity, multiple use issues between sectors – fishing, transport tourism, recreation –, land impacts on the sea, and these islands are all set in the context of very rich yet vulnerable marine ecosystems with coral reefs, seagrasses, mangroves and adjacent oceanic areas.

Impact of the Project

Professor Robin Mahon, in commenting on the project's progress, noted, "In terms of impact, projects of this type have a long-term orientation, as it is trying to change the way that systems work and people operate. It takes a long-time for governments to realize that civil society has

a lot to offer and to include it in its plans and programmes."

CERMES took this long-term orientation and received funding and support from The Lighthouse Foundation, based in Germany. Phase 1 of the project, which was focussed on Stakeholder assessment and mobilisation, including an appraisal of Government and NGO capacity for participation and participatory strategic planning to develop an integrated framework, was completed between June 2002 and April 2003. The second phase – a five-year implementation – which is currently underway was rolled out in November 2003 and has been focussed on substantial institutional capacity building for local NGOs and government departments, the establishment of management and co-management systems required for sustainable resource use and management, and the preparation of proposals seeking funding for related elements that exceed the Phase 2 core budget and scope.

Project Outcomes

So far, the Project Implementation Unit, established in Union Island and staffed by the Project Manager and the Project Administrator, has focussed on implementing the project core.

"The main impacts have been an increased awareness of issues, and increased awareness that the people themselves have the responsibility and capacity to solve many of the problems they face," explained Professor Mahon. "There are specific outputs in the form of completed projects, people trained and organizations strengthened."

The result has been a UW-led project that has garnered widespread praise for its pioneering work that will promote a sustainable future for some of the region's most valuable resources.

